



**Samuel Merritt
University**

RESUMES, COVER LETTERS AND INTERVIEW SKILLS
for
Pre-Licensure
Nursing Students



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TRACY MERRITT

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EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing, anticipated in May 2015

Samuel Merritt University, Oakland, CA

Preceptorship, January – April 2008

- Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Special Care Unit, Oakland, CA, 120 hours

Clinical Sites, September 2006 – April 2008:

- Community Health, Alameda County, Oakland, CA; 140 hours
- Maternity, John Muir Hospital, Walnut Creek, CA; 140 hours
- Critical Care, Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Oakland, CA; 140 hours
- Pediatrics, Children's Hospital Oakland, Oakland, CA; 140 hours
- Adult Medical Care II, Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Oakland, CA; 140 hours
- Adult Medical Care I, Alameda County Hospital, Oakland, CA; 140 hours

CERTIFICATIONS & LICENSURES

- Eligible to take NCLEX-RN month, year
- BLS/CPR/AED for the Health Care Provider, American Heart Association; exp: month year

HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE

Rock Med, May 2015 - present

SF Bay Area, CA

- Work with medical team to triage and care for concert attendees
- Most common conditions are dehydration and alcohol poisoning

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Student Assistant, September 2006 – May 2008

Samuel Merritt University, Oakland, CA

- Ensured accurate data entered into system, assessed and appropriately referred phone calls
- Developed and taught nursing skills and nutrition curriculum for an on-campus middle school summer program

Server, June 2004 – November 2006

Chevy's Fresh Mex Restaurant, Alameda, CA

- Assisted guests in a friendly, efficient manner
- Maintained cleanliness and stock levels in restaurant

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Gift Shop Volunteer, August 2013-April 2015

Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Oakland, CA

- Trained new volunteers to provide excellent customer service

Dolores Meehan, BSN, RN

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Roseville, CA 95678

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SUMMARY STATEMENT

RN recently returned from working in medical clinic in rural Nigeria, with 15+ years' experience in crisis management and troubleshooting for financial systems clients with strong communication and leadership skills, seeking opportunity to provide competent, safe and ethical patient care.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing, Samuel Merritt University, San Mateo, CA Nov 2012

- Cum laude

Preceptorship:

- San Francisco General Hospital, 5D telemetry 132 hours

Clinical sites included:

- St. Mary's Medical Center, telemetry/medical-surgical 270 hours
- St. Mary's Medical Center, PACU/ICU/ emergency department 135 hours
- Children's Hospital Oakland, pediatrics 135 hours
- San Francisco General Hospital, labor and delivery, nursery and postpartum 135 hours
- San Francisco General Hospital, adult mental health, Psych ER 135 hours
- Via West Services, Cupertino, community health 135 hours

B.A. Psychology, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 1991

CERTIFICATIONS

- CA Registered Nurse
- Public Health Nurse
- TNCC – Emergency Nurses Association 2013
- ACLS/PALS – American Heart Association 2013
- BLS/CPR/AED – American Heart Association 2011
- Tropical medicine certification – West Virginia University Medical School 2011

HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCE

Upon This Rock Medical Clinic, Ozu Abam, Nigeria Dec 2012 – Jan 2013

Volunteer Clinical Nurse

- Setup new clinical/surgical facility in rural village with team of volunteers
- Personally provided primary and emergent care to 50+ patients / day
- Encountered TB, malaria, parasitic infections, etc and developed practices focused on treatment
- Extensive wound care treatment, training and patient education

Zuckerberg SF General Hospital and Trauma Center, San Francisco, CA 2003 – 2011

Emergency Department Volunteer

- Collaborated with level one trauma nursing staff to deliver patient care
- Provided hands-on assistance during trauma events, including CPR

Caring for Orphans Mozambique, Temecula, CA 2011 – present

Volunteer Medic and Team Lead

- Initiated and organized project to establish medical clinic
- Led 6-person medical team to Mozambique
- Coordinated mission logistics with in-country personnel and medical school

Medical Missionaries of Charity, Alta Verapaz Mountains, Guatemala

2004 – 2007

Volunteer Medic

- Coordinated logistics and staffing for mobile clinic
- Systematized pharmacy and lab for mobile clinic
- Procured medical supplies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

D.J. Meehan Consulting, San Francisco, CA

1995 – present

Business Owner/Financial and Accounting Systems Consultant

- Troubleshoot failed system processes in high-stress environment
- Manage client needs during company crisis events such as system crashes
- Collaborate with clients to assess their needs and system recommendations
- Perform system audits, diagnostics & analysis of business processes
- Noted for combined expertise in Crisis Management and Information Systems

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- American Nurses Association 2012
- Association of California Nurse Leaders 2012

Lan Merritt

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SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Work effectively as part of an inter-professional team
- Nine+ years of experience using critical thinking to troubleshoot customer complaints
- Earned award for excellent customer service 3 years in a row

EDUCATION

B.S. Nursing, Samuel Merritt University, San Mateo, CA, *summa cum laude* December 2014

Clinical Experience

- Preceptorship, PICU, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital, San Francisco, CA, 120 hrs.
- Community Health, Children and Family Services (CPS), County of San Mateo, CA, 135 hrs.
- Mental Health, Veterans Affairs, Palo Alto, CA, 135 hrs.
- Critical Care, Kaiser Permanente, Fremont, CA, 135 hrs.
- Pediatrics, UCSF, San Francisco, CA, 135 hrs.
- Maternity, Mills Peninsula, Burlingame, CA, 135 hrs.
- Medical Surgical, Kaiser Permanente, Hayward, CA, 135 hrs.

B.A. Biology, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA, Gamma Sigma Alpha honor society May 2001

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Registered Nurse #95057387
- Basic Life Support for the healthcare provider
- Pediatric Advanced Life Support
- Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support
- Mandated Reporter Training
- Safety Management and Response Techniques
- Mental Health First Aid
- Medical Spanish Level III

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Society of Pediatric Nurses
- American Association of Critical-Care Nurses

VOLUNTEER AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Camp Counselor, DYF, Camp Jones Gulch, La Honda, CA 2014
Teacher, Citizen Schools, Ronald McNair Academy, East Palo Alto, CA 2013
Science Fair Judge, Sciencepalooza/Synopsis Championship, Santa Clara County, CA 2010 – 2015
Wish Grantor, Make-A-Wish, Greater Bay Area, CA 2005-07; 2010-13
Community Development Volunteer, Peace Corps, Samoa 2002 – 2003
Project Director, Pediatric Play Therapy, Occidental College 2000 – 2001

WORK EXPERIENCE

Technical Service Representative, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Fremont, CA 2008 – Present
Agent, Tenant Finders, Lafayette, CA 2007 – 2008
Technical Service Representative, Abaxis, Union City, CA 2004 – 2007

RESEARCH

Fellow, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA 1999

- Presented RNA transport in human myotonic dystrophy fibroblasts at NSF conference, fall 1999

Cover Letters

A cover letters are key elements in any application. It is an opportunity for the employer to get to know you; what your interest in the organization is and how you will contribute to the team. Therefore, a stand out cover letter will answer two questions.

1. Why do you want to work there?
2. Why should they hire you?

To answer each of these questions make sure you are reviewing the employer’s mission, vision and values. Think of the employer’s mission as your mission and the organization’s values as what they are looking for in an employee.

Don’t forget that a cover letter is a short essay. It requires an introduction paragraph with a thesis statement, one or two body paragraphs supporting your thesis, and a conclusion. Think of your introduction as the, “Why do I want to work there?” section and the thesis, “You should hire me because.” Then, the body paragraphs will highlight experiences and skills that support your thesis. Finally, your conclusion can be any standard cover letter closing.

To help you put these ideas together review this sample cover letter below.

COPY THE HEADER FROM YOUR RESUME AND INCLUDE HERE

Organization Name
Address
Address 2nd Line

Date

Dear [If possible include the hiring manager’s name],

Stanford Hospital’s values are in line with the kind of health care provider that I want to be— one who promotes patient self-determination and who seeks to collaborate across specialties in order to improve health outcomes. For example, their commitment to providing high-quality medical interpreter services in order to bridge gaps between healthcare providers and the families they serve is inspiring. The Start Strong series and other informational courses for patients shows a prioritization of patient education and autonomy. From my résumé, you will see that I have significant experience working in positions that require excellent communication, culturally sensitive care, and advocacy.

As a former mental health counselor and a person with a commitment to social justice nursing, I believe that I will be an asset and a leader at Stanford. I have experience working on interdisciplinary teams to achieve the best care outcomes possible for clients. In addition, I have significant experience working with escalated clients and communicating in a therapeutic manner to provide verbal de-escalation. My experience working with vulnerable populations both in the United States and in El Salvador has taught me to establish trust quickly with diverse clients through open communication, engaged listening, and a commitment to partnership. Finally, my background in grassroots organizing and national service has taught me to advocate for social change in order to eliminate social, economic and health disparities.

I would be thrilled to have the opportunity to interview and learn more about the New Graduate Residency Program at LPCH. I am happy to provide any other information that you may need. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Pat Student

Interviewing Tips for Nurses

Nursing Interview Questions & Answers

Source: <http://www.best-job-interview.com/nurse-interview-questions.html>

Nursing interview questions will include a number of behavioral questions that explore the key competencies for the nursing job you are interviewing for.

Behavioral nursing interview questions require specific examples from your nursing work experience. The interviewer is looking for evidence that you have the competencies required for this nursing job.

Describe a situation in which you had to handle a difficult and demanding patient

- This is used to assess your interpersonal skills and ability to resolve conflict. Possible examples include a patient who is uncooperative with treatment or who resists a prescribed care regime. Highlight your communication skills. Good nurses have excellent communication skills that include both verbal persuasiveness and strong listening skills. They are able to communicate with patients and families to understand their needs, explain treatments and influence their attitudes while displaying empathy.

Describe a decision you had to make quickly regarding a patient?

- This is looking at your judgment. Take the interviewer through the process you used to evaluate the situation and the criteria you used to make your decision. Show how you are able to rapidly assess the situation and then commit to the most appropriate action.

Tell us about a time where you disagreed with a colleague over the management of a patient?

- Are you able to work as part of a team? Do you display sufficient maturity in dealing with health care colleagues? What resources did you use to diffuse the situation- listening to your colleague's reasons, gathering information to make sure you had sufficient understanding of the situation? Focus on what you learned from the experience as a nursing professional.

Tell me about a challenging problem you faced in your previous job. How did you deal with it?

- This question is designed to explore your ability to analyze and manage problems. Be specific in detailing how you gathered the necessary information to clearly evaluate the situation before coming up with a workable solution. Highlight your critical thinking ability and how you are able to apply previous nursing experiences and knowledge to deal with a difficult situation. Explain what you learned from the challenging experience.

Nursing work often involves a number of daily frustrations. Tell me about some of the frustrations you have dealt with recently.

- Dealing with daily frustrations is part of most jobs. Your examples should highlight your ability to demonstrate perseverance, reasonableness and common-sense in the face of common frustrations. Prove you are resilient and able to deal with daily frustrations.

How do you manage stressful situations? Give me an example.

- Focus on how you are able to maintain emotional stability in the face of traumatic and stressful situations. What resources do you use to do this? Examples include physical fitness, exercise and relaxation techniques.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SAMPLES

Highlighted questions = most commonly asked questions

General Questions

General questions are the, "getting to know you and why do you want to work here?" questions.

1. Tell me about yourself and why you want to work at _____?
2. Walk me through your resume (Tell me about yourself).
3. Why do you want to be a nurse?
4. Why are you changing careers to nursing?
5. Why/ how did you get into your previous career or job?
6. From your resume, it looks like you are more suited for research – why not research?
7. Why do you want to be a pediatric nurse?
8. Why do you want to work at this hospital?
9. How and why did you select our hospital to interview with?
10. What department do you want to work in?
11. What area of nursing are you interested in specializing and why?
12. Why do you want to work on this unit?
13. What makes you a unique fit for this program/hospital?
14. How could you contribute to this hospital?
15. What sets you apart from other candidates?
16. What qualities could you bring to the unit?
17. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
18. Where do you see yourself in 5-years?
19. What is the preparation and experience you have obtained in an Accelerated BSN program?
20. What have you done to prepare yourself for nursing?
21. What have you been doing since graduation?
22. What is the proudest achievement in your life?
23. Give an example from your nursing education that profoundly affected you or changed your attitude toward nursing.
24. What was your favorite thing about your nursing program?
25. If someone were to look at your Facebook page, what would they think about you?
26. If we interviewed people who have been your patient before in the hospital, what would they say about you?
27. If I were to talk to your peers, what would they say about you?
28. If I called your previous place of employment what would I say about you?
29. What type of person do you find difficult to get along with?
30. Describe what kind of leader you are.
31. Will you be willing to relocate? How will you handle yourself and stress from work? Will you have support system here in LA/family/friends?
32. What do you like to do in your free time?
33. What is your personal philosophy of nursing?
34. Based on your personal experience, how could the health care industry improve?
35. How will you apply the nursing process in your job?
36. Tell me about the 'nurse practice act'?
37. Tell me what you think a circulating/scrub nurse does?
38. What does customer service mean to you?
39. What does a teaching hospital mean to you?
40. Mistakes happen. What do you do when you make a mistake?

Behavioral Questions

Interviewers ask behavioral questions in order to get evidence on how you critically think, communicate, work in a team, lead, prioritize, manage your time, deal with conflict etc.

Always answer these questions in a Situation, Action, Result (SAR) format

1. Give me an example of your most complex pt. & how you provided care for them?
2. Tell us about the most complex problem you encountered while caring for a patient. Describe the situation, your actions to resolve the problem, and the outcome.
3. Describe a challenging patient situation. Walk me through your thought process and how you would change something about that situation reflecting on it now?
4. Tell us about a time you had to choose between conflicting priorities.
5. Tell me about a time where things changed quickly. How did you react?
6. Describe a time when you had to prioritize a patient's care and the outcome.
7. Tell me about a time where you had to change your nursing action. What were you doing and how did you change to make it work?
8. Talk about a time that you made a decision that changed a patient outcome?
9. Tell us about a time you had to make a decision under pressure?
10. Describe a time when you were insufficiently staffed & what you did about it?
11. Tell me about a time you intervened early to prevent future complications.
12. Describe a time when you found a small problem before it became something bigger.
13. Give us an example of a time when you noticed a patient's health becoming critical and what you did?
14. Give me an example when you administered compassionate care.
15. Describe a time when you were a patient advocate, what did you do and what was the result?
16. Tell me about a time you delegated a task. What was the task, how did you do it, and what was the outcome?
17. Tell us about a time you had to perform a new procedure that you weren't comfortable with and what did you do?
18. Describe an example of a pt. with whom you had differing points of view & what you did about it?
19. Describe an example of when you questioned a senior nurse or MD, and the outcome.
20. How would you handle a conflict with a physician, esp. if you disagreed with a medication order?
21. Tell me about a time when you had conflict in the clinical setting? How did you handle it?
22. Have you ever been asked to do something you didn't think was right? If so, describe the situation and how you handled it.
23. Working with people from diverse backgrounds can be challenging. Tell us about a time when you faced a significant challenge working with people with different backgrounds or cultures. What did you do to meet their needs?
24. Tell me about a time you had a miscommunication with a peer/coworker – how was it handled?
25. Can you describe a situation in which you had difficulty getting along with someone at work or school? How did you handle it?
26. Describe the type of person you would NOT want to be on a team with?
27. Who was the worst co-worker ever and how did you deal with it?
28. Explain a time when you were working with a team and job duties got redistributed.
29. Tell me about a time when you had to convince people to follow you but they didn't want to. What was the issue, and how did you convince them to go along with it?
30. How would you deal with low morale on your unit?

31. Describe a team that you were on that didn't work well. What was the problem was and what you did about it?
32. Describe a team that you were on that was effective.
33. Give me an example of when you were part of a well-functioning team, and what was your role or contribution to this high functioning team?
34. What has been an example from your clinical experience where you led and interdisciplinary team?
35. After a long day when you're tired, pt. care can suffer. Explain a time when this happened and what did you do about it?
36. Tell me about a time where you were overwhelmed. How did you handle it?
37. Describe a time when you were stressed/ frustrated?
38. Tell us about a time you weren't as effective as you wanted to be?
39. What have you learned about keeping patients satisfied? Give me a specific example that illustrates how you have used this as a student nurse.
40. Share an example when you went above and beyond your call of duty?
41. Tell me about a time you made a mistake?

Scenario Questions:

Scenario questions are most often asked on a unit interview and the questions usually relate to the conditions/diseases present in the unit. The following are examples. To practice, answer NCLEX that related to what you would see on the unit and practice out loud with a friend.

1. Given a pt description including floor (tele), age (89), condition (pneumonia), meds (IV antibiotics running), VS (HR=85, RR=20, temp=101.4, BP= 189/90, O2sat=89%), other details (decreased bilateral breath sounds, very little family presence throughout hospital stay but did call for updates on pt, pt chooses to stay in bed most of the time)
 - What are you concerned about with this pt? What are the risks for this pt? What are your goals for this pt? What nursing interventions would you include in the plan of care for this pt?
 - In prioritizing care what will be the order in which I see these pts at the start of my shift? What interventions will I include when I go into each pts room?
2. How do you tell if an infant is twitching or if they are seizing?
3. A woman was arrested for public drunkenness. She has a history of crack and meth abuse. She says she has been feeling tired recently and that she has been peeing frequently and she has back pain. What other questions would you ask her? What do you think is wrong with her?
4. The guard calls you and tells you he saw an inmate seizing on the floor of his cell for 20 minutes. He says that the inmate was having suicidal thoughts recently. The patient was seen by the hospital doctor and was prescribed wellbutrin recently. What are your first actions as the nurse on duty? What do you think is wrong with this patient?
5. A young woman's father has recently died of renal failure that runs in her family. She seems chipper and in a good mood. She says she want to be a famous model. She says she likes to run and eat healthy. She has brittle hair and nails and sallow skin? What do you think is going on with her?