

TOOLKIT FOR M.S. in FINANCE STUDENTS

You may use this toolkit as a specialized and convenient resource with updated business and career information relevant to your graduate business degree, education, skills and career development.

Access and customize your 4-page [Quinlan Graduate Business Individual Career Progression Plan](#)

Information included in this toolkit:

- ✓ Career resources
- ✓ Key components of a cover letter
- ✓ Sample cover letter
- ✓ Key components of a professional resume
- ✓ Sample resumes
- ✓ Relevant job titles
- ✓ Professional organizations
- ✓ Interview preparation

Career Resources

[Handshake](#) – Loyola University Chicago’s interactive career management tool that connects students to alumni and employers. Read current and relevant job and internship descriptions to help you know marketable and desired knowledge, skills, and experience.

[GoinGlobal](#) – Offers a variety of resources for those interested in gaining experience abroad. Research career guides that are city, state, and country specific; or take a look at lists of companies that have submitted H1B applications within the past 12 months in your area. You can also perform a targeted global internship or job search using several criteria.

[O*NET OnLine](#) – Online tool for career exploration and job analysis.

[Crain’s Chicago Business](#) – Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[Wall Street Journal](#) – The Wall Street Journal is the world’s leading business publication with coverage of the last 90 days and search abilities back 4 years. Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries. Every 180 days users must refresh (or click through Libraries’ link again).

Key Components of a Cover Letter

A cover letter is your customized written introduction of yourself relevant to your job search interests (it may also be a digital email message) and it may be read before, and/or after, you and/or your resume has received a hiring professional's attention. The cover letter is concise and should complement the resume by specifically highlighting your qualifications and experience relevant to why you are a match for the specific position and company/opportunity.

Be particularly responsive to the job or internship description requirements.

Your cover letter may also be read and re-read before, during and after your interview(s) by a number of individuals involved in the selection and hiring process.

Also, you may type the key components of a cover letter, into an email message body and attach a resume PDF, as mentioned in the cover letter/email message.

Visit [here](#) for the **Business Career Services cover letter guide**.

From the top:

Your Heading: This usually includes your first and last name (middle initial optional). Your street address, city, state and zip code serve as the mailing address included in all business letters. You may also format it similarly to the heading on your resume.

Full Date: (Month, Date, Year) This is important as cover letters are not time stamped like email messages.

Employer's heading: This includes Employer's/Recruiter's name (if known*)
Employer's Title, Name of Company/Organization, Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

Salutation: Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. (Last name of contact):
or

Dear Hiring Manager/Recruiter (*If the last name of the contact is unknown)
(Do not write: To Whom It May Concern)

Paragraph 1: Address your specific reason for writing to the individual/company as it relates to the employer's hiring or talent needs. Distinguish yourself in the first paragraph to give them some context:
As a Master of Science in Finance student at Quinlan School of Business with 2+ years of banking experience ...

Paragraph 2 and 3: Describe how your skills, knowledge, experience and other attributes qualify you for the position and demonstrate that you are well-suited for the opportunity. Indicate confidence that you will excel in the role and be an asset to the organization/employer.

Paragraph 4: Show gratitude and mention follow-up or next steps in closing and ending the letter

Signature:

Sincerely,
Full first and last name
Signature as appropriate

If resume is attached or enclosed: mention this.

Sample Cover Letter

Taylor F. Business
500 N. Green Street
Chicago, IL 60610

February 1, 2020

Ms. Samantha Hanson
Strategy and Operations Manager
ABC Firm, LLP
1000 N. State Street, #3000
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Ms. Hanson,

It was a pleasure to meet you at the recent Business Career Fair and Networking event hosted at Loyola University Chicago Quinlan School of Business. I appreciated your insightful remarks about ABC Corporation's new Finance Management software and its impact on your company's growth and the new strategic management opportunities in your division.

Currently, I am pursuing my Master of Science in Finance degree at Quinlan School of Business and expect to complete it in May of 2020. I offer in-depth financial, analytical and operational knowledge and skills, and have effectively applied knowledge gained in a variety of graduate business classes including Risk Management, Strategic Business Ethics, Financial Forecasting and Global Econometrics while working for the past 3 years at XYZ International Corporation's Chicago headquarters. I have applied a variety of cutting-edge software tools to successfully complete multiple enterprise-wide projects and have effectively delivered dynamic presentations to senior leaders and strategic decision-makers.

I have a successful track record of taking initiative and demonstrating strong leadership skills as evidenced by my success in designing a new professional financial manager training program which I proposed to our Chief Financial Officer. The training program was so well-received that our senior leaders asked that I introduce it into our company's New Manager Development Program. Also, as Vice President of the Finance Association's Chicago Chapter, I organized a conference for over 20 Chief Financial Officers from different industries and launched a successful registration drive that increased attendance by 40% in the first year by developing new partnerships and collaborations. I have also participated as a mentor at Loyola and in my community, where I am able to support others in their professional growth and development.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of my qualifications. I would be thrilled to bring my skills and talents to your global strategic operations. I have attached my resume and welcome the opportunity to talk with you further or schedule a face-to-face meeting at your convenience.

Sincerely,
Taylor F. Business

[Signature]

312-888-2322
tbusiness@luc.edu

Enclosed: Resume

Key Components of a Professional Resume

Heading: This usually includes first and last name (middle initial optional). Your mailing address is not usually needed; city and state is often sufficient. Include one phone number and one email address, as this is required. LinkedIn URL is optional though frequently listed.

Professional Profile or Professional Summary: This can vary in length (2-4 lines) and format, however, aim to make it concise and demonstrative of the overall value you offer as a professional. You may include your unique strengths, skills and years of industry experience in a way that distinguishes you and matches you to the position/role you are seeking.

Core Competencies or Skills: These can be listed in bullet-pointed columns (usually 6-9).

Education: This is listed in reverse chronological order, so the master's degree/university is listed before your bachelor's degree and institution. Always include location, city, state, (country if it is international).

Example:

Loyola University Chicago, Quinlan School of Business	Chicago, IL
Master of Science in Finance	Expected Graduation Month, Year

- ✓ Include cumulative GPA if it is 3.5/4.0 or above
- ✓ List names of completed courses and/or courses in progress, though distinguish which they are

Professional Experience: Always include most relevant work and professional experience.

Example:

Name of the Organization	City, State, Country (if international)
Job Title	Start Month, Year – End Month, Year

- Include 3-6 bullet points that convey your challenges, achievements, and results
- Quantify and/or qualify results to offer specific, measurable and memorable accomplishments that convey the value to the organization

Follow this formula when writing bullet points: Action Verb + Task = Impact

- Reflect Challenge, Achievement, Result (CAR)
- Quantify and Qualify Results when appropriate

Professional Affiliations/Associations: It is encouraged to include.

Example:

American Financial Association, Member	2016-Present
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Leadership: It is encouraged to include.

Community Service/Volunteerism: It is encouraged to include.

Awards and Recognition: It is encouraged to include.

Resume Design

There is quite a bit of variability in resume design and format today, however, there are some basic guidelines shared by many recruiting and career professionals.

Recommended fonts: Arial, Georgia, Garamond, Helvetica, Calibri (10-12-point font size. Your name may be slightly larger than the rest of the content on the resume).

Formatting and Readability: Send as a PDF unless requested in another format. Name the document "Your Full Name_Resume" or something similar.

One page is frequently considered appropriate for graduate students with 1-5 years of experience depending on your scope of experience and accomplishments. If the resume is more than 1 ½ pages, it may be better to condense it to one page or assure that it is a compelling, full two pages of content.

Ensure all spacing is correct and leverage white space. Use only text as opposed to symbols or text boxes. Avoid using first person pronouns like "I", and "we".

Customization: Create a basic resume which reflects all your experience and then customize it each time you apply to a new role, by being responsive to the job description and requirements. Be sure to match key competencies, qualification, skills, or company values listed in the job description to which you are applying.

After you create an updated draft of your resume, login to [Handshake](#) to schedule a personalized resume review appointment. During your appointment you will receive strategic resume customization recommendations that will be based on your unique career goals from your Graduate Career Coach.

Sample Resume

TAYLOR F. BUSINESS

Chicago, IL | tbusiness @luc.edu | mobile: 773-225-5555 | LinkedIn/URL

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE: Results-oriented business professional pursuing M.S. Finance degree with proven success in financial services and strong analytical and quantitative skills. In-depth knowledge of financial information systems with outstanding communication and leadership skills.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

Specialized Knowledge of Financial Securities and Financial Markets • Risk Metrics • Investment Criteria
Capital Budgeting • Financial Modeling • Project Management Software
Strategic and Critical Thinking • Analytic Skills • Data Analytics

EDUCATION:

Loyola University of Chicago, Quinlan Graduate School of Business
Master of Science in Finance

Chicago, IL
Expected May 2020

Cumulative GPA: 3.8/4.0

Highlighted completed courses:

Rutgers University, Rutgers Business School
Bachelor of Science in Finance

Newark, NJ
Month, Year

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Flow Financial Systems Services

Chicago IL

Financial Development Manager, XXX Practice

Month, Year- Month, Year

- Provided leadership and support to Finance team of seven associates and interns to effectively serve operational and technical systems that support daily operations of business enterprise
- Created new policies and procedure for financial reviews that were favorably reviewed by Finance Director and implemented, saving time to completion and efficiency by 20%
- Provided timely reports to firm management and monitored performance of security units installed in firm to optimize efficiency

ABO International Corporation
Finance Associate

Chicago, IL
Month, Year- Month, Year

- Introduced new financial systems learning modules to train new staff on financial reporting software
- Assisted finance management team with detailed review of financial statements receivable, reconciliations, making quarterly estimated tax payments, preparing tax returns
- Supported financial processes including inventory and verification of all new systems and products for compliance and accurate recordkeeping that supported cost savings initiatives and resulted in loss prevention gains of 20%

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

International Financial Management Association, Chicago Chapter Member

2018-Present

Investment Banking Financial Management Association, Member

2018-Present

Rambler Investment Fund, Member

2018-Present

- Analyze and make business and investment decisions

Relevant Job Titles & Skills

- Financial Analyst
- Financial Quantitative Analyst
- Treasurer/Controller
- Financial Manager

Professional Organizations

Connect with Loyola and Quinlan Business Leadership HUB resources, programs, events, and networks for continuous learning and professional development

[Loyola Business Leadership Hub](#) – The Loyola Business Leadership Hub draws on the expertise of Loyola students, faculty, staff, and global connections and has centers specializing in [social enterprise and responsibility](#), [family business](#), [supply chain](#), [risk management](#), [professional development](#), [student-run business](#) and [innovation](#).

Rambler Investment Fund (RIF) – RIF is a student-managed global macro fund that gives students real-world investment experience by allowing them to invest actual money in financial assets.

The Graduate Investment Banking Financial Markets Association – The Graduate Investment Banking and Financial Markets Association is a student-led organization designed to unite and educate students pursuing careers within the financial services industry. This organization aims to bridge the gap between academic theory and applied finance while providing its members with the resources needed to achieve a competitive advantage in the search for investment banking and finance careers.

[Ignite Lab](#) – The Ignite Lab enables students, staff, and faculty at Loyola University Chicago to turn their entrepreneurial ideas into reality.

[Loyola's 1871 membership](#) – 1871 connects early-stage startups with educational resources, potential investors, and a community of like-minded individuals and companies. Loyola's 1871 membership is available to current students, faculty, and staff from any area of the university, who can demonstrate that they are engaged in entrepreneurial pursuits that would be advanced by accessing 1871.

Connect with national associations and resources; conferences, programs, events, networks, and webinars for continuous learning and professional development

Bank for International Settlement	Federal Reserve Bank of New York	New York Stock Exchange
Barchart	Forex Market	Oanda
Bloomberg	International Finance Corporation	Philadelphia Stock Exchange
Chicago Mercantile Exchange	International Monetary Fund	Russell
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	Morningstar	Security Exchange Commission
Dow Jones	NASDAQ Stock Exchange	World Bank Group
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago	Financial Executives International (FEI)	Emerging Market Trader Association
		Financial Management Association

Connect with professional multicultural national associations and resources

[Prospanica](#)

[National Black MBA Association](#)

[Ascend Pan-Asian Leaders](#)

Interview Preparation

- [How to Ace the 50 Most Common Interview Questions](#)
- [21 Finance Interview Questions and Answers](#)
- [100+ Technical Finance Interview Questions You Need to Know](#)
- [Preparing for a Skype Interview](#)
- [5-Minute Interview Review](#)