



RESUMES, REFERENCES, & COVER LETTERS

A STARTER GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING
YOUR JOB SEARCH DOCUMENTS

CAREER
CENTER



NEBRASKA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

Student Center, Lower Level | 402.465.2224 | career@nebrwesleyan.edu | career.nebrwesleyan.edu

Crafting Your Resume

An essential marketing tool, your resume provides a summary of your education, experiences, achievements, and leadership. A well-written resume should be specific and focused, highlighting experiences relevant to the job, internship, or program for which you are applying. Resumes often serve as the reader's first impression of you as an applicant. This document should generate interest in you, ideally enough interest to result in an offer for an interview.

There is no one "ideal" way to construct your resume in every situation. You have choices when it comes to how you market yourself and present your information. Only you can write your resume, and, in the end, you must be content with the final product. We encourage you to consider these general guidelines, but please tailor them to your needs and create a resume that represents you in the best possible way.

STEP 1 Brainstorm

Before targeting your resume to your purpose, it is helpful to brainstorm. Start broad by writing down your most significant experiences and accomplishments. It may help to use the following categories to generate ideas and organize your information:

- Education (colleges, relevant coursework, certifications, special training)
- Experience (paid, volunteer, internships, military)
- Activities (student organizations, professional associations, sororities, or fraternities)
- Honors (scholarships, academic achievements, special awards, and recognition)
- Hard, measurable skills (software proficiency, foreign languages, laboratory skills)

Periodically, you will want to revisit and update your employment history/experience section. This information will be invaluable throughout your working years as you will want to include relevant experiences from your past when applying for new opportunities.

STEP 2 Format It (No Template)

When it comes to resume design, there is no magic format that works best for everyone. Despite differing preferences, it is up to you to come up with a format that best highlights your qualifications in an easy-to-read, organized document.

Because resumes must be customized to you, your needs, and your experiences, it is difficult to take an already created resume template and make it your own. Employers that have online applications often use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to filter through resumes to ensure applicants are a good fit for the job. ATS's cannot always read the formatting found on templates, and so you run the risk of the ATS not pushing you forward in the hiring process if it cannot read your resume. Also, realize that employers typically know when you've used a template, and this may cause them to question your ability to format and create your own documents. For these reasons, resume templates are strongly discouraged.

Employers receive hundreds of applications and spend, on average, 15 seconds initially skimming a resume. To pass this initial scan and get the reader to take a closer look, keep these guidelines in mind:

- When ordering resume sections, prioritize according to the needs of the employer, putting the most important information toward the top.
- Choose headings that allow you to effectively communicate your unique qualifications for the position.
- Use just one font style throughout the resume; avoid script fonts. Some studies show that sans serif fonts like Arial and Calibri are more easily read by neurodivergent individuals. Times New Roman, while a serif font, is still widely used and accepted by many industries.
- Do not use graphics, shadowing, clip art, or distracting bullets.
- Make your resume easy to skim with bullets, short declarative phrases, an easy-to-read font (10-12 pt), no abbreviations.
- Be consistent with bold, italics, all caps and/or spacing.
- Begin phrases with action verbs.
- Avoid generalities and focus on specifics about experience, projects, products, etc.
- The length of a resume varies according to field of interest, geographic location, and level of experience. Generally, an undergraduate with little or no professional experience will have a one-page resume. Experienced workers and some graduate students, along with students in certain disciplines, may have two pages. Visit the Career Center for help determining the appropriate length for your experience and desired career field.
- Quantify experience when possible (Received customer service ratings of 9.8/10, Worked with a budget of \$20,000, etc.)

STEP 3 Form an Initial Draft

NAME & CONTACT INFORMATION (Required)

- Your name should stand out from the rest of your text; consider making it a few points larger (16-18pt) and **bold**.
- It is acceptable to write your preferred name on your resume since it is not a legal document. Some individuals do this by writing their first initial followed by their preferred name (e.g., J. Lee Thomas), and others by writing their preferred name in quotes (e.g., Jordan “Lee” Thomas). On all legal documents, such as those used for background checks, you should write your legal name.
- At minimum, your contact information should include your phone number and e-mail.
- List the phone number where you can most easily be reached and ensure that your voicemail is set up with your name and an appropriate message.
- List only the email address you will use to correspond with the employer and ensure your email address name is appropriate for the job market.
- Including your full street address is optional. If desired, you could include just your city and state. If you plan to post your resume online (e.g., LinkedIn), you may want to omit your full street address for privacy.
- You may include your LinkedIn profile or a personal website showcasing your work if it is complete and professional.

Molly Traut

712-XXX-XXX | email@gmail.com

S. Colleen Davidson

Lincoln, NE
(402) XXX-XXXX
email@nebrwesleyan.edu
linkedin.com/in/colleen-davidson

OBJECTIVE OR SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS (Optional)

An objective is a clear, concise statement that specifies the goal or focus of your resume. While an objective is not commonly included as part of your resume, having a goal for your resume is essential. If you decide to include an objective statement, it should answer the question, “What do I want to do?”. Is the purpose of your resume for acceptance into a graduate program, a part-time job, an internship, a scholarship, or a professional position after graduation?

To be effective, objective statements must be specific and customized. Know that objective statements can work against you if they do not match the position or program for which you are applying.

OBJECTIVE

To apply my knowledge and passion for economics towards a summer internship with Nebraska Appleseed.

OBJECTIVE

Acceptance into a biomedical engineering doctoral program to pursue research in musculoskeletal tissue repair and regeneration.

When attending a career fair, you may consider adding an objective statement on your resume to help remind specific employers that you met about your interest in obtaining a job or internship in their industry or at their organization. If you plan to speak to employers from a variety of industries or if you do not know which employers you may interact with at a career fair, it is best not to have an objective statement.

If you have substantial relevant and professional work experience, you may consider including a “Summary of Qualifications”. This section should read like a personal tagline summarizing your accomplishments relevant to the qualifications of the job for which you are applying. Think of the top three or four personal qualities that highlight you as a candidate and differentiate you from other candidates in the pool.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Personable and motivated entry-level marketing professional with experience in both nonprofit and for-profit environments. Skilled in marketing plan design and implementation. Efficient presentation and communication skills acquired through student leadership positions.

Whether writing an objective statement or a summary of qualifications, write in the third person, avoiding “I” or “me” throughout.

EDUCATION (Required)

This section can include your credit-based higher education degrees and certificates, as well as noncredit learning. Your information should include:

- Institution name, city, and state
- Degree (e.g., Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts)
- Major(s)
- Minors, concentrations, or areas of emphasis
- Month and year of graduation
- GPA (optional, often included if above 3.0)

EDUCATION Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU) Bachelor of Science, Economics Minor: International Studies	Lincoln, NE May 20XX
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EDUCATION Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln NE Master of Business Administration May 20XX GPA: 3.5/4.0
Bachelor of Science, Business Administration May 20XX GPA: 3.0/4.0 Self-financed 100% of tuition through academic scholarships and part-time employment on campus

Your most recent degree should be listed first. Typically, you will only list colleges or universities where you are currently enrolled or have earned a degree. Write out the full name of the institution in the education section. If you wish to use the school's acronym in other sections on your resume, place it in parentheses after the full name – Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU).

Once you are in college, high school is not included on a resume unless you have a good reason you want an employer to know where you attended high school.

If applicable, it can be a good idea to include a statement about your contribution toward financing your education (e.g., "Financed 75% of college education through scholarships and employment.") Study abroad programs or academic honors and achievements may also be included in this section. You might also list relevant coursework in the education section.

EXPERIENCE (Required)

This part of your resume may include several sections. Experience does not always have to be paid work. Marketable skills are gained through community service, student organizations, athletics, etc. Some sample categories for your resume could include Student Teaching, Research Experience, Coaching Experience, Relevant Experience, Work Experience, Additional Experience, Leadership & Involvement, and Volunteer Experience, just to name a few.

For each experience, you should include four pieces of information: name of the organization, your title, dates of employment/involvement (months and years), and the location (city, state) of the organization (not necessarily in this order). You should also have bulleted statements underneath your experiences. These bulleted statements should not only describe what you did at the organization, but should stress your accomplishments, higher-level responsibilities, and/or skills gained. Start each bulleted statement (not full sentences) with an action verb (see page 7 for a list of action verbs). Here are some additional tips:

- Within each category, list experiences in reverse chronological order with your most recent experience first.
- Use present tense verbs when describing current positions and past tense when describing past experiences.
- Avoid pronouns (I, he, she, my, me), and, unless necessary, small articles such as "a", "an", "the".
- Quantify information when possible to show scope of responsibility or achievement. For example, "Trained six new student workers", or "Increased sales by 25% over a three-month period".
- Highlight transferable skills. Consider the types of tasks you performed which will be needed in your future professional positions. For example, "Interviewed, hired, and trained new team members" or "Led closing of store by assigning roles at the appropriate time, balancing cash registers, securing all cash, and setting the alarm."
- Target your resume by finding keywords from the job description and incorporating those words into your work experience.

Novartis <i>Human Resources Intern</i> • Compile new hire packets and retiree booklets • Organize and verify Drug Enforcement Administration employee files, ensuring compliance with federal regulations • Complete administrative tasks including filing, copying and data entry of sensitive information • Create binder tracking system for I-9 verification forms • Ensure personnel and medical files contain correct documentation per DEA and FDA guidelines	Lincoln, NE August 20XX – Present
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Max Tan, Tanning Salon <i>Senior Sales Associate</i> • Consistently achieve 7-10% per tanner retail sales goal each month, netting approximately \$5 per customer (average net per customer is approximately \$2)	Lincoln, NE January 20XX - Present
Team Leader • Developed and implemented store-specific marketing initiatives • Interviewed candidates and made hiring decision based on needs • Coordinated new hire training process and schedule	June 20XX - August 20XX

It is important to know that even if you do not have direct experience with the tasks or type of work involved in a position, employers are looking for skills you have gained through former experiences that will transfer to their work environments. When incorporating transferable skills, look at the job description first, but also see the list below for ten common skills/competencies sought by employers. Choose a few and think through how you can demonstrate these skills within your resume.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Critical/Analytical Thinking
 Embrace Diversity
 Self-Management
 Communication
 Leadership</p> | <p>Creativity
 Time Management
 Technology
 Integrity
 Teamwork</p> |
|---|--|

Marketing your experience involves using strong action verbs, using keywords from the job description, and incorporating transferable skills. Below are a few examples of how bulleted statements can be enhanced by incorporating these suggestions.

Poor: Responsible for publicity.

Better: Interacted successfully with public affairs representatives and local media.

Best: Interacted successfully with public affairs representatives and local media, increasing community awareness of agency by 25%.

Poor: Duties included handling customer complaints.

Better: Resolved service and billing problems.

Best: Resolved service and billing problems, consistently recognized for promptness and professionalism.

Poor: Responsibilities included following safety rules and ensuring other lifeguards knew policies.

Better: Carried out safety precautions and instructed staff in the proper use of equipment.

Best: Carried out safety precautions and instructed staff in the proper use of equipment, resulting in a 50% reduction of injury accidents over the summer.

Poor: Worked with delinquent youth in after-school athletic program.

Better: Explained team strategies and instructed youth on how to execute strategies.

Best: Explained team strategies and instructed youth on how to execute strategies, developing enthusiasm among team members which resulted in winning city competition.

HONORS/ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP (Optional)

Highlight what is most pertinent to your career goal and only include activities and honors you feel comfortable discussing. If you include information with a strong religious or political affiliation, for example, be mindful that some employers may have a bias reaction. If more detail is needed, use the guidelines and format you used for your “Experience” section(s). Include descriptions of the leadership roles you performed in these organizations.

LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT	
Delta Zeta, Recruitment Chair	Month 20XX-Present
<i>- Increased chapter recruitment by 50 percent for two consecutive academic years</i>	
Blue Key Academic Honorary	Month 20XX-Present
Health & Human Performance (HHP) Club	Month 20XX-Present
<i>- Served on a team of five to recruit NWU alumni who are currently enrolled in pre-health professional programs to serve as panelists for a discussion on their experiences in pursuing their chosen careers.</i>	
Red Cross Blood Drive, Volunteer	Month 20XX-Month 20XX

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
<p>Nebraska Wesleyan University (Lincoln, NE) Women’s Basketball Team, August 20XX - May 20XX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved goal of being a first-year starter and consecutive letter winner • Honed time management skills, leadership ability, teamwork, and resiliency
<p>Academic Research, October 20XX - April 20XX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnered with faculty for research project focusing on the negative effects of several blood pressure medications
<p>Clinic With a Heart (Lincoln, NE) Volunteer, August 20XX - May 20XX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learned the new electronic health record system and input statistical data about the demographic backgrounds of patients

SKILLS (Optional)

This section highlights measurable skills and abilities, such as technical skills, laboratory skills, and modern language proficiency or fluency. Items in this section should relate to the positions for which you are applying. The placement of this section on your resume may vary depending on the relevancy to the employer. Avoid including interpersonal, non-measurable skills in this section (i.e., “time management”, “good communication skills”). These are good skills to be thinking about, but when they are simply listed in your skills section, the employer has no context as to where you gained this skill or how you use it in a professional environment. Instead, these skills should be incorporated into the bulleted statements in your “Experience” section(s).

SKILLS
Language: French: intermediate (speaking, reading), basic (writing); German: fluent (speaking, reading, writing).
Computer: Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite, Camtasia, HTML, SPSS, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Photoshop, and WordPress.

REFERENCES (Required, but separate from the resume)

The statement “References Available Upon Request” is not needed, as this is given in the job search process. Reference names and information are generally listed on a separate page (see References section in this handbook on page 16). Usually, references are provided to an employer once they are requested or at an interview.

STEP 4 Proofread and Edit

Make a solid impression by eliminating spelling errors, poor grammar, poor organization, wordiness, vagueness, etc. Any of these mistakes may give the impression that you are careless, sloppy, or unprofessional. Have several trusted people critique your resume.

- Contact the Career Center to have a career counselor critique your resume.
- Ask your references to provide feedback.
- Ask a family member, friend, or roommate to look over your resume.

STEP 5 Prepare Different Versions

Formatted Hard Copy: highly designed with bullets, underlining, italics, borders, etc. For the finished paper resume, use good quality paper (at least 20% cotton bond): white, ivory, or a very pale gray. Avoid patterns that would give a “dirty” appearance when copied and ensure that you do not leave any stains or ink smudges on the paper. The Career Center provides resume paper upon request.

Formatted Electronic Version: looks the same as your paper version when emailed or pasted into a company resume database. When uploading or emailing, always send as a PDF so formatting does not change. Always open the PDF on your own device before uploading or emailing to ensure the formatting looks good.

Plain Text Version: stylized formatting is removed (i.e., bullets, bolding, italics, etc.) to be cut and pasted into online applications. Lines can be indented using the spacebar. To show section headers, use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS and think about rebuilding lists using a hyphen (-) or asterisk (*) at the beginning of each line instead of bullets or other special characters. If horizontal lines are desired, create them by using a series of dashes. Email your resume to yourself to see how it looks.

For advice on submitting your application materials, see page 23.

Special Considerations

Academic Resumes, or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

In the United States, a CV is a comprehensive document which summarizes one's educational and academic background. Rather than a specific focus on work history, CV categories highlight teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, professional affiliations, grants received, academic honors, and scholarly/professional memberships. CVs typically include more information, often extending to two or more pages. A CV should only be used if specifically requested. This might occur in the following instances:

- Applications for admission to graduate or professional programs
- Proposals for fellowships or grants
- Applications for positions in academia for teaching, research, or administration

Know that an international CV is NOT the same as a US CV. See page 12 for an example of a US CV.

Education Resumes

If you are aspiring towards a position as a K-12 educator, incorporate a "Teaching Experience" category for your student teaching and education practicums. Instead of listing out every practicum, consider combining to summarize your observations. You may also have a "certifications" section and possibly a "professional development" section if there are trainings that you'd like to feature. Even as a recent graduate, expect your resume to span 1-2 pages. When writing bulleted statements, highlight your achievements instead of routine responsibilities. Use the list below to consider and expand upon your own classroom successes:

- Classroom management
- Curriculum development
- Cross-curriculum experience
- Cooperative learning
- Diverse age groups, at-risk youth, ELL students
- Unique teaching strategies/styles/methods
- Standardized testing
- Use of assessment tools
- Participation in meetings
- Collaboration with other staff
- Parental involvement
- Organizing field trips/special projects
- Participation in the community
- Participation in after-school activities
- Use of technology
- Innovative techniques for engagement
- Accommodations
- Grading
- IEP planning

See page 13 for an example.

Nursing Resumes

Nursing students are required to attain hands-on clinical experience. Help employers see the depth and breadth of your experiences by including (when applicable) preceptorships, relevant employment, clinical rotations, shadowing, and health care volunteer work. Clinical experience often varies greatly, so provide the employer with a clear understanding of what you know by using specific medical terminology for the instruments, tests, or procedures you witnessed, performed, or assisted with. Your clinical experience should include your unit floor, organization, city and state, and dates. Remember all new BSN graduates have completed clinical rotations: find a way to make your rotational experience stand out. As mentioned before, don't just list job responsibilities in your bullet points. Show the results of your work and how it helped the organization.

If you have a long list of Clinical Rotations, you may need to be selective ("Select Clinical Rotations") and choose only relevant rotations per the position you are applying for.

See page 14 for an example.

Resumes for Federal Government Agencies

The Federal Government has a standard job application in which your resume serves as your application. The hiring agency uses the information in your resume to verify if you have the required qualifications stated in the job announcement. For this reason, you'll need to follow a very specific format which requires unique information. To ensure all these details are in place, it is suggested to use the Resume Builder on USAJOBS. The Resume Builder will guide you through the resume-writing process to ensure you do not leave out anything important.

List of Action Verbs for Resumes

MANAGEMENT/ LEADERSHIP SKILLS

administered
analyzed
appointed
approved
assigned
attained
authorized
chaired
considered
consolidated
contracted
controlled
converted
coordinated
decided
delegated
developed
directed
eliminated
emphasized
enforced
enhanced
established
executed
generated
handled
headed
hosted
improved
incorporated
increased
initiated
inspected
instituted
managed
merged
motivated
organized
originated
overhauled
oversaw
planned
presided
prioritized
produced
recommended
reorganized
replaced
restored
reviewed
scheduled
streamlined
strengthened
supervised
terminated

COMMUNICATION/ PEOPLE SKILLS

addressed
advertised
arbitrated

arranged
articulated
authored
clarified
collaborated
communicated
composed
condensed
conferred
consulted
contacted
conveyed
convinced
corresponded
debated
defined
described
developed
directed
discussed
drafted
edited
elicited
enlisted
explained
expressed
formulated
furnished
incorporated
influenced
interacted
interpreted
interviewed
involved
judged
lectured
listened
marketed
mediated
moderated
negotiated
observed
outlined
participated
persuaded
presented
promoted
proposed
publicized
reconciled
recruited
referred
reinforced
reported
resolved
responded
solicited
specified
suggested
summarized
synthesized
translated

RESEARCH SKILLS

analyzed
clarified
collected
compared
conducted
critiqued
detected
determined
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
experimented
explored
extracted
formulated
gathered
identified
inspected
interpreted
interviewed
invented
investigated
located
measured
organized
researched
searched
solved
summarized
surveyed
systematized
tested

TECHNICAL SKILLS

adapted
assembled
calculated
computed
conserved
constructed
converted
debugged
designed
determined
developed
engineered
installed
maintained
operated
overhauled
programmed
regulated
remodeled
repaired
replaced
restored
solved
specialized
standardized
studied
upgraded
utilized

TEACHING SKILLS

adapted
advised
clarified
coached
communicated
conducted
coordinated
critiqued
developed
enabled
encouraged
evaluated
explained
facilitated
focused
guided
individualized
informed
instilled
instructed
motivated
persuaded
simulated
stimulated
taught
tested
trained
transmitted
tutored

FINANCIAL/ DATA SKILLS

administered
adjusted
allocated
analyzed
appraised
assessed
audited
balanced
calculated
computed
conserved
corrected
determined
developed
estimated
forecasted
managed
marketed
measured
planned
programmed
projected
reconciled
reduced
researched
retrieved

CREATIVE SKILLS

acted
adapted

began
combined
conceptualized
condensed
created
customized
designed
developed
directed
displayed
entertained
established
fashioned
formulated
founded
illustrated
initiated
instituted
integrated
introduced
invented
modeled
modified
originated
performed
photographed
planned
revised
revitalized
shaped
solved

HELPING SKILLS

adapted
advocated
aided
answered
arranged
assessed
assisted
cared for
clarified
coached
collaborated
contributed
cooperated
counseled
demonstrated
diagnosed
educated
encouraged
ensured
expedited
facilitated
familiarize
furthered
guided
insured
intervened
motivated
provided
referred
rehabilitated

presented
resolved
simplified
supplied
supported
volunteered

ORGANIZATION/ DETAIL SKILLS

approved
arranged
cataloged
categorized
charted
classified
coded
collected
compiled
distributed
executed
generated
implemented
incorporated
inspected
logged
maintained
monitored
obtained
operated
ordered
organized
prepared
processed
provided
purchased
recorded
registered
reserved
responded
reviewed
scheduled
submitted
standardized
systematized
updated
validated
verified

MORE VERBS FOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

achieved
completed
expanded
exceeded
improved
pioneered
reduced (losses)
resolved (issues)
restored
spearheaded
succeeded
surpassed
transformed

Maura Rippe

Omaha, NE
email@nebrwesleyan.edu
XXX-XXX-XXXX

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU) Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Arts: Psychology Expected: May 20XX

- Funded 70% of college tuition through academically awarded scholarships

Omaha Central High School Omaha, NE
GPA: 3.78/4.0 May 20XX

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Camp Fontanelle Fremont, NE
Camp Counselor June 20XX, June 20XX

- Managed cabin of eight campers aged 11 to 12
- Presented at orientation and trained new incoming counselors
- Led small group meetings on peer pressure and conflict resolution
- Created information pamphlets and bulletin boards for students

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Culvers Omaha, NE
Crew Member October 20XX-August 20XX

- Recognized for outstanding work ethic by receiving Employee of the Month three times
- Trained seven new employees on register and making all frozen desserts
- Operated and reconciled cash register daily
- Organized and maintained inventory of food and beverage items weekly

ACTIVITIES

- NWU Psychology Club August 20XX-Present
- Red Cross Blood Drive, Volunteer April 20XX
- Friendship Home, Volunteer October 20XX
- Omaha Central Homecoming Committee May 20XX-October 20XX

SKILLS

- Proficient in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint
- Familiar with Microsoft Outlook email system on both Mac and PC operation systems

Student Athlete Seeking Internship

Ty Holdson

Lincoln, NE 68504 | email@nebrwesleyan.edu | XXX-XXX-XXXX
www.linkedin.com/ty_holdson

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU)	Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Science: Business Administration	Anticipated: May 20XX
Minor: Finance	GPA: 3.6/4.0

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Business Communication	Principles of Management
Principles of Marketing	Accounting
Business & Economic Statistics	Personal Finance

WORK EXPERIENCE

Wells Fargo	Lincoln, NE
Teller	May 20XX – Current

- Maintain appropriate cash limits, cash checks, establish deposits, and issue money advances
- Cash and confirm deposits, process loan expenses and open new accounts
- Balance cash drawer and manage petty cash account
- Keep a record of excess or less cash at the end of the shift
- Hired as junior teller; promoted because of accuracy, pace, and skills

NWU Weary Center	Lincoln, NE
Open Recreation Staff	August 20XX – May 20XX

- Assisted individual students, faculty, and staff to create a safe workout environment
- Managed front desk check-in, greeting patrons and monitoring equipment check-out
- Oversaw cardio and weight rooms, recorded attendance, and supervised use of equipment
- Maintained a clean workout environment by routinely sanitizing machines and weights

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

NWU New Student Orientation	May 20XX – Current
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- Serve as an ambassador for first-year students by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Exemplify leadership and communication skills by facilitating activities for a group of 16 students
- Volunteered at Lend A Hand to Lincoln, assisting the Foster Care Closet organization

NWU Men's Track & Field Team	August 20XX – Current
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- Organize meetings to open and improve communication among team members
- Display strong time management skills by balancing full-time student workload and team responsibilities
- Provided leadership as a team captain for the 20XX outdoor season
- Received NCAA All-Conference Awards for outstanding performance (20XX, 20XX, 20XX)

JORDAN WALLACE

email@nebrwesleyan.edu | (XXX) XXX-XXXX | www.linkedin.com/in/jwallace

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU)

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Design and Technology
Minor in French Modern Language Literacy

Lincoln, NE

May 20XX

GPA: 3.97/4.0

- Honors: NWU Huge Society Scholar, Alpha Mu Gamma Modern Language Honor Society

CEA CAPA Paris Center

Study & Internship Abroad

Paris, France

Spring 20XX

- Completed coursework in 20th-century art history and architecture
- Conducted research for an independently produced documentary film and designed marketing materials for educational social media posts about historic women through an internship with Women of Paris

EXPERIENCE

NWU Cochrane-Woods Library

Exhibit Assistant

Lincoln, NE

February 20XX – Present

- Assist with curating, producing, and installing an exhibition of university materials for a grant-funded project
- Define the theme of the project, conduct archival research, and select materials for the exhibit

Wesleyan Theatre Company

Stage Manager

Lincoln, NE

August 20XX – Present

- Manage the scheduling and coordination of rehearsals, production meetings, and live shows
- Supervise timeline and schedules of seven individual technical departments to ensure deadlines are met
- Document and distribute staging and technical notes to technical departments
- Communicate daily with production team, cast, and crew (25-40 people) via email, Microsoft Teams, and phone

Mattel

Assistant Set Builder for American Girl Company

Middleton, WI

May 20XX – August 20XX

- Devised and implemented a new organizational system for existing set and property inventory
- Constructed sets and props at 18-inch doll scale to be used in photography and videography
- Assisted on active photography and videography sets with lighting and camera equipment

Parker Arts and Culture

Stagehand

Parker, CO

May 20XX – March 20XX

- Managed and communicated with guest artists under contract
- Built theatrical sets using power tools and lumber
- Provided audio and visual support for event rentals such as weddings and conferences

SKILLS

- French Language (Advanced)
- Proficiency in Google Suite Apps, Microsoft Teams, Microsoft 365, Canva

Student Seeking First Full-Time Position

Elise Ruppert

Lincoln, NE | (XXX) XXX-XXXX | email@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU): Lincoln, NE

Bachelor of Arts: English, Communication Studies

Anticipated: May 20XX

Minor: Political Science

GPA: 3.97/4.0

- Honors: Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society, Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honor Society

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Communication Intern – Solidago Conservancy: Lincoln, NE

July 20XX – Present

- Interview stakeholders to illustrate the interconnected relationships of landowners and conservationists in local land projects to relate to audience members and gain traction in the Midwest
- Create engaging Instagram and Facebook reels and LinkedIn posts that feature local prairie, wetland, and wilderness sites to educate the public on Solidago's mission
- Broadcast the addition of a 310-acre parcel to the conservation efforts through a celebratory fence-cutting and networking event

Communication Intern – Humanities Nebraska: Lincoln, NE

May 20XX – September 20XX

- Arranged weekly e-blasts showcasing humanities events in the state of Nebraska
- Led marketing efforts for the annual Nebraska Chautauqua by formulating a social media plan, designing event posters, and communicating with event partners
- Invented and executed engagement activities for over 20 Nebraska Chautauqua youth attendees such as an educational coloring book

Digital Media, Marketing, & Podcast Intern – SEACHange, LTD: Lincoln, NE

November 20XX – May 20XX

- Developed and expanded company podcast to reach audiences across all seven continents
- Engaged professionally with potential partners through online interactions as well as in-person events
- Oversaw all social media handles and witnessed 50% increase in engagement from January 20XX to December 20XX on the company's LinkedIn account

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Writing Tutor – NWU Cooper Center: Lincoln, NE

March 20XX – Present

- Cover drop-in hours and offer appointment times for students to ask questions about essay components, citation styles, and other writing-related inquiries
- Tutor and review an average of three student essays weekly
- Build rapport with students to create an environment that encourages student-centered collaboration and optimizes learning

Intermediate Reading & Writing Teacher – Lincoln Literacy: Lincoln, NE

August 20XX – August 20XX

- Instructed and supported a small class of English Language Learners (ELL) once a week
- Adapted to students' weekly needs to address immediate challenges like health insurance benefits
- Formulated weekly lesson plans for a 90-minute class that built off skills learned in previous weeks

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Global Service Learning Club (GSL) – *Secretary*

September 20XX – Present

Flintlock Journal – *Public Relations Coordinator*

January 20XX – Present

SustainNWU (Environmental Sustainability Group)

September 20XX – Present

Student Affairs Senate (SAS) – *Academic Affairs Committee*

February 20XX – December 20XX

The Yip Student Newspaper – *Co-editor*

February 20XX – November 20XX

Student Seeking Graduate School

Alex Lawrence		(XXX) XXX-XXXX email@gmail.com
EDUCATION		
Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU)		Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Science: Sociology-Anthropology		May 20XX
Minor: Psychology		GPA: 3.83/4.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean's List, every semester 		
Victoria University of Wellington		Wellington, New Zealand
Completed coursework in social theory and global urbanism		Spring 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed acute cultural sensitivity while living among a variety of international students Traveled independently to Australia and throughout New Zealand 		
NWU RESEARCH & TEACHING EXPERIENCE		
Student Instructor – Qualified Research Methods Course		Spring 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted course professor to plan, develop, and execute class activities and materials Taught fifteen 50-minute lessons, coordinating materials with instructor during their absence Served as a resource for eleven students, answering questions in person and over email Worked with students in groups and on an individual basis throughout development of class projects 		
General Education Data Analyst – Academic Affairs Office		Fall 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked collaboratively with Associate Director for Institutional Research and Effectiveness Cleaned, organized, and analyzed student performance data using Excel and SPSS Created data summaries in report form and presented to Board of Governors 		
Student Anxiety Researcher – Sociology-Anthropology Department		Spring 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed IRB certification to administer study Consulted with department faculty to further conceptualize project design Conducted in-depth individualized interviews to collect qualitative data Executed open and focused coding to interpret data Presented findings which examined experiences of students who self-identified as suffering from anxiety 		
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS		
<i>The Making of US</i> , Nebraska Wesleyan Student Research Symposium		May 20XX
<i>Self in Everyday Life</i> , Midwest Sociological Association – Annual Meeting		March 20XX
ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT		
Alpha Kappa Delta, International Sociology Honor Society		December 20XX-May 20XX
Sociology/Anthropology Club		August 20XX-May 20XX
Psychology Club		August 20XX-May 20XX
Student Affairs Senate		April 20XX-April 20XX

INTERNSHIPS	
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Washington, DC
Marketing and Communications Intern	Summer 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquired and executed hands-on fundraising strategies in a nonprofit setting Recruited 140 volunteers to assist staff in preparing materials for Annual Appeal Project Led implementation of the Domestic Violence Intake Center marketing promotion Established media and community network contacts within the DC area to raise awareness of cause Developed materials and presented to four area high schools on domestic violence 	
The Owens Companies	Lincoln, NE
Family Partner Intern	Summer 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sought reunification of families by helping parents achieve the goals set by the court and referral source Educated parents or caregivers about available community resources Documented services provided to the family and ensured the safety of the children 	
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE	
Lincoln Literacy	Lincoln, NE
ELL Tutor	September 20XX-Current
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice English writing, reading, and speaking to ensure students can communicate efficiently and effectively within the community Develop relationships with five students, offering consistency and encouragement Commit one hour per week to prepare personalized lesson plans 	
NWU Global Service Learning (GSL)	Lincoln, NE
Volunteer	August 20XX-May 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovate a community center with the people of Jayuya, Puerto Rico Collaborated with FoodNet Lincoln to provide service to those struggling with food insecurity Participated in three different highway roadside clean-ups Serve with the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona to distribute food to households across the Tucson area 	
NWU Prairie Wolves Welcome (PWW) Student Orientation Leader	August 20XX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led a group of thirty NWU first-year students through a week's worth of activities and presentations introducing them to campus Facilitated student connection through community-building games during down-time Participated in a week of training to ensure a successful orientation week Identified as a resource for students as they began their college career at NWU 	

Education Major Seeking First Full-Time Position

ANASTASIA SWARTZ

Lincoln, NE | XXX-XXX-XXXX | email@nebrwesleyan.edu

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU)

Bachelor of Arts, History-Social Science Education
Endorsement: Secondary Education

Lincoln, NE

Anticipated May 20XX
GPA: 3.75/4.0

University of Antwerp

Study Abroad
Completed coursework in: Social Justice, Education

Antwerp, Belgium

Spring 20XX

CERTIFICATIONS

- Nebraska Secondary Education Teaching Certificate 7-12 *Anticipated June 20XX*
- American Red Cross CPR/AED Certification *September 20XX-September 20XX*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Culler Middle School

Student Teacher, 8th Grade American History

Lincoln, NE

January 20XX-May 20XX

- Practiced direct instruction, cooperative learning strategies, and strategic learning in class sizes ranging from 17-31 students
- Collaborated closely with the Special Education department to adjust lessons and exams to meet the needs of students with IEPs
- Served as a Check In/Check Out Coach for students struggling academically and behaviorally
- Adapted and differentiated lessons, activities, and exams to meet the needs of gifted students
- Engaged in professional development seminars including "Professional Learning Communities" and "Classroom Instruction That Works"
- Communicated effectively with parents at conferences as well as throughout the semester through phone calls, emails, and letters sent home

Lincoln Public Schools (LPS)

Practicum Student

Lincoln, NE

January 20XX-December 20XX

- Observed, assisted, and taught in diverse classrooms for 100+ hours
- Planned, taught, and assessed lessons
- Learned classroom management strategies to prepare for student teaching

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Nebraska Vortex Softball Organization

Director of Player and Coach Development

Lincoln, NE

August 20XX-December 20XX

- Planned daily practice activities and drills for 17 players on technique, strategy, teamwork, and leadership development
- Managed games including calling signs and preparing lineups
- Increased team membership by 30% from year one to year three

Fremont Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Softball/Baseball/T-ball Coach

Fremont, NE

Summer 20XX, 20XX

- Designed and executed practice plans and coordinated weekly practices and games to accommodate the availability of players
- Communicated with parents on a regular basis at practices and games
- Created a safe, fun, and inclusive environment for all children

Guidance to Success Higher Learning Program

Leadership Team Tutor

Lincoln, NE

February 20XX-December 20XX

- Tutored children experiencing poverty weekly by encouraging future academic success goals
- Compiled lesson plans by collaborating with other tutors at weekly meetings
- Publicized the opportunities Guidance to Success provides youth by speaking on campus

NWU Residential Education

Peer Assistant

Lincoln, NE

August 20XX-December 20XX

- Served as a mentor and advisor for 50+ first-year students each year
- Counseled first-year students on personal, academic, and career concerns
- Created, planned, and implemented educational, social, and community programs
- Enforced and upheld University policies and procedures

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

NWU Willard Sorority

August 20XX-Present

- Held three executive offices: Vice President of Campus Relations (August 20XX-Present), Operations (August 20XX-May 20XX), and Member Development (August 20XX-May 20XX)
- Raised \$2,500 for national philanthropies by coordinating a team to execute four on-campus fundraisers during the 20XX-20XX school year

Nebraska State Education Association (NSEA) - Aspiring Educators

January 20XX-Present

SKILLS

- Fluent in French
- Advanced knowledge of: Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe InDesign, and Filemaker Pro

Nursing Major Seeking First Full-Time Position

R. Lanae Mobley

email@nebrwesleyan.edu | (XXX) XXX-XXXX

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University (Lincoln, NE)

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Expected: May 20XX

Minor in Spanish

GPA: 3.8/4.0

- Honors: Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society of Nursing

CERTIFICATIONS

Nurse's Assistant Certification (CNA): Southeast Community College (Lincoln, NE)

August 20XX – Present

Basic Life Support with AED: Southeast Community College (Lincoln, NE)

August 20XX – August 20XX

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Preceptorship

Immanuel Medical Center: Post-Intensive (PINS)/Telemetry Unit (Omaha, NE) February 20XX – Present

- Perform routine assessments every four hours with telemetry evaluation and monitoring
- Admit and discharge patients with follow-up appointments and medication reconciliation
- Observe and perform the following procedures: dialysis, plasmapheresis, insertion nasogastric (NC) tube, central line placement, PICC line placement, peripheral IV placement, pacemaker removal, and wound care
- Apply appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for MRSA and VRE patients
- Created an evidence-based practice recommendation regarding "Alarm Fatigue" hazards and presented this project with unit-specific suggestions to the Operations Director and nursing staff

Clinical Rotations

Lincoln Surgical Hospital: Multi-Client Med/Surgery and one OR day (Lincoln, NE) November 20XX

- Administered medications to three patients, participating in rounding and care meetings
- Acted as Charge Nurse with clinical group, tracking students' medication administration
- Observed removal of endometriosis during OR experience

CHI Health Saint Elizabeth: Burn Unit (Lincoln, NE)

October 20XX

- Created a team improvement project for patient charting for greater consistency
- Acquired skills to effectively change dressings and administer prescribed medications

Lincoln Psychiatric Group: Adult and Pediatrics, Psychiatric/Mental Health (Lincoln, NE)

April 20XX

- Assisted residents with mental self-strengthening activities, communicating improvements
- Observed adult and pediatric mental health issues; Schizophrenia, bipolar, and drug addictions

Bryan Medical Center East Campus: Labor & Delivery, High Risk OB, NICU (Lincoln, NE)

March 20XX

- Assisted with fetal monitoring, APGAR scores, hearing tests, Vitamin K shots, and gave the first bath to an infant
- Observed a vaginal, cesarean section for male twins, and four hours of monitoring in the NICU for three premature infants with decorated lung and heart maturation

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Eastmont Towers (Lincoln, NE)

Certified Nursing Assistant

September 20XX – Present

- Care for 25 residents by aiding with dressing, eating, oral care, bathing, and transportation
- Trained eight new nursing assistants to the facility

Bryan Health (Lincoln, NE)

Nutrition & Dining Services Host

October 20XX – August 202XX

- Organized and memorized information regarding patient preferences and dietary restrictions to accurately edit menus for patients
- Developed relationships with patients through utilizing the Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation, and Thank You (AIDET) technique
- Collaborated with nurses in understanding patients' dietary needs and informing nurses of changes in patient health or behavior

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Clinic with a Heart (Lincoln, NE)

August 20XX – Present

- Aid clinical directors with providing free healthcare services for uninsured and underinsured members of the community
- Assist Spanish-speaking patients with filling out paperwork and provide interpreting services

Bryan Health: Patient Support Services (Lincoln, NE)

December 20XX – January 20XX

- Provided patients with emotional support through their recovery process by visiting rooms and listening to their concerns
- Interacted with nursing staff to understand needs on the floor

UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

Willard Sorority

August 20XX – Present

Pre-Health Club

August 20XX – Present

Yoga Club

January 20XX – Present

Knitting Club

August 20XX – Present

Resume Checklist

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Name:** Make it the largest font on your resume (16-18 pt). Your contact information should be a smaller font (10-12 pt).
- Address (Optional):** Consider including your city and state. You may or may not choose to include your full mailing address.
- Phone number:** Be sure your voicemail message sounds professional and says your name. Ensure your voicemail is not full.
- Email address:** Use an appropriate and professional email address, ideally one that includes your name.
- (Optional): Include the **URL** of your LinkedIn profile or website if the content is complete and appropriate for employer.
- Remove blue hyperlinks on your email address and/or LinkedIn or professional website URL.

EDUCATION

- List degrees in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Spell out names of degrees and your institution (i.e., Bachelor of Science, not BS; Nebraska Wesleyan University, not NWU).
- Include the city and state after the institution name.
- List the month and year of your graduation. If still attending, say “Anticipated” before the month and year of graduation.
- Include GPA if above 3.0, or if specified in the job posting. Round to two decimal places and include the scale (i.e., 3.25/4.0).
- If you have completed a study abroad experience, include it in the education section.
- If you financed your education, indicate so (i.e., Maintained a 3.5 GPA while working part-time to pay 75% of tuition.)

EXPERIENCE

- List your experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Include full- and part-time jobs, paid/unpaid internships, and volunteer experiences, especially if they are related to your desired job.
- Use bold print and/or italics to highlight your job title and company/organization name. Be consistent with punctuation and formatting.
- Include city and state for employer location. Do not include the complete address.
- When listing dates include the month and year. It is not necessary to include exact dates.
- Do not include information such as salary, supervisor’s name, etc.
- Use strong action words to describe your work experience. Avoid passive phrases such as “responsible for” and “duties included”. Eliminate personal pronouns (I, me, we) and avoid articles where possible (a, an, the).
- Use appropriate verb tense. Use present tense action words to describe present employment experience and past tense action words to describe past employment experience.
- Include numbers to quantify experience where possible. (i.e., # of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, # of workshops taught, or projects coordinated, \$ amount saved by your ingenuity).
- Focus on your accomplishments/results. Indicate value to past employers instead of listing responsibilities (i.e., instead of “Responsibilities included implementation of policies and procedures, training of new employees, interfacing with subordinates and vendors,” try “Worked with staff and vendors to increase product turnover by 15% and sales by 23%. Trained 14 new employees, 5 of whom were rapidly promoted.”)

Additional Categories

To further customize your resume, you may also include some of the following categories if applicable:

- SKILLS (typically computer software, programming languages, or modern languages)
- HONORS/AWARDS
- CAMPUS/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE/COMMUNITY SERVICE
- CERTIFICATIONS/LICENSES
- RESEARCH
- PUBLICATIONS
- PRESENTATIONS

General Resume Guidelines

- A resume is a marketing tool, not a complete job history. Include only the items that will help you get the job you want. Leave off superfluous information. Try to target your resume to a specific position or industry.
- Your resume should be one to two *full* pages in length, but most industries prefer one full page.
- Your document should look balanced, pleasing to the eye, and be easy to read.
- Your resume format (bolding, italics, etc.) must be consistent throughout your document.
- The body text font size should be between 10pt and 12pt.
- Use consistent and proper punctuation.
- Do not include references or, “References Available Upon Request.” Your reference list should be a separate document.
- Run a spell check AND proofread carefully. Have at least two additional people review your resume.

References

Excellent references can win job offers. A less than enthusiastic reference can provide doubt, costing you the position. When providing references, always assume the people you select will be contacted, speaking on your behalf.

Identify as many references as possible, considering current and former supervisors, professors, advisors, volunteer coordinators, and co-workers who have first-hand knowledge of your work performance. Be sure to find references who know you well enough to speak to your abilities and who will be able to give a positive report. Roommates, friends, and family members are not considered professional references. Typically, you will need to list three to four individuals.

Call or meet individually with your top potential references. Begin by explaining that you are in a job search or applying to graduate/professional school. Then ask whether they would be willing to act as a positive reference for you. You might say something like:

“Dr. Jackson, I will be graduating in May and will be seeking a full-time position. I realize how important references can be, and I would like to know if you would be comfortable serving as a positive reference?”

Be prepared to provide a brief overview of your recent preparations and career plans. Do give them a copy of your current resume and, if applicable, the description of the job you are applying for.

References should not be included on your resume. Instead, make a separate reference page. Be sure to include your name and contact information at the top. When delivered with your resume and cover letter, the three documents should be complementary and professional in appearance. If printed, all three should be on the same high-quality bond paper.

Include each reference’s name, current title, organization with which they are currently affiliated, address of their organization, preferred phone number(s), and email address. In some cases, you may also want to note your relationship to the individual (e.g., former supervisor at Walgreens), particularly if your reference has moved to a new organization.

Provide your reference list to a potential employer only when requested. Be sure to keep your references updated and thank your references after your job search.

Malik Davis

Lincoln, NE 68521
(XXX) XXX-XXXX
email@nebrwesleyan.edu

REFERENCES

Reference #1 Name
Job Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State Zip code
Phone number, Ext: #
Email

Reference #2 Name
Job Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State Zip code
Phone number
Email

Reference #3 Name
Job Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State Zip code
Phone number
Email

Reference #4 Name
Job Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State Zip code
Phone number, Ext: #
Email

Cover Letters

A cover letter introduces your resume while demonstrating enthusiasm and knowledge for the position. The overall intention of the cover letter and resume is to motivate the reader to invite you for an interview. Unless you are handing over your resume in person (such as at a networking reception or career fair), a cover letter should ALWAYS accompany your resume. Without it, you are missing an opportunity to personally introduce yourself and explain your fit in the organization.

Spend time thinking through and composing a quality document. Know that an impressive cover letter can be more valuable than a resume when deciding which candidate to interview. The cover letter allows the reader to better understand who you are and serves as a sample of your writing style.

Generally, there are two types of cover letters:

1. **The letter of application** is used when responding directly to a job posting, mentioning the name of the position and how it came to your attention. It also specifies why you are the best fit for the position. This is considered the traditional cover letter.
2. **A letter of inquiry** is sent to an employer to “inquire” about the possibility of available positions or to ask for information about the organization. This type of letter can be used to inquire about job or internship possibilities, to request company information, or to request a meeting to discuss future opportunities within the organization. When writing letters of inquiry, include details about your qualifications that will prompt the employer to decide that a discussion with you will be worthwhile. See Blair Jobbin’s letter on page 22 of this handbook for an example of a letter of inquiry.

Regardless of type, the key thing to remember about a cover letter is that it must be customized to the position and/or company to which you are applying. Sending out a generic letter to hundreds of employers is time consuming and rarely successful. It can create a perception that you are not a serious and thoughtful person, that you are desperate for a job, or that you don’t really care enough to learn about their organization.

To make a positive first impression, follow these additional tips:

- Address your letter to a specific person by name. If there is no contact listed on the job posting, call or email the company to ask to whom you should address your cover letter, how to address them (Ms., Mr., Mx., Dr.), and how to spell their first and last name (if calling). If you are unsure how to address the contact person, it is best to write their first and last name with no title in front
- Keep your letter relevant, concise, and error-free
- Do not rehash your resume, instead expand on a few unique qualifications that make you a fit for the position
- Do not self-praise or mention skills or qualifications without providing examples from your experiences
- Consider what you can do for the employer, not how this opportunity will benefit you
- Use formal language to convey a professional and polished impression (“speak with you” instead of “talk to you”)
- Show enthusiasm through your words, not exclamation points
- Keep your letter on one page
- Use active, rather than passive, verbs
- Use “I” at a minimum. Whenever possible, avoid starting a sentence with “I”
- Avoid “weak phrases” or language such as “I think...”, “I feel...”, “I believe...”
- Remember to use key words from the job description
- Attract the reader’s attention in the first sentence; avoid starting with the generic “I am writing to apply for...”
- Do not use negative, qualifying statements (“Although I don’t have”...“I do have”)
- Include the name of someone recommending you- but only if you have permission
- If printing a hard copy, don’t forget to sign your name in black or blue pen

Sample Cover Letter Format

(Paste the exact same header as your resume making sure to include your name and contact info)

Month XX, 20XX --- Fill in with the date your application is submitted.

Attn: Name of contact person, position title
Company or organization name
Street address
City, state and zip code

Dear Name of contact person:

- Never use "To Whom It May Concern" or "Dear Sir or Madam" as it gives the impression that your letter is generic and has not been tailored. Always strive to include the name of a contact person.
- If you know the honorific title for the contact person (e.g., Dr., Ms., Mr., Mx.), include it with their name in the salutation. If you are unsure, it is best to write their first and last name with no title.
- If you are unable to obtain the contact's name, use "Dear <name of position> Hiring Committee" or similar for the salutation.
- Using a colon rather than a comma after the name signifies this is a business letter.

First Paragraph:

Purpose: *Grab the reader's attention and establish interest in the company.*

- Provide an opening sentence(s) that entices the reader to continue reading. Avoid "I am writing to apply for..." or "My name is..."
- Name the job for which you are applying and include how you learned of the position.
 - Mention the name of the person (if any) who referred you to the organization and position, preferably a colleague of the contact person.
- Mention specific knowledge of the company to indicate your interest.

Middle Paragraph(s):

Purpose: *Demonstrate your abilities relating to the position, and your potential value to the company, by highlighting your key strengths and experiences.*

- Don't just repeat the information from your resume. Instead, elaborate on/provide more detail regarding how you meet the job qualifications.
- State the specific skills/strengths/experiences you are prepared to bring to the company. These skills should address qualities needed to succeed in the position for which you are applying. Show that you know the employer's needs and that your skills are a match. Use the job description here, if applicable.
- Be sure to give examples of your skills and any related work experience (quantified results, accomplishments, and achievements). Explain how these skills will transfer to the position.

Final Paragraph:

Purpose: *Ensure follow-up action and extend your appreciation for being considered.*

- You may choose to take an active approach by indicating that you will contact the employer (e.g., I will call next week to discuss scheduling an interview).
- Thank them for their time and consideration of your application.

Sincerely,

Sign your name in ink (if submitting a hard copy application)

Type your name

Cover Letter Example

PAYTON MATTHIES

email@gmail.com | XXX-XXX-XXX | www.linkedin.com/paytonmatthies

January 3, 20XX

Attn: Seiler Library Internship Hiring Committee
American Antiquarian Society
185 Salisbury Street
Worcester, MA 01609

Dear Seiler Library Internship Hiring Committee:

For as long as I can recall, I have loved organizing and been fascinated by history. My dream job since I was young has been to organize historical documents, and upon finding this internship program on Handshake, I thought, *“This is exactly the summer program I have been looking for.”* An internship at the American Antiquarian Society working with and cataloguing historical materials would be the ideal opportunity for me to gain experience in the archival field and learn how I could apply my skills in organization, attention to detail, problem solving, written and verbal communication, and project management to a career in librarianship.

I became particularly interested in the field of archival work after studying art history in Paris last spring. While abroad, I sought out museums and libraries and was fascinated by the logistics of how materials were stored, curated, and displayed. *“Sure, that’s a Picasso, but why is it on this wall and not that one over there?”* This realization motivated me to focus my post-graduation plans on exploring opportunities in archival work, and I am eager to learn from American Antiquarian Society Members this summer to improve my training in the industry.

As a driven and self-motivated individual, I enjoy working independently on detail-oriented projects such as research, scheduling, and organizing. My background in theatre has afforded me experience and passion for managing projects across artistic departments, as well as creating and enforcing structural frameworks for organizing and distributing a substantial amount of show paperwork. My educational training as a theatrical technician has been enjoyable, though I have been most excited for and fulfilled by the aspects of my roles which include accumulating, organizing, and making available documents and knowledge for the creative team. I am looking forward to focusing more on my organizational skills and transitioning into the world of libraries and archives after my graduation in May, and in a few years, I plan to pursue a Master of Library and Informational Science degree so I can work in archival and library science.

Thank you for considering my candidacy for the Seiler Library Internship. I look forward to hearing more about the position once applications are reviewed.

Sincerely,

Payton Matthies

Cover Letter Example

Hannah Jeffers

Lincoln, NE
XXX-XXX-XXXX
email@gmail.com

February 17, 20XX

Nebraska Wesleyan University
Attn: Sausha Lyons
Human Resource Office
5000 St Paul Ave.
Lincoln, NE 68504

Dear Ms. Lyons:

Deciding to attend a Liberal Arts institution was one of the best decisions I ever made. When John Doe, Admissions Counselor at Nebraska Wesleyan University, informed me of an open position in the Admissions Office, I immediately knew this was the perfect opportunity. This position would allow me to share my stories with prospective students and their families, showcasing the advantages of a quality Liberal Arts experience.

As my enclosed resume states, I am currently the Greek Life Intern at Nebraska Wesleyan. In this position, I assist with recruitment activities for the six Greek Chapters on campus. Along with serving as Panhellenic President, I organized and implemented several new recruitment ideas this year, resulting in one of the highest recruitment years in recent history. I contacted, visited, and welcomed incoming students during the summer months to make them feel at home when arriving to campus. This position, as well as many other leadership opportunities, taught me to relate with students and their families to make them feel comfortable to ask questions.

This position requires an individual to take initiative and promote the institution's tradition of excellence. Personally, I have taken initiative to be involved in activities, organizations, and committees, while still upholding merit in academics. I enjoy visiting about my positive experience, and I have been involved in a wide scope of campus activities to relate to more students.

I would be grateful for an opportunity to discuss my passion for Nebraska Wesleyan and the Admissions Counselor position. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Hannah Jeffers

Cover Letter Example

JAQUELINE N. MARTINEZ

(XXX) XXX-XXXX | email@gmail.com

May 18, 20XX

Attn: Brad Marsh
Marsh Copsey + Scott
8201 Corporate Dr., Ste. 10
Landover, MD 20785

Dear Mr. Marsh:

It is no secret that good communication wins elections. And good communication begins with good writing.

Television spots, websites, and direct mail pieces are only as good as their copy—copy that must be clear, concise, and memorable to win over its audience. As an aspiring political speechwriter or consultant, I pay careful attention to campaigns and campaign communication. I became familiar with Marsh Copsey + Scott while working on Jane Doe’s congressional campaign, and I was excited to learn you are hiring a new writer. Given my long-term background and interest in politics and marketing communications, I am an excellent candidate for this position.

With a degree in communication studies from Nebraska Wesleyan University, I completed courses in political science and public policy, marketing, public relations, and both advertising and journalistic writing. I put my knowledge to good use through internships and employment both in and out of the political area, and I’ll be taking my education to the next level this fall when I begin graduate study at The George Washington University School of Media and Public Affairs.

I’ve written speeches for Nebraska Governor, John Doe, worked on two major campaigns, and helped produce election stories for CNN. Additionally, I’ve been named one of the top 12 speakers in the nation by the American Forensic Association and won three state championships in one of the nation’s toughest forensic circuits. In a similar vein, I’ve helped a small liberal arts college in Lincoln, Nebraska gain national media attention—from ESPN, the Discovery Channel, and Paul Harvey—and served as editor in chief of Nebraska’s best college newspaper.

My enclosed resume outlines additional experiences and skills that have prepared me for this position, and my writing samples illustrate the variety of projects I have completed. I’m eager to experience the exciting and challenging duties of working for Marsh Copsey + Scott, and I look forward to discussing my credentials and how best I can serve your firm. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jaqueline N. Martinez

Letter of Inquiry Example

BLAIR JOBBIN

(XXX) XXX-XXXX | email@nebrwesleyan.edu

February 15, 20XX

Attn: Darrin Klaus, Executive Director
Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
3601 N. 25th St., Suite D
Lincoln, NE 68521

Dear Mr. Klaus:

On the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association website, I read that over 6,000 children are in foster care, sometimes for several years, seeking permanent homes. Upon learning this statistic, I felt compelled to reach out in hopes of supporting the mission of your organization. As a senior social work major at Nebraska Wesleyan University, I am confident that I can contribute my skills and experience in a beneficial and meaningful way.

My academic and student learning experiences have prepared me well for supporting children and families. My curriculum thus far has included courses in the areas of Child Psychology, Loss, Grief & Death, Developmental Psychology and Clinical Psychology. In addition to my coursework, I also completed a service-learning project at Kahoa Elementary School in Lincoln, Nebraska. During this time, I assisted in the coordination of a "Parents as Teachers" program which provided education to parents on how to be involved in their child's learning. My main function was to ensure the event ran smoothly, but I also learned about several local community resources for parents and families.

Enclosed please find a copy of my resume for your consideration. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to talk to you about any internship possibilities at the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association. I will call you at the end of next week to follow up. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(signature)
Blair Jobbin

Submitting Application Materials

Thought should be given to how you submit your application materials. Cover letters and resumes are typically emailed to a designated hiring manager or submitted online in an application portal. The general rule is to do what the employer instructs by checking the organization website, the job description, or calling the organization to ask. Below are answers to common questions about submitting your job application materials.

Why does the organization require all materials to be submitted online?

Large organizations use online systems to receive, process, manage, and track a large volume of applicants. Many also have built-in Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), enabling them to sort through applicants.

Federal regulation requires applicants be treated and defined the same way; thus, all applicants may be required to apply in the same way.

Additionally, email includes so much spam and virus-potential in attachments. Receiving a large volume of resumes by email may be impractical and risky.

What should I keep in mind when emailing my materials?

Review the application instructions to see exactly how they would like you to submit your documents. Are they supposed to be attachments or pasted into the body of the email? Should the application materials be combined into a single document, or attached as individual documents? Do they specify what *type* of documents to send? If nothing is specified, *attach* your cover letter and resume to the email as individual documents using a PDF format to avoid layout changes.

Name your documents like this:

LastName. FirstName. Cover Letter

LastName. FirstName. Resume

If asked to upload all application materials as a single PDF, the order goes: cover letter, resume, references.

Keep your email brief if you are attaching your cover letter. Include a greeting, introduce yourself, and state that your resume and cover letter are attached. Remember to include a closing (e.g., Sincerely), followed by your name. Contact the organization you are applying to if you have specific questions.

Make sure you use an appropriate subject line. Review the position's application instructions to see if they tell you what to put. If they don't specify, use a simple and appropriate phrase like "Experienced History Grad for Exhibitions Manager."

Keep in mind that employers are busy. They often receive a large volume of resumes, and they will not look at email that looks like spam. Applicants who don't follow instructions are not good job candidates and have screened themselves out.

As always, spell check and proofread everything. Email a test version to yourself before sending the final email. Check that the text looks normal and that all attachments open.

When do I need to have hard copies?

Even if you submitted online or by email, you should carry hard copies when you attend a career fair. Expect that employers will ask you to apply online, but carry hard copies to facilitate conversation; this in-person opportunity is unique to a career fair.

Also, when you have an interview scheduled, even though someone has already seen and screened your resume, it's a good idea to show up with hard copies (you might have updated, revised, or improved your resume since you applied.) You can offer these to individuals who you meet as part of the interview process.

Professional Communication

Most communication both during the job search and on the job will likely be done via email. As such, professional email communication skills are vital to securing and keeping jobs. Because employers are evaluating your communication skills with every piece of correspondence, you want to make sure your message is being delivered effectively *and* appropriately. Below are some examples.

Job Prospecting Through Email

Subject: <input type="text" value="Haberfeld Creative Opportunities"/>
<p>Dear Ms. Ellsworth:</p> <p>After learning about Haberfeld from your company's website, I would like to know about possible job opportunities in your creative department. I am a senior at Nebraska Wesleyan University studying English, and I will earn my bachelor's degree in May.</p> <p>Last summer I had the opportunity to complete an internship for minnowPROJECT, creating written content for the organization's website as well as their print marketing materials. This experience confirmed my interest as a marketing-focused writer.</p> <p>My resume is attached for your consideration. I realize that you have many demands on your time, but I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss employment possibilities with your company. Would you be available the week of February 20 to meet briefly? If you would prefer to contact me by phone, my number is XXX-XXX-XXXX.</p> <p>Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Roland Baldwin email@nebrwesleyan.edu XXX-XXX-XXXX</p>

Networking Through Social Media

Subject: <input type="text" value="NWU Student in Chicago"/>
<p>Dear Ms. Beck:</p> <p>I am currently a psychology major at Nebraska Wesleyan University exploring career options. While researching people who work in higher education and live in Chicago, I found your profile. I will be in Chicago during the week of March 18-22. Would you be willing to take 20-30 minutes of your time to talk to me about your experiences in this field? If you would rather connect by email, I can be reached at email@nebrwesleyan.edu. Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Suzanne Atchinson email@nebrwesleyan.edu XXX-XXX-XXXX</p>

LinkedIn Invitation to Connect Message

Subject: <input type="text" value="LinkedIn Connection-Kidwell"/>
<p>Dear Mr. Thorpe</p> <p>It was great meeting you yesterday at the Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours event. I had always known of Kidwell, but the specific information you provided about Kidwell's new security initiatives intrigued me. Thank you for taking the time to tell me about your company. I hope you will connect with me on LinkedIn so we can stay in touch in the future.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Casey Clouse email@nebrwesleyan.edu (XXX) XXX-XXXX</p>

Additional Tips for Professional Communication

- Be respectful of the person you are contacting; don't ask for something they can't provide.
- Use a formal greeting such as Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. when addressing them. If you are unsure of their honorific title, use their first and last name.
- Do not send a short email which requires a long response.
- Attach a resume in a request to connect, or in a request for an informational interview.

