



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 change positions and seek any relevant experiences from your past.

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. 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 one font style throughout the resume; avoid script fonts. Times New Roman and Arial are good choices.
- Do not use graphics, shadowing, clip art, or distracting bullets.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 and bold.
- Contact information should include your phone number, address, and e-mail.
- List the phone number where you can most easily be reached. Ensure that your voicemail is set up with your name and an appropriate message.
- Your full street address is optional. Generally, you should include your city and state, but may choose to omit your full street address, especially if you plan to post your resume online.
- Your LinkedIn profile or a personal website showcasing your work can be listed if complete and professional.

Madison Taylor

2301 N. 44th | Lincoln, NE 68504 | 402.598.0192 | mtaylor@msn.com

Jacob Thompson

Lincoln, NE
402.787.5656
jthompson@nebrwesleyan.edu
linkedin.com/in/jacob-thompson

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 a required 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 doctorate of biomedical engineering program

If you have substantial relevant and professional work experience, you may consider using a "Summary of Qualifications" rather than an objective statement.

This section should read like a personal tagline summarizing your accomplishments 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 the 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:

- University name, city, and state
- Degree (i.e., 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)

Your most recent degree should be listed first (Ph.D., Master's, Bachelor's). Typically, you will only list colleges or universities where you have (or intend to) earn a degree from.

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.") You may also choose to list study abroad programs, or academic honors and achievements in this section. You might also list relevant coursework in the education section.

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University
Bachelor of Science, Economics
Minor: Global Studies

Lincoln, NE
May 20XX
GPA: 3.8/4.0

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln NE
Master in Business Administration
Cumulative GPA: 3.5/4.0

May 20XX

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration
Cumulative GPA: 3.0/4.0

May 20XX

Self-financed 100% of tuition through academic scholarships and part-time employment on campus

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 have 4 pieces of information included: 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 6 for a list of action verbs). Here are some additional tips:

- 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”.
- Within each category, list experiences in reverse chronological order with your most recent experience first.
- 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.

Human Resources Intern, Novartis, Lincoln, NE, August 20XX – Present

- 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 & FDA guidelines

Max Tan, Tanning Salon
Senior Sales Associate
Lincoln, NE
January 20XX - Present

- Consistently achieve 7-10% per tanner retail sales goal each month, netting approximately \$5 per customer (average net per customer is approximately \$2)

June 20XX - August 20XX

Team Leader

- Developed and carried out store-specific marketing initiatives
- Interviewed candidates and made hiring decision based on needs
- Coordinated new hire training process and schedule

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 the top ten common skills/competencies sought by employers. Choose a few, and think through how you can demonstrate these skills within your resume.

Critical/Analytical Thinking
Embrace Diversity
Self-Management
Communication
Leadership

Creativity
Time Management
Technology
Integrity
Teamwork

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, 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 Gamma, Recruitment Chair	2015-Present
- Increased chapter recruitment by 50 percent for two consecutive academic years	2015-Present
Blue Key Honorary	2014-Present
Colleges Against Cancer	
- Served on a team of ten raising over \$4,000 for Relay for Life	2014-2015
Red Cross Blood Drive, Volunteer	

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln NE

Women's Basketball Team, August 20XX - May 20XX

- Achieved goal of being a first-year starter and consecutive letter winner
- Honed time management skills, leadership ability, teamwork, and resiliency

Academic Research, October 20XX - April 20XX

- Partner with faculty for research project focusing on the negative effects of several blood pressure medications

Clinic With a Heart, Lincoln NE

Volunteer, August 20XX - May 20XX

- Learned the new electronic health record system and input statistical data about the demographic backgrounds of patients

Skills (Optional)

This section highlights "hard" or measurable skills and abilities, such as technical skills, laboratory skills, and proficiency or fluency in a foreign language. 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 "soft", 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 located 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. These skills should be incorporated into the bulleted statements in your "Experience" section(s), instead.

COMPUTER SKILLS

Microsoft Office
Adobe Photoshop

Word Perfect
SPSS

Adobe InDesign
FileMaker Pro

SKILLS

Journalistic: Working knowledge of AP Style, HTML, Photoshop, Dreamweaver, InDesign, and WordPress

Language: French: intermediate (speaking, reading), basic (writing); German: fluent (speaking, reading, writing)

References (Required but separate from the resume)

The statement "References Available Upon Request" is not needed, as this is a given in the job search process. Reference names and information are generally listed on a

separate page (see References section in this handbook). 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, smudges, 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 take a look and solicit 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.

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 file so formatting does not change.

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 18.

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

See page 10 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 11 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 of 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

began
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
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

First-Year Student, Minimal Experience

Maddie Rhylen

mrhylen@nebrwesleyan.edu
402.658.1747

Current Address:
NWU SMB 4365
5000 St. Paul Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68504

Permanent Address:
9869 Highpoint Rd
Omaha, NE 68511

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a part-time position working with youth at Cedars Youth Services

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology

- Funded 70% of college tuition through academically awarded scholarships

Lincoln, NE
Anticipated May 20XX

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Camp Fontanelle
Camp Counselor

- Managed cabin of eight campers
- 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

Fremont, NE
June 20XX

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Culvers

Crew Member

- Operated and reconciled cash register
- Organized and maintained inventory of food and beverage items
- Train seven new employees
- Scheduled and assigned shifts for 11 crew employees

Omaha, NE
April 20XX – August 20XX

ACTIVITIES

- Psychology Club, Member August 20XX-Present
- Wesleyan Alumni Student Association, Member August 20XX-Present
- Red Cross Blood Drive, Canteen Volunteer May 20XX
- Friendship Home, Volunteer October 20XX

SKILLS

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

Student Athlete Seeking Internship

Tyson Helm

5000 St. Paul Avenue | NWU SMB 9048 | Lincoln, NE 68504
thelm@nebrwesleyan.edu
(402) 380-6386
Linkedin.com/TysonHelm

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University

Bachelor of Science
Major: Business Administration
Minor: Finance

Lincoln, NE
Anticipated May 20XX
GPA: 3.6/4.0

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Business Communication
Principles of Marketing
Business & Economic Statistics
Management Information Systems

Spreadsheet Applications
Principles of Management
Accounting
Personal Finance

WORK EXPERIENCE

Wells Fargo

Teller

- 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 shift
- Hired as Junior teller; promoted because of accurateness, pace, and skills

Lincoln, NE
May 20XX - Current

Nebraska Wesleyan University

Wearry Center Open Recreation Staff

- Assist individual students, faculty, and staff to create a safe workout environment
- Manage front desk check-in, greeting patrons and monitoring equipment check-out
- Oversee cardio and weight rooms, record attendance and supervise use of equipment

Lincoln, NE
August 20XX - May 20XX

McPherson Farms

Farm Hand

- Consistently arrived at 4:00 a.m. to begin operations
- Maintained and repaired farm buildings, fences, machinery, and other equipment
- Operated heavy farm equipment such as headers, sprayers, and combines

North Platte, NE
May 20XX - August 20XX

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Nebraska Wesleyan University New Student Orientation

January 20XX - Current

- Serve as an ambassador for first-year students, exemplifying leadership and communication skills to a group of 13 students
- Volunteered at Lend A Hand to Lincoln assisting Foster Care Closet

NWU Men's Track & Field Team

Provided leadership as the team captain for the 20XX season

- Organized meetings to open and improve communication among team members
- Received GPAC All-Conference Award for outstanding performance

August 20XX - Current

Student with Previous Professional Work Experience

Jordan Wolf

1234 North 48th St Lincoln, NE 68504 402.465.7556 jordanwolf@gmail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Meticulous attention to detail and quality to ensure accuracy, reduce errors, and preserve excellence
- Demonstrated organizational skills and flexibility with ability to prioritize work, function independently, and complete daily responsibilities amidst interruptions
- Proven ability to significantly increase company revenue by quickly developing positive client rapport, establishing solid business relationships and fully developing new and existing accounts
- Five years experience providing exceptional customer service for diverse clientele
- Recognized for consistently meeting and exceeding company goals and objectives

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Arts in Business
Minor: Marketing

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Marketing & Design Center, Lincoln, NE February 20XX – Present

- Create public relations campaigns that significantly increase local awareness of clients' services while meeting clients' budgetary restraints
- Manage 50+ customer accounts by monitoring website activity, ordering marketing materials, and ensuring customer satisfaction with services
- Assist graphic designers in creation and maintenance of client websites
- Evaluate efficacy of marketing campaigns by analyzing customer surveys and writing reports for senior marketing personnel

Farmers Insurance, Lincoln, NE

April 20XX – February 20XX

Claims Processor

- Screened, entered, and scanned 5-10 commercial insurance policies per day with attention to detail to ensure accuracy
- Provided direct customer service for 5-7 clients per day seeking assistance with insurance claims
- Communicated with assessors about evaluation needs pertaining to insurance claims
- Recognized for excellent customer satisfaction ratings three years consecutively

Spikes Bar & Grill, Lincoln, NE

October 20XX – April 20XX

Server and Shift Supervisor

- Coordinated service staff by assessing talents of individuals and assigning tasks appropriately in order to increase efficiency of service to customers
- Provided a pleasant dining experience for a section of 6-7 tables by ensuring order accuracy and building rapport with customers
- Revamped the company's scheduling process to maximize the daily productivity of employees and to exceed customer expectations in speed and accuracy of service

SKILLS & ACTIVITIES

- Advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite software and Adobe Creative Suite
- Proficient in database systems such as InsuranceTracker and Client Management Systems
- Member of American Marketing Association, 20XX – Present
- Member and Treasurer of Lincoln Marketing Association, 20XX – Present
- Volunteer for March of Dimes and American Cancer Society

Student Seeking First Full-Time Position

Emma Roberts

92 Lakeview Acres
Lincoln, NE 68516

(402) 746 – 2256
emma.roberts@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University
Bachelor of Arts

Major: Communication Studies

Honors: Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society, Lambda Pi Eta Communication Studies Honorary

Lincoln, NE
GPA: 3.44/4.0

Minors: Marketing, Human Resource Management

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Cornerstone Print & Marketing – Marketing Intern (December 2014 – Present)

- ☐ Serve as a project liaison between the marketing department and print designers
- ☐ Maintain all sponsorship requests and track donations on Google Spreadsheets
- ☐ Form a cross media proposal for College View Academy
- ☐ Fulfill miscellaneous tasks to keep department performing efficiently

Lincoln, NE

Nebraska Wesleyan – Public Relations Intern (August 2014 – Present)

- ☐ Utilize networking skills by interviewing staff, faculty, and students for stories
- ☐ Publish two stories each month on the Nebraska Wesleyan home page and social media pages
- ☐ Communicate theatre and music events to the media through press releases
- ☐ Refine concise writing skills

Lincoln, NE

Good Samaritan Hospital – Marketing and Communications Intern (May 2014 – August 2014)

- ☐ Developed the "I'm a Good Sam Baby" social media campaign
- ☐ Assisted in planning and publicizing Good Samaritan's 90th birthday celebration
- ☐ Published six feature stories and three press releases in the local newspaper for Healthy Community Awards
- ☐ Drafted social media posts on various health topics

Kearney, NE

Norris Public Power District– Marketing Intern (May 2012 – August 2012)

- ☐ Organized and managed a customer appreciation program called Co-op Connections
- ☐ Networked with area business owners to gain discounts for NPPD customers
- ☐ Promoted program through self-designed brochures and letters

Lexington, NE

WORK EXPERIENCE

Caribou Coffee – Barista (September 2013 – December 2014)

- ☐ Enhanced ability to multi-task in a fast-paced environment
- ☐ Handled a daily revenue of \$2,000
- ☐ Managed all customer service issues with positive attitude and prompt service
- ☐ Maintained 25 hours a week while enrolled as a full-time student

Lincoln, NE

Coffee Cottage – Barista (May 2009 – August 2014)

- ☐ Accountable for opening and closing shop on weekends
- ☐ Assisted customers with ordering and purchasing products
- ☐ Consistently kept a clean working area while serving customers
- ☐ Recommended new or special products to customers to enhance sales

Lexington, NE

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Beta Chapter of the Delta Zeta Sorority (August 2011 – May 2015)

- ☐ Held three executive offices of Vice President of Programs, Philanthropy Chair and Alumnae Coordinator
- ☐ Arranged educational programs, including alcohol awareness training and bystander prevention training
- ☐ Fundraised \$3,000 for national philanthropies through a variety of fundraisers
- ☐ Functioned as a liaison between Delta Zeta alumnae and chapter members

Colleges Against Cancer (September 2011 – May 2015)

- ☐ Served as Luminary Committee Chair
- ☐ Oversaw Luminary committee of approximately ten members
- ☐ Publically spoke at Relay for Life ceremony
- ☐ Generated spreadsheet and PowerPoint to track and honor survivors

Aaron Larson

901 Cottonwood St.
Lincoln, NE 68509
(402) 378-3642
alarson@nebwestlesleyan.edu

OBJECTIVE

Admission into the Master of Arts degree program in Human Development and Social Policy at Northwestern University School of Continuing Studies

EDUCATION

Nebraska Wesleyan University Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Science, Sociology-Anthropology May 20XX
Minor: Psychology GPA: 3.83/4.00
• Dean's List, every semester

Victoria University of Wellington

Completed coursework in social theory and global urbanism New Zealand
Spring 20XX
• Developed acute cultural sensitivity while living among a variety of foreign students
• Traveled independently to Australia and throughout New Zealand

RESEARCH & TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Co-Instructor – Qualitative Research Methods Course Spring 20XX
• Assisted course professor to plan, develop, and execute class activities and materials
• Taught 15 50-minute lessons, coordinating materials with instructor during his absence
• Served as a resource for 11 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

• 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 Fall 20XX

C-SAM Data Analyst

• Used SPSS to analyze and prepare data sets for use in introductory courses
• Co-presenter with faculty supervisor at Midwest Sociological Association's Annual meeting in 20XX Fall 20XX

Student Anxiety Researcher

• Completed IRB certification to administer study
• Consulted with department faculty to further conceptualize project design
• Conducted in-depth individualized interviews collecting qualitative data
• Executed open and focused coding to interpret data
• Presented findings which examined experiences of students who self-identified as suffering from anxiety Spring 20XX

INTERNSHIPS

DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence Washington, DC
Marketing and Communications Intern Summer 20XX
• Acquired and executed hands-on professional 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 the topic of domestic violence

The Owens Companies

Family Partner Intern Lincoln, NE
Summer 20XX
• Sought reunification of families by helping parents achieve the goals set by the courts and referral source
• Educated parents or caregivers about the existence of informal or community resources available
• Documented services provided to the family and ensure the safety of the children

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Self In Everyday Life, Midwest Sociological Association – Annual Meeting March 20XX
Future Implications for Social Policy, Nebraska Undergraduate Sociological Symposium (NUSS) November 20XX
The Making of US, Nebraska Wesleyan Student Research Symposium May 20XX & May 20XX

ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT

Sociology/Anthropology Club September 20XX-Current
Alpha Kappa Delta, International Sociology Honor Society December 20XX-Current
Student Affairs Senate April 20XX-April 20XX
Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges May 20XX-May 20XX
Peer Review Board NWU August 20XX- May 20XX

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Heartland Big Brothers/Big Sisters Lincoln, NE
Mentor Volunteer August 20XX-Current
• Develop one-to-one relationship with second grade mentee, offering consistency and encouragement
• Commit one hour per week to spend time with mentee during school hours
• Assist with and participate in classroom activities with mentee

Colleges Against Cancer

NWU Chapter Member Lincoln, NE
September 20XX-Current
• Coordinated, planned and executed silent auction fundraiser with team of two others, brought in over \$6000 for the organization
• Secured family-friendly activities including a photo booth, miniature golfing, games, music, and food for annual Relay For Life Event
• Solely raised over \$600 in donations from location organizations to fund cancer research

Education Major Seeking First Full-Time Position

AMELIA STEVENS

4400 N. 52nd Street | Lincoln, NE, 68504 | (402) 292-4545 | astevens@nebrwesleyan.edu

EDUCATION	
Bachelor of Arts, History-Social Science Education <i>Nebraska Wesleyan University</i> Endorsement: Secondary Education	Anticipated May 20XX <i>Lincoln, NE</i> GPA: 3.9/4.0
CERTIFICATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nebraska Secondary Education Teaching Certificate, 7-12American Red Cross CPR/AED Certification	Anticipated June 20XX September 20XX to September 20XX
TEACHING EXPERIENCE	
Student Teacher <i>Culler Middle School, 8th Grade American History</i> <i>Lincoln, NE</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Practiced direct instruction, cooperative learning strategies, and strategic learning in class sizes ranging from 17-31 studentsCollaborated closely with the Special Education department to adjust lessons and exams to meet the needs of students on IEPsServed as a Check In-Check Out Coach for students who were struggling academically and behaviorallyEngaged students in learning through creative lessons such as throwing a birthday party for Abraham Lincoln or simulating the mass hysteria that took place during the Salem Witch TrialsRegularly worked sporting events as a time keeper or score keeperObserved master teachers for two full school days in their classroomsCollaborated with the 8th grade social studies team to create a month-long Civil War research project, which was showcased for the community (skits, costumes, murals, props, monologues, etc.)Engaged in and applied professional development seminars including "Professional Learning Communities" and "Classroom Instruction That Works"Adapted and differentiated lessons, activities, and exams to meet the needs of gifted studentsCommunicated effectively with parents at conferences, as well as throughout the semester through phone calls, emails, and letters home	January 20XX-May 20XX <i>Lincoln, NE</i>
Practicum Student <i>Lincoln Public Schools (LPS)</i> <i>(Lincoln Northeast, Lincoln Southeast, Lincoln North Star, Dawes Middle School)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Observed, assisted, and taught in diverse classrooms for 100+ hoursPlanned, taught, and assessed lessons	January 20XX-December 20XX <i>Lincoln, NE</i>

A. Stevens 1 of 2

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE	
Director of Player and Coach Development <i>Nebraska Vortex Softball Organization</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Planned daily practice activities and drillsManaged games including calling signs and preparing lineupsInstructed 17 players on technique, strategy, teamwork, and leadership developmentIncreased team membership by 30% from year one to year three	August 20XX-December 20XX <i>Lincoln, NE</i>
Parks and Recreation Softball/Baseball/IT-ball Coach <i>Fremont Parks and Recreation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Designed and executed practice plansScheduled weekly practices and games to accommodate the availability of players and their familiesCommunicated with parents one-on-one and as a group on a regular basis at practices and gamesCreated a safe, fun, inclusive environment for all children	May-August 20XX-20XX <i>Fremont, NE</i>
Leadership Team Tutor <i>Guidance to Success Higher Learning Program</i> <i>Lincoln, NE</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tutored impoverished youth weekly by encouraging future academic success related goalsCompiled lesson plans by collaborating with other tutors at weekly meetingsPublicized the opportunities Guidance to Success provides youth by speaking on campus	February 20XX-December 20XX
Peer Assistant <i>Nebraska Wesleyan University, Residential Education</i> <i>Lincoln, NE</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Served as a mentor and advisor for 50+ first year students each yearCounseled first year students on personal, academic, and career concernsCreated, planned, and implemented educational, social, and community programsWorked as a team member with other peer assistants to develop a successful hall communityEnforced and upheld University policies and procedures	August 20XX-December 2016 <i>Lincoln, NE</i>

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	
Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority Member <ul style="list-style-type: none">Held three executive offices as Vice President of Campus Relations, Operations, and Member DevelopmentArranged educational programs, including alcohol awareness training and bystander intervention trainingRaised \$3000+ for national philanthropies by coordinating a team to execute four on-campus fundraisersOrganized and hosted two professional development evenings for members to learn more about their strengths	August 20XX-present

Student Education Association of Nebraska Member	January 20XX-present
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A. Stevens 2 of 2

Laurnyn M. Miller

lmiller@nebrwesleyan.edu | (402) 450-1234

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Nursing

Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln, NE
Minor in Spanish

- GPA: 3.8/4.0; Member, Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society of Nursing

May 20XX

CERTIFICATIONS

Nurse's Assistant Certification (CNA): Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE 20XX- Present
Basic Life Support Certification with AED: Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE August 20XX

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Preceptorship

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

- Performed routine assessments every four hours with telemetry evaluation and monitoring
- Admitted and discharged patients with follow-up appointments and medication reconciliation
- Observed and performed procedures such as dialysis, plasmapheresis, insertion nasogastric (NC) tube, central line placement PICC line placement, peripheral IV placement, pacemaker removal, and wound care
- Applied 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, care 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

L. Miller pg. 1 of 2

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Nutrition & Dining Services Host

Bryan Health, Lincoln, NE

October 20XX – Present

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

Certified Nursing Assistant

Eastmont Towers, Lincoln, NE

May-August 20XX-20XX

- Cared for 25 residents by aiding with dressing, eating, oral care, bathing, and transportation
- Trained 8 new nursing assistants to the facility

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Colleges Against Cancer, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln, NE August 20XX-Present

- Planned and organized food, games, and music for annual Relay for Life event
- Independently raised approximately \$500 from local organizations to fund cancer research

Bryan Health: Patient Support Services, Lincoln, NE

December 20XX- January 20XX

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

COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

Member, Willard Sorority

August 20XX-Present

Member, Pre-Health Club

August 20XX-Present

Member, Love Your Melon Club

August 20XX-Present

L. Miller pg. 2 of 2

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:** Include at least 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.
- ☐ Include the **URL** of your LinkedIn profile or website if the content is complete and appropriate for employer viewing.
- ☐ Remove hyperlinks on your email address and/or 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.
- ☐ Include GPA if above 3.0, or if it 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 work especially if it is 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, not 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 or language related)
- HONORS/AWARDS
- EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- VOLUNTEER WORK/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 - two *full* pages in length, but preferably 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 five 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 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.

Malcolm Jamal Wade

6901 NW 4th Street
Lincoln, NE 68521
402.444.4444

mwade@nebrwesleyan.edu

REFERENCES

Karri Sanderson

Director of Student Involvement
Nebraska Wesleyan University
5000 St. Paul Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68504
402.465.2412
ksanders@nebrwesleyan.edu

David Honnens

Assistant Director of Golf
Holmes Park Golf Course
3701 South 70th Street
Lincoln, NE 68506
402.441.8961
dhonnens@yahoo.com

John Crow

Director of Golf
Holmes Park Golf Course
3701 South 70th Street
Lincoln, NE 68506
402.441.8960
crowdad@pga.com

Dorothy Skorupa

Center Director
F Street Community Center
1225 F Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
402.441.7951
dskorupa@lincoln.ne.gov

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 take action by inviting 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 Quinn Jackson’s letter on page 17 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 a job posting, call the company to ask who to address your cover letter to. Be sure to ask how to address the individual (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and how to spell their first and last name.
- 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

Sample Cover Letter Format

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

Date (Month XX, 20XX)

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

Dear Ms., Mr. or Dr. _____: (Never use "To Whom It May Concern," or "Dear Sir or Madam."
After calling, if the company is unable to give out the contact name, then use "Dear <insert
name of position> Hiring Committee" or similar.) A colon rather than a comma signifies this is a
business letter.

First Paragraph:

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

- ☐ Provide an opening sentence 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, also say 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.

- ☐ 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.
- ☐ Don't repeat the information from your resume, instead refer to your enclosed resume or application, elaborating on/providing more detail regarding how you meet the job qualifications.

Final Paragraph:

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

- ☐ You may choose to indicate that you will contact the employer. (i.e. I will be contacting you on Wednesday afternoon to discuss scheduling an interview).
- ☐ Refer to your contact information.
- ☐ 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

PAIGE MATHESON

June 1, 20XX

Child Advocacy Center
Attn: Joanna Wilhelm, Director
P.O. Box 81341
Lincoln, NE 68501

Dear Ms. Wilhelm:

The abuse of children is inexcusable and society's concern for the well being of those children continues to grow. It is for this reason I am applying for the Child Interview Specialist position with the Child Advocacy Center. My formal education in the fields of psychology and forensic criminology, as well as my experience working with troubled youth and their families, would prove beneficial in this capacity.

Your position requires skills in conducting interviews, knowledge regarding child abuse and family violence, as well as experience working with children and families from diverse backgrounds. In my role as a Psychiatric Technician and Mental Health Technician at two respected mental health facilities, I assisted children, adolescents, and adults providing 1:1 observations and implementing treatment plans. Being involved with the overall treatment of each child included supporting their families and working with team members to develop comprehensive strategies tailored to meet the needs of each child.

My unique educational background in psychology and forensics, as well as my former experience interacting with the youth population, make me a solid candidate for this position. Furthermore, I am genuinely passionate about the mission of the Child Advocacy Center. Your organization has an excellent reputation for working with child abuse victims and comes highly recommended.

Please consider my request for a personal interview to discuss my qualifications and to learn more about this opportunity. I will call you next week to see if a meeting can be arranged. Should you need to reach me, please feel free to contact me at the information above.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Paige Matheson

Enclosure: Resume

710 S. 274th St.
Elmwood, NE 68349
402.569.8781
pmatheson@nebrwesleyan.edu



Hilary Lyndon

2400 N. 49th Apt. 4 | Lincoln, NE
402.325.6937 | hlyndon@gmail.com

February 17, 20XX

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

Dear Ms. Cookson:

Deciding to attend a Liberal Arts institution was one of the best decisions I ever made. When Cliff Carlson, 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 eight 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, making the students 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 in order to relate to most 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,

Hilary Lyndon

Enclosures

Letter of Inquiry Example

QUINN JACKSON

402.465.8585 | qjackson@nebrwesleyan.edu

February 15, 20XX

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

Dear Ms. Nelsen:

On the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association website, I read that over 6,000 children are in foster care seeking permanent homes, sometimes for several years. 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 interested in working with children in the future, 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 had the opportunity to do a service-learning project at Kahoa Elementary School in Lincoln, NE. 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 program and events 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 speak with you about any internship possibilities at the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association. I will call you next week to follow up. If you have questions or comments regarding my inquiry prior to this time, please contact me at (402) 465-8585 or via email at qjackson@nebrwesleyan.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(signature)
Quinn Jackson

Cover Letter Example

Jennifer A. Myers

5696 S. 87th St. | Omaha NE 68549 | 402.658.4656 | j_myers@gmail.com

May 18, 20XX

Mr. Tony 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 Greg Ruehle'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 integrated marketing communications, I am an excellent candidate for this position.

With a degree in communication studies from Nebraska Wesleyan University, I completed courses in such fields as political science and public policy, marketing, public relations, and both advertising and journalistic writing. I put this knowledge to good use through internships and employment both in and out of the political area.

I've written speeches for Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns, worked on two major campaigns, and helped produce election stories for CNN.

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.

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.

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.

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,

Jennifer A. Myers

Enclosures

Submitting Application Materials

Thought should be given as to how you submit your application materials. Cover letters and resumes can be mailed as hard copies, emailed, submitted online, or hand-delivered. 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 is impractical and risky.

I have the option of emailing documents or mailing hard copies. Which is best?

This is a judgment call. In making your decision, consider:

- Is there someone you can ask? Would a simple phone call solve the issue?
- Do you know something about the organization or person to help you decide? Have you received a job notice via email? If so, the sender may expect responses via email. Is the organization very formal? Perhaps a hard copy document on good quality paper might appeal to a formal organization.
- It is easier to receive, store and forward items sent via email. It is also easier to be overloaded by email and chose to ignore email that is from an unknown source. Email that looks like spam will be ignored and deleted.
- It takes more effort to print and mail hard copy documents, and suggests you care enough to take the effort. But a hard copy is harder to store and share.
- Is the job really important to you? Is it worth your time to do both email and hard copy just to cover the bases? (If so, state in each that you are doing both; e.g. "I am also sending this by a hard copy/email in case you prefer to receive this by that means.")

Should I hand-deliver my materials?

Hand-delivering may be an option if you are visiting a city in which you want to work and/or have identified specific organizations to target in your job search.

It can make a very positive impression to show up in person, well-dressed, and hand-deliver an envelope containing your resume and cover letter, using a friendly demeanor and excellent interpersonal skills with the employees you do encounter.

Of course it's possible that you show up in person and the person with whom you should speak is not available or you are told to apply by email, hard copy or online. Do your research first, and determine if you want to go to this effort.

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? Do they specify what *type* of documents to send? If nothing is specified, *attach* your resume and cover letter to the email, using a PDF format to avoid layout changes.

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 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 text 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; the in-person opportunity is unique to a job 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 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: Haberfeld Creative Opportunities

Dear Ms. Ellsworth:

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.

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.

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 402.689.9875.

Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Ryan Badder
rbader@nebrwesleyan.edu
402.689.9875

Networking Through Social Media

Subject: NWU Student in Chicago

Dear Ms. Beck:

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 katwood@nebrwesleyan.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kate Atwood
katwood@nebrwesleyan.edu
402.986.4147

LinkedIn Invitation to Connect Message

Subject: LinkedIn Connection-Kidwell

Dear Ms. Thorpe:

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.

Sincerely,

Courtney Clymer
cclymer@gmail.com
308.598.6563

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./Dr. unless they have given you permission to call them by their first name or you know them well.
- 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.