



CAREER SERVICES



JOB SEARCH GUIDE

Learn how to find job and internship opportunities, write your resume and cover letters, market yourself online, and more!

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RESUMES, REFERENCES & COVER LETTERS

A resume is your personal marketing tool designed to quickly show you are an ideal candidate for a role. A strong resume generates interest in your qualifications resulting in interviews. Resumes look different depending on the industry and field you are applying in, so research both to learn the format which will make the best possible first impression.

BUILDING YOUR RESUME

STYLE

- Use a common, easy-to-read font in a readable size, typically 10-12 point font.
- Set all margins between .5 to 1 inch.
- Use bold, underlining, and italics purposefully and consistently to separate sections and highlight content.

FORMAT

- Limit to one page unless more are typical in your field and you have relevant content for a second page.
- List education, experiences, etc. in reverse chronological order, with the most recent first.
- Develop an unformatted version of your resume with no bold, italics, or other designs to copy into online application systems.

AVOID

- × Paragraph descriptions of experience
- × Pronouns referring to yourself, i.e. I, my, our, and we
- × Inconsistencies in layout or formatting
- × Photographs, clip-art, and borders
- × Oversharing, especially personal information, i.e. hobbies & marital status
- × Abbreviations not widely known
- × Rounding your GPA up
- × Listing unsubstantiated soft skills
- × Templates which reduce control or may not be readable by online application systems
- × Tables and grids which may not transfer across platforms or be readable by online applications system
- × Distracting colors or designs, unless expected in the field



TIPS:

Build your resume by getting engaged in and out of the classroom.

Participate intentionally in internships/co-ops, part-time jobs, student organizations, volunteer opportunities, class projects, research experiences, etc.

Update your professional materials often.

Doing so will help you keep track of your experiences and accomplishments and will allow you to better capitalize on opportunities as they come.

Get your resume reviewed by a Career Coach and/or a professor.

Having another set of eyes on your document can help clarify and strengthen your resume content and catch any spelling and formatting issues.

REQUIRED



Contact Information

- Include your name, phone number, professional email, city, state, and zip code.
- May include your address, personalized LinkedIn profile URL and/or professional website.

Examples:

Herbie Husker

402-555-5555 | herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu | Lincoln, NE 68588 |
www.linkedin.com/in/herbie.husker

Herbie Husker

1234 Stadium Drive / Lincoln, NE 68588 / 402-555-5555 / herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu



Education

Education Background | Academic Background

Alternative titles

- Include institution name(s), location (City, State or City, Country) degree, graduation date (Month Year), and major(s).
- List institutions with most recent degree first.
- May include GPA if above a 3.0, minor(s), concentration, and/or education abroad.

Example:

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, May 20XX
Major: Management, Minor: Political Science
GPA: #.##/4.0

Major GPA may be included if higher than cumulative.



Experience

Work History | Internship Experience

Alternative titles

- Include organization name(s), location(s) (City, State or City, Country), position title(s), dates of employment (Month Year-Month Year), and description of activities and achievements.
- Describe in a bulleted list, each starting with an action verb.
- Strive for a minimum of three bullet statements for each role.

Examples:

Super Food Grocery, Lincoln, NE
Grocery Clerk/Cashier, May 20XX - Present

- Manage cash and credit transactions efficiently using Point of Sale system to check customers out in a timely manner.
- Communicate with 100+ customers daily to welcome them and to resolve concerns.
- Monitor inventory, stock shelves, and ensure expiration dates are within standards.

If it is a current position, verbs would be in present tense.

States Bank, New York, NY

Investment Banking Intern, May 20XX - August 20XX

- Researched and prepared offer documents for potential clientele.
- Generated comprehensive financial models utilizing SPSS statistical software.
- Consulted with and answered system questions for clients.

As this is a previous job, verbs are in past tense.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED



Related Experience

Consider including a Related Experience section to:

- Feature an experience related to the job you are applying for, but which would otherwise be farther down your resume due to the date of the experience.

For a detailed example, see pg. 13



Involvement

Leadership Experiences | Activities | Volunteer Experiences

Alternative titles

- Include organization name(s) (City, State or City, Country), position title(s), and dates of involvement (Month Year - Month Year).
- Include where you have been involved over several months/years and/or have had a high level of responsibility.
- May include bulleted list of activities.
- May include student, academic, community, or social organizations.

Example:

Mexican-American Student Association, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Vice President of Membership, January 20XX - Present

- Recruit new members through email promotions and personal outreach to strengthen organization's impact.



Honors/Awards

- Include award, honorary, or scholarship name(s) and dates (Month Year) and if unclear, a brief description, i.e. academic, civic, leadership, or professional.
- May alternatively be included in Education if academic based.
- May include academic, service, performance, or work/professional honors.

Example:

University Honors Program, August 20XX - Present

Alpha Lambda Delta (First Year Academic Honorary), May 20XX - Present

OPTIONAL



Objective

Professional Objective | Career Objective

Alternative titles

- State your intention for the resume while highlighting related skills and experience.
- Eliminate first to gain space for experience, involvement, or other content.

Example:

Seeking account management internship for summer 20XX to apply organizational, communication, and customer service skills.

RESUME SECTIONS

OPTIONAL



Related Coursework

Relevant Coursework | Professional Coursework

Alternative titles

- Include coursework related to the profession or industry.
- Identify course name, i.e. Sales Communication instead of MRKT 257.
- List in a bulleted column with up to 6 courses.

Example:

- Microprocessor Applications
- Electrical Circuits I, II
- Electromagnetic Field Theory
- Signals and Systems I, II
- Digital Design and Interfacing
- Assembly Language Programming



Projects

- Highlight significant, relevant academic projects or independent projects completed.
- Include course/project name, dates (Month, Year), and your role/activities.

Example:

Business Plan Development and Decision Making | August - December 20XX

- Researched markets and conducted case studies to identify business opportunities and the requirements of a successful business plan.
- Developed and presented business plan to executives for evaluation and submission to University-wide business plan competition.



Additional Sections

Include other sections based on your experience types and their significance and relevancy to the job. These may include:

- International Experience
- Military Experience
- Certifications
- Senior or Capstone Project
- Research Experience
- Professional Associations
- Teaching Experience

NOT INCLUDED



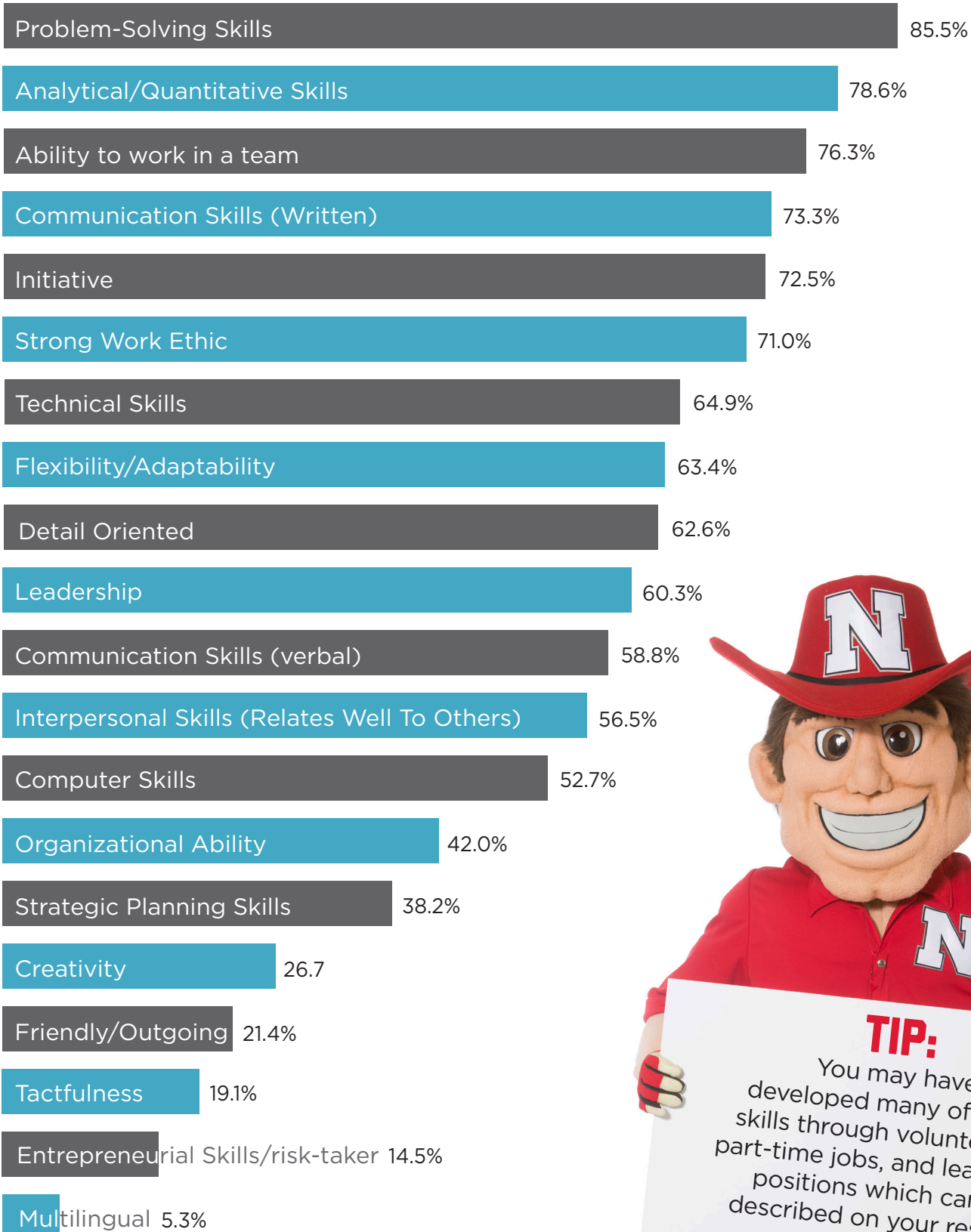
References

Create a separate page listing your references.

* For a detailed example, see pg 15

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Most college students won't have a lot of direct experience in the fields they wish to work in; therefore, employers are interested in the skill sets that can be transferred from one industry or field to another. These are called "transferable skills" because they are associated with professional success in any industry.



RESUME BULLET STATEMENTS

BULLET POINT BASICS

Bullet statements describe your activities, skills, and results. They may be used to describe jobs, internships, involvement, research, volunteer positions and academic/independent projects.

- Start your bullet statements with an **action verb** which clearly describes the activity.
- Include numbers to give context to an activity and/or to show results.
- Answer the questions “what?” “how?” and “why?” of the activity you are listing.

CRAFTING RESUME BULLET STATEMENTS >>> using *WHAT, HOW, and WHY*

WHAT
did you
do?



HOW
did you
do it?



WHY
did you
do it?

Example:

Communicate with 100+ customers | on the phone daily with personalized service | to resolve their concerns.

Example transition words: by, through, using, with, utilizing, to, in order to, as part of, so that, because of, due to

VERBS BY SKILL SET

Start your bullet statements with a strong action verb related to the skills the job, field, or industry desire. Below are a few examples of verbs to consider.

Leadership/Initiative

Accomplished, Achieved, Chaired, Coached, Coordinated, Directed, Influenced, Initiated, Led, Oversaw, Managed, Mentored, Motivated, Supervised, Trained

Teamwork/Interpersonal

Collaborated, Consulted, Cooperated, Contributed, Encouraged, Engaged, Ensured, Guided, Helped, Interacted, Networked, Partnered, Related, Resolved, Supported

Written Communication

Authored, Briefed, Composed, Corresponded, Critiqued, Described, Documented, Drafted, Edited, Proposed, Reported, Reviewed, Summarized, Translated, Wrote

Problem Solving

Adjusted, Concluded, Converted, Enhanced, Formulated, Identified, Improved, Increased, Mediated, Reconciled, Reduced, Resolved, Restructured, Solved, Streamlined

Verbal Communication

Advised, Advocated, Convinced, Discussed, Expressed, Facilitated, Instructed, Negotiated, Persuaded, Presented, Promoted, Publicized, Reasoned, Sold, Taught

Analytical

Analyzed, Assessed, Compared, Confirmed, Determined, Estimated, Evaluated, Examined, Investigated, Projected, Recommended, Researched, Synthesized, Validated

Technical

Applied, Assembled, Audited, Built, Calculated, Converted, Demonstrated, Designed, Implemented, Installed, Maintained, Modified, Operated, Resolved, Systematized, Tested

Organized/Detailed

Arranged, Compiled, Consolidated, Coordinated, Distributed, Executed, Implemented, Inspected, Monitored, Organized, Planned, Prioritized, Processed, Revised, Scheduled

Creativity

Brainstormed, Built, Created, Designed, Developed, Displayed, Envisioned, Generated, Illustrated, Invented, Launched, Marketed, Produced, Shaped, Strategized

Example 1: Getting Started

Transitioning a high school resume to a professional format

Herbie Husker

402-555-5555 | herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu | Lincoln, NE 68588

Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX
Major: Psychology, GPA: #.##/4.0

Lincoln North High School, Lincoln, NE
High School Diploma, May 20XX
GPA: #.##/4.0

Work Experience

Hometown Family Restaurant, Lincoln, NE
Server, June 20XX – Present

- Manage orders and serve up to five tables of 4–12 guests simultaneously, 20 or more tables per three hour shift
- Provide an exceptional dining experience using a positive attitude and attention to detail
- Handle cash and credit transactions at the tables accurately and efficiently for an average of \$2,400 per shift

Private Families, Lincoln, NE
Babysitter, October 20XX – May 20XX

- Ensured the safety and well-being of three elementary school-age children
- Developed creative and age-appropriate educational activities to support social and academic growth

Involvement

Center for People in Need, Lincoln, NE
Volunteer, June 20XX – Present

- Coordinate events to generate community donations to support families and individuals in need
- Deliver supplemental nutrition assistance to approximately 100 individuals monthly

Orchestra and Marching Band, Lincoln North Star High School, Lincoln, NE
First Chair Trumpet, September 20XX/ *Member*, October 20XX – May 20XX

- Earned first chair position out of 20 other students based on performance ability and leadership skills
- Practiced two hours daily while balancing academics and other activities

Student Council, Lincoln North Star High School, Lincoln, NE
President, January 20XX – December 20XX

- Led eight-member team in event planning, fund raising, and advising administration of student body perspective
- Treasurer*, January 20XX – December 20XX
- Managed council funds exceeding \$3,000, accurately monitoring expenses and income, paying account payables in a timely manner, and communicating activity to administration regularly
- Sophomore Representative*, January 20XX – December 20XX
- Collaborated on school activities, contributed to decision making, and communicated with student body

Honors

James Canfield Scholarship, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, August 20XX – Present
Salutatorian, Lincoln North Star High School, May 20X

Skills

Computer: SharePoint, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Outlook
Language: Basic written and conversational Spanish

High school education and experiences may be included initially but should be replaced by junior year.

Start with a strong **action verb in present tense** if you are still working in the role.

Start with a strong **action verb in the past tense** if you are no longer working in the role.

In the Skills section, focus on "hard" or technical skills relevant to your field. Integrate them into bullet statements if possible (see example on page 11).

EXAMPLE RESUMES

Example 2: Gaining Experience

Applying for internships, research opportunities, or major-related experiences

Include a URL to your LinkedIn profile, professional website, or portfolio.

Include your GPA if it is 3.0 or better.

At the internship level, employers do not expect a significant amount of related experience. For unrelated positions, describe activities which demonstrate transferable skills.

Include achievements or results where possible, using numbers to communicate level of impact.

Herbie Husker

402-555-5555 | herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu | Lincoln, NE 68588 | www.linkedin.com/in/herbie.husker

Objective

To obtain a management internship, research opportunities, or major-related experience

Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX

Major: Psychology, GPA: #.###/4.0

Scholarships: James Canfield Scholarship, Global Gateway Scholarship

University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

New Zealand Study Tour (6 credits in history), Summer 20XX

Related Coursework

Motivation and Emotion, Psychology Department, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Fall 2019

- Gained understanding of motivational/emotional drivers of human behavior
- Learned applications of positive psychology to effective leadership
- Researched and reported on employee motivation and engagement
- Authored paper exploring psychological research on motivation utilized in management and human resources

Work Experience

University of Nebraska Foundation, Lincoln, NE

Development Associate, September 20XX - Present

- Persuade alumni to make financial donations through communication skills adapted to each prospective donor's interests
- Analyze giving trends through Microsoft Excel to create monthly reports by monthly deadlines
- Generated over 200,000 in pledges within first three months, earning top 10% fundraiser status

Hometown Family Restaurant, Lincoln, NE

Server, June 20XX – Present

- Manage orders and serve up to five tables of 4-12 guests simultaneously, 20 or more tables per three hour shift
- Provide an exceptional dining experience using a positive attitude and attention to detail
- Handle cash and credit transactions at the tables accurately and efficiently for an average of \$2,400 per shift

Involvement

Undergraduate Psychology Organization Lincoln, NE

Member, January 20XX - Present

- Build relationships with peers and faculty for professional and personal development
- Learn current application of psychological research and explore careers with a degree in psychology

University Program Council (UPC), University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Member, January 20XX - Present

- Research speakers and performers using online resources to evaluate as campus events
- Coordinate events for diverse student audiences with a team of five peer

Alternative Service Break, Pine Ridge, SD

Participant, March 20XX

- Tutored 20 elementary school students in reading and math on the Pine Ridge Reservation
- Promoted participation and engaged students in extracurricular activities

Center for People in Need, Lincoln, NE

Volunteer, June 20XX – October 20XX

- Coordinated events to generate community donations to support families and individuals in need
- Delivered supplemental nutrition assistance to approximately 100 individuals monthly

Skills

Computer: SharePoint, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Outlook

Language: Basic written and conversational Spanish

EXAMPLE RESUMES

Example 3: Getting The Job

Seeking full-time opportunities for after graduation

Herbie Husker

402-555-5555 | herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu | Lincoln, NE 68588 | www.linkedin.com/in/herbie.husker

Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX

Major: Psychology, GPA: #.###/4.0

University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

New Zealand Study Tour (6 credits in history), Summer 20XX

Related Experience

University of Nebraska Foundation, Lincoln, NE

Development Associate, September 20XX – Present

- Persuade alumni to make financial donations through **communication skills** adapted to each prospective donor's interests
- Analyze giving trends through Microsoft Excel to create monthly reports **by** monthly **deadlines**
- Utilize SharePoint to maintain updated work documents among team
- Generate an average of 50,000/month, maintaining top 10% fundraiser status

City Center Mart, Kansas City, MO

Executive Store Intern, May 20XX – August 20XX

- Interacted with 50+ customers daily using effective **customer service**, organization, and **multi-tasking abilities** to **resolve problems** and ensure a positive experience
- **Managed** team of five associates to shift 10 aisles of merchandise in a single overnight shift
- Cross-trained in all departments, including electronics, to appropriately support customers' individual needs

Projects

Department of Psychology, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Research Methods and Data Analysis Research Project, August 20XX – December 20XX

- **Analyzed complex statistical data** using Microsoft Excel and SPSS to test research project hypotheses
- Utilized **critical thinking skills** to evaluate accuracy of research conclusions based on data
- Presented research project through a detailed poster format using writing and speaking skills to **describe technical processes** and results to a public audience

Involvement

Undergraduate Psychology Organization, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Vice President, January, 20XX – Present

- Recruit new members through social media, classroom visits, and flyers increasing overall membership by 55
- Member*, January 20XX – Present
- **Build and maintain relationships** with peers and faculty while learning about the psychology field

University Program Council (UPC), University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Member, January 20XX – December 20XX

- Researched speakers and performers using online resources to evaluate as campus events
- **Coordinated** events for diverse student audiences with a **team** of five peers

Alternative Service Break, Pine Ridge, SD

Participant, March 20XX

- Tutored elementary school students on the Pine Ridge Reservation
- Promoted participation and engaged in extracurricular activities

Selected Honors

Psi Chi (academic honorary in psychology), October 20XX – Present

James Canfield Scholarship (based on academic achievement), August 20XX – May 20XX

Additional Experiences

Hometown Family Restaurant, Lincoln, NE

Server, June 20XX – October 20XX

- Managed orders and served up to five tables of 4-12 guests simultaneously, 20 or more tables per three hour shift.
- Handled case and credit transactions at the tables accurately and efficiently for an average of \$2,400 per shift

Target your resume for a specific position by incorporating words, phrases, or concepts used in the job description which are related to your skills and experience.

This example resume is targeted to the job description on the following page (12). Key words and concepts which matched those in the job description are in red for demonstration only. Do not use red text in your resume or other application materials.

Integrate hard skills into bullet statements where applicable.

Show progression in an organization by listing the roles under the organization.

Unrelated experience may be listed to show work longevity, time management, customer service, etc.

EXAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Account Manager

Account Managers at XXX Company are **problem solvers**, **excellent communicators**, **team players**, and responsible advocates. As an Account Manager, you will:

- Know scope and details of client accounts by **building relationships** with key client contacts.
- Develop an in-depth, holistic understanding of the customer's business needs and the integral value provided by XXX Company products.
- **Coordinate** with XXX and customer **teams** to **ensure deadlines are met** and communication flows efficiently between organizations.
- Communicate **complex technical concepts** to both technical and non-technical contacts.
- **Manage** and build relationships within the account to up-sell additional components of the XXX platform.

Qualifications Required

- **Bachelor's degree** in related field
- **Written and verbal communication skills** with the **ability to understand** and **explain complex concepts** clearly with all levels of stakeholders externally and internally
- Strong **problem solving**, **analytical**, and **critical thinking skills**
- **Multi-tasking** and time management skills
- **Customer service** and sales experience

**GET PERSONALIZED
JOB SEARCH
HELP NOW**



**CONNECT
WITH A
CAREER
COACH**

Employers may ask for a list of individuals who are willing to provide a description of your qualifications, work habits, character, and skills. These references should be provided on a document separate from your resume. You do not need to send references unless it is listed as a requirement in the application instructions, but be prepared to provide them when asked following these guidelines:

BUILDING YOUR REFERENCE SHEET

- Submit exactly the number of references requested by each employer.
- Supervisors, professors, student organization advisors, academic advisors, and other professional contacts able to positively attest to your skills, abilities, and work ethic are among those references most valued by employers. Do not include family or friends.
- Always ask potential references prior to listing them if they are willing to serve as a positive reference for you. This helps those who agree to be prepared and eliminates those unwilling or unable to give positive feedback.
- Tell your references the types of positions you will be applying for and send them your current resume to help prepare them for an inquiry.
- Keep your references updated on your job search and send a thank you note to each when you have accepted a position to show your appreciation and recognize their impact.

Herbie Husker

402-555-5555 | herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu | Lincoln, NE 68588 | www.linkedin.com/in/herbie.husker

Use the same header and footer as that of your resume

REFERENCES

Dr. Barbara Huxley

Professor of Psychology
University of Nebraska–Lincoln
123 Burnett Hall
P.O. Box 880055
Lincoln, NE 68588-0055
402-472-9874
bhuxley2@unl.edu
Former Professor

Susan Peters

Store Manager
City Center Mart
8509 State Line Road
Kansas City, MO 64114
816-562-5987
susan.peters@citycentermart.com
Former Supervisor

Ken Smith

Director of Development
University of Nebraska Foundation
1010 Lincoln Mall Suite 300
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-458-7272
kensmith@nufoundation.com
Current Supervisor

Include for each reference:

Name
Title
Organization
Work address
Work Phone Number
Work Email Address
Relationship to You



TIP:

List references in order of who you want to be notified first.

COVER LETTERS

The goal of a cover letter is to provide a compelling one-page story on why you are the best candidate for a position. It works in partnership with your resume, telling an employer why you are interested in their organization, and connects your skills and experiences to the position. It gives you an opportunity to identify the contributions you would make, something a resume does not do.

GETTING STARTED

- Study the job description and highlight keywords. What is important to the employer for the position?
- Identify your skills and experiences which match the keywords in the job description. How can you connect them strategically in your story?
- Determine why you are interested in this employer or opportunity. What aspects excite or appeal to you?

BUILDING CONTENT

- Tailor letters to each position specifically. Incorporate keywords in your writing to match the employer's needs. Applicant tracking systems often look for keywords.
- Consider your writing "tone" and style relative to the organization's culture, which may suggest a more or a less formal approach.
- Identify your related experiences including:
 - Actions taken
 - Skills developed
 - How these show you can succeed in the position
- Determine 3 points to highlight.
- Develop a thesis statement for the introduction paragraph based on your list.

CONTENT EXAMPLE

Job Qualifications/ Responsibilities	Experience	Action	Skills	Relationship to Job
Relationship building	University Foundation	Persuaded alumni to donate to the University	Communication, interpersonal, and sales	I can build relationships with customers and generate sales
Problem solving	Internship at City Center Mart	Resolved customer problems, questions on electronics and other product lines	Problem solving, ability to explain technical details to non-technical customers	I can solve client concerns and explain complex technology to their clients
Ability to understand and communicate complex technical systems	Research Asst. in Psychology Dept.	Learned and used SPSS to write report summarizing data	Ability to learn and use complex systems and communicate data	I can quickly learn XXX Organization's platforms and effectively communicate with their clients and teams

Thesis Statement

Based on my customer service experience and strong problem-solving, analytical, and communication skills, I believe I would be an asset to XXX Organization as an Account Manager who will work hard to build relationships with current and new clients, broadening their use of XXX's platforms.

COVER LETTERS

Use left-justified, single spaced block formatting with the same font style and size of your resume. The document below reflects the correct formatting and describes the components of a cover letter.

Header Matches Resume

XXX-XXX-XXXX | email@huskers.unl.edu | City, State, Zip Code | www.linkedin.com/in/name

Date

Contact Name
Contact Title
Organization
Address
City, State ZIP

If you do not have contact name, address it based on the language of the organization such as, "Human Resources" or "Talent Acquisition Team," found through your research.

Dear First & Last Name:

In the INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH establish the purpose of the letter. Start with a hook – a sentence that engages the reader (e.g., why you are interested in the industry or job function, past experience, etc.). Next, indicate the position you are seeking. Show knowledge of the employer, their needs, and why you are interested. End with a thesis statement to explain how your experience and/or skills can benefit the organization.

A "hook" may be found by brainstorming questions about yourself such as:

- Why did you choose your major?
- What interests you in this field?
- What are your strengths?

In the BODY PARAGRAPH(S), emphasize the skills and experiences which qualify you for the position. Develop your main points based on your thesis statement to be concise but clear on why you are the best candidate. Relate your background to the job description using keywords. Build on your resume bullet points by connecting them to the position. Specify what you will be able to help the organization accomplish or the results you will be able to achieve. Include any special training, education, and/or experience which sets you apart. Identify benefits your qualifications offer to the organization. Use more than one body paragraph to organize and present your main points.

If you have a connection or a contact with the organization mention them in your introduction.

In the CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH, restate your interest in the position and the organization and refer to the included resume. Indicate your interest in a personal conversation about your qualifications for the position, how to contact you, and thank the reader for their time and consideration.

A second "hook" can reinforce that you understand and offer what the organization needs.

Sincerely,

Signature
Your Name (typed)

For an electronic signature, include your name in a cursive font.



TIPS:

In an online application, if you are required to copy your cover letter into a text box:

- Remove your header, date, and contact information, copying in the greeting through your signature.
- Review and edit as needed, such as correcting character changes and adding returns between paragraphs.

EXAMPLE COVER LETTER

This example is targeted to the job description on page 12. Keywords and concepts which matched those in the job description are in red for demonstration only. Do not use red text in your cover letter or other application materials.

Herbie Husker

402-555-5555 | herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu | Lincoln, NE 68588 | www.linkedin.com/in/herbie.husker

February 25, 20XX

Kathy Beck
Human Resources Director
XXX Company
444 Old Cheney Road
Lincoln, NE 68516

Dear Kathy Beck:

Throughout my education and work experiences, I have found that I am happiest and perform at my best when I get to **build relationships**, which has led to my interest in client services. While researching opportunities on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Handshake system, I came across the Account Manager position at XXX Organization. I appreciated learning even more about it from you in our conversation at the career fair. I am particularly interested in XXX because of your commitment to exceptional service to clients, focus on driving change in the industry, and teamwork. Based on my strong **communication**, **problem solving**, and **analytical** skills, I believe I would be an asset to XXX Organization as an Account Manager who would work hard to build relationships with your clients, broadening their use of XXX's platforms

As an Executive Store Intern at City Center Mart and in leadership roles at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, I learned how to **communicate** with **diverse audiences** and **resolve their concerns** which I will be to do for XXX's clients. By understanding and **analyzing** their needs, I can identify which XXX platforms will serve them best and persuasively communicate the benefits offered, much like my work as a Development Associate with the University of Nebraska Foundation. In that role, I was able to generate an average of \$50,000/month through communication skills which helped me identify what was important to the alumnus with whom I was speaking and adapting my approach accordingly. At XXX, I will use these skills to **build relationships** and **solve problems** to the benefit of XXX and your clients.

My **analytical**, **critical thinking**, and **communication skills** developed in the classroom will also support my success as an Account Manager. For example, in my Research Methods and Data Analysis course, I reviewed research, **analyzed complex data**, and evaluated the accuracy of conclusions made. Subsequently, I **explained the complex concepts** and findings in a written summary and in a presentation to faculty and classmates. For that project, I taught myself SPSS further developing my **technical** skills and increasing my interest in technology. With these skills and enthusiasm, I am eager to learn more about XXX's products and am confident I will be able to work effectively with your teams and clients.

As detailed in my resume, my professional and academic experiences demonstrate my ability to be a strong Account Manager for XXX Organization. I am a **team** player with the communication and technical skills needed and am excited by the opportunity to grow with XXX. I look forward to further discussing my qualifications for the position with you. If you would like to arrange such a meeting, please contact me at 402-555-5555 or herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Herbie Husker
Herbie Husker

The "hook"

Contact in organization

Why the position and organization are of interest specifically

Thesis statement with main points

Building on and connecting a resume bullet point

Second "hook"

Statement of interest in an interview and how to contact you

EXAMPLE COVER LETTER

When applying by email, write a shorter cover letter as the body of the email.

Dear Kathy Beck:

I appreciated learning about the Account Manager position with XXX Organization in our conversation at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln career fair. As we discussed, I believe my communication, problem solving, and analytical skills, would allow me to succeed in the role.

My education and experience developed my ability to learn complex systems and to communicate them to others. Additionally, relationship building has been part of many of my roles on and off campus. Specifically, I have been a successful fundraiser for the University of Nebraska, connecting to alumni, understanding their interests, and adapting my approach accordingly. Coursework required my critical thinking and technical skills, such as learning and interpreting results of SPSS.

My resume details my related experiences which demonstrate my ability to be a strong Account Manager for XXX Organization. I look forward to further discussing my qualifications for the position with you. If you would like to arrange such a meeting, please contact me at 402-555-5555 or herbie.husker@huskers.unl.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Herbie Husker

Keep your email cover letter to three paragraphs.

Attach your resume as a PDF using your name in the title, i.e., Herbie Husker Resume.

MAXIMIZING ONLINE SEARCH SYSTEMS

Recruiters offer the following advice for your online profiles and job or internship search activity:

- **Be authentic in your online profiles.**

Introduce who you are as a professional and as a person. Include not just what you do, but how you do it, and why you do it. Showcase your experiences and goals, the skills and qualities that allow you to be successful in your work, and what motivates you, why you are interested in the field.

- **Show your work digitally.**

In addition to describing your experiences, include projects you have completed in coursework or independently. Consider creating an online portfolio or website if appropriate for your field or maximize your online profiles.

- **Communicate proactively and reliably.**

Reach out to recruiters through Handshake, LinkedIn and/or other platforms widely used in your field. If someone reaches out to you, reply quickly, demonstrating your professionalism, commitment, and communication skills.

Connect with a Career Coach to apply these strategies and those detailed in this guide to your personal search to maximize your time, resources, and efforts.

HANDSHAKE & LINKEDIN

Managing your online brand is important in any profession. In addition to being mindful of what you post on social media, knowing prospective and current employers may see it, use Handshake and LinkedIn to strengthen your online brand. You can do this by creating and maintaining a professional profile and engaging in groups and forums in your field on these platforms.

Handshake

Handshake is a student-centered job search system provided to you by UNL Career Services. As an UNL student, you already have a Handshake account- all you have to do is claim it by logging into Handshake at unl.joinhandshake.com. Search for part-time and full-time jobs and internships and make your profile available to employers. The more information you add to your profile, the easier it will be for Handshake to generate recommendations and content for you.

WHY USE HANDSHAKE?

You have the edge

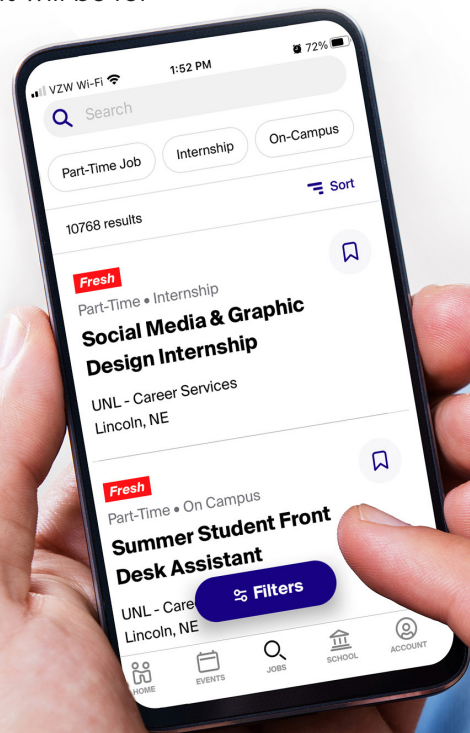
- Handshake is unique because all the jobs you see are posted specifically for students and employers are actively recruiting from UNL. In fact, it's the only place that connects you, your school, and employers together. On other sites, you may feel like your application is lost in the crowd, but on Handshake, you can be confident knowing the employers are looking for students like you.

Connection

- You can easily connect with job opportunities, employer information, career events and fairs.
- The employers on Handshake are messaging students like you with event invites, interview requests, and new job opportunities.

Job recommendations

- When you fill out your profile, Handshake will show you jobs and internships that match your interests and skills.



USING HANDSHAKE

Handshake BY THE NUMBERS

(2021-2022 Academic Year)

18,700+

Employers in Handshake

100%

Of the Fortune 500 Companies
use Handshake
to recruit

102,359

Total opportunities employers
posted in Handshake

19,641

Internship opportunities
posted in Handshake

43,648

Applications submitted by
UNL students

GET STARTED USING HANDSHAKE

1. Claim Your Account

UNL students are provided with a free Handshake account. To log in, download the **Handshake app** or go to unl.joinhandshake.com and use your UNL single-sign-on credentials.

2. Build Your Profile

Fill out your profile with information about you, your interests, your studies and what you're looking for in a job. Make sure to add your preferred locations and job roles. Your profile information can be changed and updated at any time.

3. Discover Jobs & Employers

Handshake takes the info you share in your profile to show you full-time jobs and internships that align with your interests and that you'd be a good fit for. You can also follow employers so that you can be the first to know when they post a new job or host an event.

4. Connect to Career Events & Fairs

Learn more about employers or roles you're interested in directly from the source. In-person and virtual career events can include career fairs, info sessions, employer panels, industry-focused networking opportunities, and more.

5. Get Recruited

Top employers, including 100% of the Fortune 500, tech start-ups, nonprofits, and more are hiring students like you on Handshake. When you create a profile, they'll be able to find you and message you about the roles you want.

6. Apply Easily

On Handshake you can store your resumes and other documents so they are ready when you need them. You can even apply to jobs in two clicks with Quick Apply.



Handshake

**WHERE HUSKERS FIND
JOBS & INTERNSHIPS**
www.unl.joinhandshake.com

HANDSHAKE PROFILE



TIP:

When you fill out your profile, you increase your chances of having a recruiter message you directly with job opportunities and event invitations. In fact, **80%** of students who fill out their profile receive a message from a recruiter.

PROFILE

- Login at unl.joinhandshake.com
- Upload your resume and additional documents to autofill your profile.
- Double check your profile to make sure all of the information from your resume transferred, and add more as necessary.
- Fill out the Career Interests section to begin tailoring your jobs feed.
- Customize your Notification settings to make sure you are getting the right information to your email and phone.

A screenshot of a LinkedIn profile page for Herbie Husker. The profile is for a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, majoring in Psychology, with a GPA of 4.0. The profile is 50% complete. The page shows sections for My Journey, Education, and Work & Volunteer Experience. A dropdown menu is open, showing options like My Profile, Documents, Applications, My Reviews, Career Interests, Notifications, Settings & Privacy, Help, and Sign Out. A red callout box points to the 'Add Skills' button, and another red callout box points to the 'Settings & Privacy' option in the dropdown menu.

Herbie Husker
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Bachelors, Psychology
Graduates May 2023
Sophomore • GPA: 4.0

Your profile is 50% complete

[Add Skills](#)

[Add Documents](#)

[Add Courses](#)

[Add Profile Picture](#)

✖ Your profile is hidden from employers

By marking your profile as private, over 300,000 employers cannot search for you or message you about job or internship opportunities.

[Make Profile Public to Employers](#)

This can be changed anytime in [settings](#).

My Journey

I enjoy understanding how people think and make decisions with a psychology degree, combined with my interests in technology, research, and data, I am eager to dive into technical sales while building meaningful relationships.

My past experiences include working with the University of Nebraska Foundation and serving in student organizations. I have gained strong communication, team-building, and problem-solving skills which I look forward to bringing to my next role.

Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln primary education
Bachelors, College of Arts & Sciences
Aug 2019 - May 2023
Major in Psychology
Cumulative GPA: 4.0

University of Otago
Certificate

[Add School](#)

Work & Volunteer Experience

University of Nebraska Foundation
Development Associate
Sep 2019 - Present (10 months)

- Persuade alumni and others to make financial contributions using strong speaking and listening skills
- Analyze giving trends through Microsoft Excel to create monthly reports by monthly deadlines
- Generate over 200,000 in pledges within first three months, earning top 10% fundraiser status

Continue to fill out your profile to get it to 100% complete.

Access Settings and Privacy to make your profile public to employers and other students.

WHAT DO YOU SHARE ON LINKEDIN?

Here are a few questions to start your thinking. Have you recently:



Read something related to your major or career field? Share the article with a summary of your takeaways.



Accepted an internship or job offer? Write a post about how excited you are to join the team and tag your new organization.



Collaborated on a group project at work, in a course, or for a student organization? Share your results and what it took to get it done.



Completed an online training or certificate program? Add it to Education or Accomplishments.



LinkedIn is an online professional networking platform which gives you the opportunity to:

- Market your skills, strengths, and experiences
- Connect with alumni, professionals, and recruiters
- Gain insight on organizations, industries, and opportunities
- Apply for internships and jobs

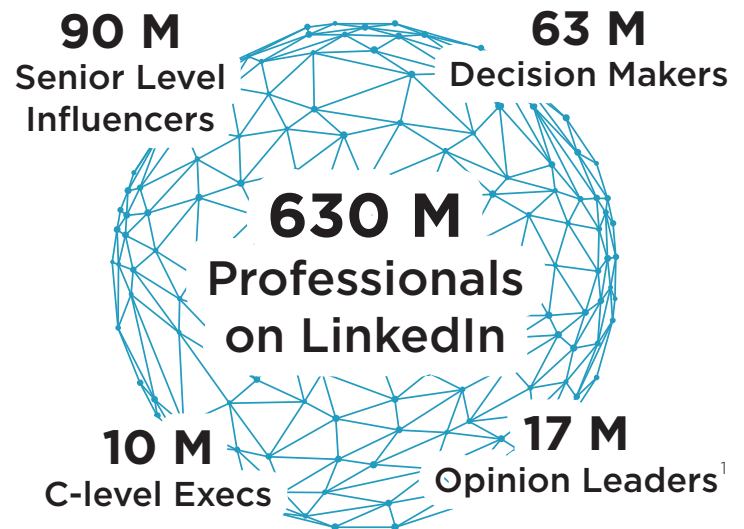
WHY USE LinkedIn?

Huge network of professional users.

- Once you join LinkedIn, each connection made introduces you to an average of 400 new people. You also get access to more than 100 new companies looking for your talent or skills and connections to 500+ jobs, on average.²
- 61 million LinkedIn users are senior level influencers and 40 million are in decision-making positions.
- 30 million companies are on LinkedIn.

Connection

- You can easily connect with job opportunities, employer information, and professional networks.



TIP: Include a profile picture. LinkedIn profiles with photos get 21x more views and 36x more messages.



1. Source: (2020, March 31). 50+ LinkedIn Statistics For 2020 (User Stats, Demographics, Usage & More) [Review of 50+ LinkedIn Statistics For 2020 (User Stats, Demographics, Usage & More)]. Foundation; foundation inc. <https://foundationinc.co/> <https://influencermarketinghub.com/linkedin-stats/>

2. Source: 50 of the Most Important LinkedIn Stats for 2020. (2020, February 3). Influencer Marketing Hub. <https://influencermarketinghub.com/linkedin-stats/>

LINKEDIN PROFILE

Photo:

Select a professional photo. Include a photo which clearly shows your face and does not have a distracting background.

Headline:

Write a headline that will catch attention. A headline includes information such as title, skills, strengths, experience, what positions you are seeking, etc.

Contact Information:

Create a custom LinkedIn URL for your profile via the "Edit public profile & URL" link to be used on your resume and your email signature.

Summary/About:

Develop a brief story or description of your experience, skills, and what you are seeking.

Experience:

Copy the same bullets listed on your resume for branding and consistency. You can also include links to work examples.



Connect

Message

More...

Herbie Husker · 2nd

Development Representative | Relationship Builder | Seeking Account Manager Positions

Lincoln, Nebraska · 6 connections · [Contact info](#)



University of Nebraska Foundation



Nebraska College of Business

Highlights



4 mutual connections

You and Herbie both know Celeste Spier, Julie Obermeyer, and 2 others

About

I have always been the person to strike up a conversation with someone new. Meeting new people and building relationships which create win-wins, is a strength of mine which I have invested in and utilized through my roles as a development representative with the University of Nebraska Foundation and executive store intern at ... see more

Experience



Development Representative

University of Nebraska Foundation · Part-time

Sep 2018 – Present · 1 yr 11 mos

Lincoln, Nebraska Area

- Persuade alumni and others to make financial contributions using strong speaking and listening skills
- Analyze giving trends through Microsoft Excel to create reports by monthly deadline
- Utilize SharePoint to maintain updated work documents among team
- Generate an average of 50,000/month, maintaining top 10% fundraiser status



Executive Store Intern

City Center Mart · Internship

May 2019 – Aug 2019 · 4 mos

Kansas City, Missouri Area

LINKEDIN PROFILE

Education



University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology
2017 – 2021

Education:

List your exact degree and major on your profile.



University of Otago
New Zealand Study Tour (6 credit hours of history)

Volunteer Experience



Participant
Alternative Service Break
Mar 2019 • 1 mo
Education

- Tutored elementary school students on the Pine Ridge Reservation
- Promoted participation and engaged in extracurricular activities

Volunteer Experience:

Add relevant organizations where you have volunteered. This shows an employer your civic engagement.

Skills & Endorsements

Communication

Customer Service

Public Speaking

[Show more](#) ▾

Skills & Endorsements:

Add skills based on your industry or careers of interest. Ask appropriate connections for an endorsement on a skill or a written recommendation.

Accomplishments

2 Honors & Awards

Psi Chi (Academic Honorary in Psychology) • James Canfield Scholarship (Academic Achievement Based)

2 Organizations

Undergraduate Psychology Organization • University Program Council (UPC)

1 Project

Research Methods and Data Analysis Research Project

Accomplishments:

Add organizations, honors, projects, etc. to highlight unique experiences which show your transferable skills. You can add these under the “Add profile section” drop-down.

Interests

Interests:

Follow influencers, organizations, groups, and schools. Join “The Official University of Nebraska-Lincoln Alumni Association” group where you can search and contact alumni in fields of interest.

LINKEDIN HEADLINE AND SUMMARY

WRITING YOUR HEADLINE & SUMMARY

The Headline and Summary/About sections describe your personal brand. Below are formulas for each. Including keywords based on your field is essential.

HEADLINE FORMULAS

Use elements from the formulas below to craft a unique headline.

Position | Skills or Experience | What you are seeking

Development Representative | Relationship Builder | Seeking Account Manager Positions

Major | Skills or Strengths | What you are seeking

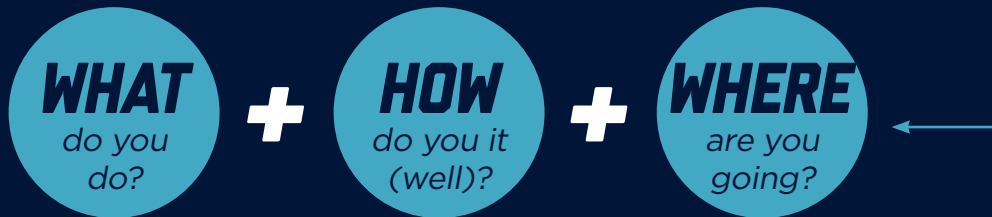
Psychology Major | Student Leader & Team Player | Seeking Sales Internships

Current Position & Organization | Sentence on what you do

Executive Store Intern at City Center Mart | Build relationships with customers and manage teams to create win-wins

SUMMARY FORMULAS

Develop your summary or story by answering these questions:



See the profile on page 22 for an example using this formula.

To catch a reader's attention, also ask yourself:

- What is important to others in my field?
- What is my main message or my brand?

Avoid starting with, "I am a student..." Be professional, but use your own voice. Update your summary periodically as your experience and interests evolve.



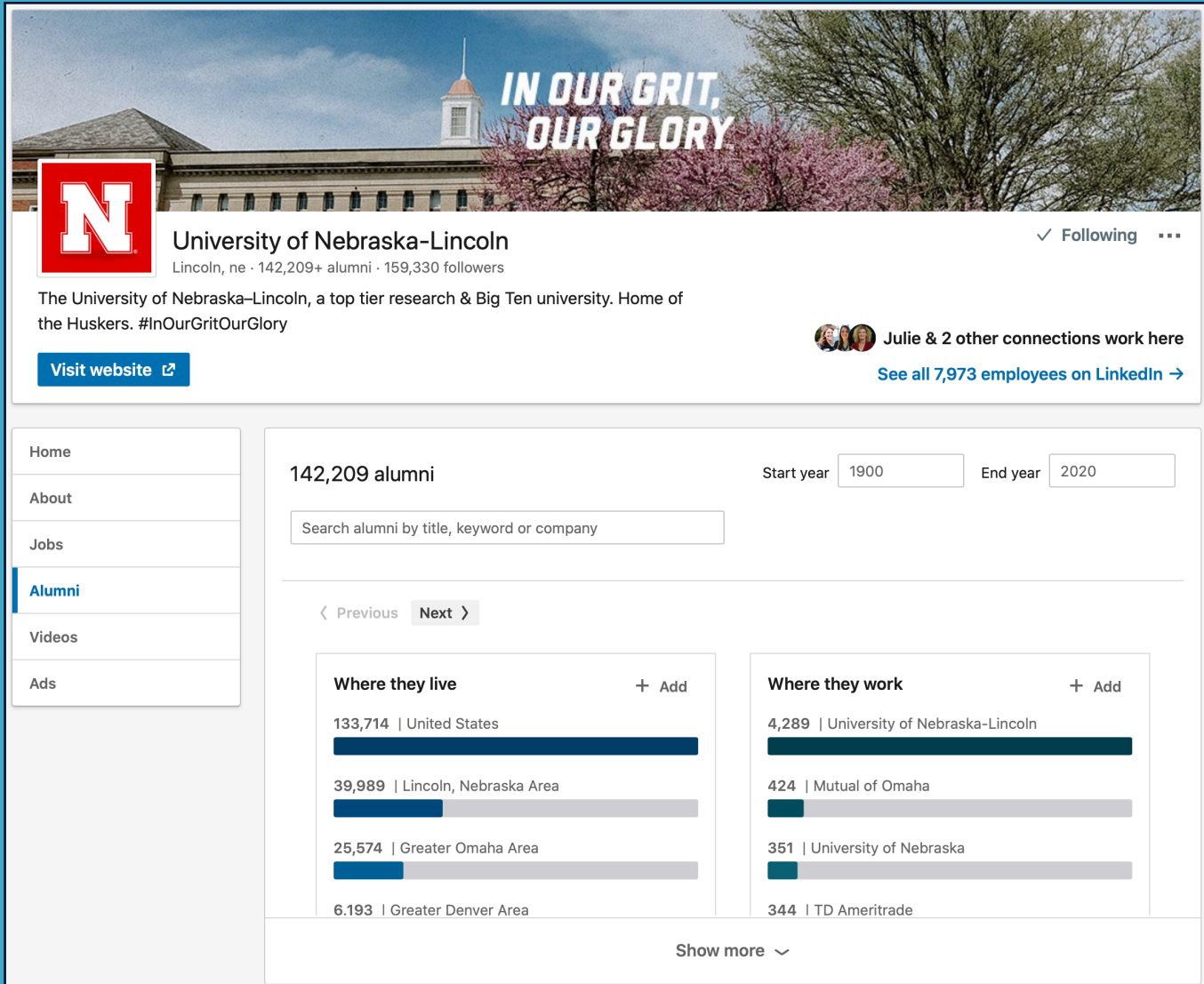
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

CAREER FAIRS & EVENTS

DISCOVER. EXPLORE. ENGAGE.

Learn more at go.unl.edu/careerfairs

LINKEDIN JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES



University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, ne · 142,209+ alumni · 159,330 followers

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln, a top tier research & Big Ten university. Home of the Huskers. #InOurGritOurGlory

Visit website ↗

Julie & 2 other connections work here
See all 7,973 employees on LinkedIn →

142,209 alumni

Start year: 1900 | End year: 2020

Search alumni by title, keyword or company

< Previous | Next >

Where they live	+ Add	Where they work	+ Add
133,714 United States		4,289 University of Nebraska-Lincoln	
39,989 Lincoln, Nebraska Area		424 Mutual of Omaha	
25,574 Greater Omaha Area		351 University of Nebraska	
6,193 Greater Denver Area		344 TD Ameritrade	

Show more ▾

CONNECT WITH ALUMNI

Reaching out and connecting with alumni is another great engagement strategy on LinkedIn. They may be able to provide insight, suggestions, or information about how they came into their career. Be strategic in your approach to connect and learn from alumni or professionals in your industry of interest.

To find alumni, search for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Once on the University's LinkedIn page, select "Alumni" which will allow you to search alumni members by title, keyword, or company, between graduation years you enter. Read alumni profiles to learn more about career paths and to find individuals for informational interviews. To learn how to make the most of an informational interview, check out the Ask For Advice, Not A Job section on page 28.



TIP:

Learn how the UNL Alumni Association can help with your networking and job search by going to <https://careers.unl.edu/channels/alumni-career-enrichment/>

NETWORKING

Networking is the best strategy to search for jobs and career opportunities.

People do business primarily with people they know and like.

- Resume and cover letters are too impersonal to convince someone to hire you.

Online job postings draw large pools of applicants.

- Comprehensive listing systems put you in competition with hundreds of others.
- Networking makes you a recommended candidate of a much smaller pool.

The job you are looking for may not be advertised at all.

- Networking leads to new information, leads, and the hidden job market.

Connecting with new people infuses opportunities into your life.

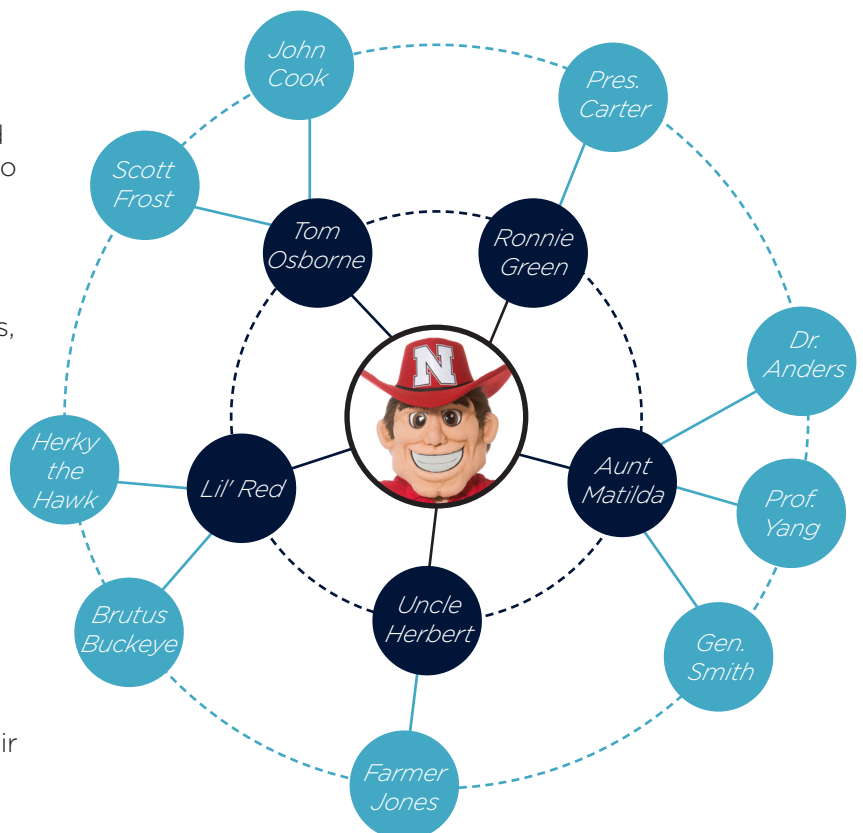
- Networking introduces directions you would not have otherwise discovered.

IDENTIFY YOUR NETWORK

You already have a network and it is more powerful than you think!

Your **inner circle** may include your family, extended family and family friends, your friends' parents, your neighbors, and former teachers and coaches. These 'strong ties' can lead to new ties to build your network.

Your **secondary circle** includes those you could meet through people in your inner circle such as your sibling's co-worker, your best friend's boss, and your aunt's business partner.



BEGIN BUILDING

Start reaching out by sending an email to people in your inner circle who may know something about the field you hope to enter. Ask for a meeting or phone call to learn from them about it and/or their employer. In such a meeting, called an informational interview, you will ask questions about the person's professional life, their field, and people in it who they know and would be willing to refer you to.

OUTREACH EMAIL EXAMPLES

INNER CIRCLE

To: teresa.jones@gmail.com
Subject: Experience in Human Services

Hello Aunt Teresa,

I hope you are having a great week and I look forward to seeing you at the next family gathering. I am reaching out because I have just declared a Psychology major at UNL and would like to start gaining more experience for careers in human services.

My mom mentioned that you have been a long-time volunteer with the Center for People in Need and might have some suggestions on what type of experience I should pursue and where to look for it. Would you have time to meet with me in the next couple of weeks to talk about this? Thank you for your consideration. I hope we can touch base soon!

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

Be concise.

Give enough context to make it clear why you are asking for a meeting or conversation but be brief.

To: teresa.jones@gmail.com
Subject: Connections in Human Services

Hello Aunt Teresa,

It was fun to catch up with you at the picnic last week. As you know, I am graduating next May. I will be starting my first full-time job search this spring and wondered if you could help.

I am reaching out to you because I remember you sharing with me that you have some connections in the technology industry. I was wondering if you would feel comfortable introducing me via email to a few of your contacts, so I could start networking with professionals in that field.

Thank you so much for your consideration and please let me know if there is any way I can help you professionally or maybe around the house.

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

Be direct and specific.

Clearly state why you are reaching out to them and what you are asking for.

Offer your assistance.

Networking is about building relationships, not just getting something for yourself. Recognize you are in others' networks and can be helpful to them.

SECONDARY CIRCLE

To: john.smith@organization.com
Subject: Referral from Teresa Jones

Dear John Smith:

I received your email from my aunt, Teresa Jones, who recommended I reach out to you to learn more about account management in the technology industry. I am a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln majoring in Psychology and am looking into this as a potential career.

To decide if it is a fit for me, I would like to talk to you about your career path and the skills and experience needed for account management. Would you be willing to meet with me or let me job shadow you for a couple of hours so I can gain a better understanding of it?

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I know your schedule is busy, so I understand you may not be able to get back to me this week, which is no problem. I will reach out to you again next week in the case that is a better time for you.

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

Mention connections.

Reference your last meeting or shared contact in the first line.

Maintain control.

State you will follow-up, otherwise you are left waiting for them to respond.

OUTREACH EMAIL EXAMPLES

OUTSIDE NETWORK

To: Jane.Andrews@organization.com
Subject: Information on Sales in Technology

Dear Jane Andrews,

I am a junior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln interested in pursuing a career in account management, specifically of technology. I came across your profile in the University Alumni Association LinkedIn group and would like to connect with hopes of learning more about the field. Would you be willing to add me as a professional connection?

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

To: Jane.Andrews@organization.com
Subject: Information on Chicago Market

Dear Jane Andrews,

I found your information in the UNL Alumni LinkedIn group and as a senior psychology student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, I am interested in learning more about your career path.

I am specifically looking at the market in the Chicago area where your insight would be particularly helpful. I recognize this might be a very busy time for you, so if you are unable to respond this week, I will follow-up next week to see if that is a more convenient time to talk.

Thank you for your time,
Herbie Husker

Target Experts.

Your network should reflect your goals. Reach out to successful professionals in the field to guide you.

ASK FOR ADVICE, NOT A JOB

In an informational interview, you want to gain insight into a field and/or organization, build a relationship, and gain an advocate. Asking for a job can make them feel pressured and leads to a short conversation. Ask for information, ideas, suggestions, and referrals to others with relevant information.

In his book, *The 2-Hour Job Search*, Steve Dalton suggests the TIARA method of developing questions for an informational interview. Examples:

TRENDS

What industry trends are influencing (field) right now?
How has the economy impacted (field) in the last three years?

INSIGHTS

What skills were most valuable in getting where you are now?
Where do you see (field) going in the next 3 years?

ASSIGNMENTS

What projects are filling most of your time right now?
What types of projects do new professionals in (field) typically get?

RESOURCES

What professional associations could be helpful in learning about (field)?
Do you know any (field) leaders on LinkedIn or elsewhere who would be good to follow?

ADVICE

What types of experiences should I gain now to pursue this career?
What coursework or training should I take to be ready for a position in (field)?

OUTREACH EMAIL EXAMPLES

NEW CONNECTION FOLLOW-UP EMAIL EXAMPLES

To: Ann.Beck@organization.com
Subject: Career Fair Follow-up

Dear Ann Beck,

Thank you for visiting with me about account management positions with (organization) at the UNL Career Fair this afternoon. I was excited to hear new sales staff are given the opportunity to work with some of your bigger clients. As we talked, I began to believe even more strongly that my skills and experiences are an excellent match for that type of role.

As you recommended, I am sending you my resume (attached) and have applied for the Account Management position through the (organization) website. If you need more information or would like to discuss my qualifications for the position further, please contact me at (phone number) or (email).

It was a pleasure to meet you and get to know more about (organization). I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

Remind them of yourself.
Refer to something specific in your conversation.

To: Dan.Jones@organization.com
Subject: Thank You

Dear Dan,

Thank you for your time and the great insight you shared with me this morning. I enjoyed not only learning about account management in the technology industry, but also getting to know about your own career path.

As you recommended, I will be pursuing experience in customer service to see if account management is a fit for me and to become more competitive for a variety of opportunities. I have also already requested membership in the LinkedIn group you suggested and look forward to joining the conversation and connecting with other experienced professionals there.

Thanks again for meeting with me this morning. When you are back in the city, please let me know so I can treat you to a latte at The Coffee Café next time!

Best regards,
Herbie Husker

Use an appropriate tone.
Address them by their first name only if your last conversation suggests it would be expected.

Be timely.
Follow-up within 24 hours of your conversation.

STAYING IN TOUCH EMAIL EXAMPLE

To: Dan.Jones@organization.com
Subject: (article topic in one word) Article and Follow-up

Hello Dan,

I hope all is well with you and (organization). I thought you would enjoy this article on (topic) (url). When I read it, you of course came to mind!

I recently accepted an internship at (organization) as a Customer Experience Specialist which will be a great introduction to the technology industry and what a career in it would look like. Thank you again for the information you shared with me earlier this fall. It helped me determine my next steps and lead me to this position.

The offer to buy at The Coffee Café still stands, so let me know when you are back in town!

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

Stay in touch.

- Send thank you notes.
- Forward articles that may be of interest.
- Check-in just to ask how they are doing.

Reinforce ongoing connection.
Refer to future opportunities to connect.



NETWORKING STRATEGIES

MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

Be Considerate. Respect their time and be polite and positive to make it a pleasant experience for them.

Be Authentic. Misleading someone about interests and goals will only hurt you in the long run.

Be Professional. Strike a professional, but conversational tone so they feel proud to connect you to people in their network.

Ask For Referrals. Ask, “Do you know anyone who is knowledgeable about (field) who you could introduce me to?”

MAINTAIN AND BUILD

Make connecting a priority. Schedule time to reach out and strengthen relationships with your current connections and create new ones.

Make connecting routine. Networking is part of being a professional, not just part of a job search. Incorporate it into your life to maximize its impact in the short and long term.

Manage what you learn. Develop strategies to track and access the insight and information you learn about the field and your connections.

Nurture your network. Stay in touch with your connections at reasonable intervals, prioritizing those you value most. Help others when you can. Maintaining your network is as important as building it.



MORE STRATEGIES TO EXPAND YOUR NETWORK:

Join professional and trade associations.

Attend industry and professional conferences.

Read industry journals to identify leaders in the field to reach out to.

Develop a strong LinkedIn profile and join the UNL Alumni LinkedIn Group and professional groups.

INTERVIEWING



An interview is a chance for an employer and a candidate to get to know each other. The employer assesses the candidate's interest level, motivations, personality, qualifications, and fit for the organization's culture. The candidate, in addition to pitching their qualifications for the position, should use the interview to determine if the employer and position fit their needs, interests, and work environment preferences. The following will help you prepare for effectively pitching your qualifications in an interview.

KNOW THE FORMAT

If not offered, ask in advance for information on the format of the interview. Many interviews are conducted between the candidate and one interviewer at the organization's site. Other formats include:



On-Campus



Phone



Prerecorded
Video



Virtual



Groups

Some may include formal testing, a series of interviews with different interviewers and groups, facility tours, and/or social events.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

PREPARE YOUR TARGETED STORIES

Based on Your Research Answer:

- What is important to the employer?
- What is required by the position?
- What are your skills, education, experiences, and interests which match those?
- What specific examples in your background demonstrate those matches?

Outline Your Examples Including:

- Skills, knowledge, and strengths used
- How you acquired those skills, knowledge, and strengths
- How you will use them in the position

Outline Your Message Including:

- What interests you in the organization and position
- Your motivations for pursuing the type of work and industry
- Your professional strengths

PRACTICE YOUR INTERVIEW SKILLS

Interviewing is not natural for most people, so practice your interview skills as you begin to apply for positions. You can practice on your own, but to experience an interview and get feedback on your interviewing skills, take advantage of the services and resources available to you through Career Services:

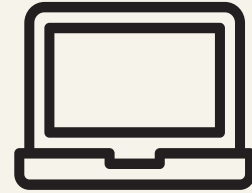
Mock Interviews with a Career Coach/Advisor and/or a mentor allow you to practice answering interview questions and get feedback on your ability to present yourself and your qualifications persuasively.

Big Interview is an online tool that allows you to practice and record yourself answering interview questions. Go to <https://careers.unl.edu/resources/big-interview/> to utilize the Big Interview resource.



TIP:

Prepare for a virtual interview the same way you would prepare for an in-person interview as outlined here. In addition, ensure your technology is working, your background is not distracting, and in the interview, maintain eye contact by looking into the camera.



GAIN INSIGHT

The more you know about the organization and the role, the better able you will be able to connect your qualifications to them. You have done some research prior to applying. Now is the time to go farther.

Research the Organization:

- Mission/values
- Culture
- Services/products
- Industry trends/issues
- Customers/clients
- Location(s)
- Competitors

Research the Role:

- Responsibilities/duties
- Qualifications
- Challenges
- Salaries in similar roles

Use Resources:

- Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/ooh)
- O*Net Occupational Information Network (www.onetonline.org)
- Organization's website, social media, and LinkedIn profile
- Job descriptions of similar roles in the industry
- News sites, i.e. US News, Forbes, Google News
- Professional associations
- Contacts in the organization/industry

UNDERSTAND THE QUESTIONS

TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Learn the types of questions employers may ask and what they are looking for below.

Traditional Questions often start an interview to establish rapport, i.e.:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What interests you in our organization?

Open-ended/Behavioral Questions call for description of your qualifications often through examples of how you have acted in the past in specific situations to reveal how you may act in similar situations in the future, i.e.:

- What are your strengths and areas in need of growth?
- Describe a time you set and met a goal.

Case/Problem Questions require you to analyze and offer a solution to a specific situation or puzzle in the interview to reveal your critical thinking skills and ability to articulate your thoughts under pressure, i.e.:

- Your client asks for an account credit card as their sales have been declining despite your support services. What do you do?
- How many footballs fit in a school bus?

CAN YOU DO THE JOB?

Describe your experience and how it has prepared you for this position.

What skills would you bring to the position?

Tell me about a challenge you faced in a previous role and how you handled it.

Describe a class that challenged you, in what ways, and how you handled it.

Tell me about a creative solution you developed for a problem at work.

Describe a time when you were facing multiple projects and deadlines and how you handled it.

ARE YOU A FIT FOR US?

What interests you in our organization?

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

How would a former supervisor describe you?

What projects are you working on outside of school/work?

Tell me about a project you worked on as part of a team and what your role was.

Tell me about a time you went beyond what was expected of you.

ARE WE A FIT FOR YOU?

What interests you in this field?

Where do you see your career in five years?

How do you like to be coached and receive feedback?

What is an area you would like to learn more about in the next year?

What types of projects motivate you most?

Why did you choose your major/field of study?

INTERVIEW QUESTION PREPARATION

Tell me about yourself.

While there is no one right way to answer this question, one strong approach is to share your Near Past or Present and your Future as they connect with the position which may include:

- Strengths, interests, and/or work style
- Major field of study and concentrations
- Experiences which reinforced strengths and interest in the field
- Why the position is of interest

End with a clear, positive summary statement which includes your strengths for the position.

Typical Answer:

I am from a small town in Nebraska. I have two siblings, one sister and one brother. When I came to college, I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I enjoyed my Psychology classes so went with that as a major. I will graduate in May and hope to find a full-time position such as the Account Manager position.



STANDOUT ANSWER:

I have always been fascinated by why people do what they do, so a Psychology major was a natural for me. My customer service, leadership, and fundraising experiences complemented my studies and strengthened my interest in relationship management. As a fundraiser, I developed my ability to quickly understand and adapt to the needs of my customer. My coursework often required analytical and technical skills for research projects. These projects got me excited about data management through platforms such as SPSS which I taught myself. It is the combination of building relationships, technology, and teamwork which makes an Account Manager position with XXX Organization so appealing to me. My communication, relationship management, analytical, and collaboration skills also make it a great fit, so I am excited to be here today to learn more about the role, XXX, and your teams, and to share my experiences and skills which connect to what you need in an Account Manager.

Interests, motivation

Major

Experience & skills

Interest in position

Summary with strengths

INTERVIEW QUESTION PREPARATION

What interests you in our organization?

Typical Answer:

I am interested in your organization because of your strong reputation in the industry and the position aligns with my career interests and skills. I enjoy working with people and using technology to help them.



STANDOUT ANSWER:

XXX Organization is committed to the unique needs of your clients which is why clients stay with you longer than is typical in the industry. Building relationships is something I naturally do, but I have also developed those skills in a variety of settings, so feel that type of role fits my personality and skills. I am also drawn to the team-oriented and innovative environment of XXX. Teamwork has been a big part of my work and academic experience and being a part of delivering new solutions is exciting to me. XXX Organization is just the type of organization I want to be a part of.

Specifics about the organization based on your research

Strengths related to the needs and/or culture of the organization

INTERVIEW STATS

- Average job interview length: 40 minutes
- Average interview process: 23 days
- Average number of interviews before an offer is made: 3
- Average time between first interview and an offer: 4.5 weeks

"Nail Your Job Interview With These 2020 Facts and Insights." Resume-Now, 2 June 2020, www.resume-now.com/job-resources/special-reports/stats/job-interview-2020. Accessed 2 Aug. 2020. With Insights from Employers and Candidates MRINetwork.Com/Recruiter-Sentiment-Study. 2 Aug. 2020.

<https://www.mrinetwork.com/media/304094/2017hiringsentimentstudy.pdf>
<https://www.resume-now.com/job-resources/special-reports/stats/job-interview-2020>



INTERVIEW QUESTION PREPARATION

START METHOD

The START method is especially useful with behavioral based questions which call for specific experiences by asking, "Tell me about a time," or "Give me an example of."

Prepare and share evidence that you can do the job and will be a good fit for the organization.

- Describe specific experiences with details showing how skills were developed.
- Include transferable skills all employers look for (p. 8)
- Build examples using the START method.

SITUATION

Outline the situation. *What was happening? What was the setting? Who was involved?*

TASK

Identify your task or assignment. *What was the challenge? What was the problem needing to be solved?*

ACTION

Describe what you did to accomplish the task. *What did you do? How did you decide what to do? What skills did it require?*

RESULT

Share the results. *What was the outcome? Was the challenge met or problem resolved?*

TAKEAWAY

Finish with your takeaway and how it relates to the position. *What did you learn from it? How does it relate to the position?*

Tell me about a team project you were a part of.

Typical Answer:

As a member of University Program Council, I collaborated with a team of students to bring events to campus. We coordinated educational and entertainment events and had to promote them across campus, which required research and a lot of organization. Our events were all well-received and had high attendance.



STANDOUT ANSWER:

As a member of University Program Council, I worked with a diverse team to select, coordinate, and promote events which appealed to the widest student audience possible. One of my roles was researching speakers and acts to determine their fit for our student body. I looked for online reviews and video of over 50 possibilities and identified their expenses. Analyzing the data, I made recommendations to the team. We discussed the options and determined which performers to bring to campus. Collaborating on design and strategy, we developed and executed unique promotions for each. Our programming was very successful. Four of the six events exceeded attendance projections by 20%. I enjoyed being a part of the team, getting to know and understand their perspectives, coordinating events together, and watching so many students enjoy our work. I look forward to using my communication and collaboration skills as a team member of XXX Organization, learning from others and contributing to our success.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Takeaway

Describe a project you were assigned and how you completed it.

Typical Answer:

In my internship at City Center Mart, I had the task to move ten aisles of merchandise to a new part of the store in an overnight shift. I developed the order in which we would move the merchandise and assigned different sections to members of my team. We worked from 10 pm to 2 am to get the job done.

 **STANDOUT ANSWER:**

As an Executive Store Intern at City Center Mart, I was given the lead role in moving ten aisles of merchandise to a new area of the store as a part of a new marketing strategy. I had a team of six associates to accomplish the move in a single overnight shift. I started with an analysis of the merchandise to be moved, including quantity, size, weight, and risk of damage. Additionally, I evaluated the size and configuration of the new space and determined where the merchandise should be positioned. I assigned teams of two to different sections, describing the order to move and where to reposition the merchandise. We started at 10 pm. I spent time between teams, helping with the move while resolving problems along the way and keeping their energy and momentum up. We finished in four hours, an hour earlier than anticipated. Working with XXX Organization will require these analytical, organizational, and communication skills, and the ability to motivate others. I look forward to leading and being a part of a team.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Takeaway

Tell me about a time you had a different opinion than a coworker you were collaborating with on a project and how you approached resolving it.

Typical Answer:

In one of my psychology classes, we were put in teams to develop a research paper and presentation on the application of psychological theories. One of my team members wanted to look at motivation and weight loss, but I thought positive psychology and its impact on employee motivation would be more interesting. I explained why I thought it would be better as a topic and we decided to go with it as our topic.

 **STANDOUT ANSWER:**

In one of my psychology classes, Motivation and Emotion, we were put in teams to develop a research paper and presentation on the application of psychological theories. After reviewing the theories we had studied and talking to the team about their interests, which included business management, I suggested the impact of positive psychology on employee motivation as a topic since it would be relevant to all of us. One of my team members wanted to look at motivation and weight loss. To resolve the difference and choose a topic, I asked them to describe why they suggested that topic. They explained their personal interest in it and how widespread it could be applied. Then I explained the reasons I was making my suggestion, including the current prevalence of positive psychology and how it fit for the team. It was important to understand their perspective and discuss it as a team. We decided positive psychology would best lend itself to our interests and resources. As an Account Manager with XXX Organization, I will use these communication and collaboration skills with clients and our team. I enjoy working with others to find win-win solutions, which I will always strive for at XXX.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Takeaway



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS PREPARATION

PREPARE QUESTIONS

At the end of your interview you may be asked if you have any questions. Asking informed questions demonstrates your interest and desire to learn more. Prepare three to five questions which show the research you have done on the position and organization or focus on specifics of either such as:

Regarding the Position

- What are some of the challenges I would face in this position?
- What kind of assignments could I expect in the first six months?
- What teams and customers would I be working with most?

Regarding the Organization

- How would you describe your organization's culture?
- How does your organization support diversity in the workplace and for your customers?
- What kind of training and development opportunities are available to staff?

Avoid questions on:

- ✗ Salary
- ✗ Vacation/leave policy
- ✗ Promotions
- ✗ Pay for further education
- ✗ Details easily found online

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTS

Close to one in four companies use pre-employment tests to screen job candidates (2019 NACE Recruiting Benchmarks Survey Report). These tests are designed to assess a candidate's fit for the organization and the role. You can, however, prepare to provide optimal answers with the following tips:

Be Your Professional Self

Your personality has many dimensions, i.e., student, friend, professional, etc. When taking an employment test, maintain your professional perspective. This can take focus while answering dozens of questions which seem unrelated to the job. Answer as your best, most confident self throughout.

Control Your Environment

Employment tests are often taken remotely. Before starting, ensure your test-taking space has few distractions. Take the test on a laptop or desktop, not a mobile device, and make sure your technology is sound.

Manage Your Stress

Stress can cause indecisiveness and carelessness. Learn as much as you can about the test to be completed, i.e. the format, time allowed, number of questions, etc. Be well-rested when you take the test and as noted, control your environment to reduce outside stressors.

Finally, understand that there are no right or wrong answers. Be honest when taking these tests. Trying to out-think them can backfire, as you will not know what specific answers indicate or the exact profile the employer wants to see. Also, assessing your fit is not only about your potential success in a role, it indicates how satisfied you would be in it. Answering honestly offers the opportunity to confirm the role will fit your needs, too.

"How Job Candidates Can Prepare For Employment Tests | Criteria Corp." www.criteriacorp.com, www.criteriacorp.com/how-job-candidates-can-prepare-employment-tests. Accessed 2 Aug. 2020. <https://www.criteriacorp.com/how-job-candidates-can-prepare-employment-tests>

LOOK THE PART

Use your company and industry research to determine what might be most appropriate for the interview. You are still proving yourself, so be thoughtful and show you are taking the opportunity seriously. The following general guide applies to many fields and organizations, but it is appropriate for your attire to reflect your personality, culture, religion, and/or gender identity.

BUSINESS FORMAL

Business Formal is the standard dress code for a job or internship and indicates the following:

- Dark-colored suit with coordinated jacket and pant/skirt
- White or light color and subtle-patterned dress shirt, blouse or top
- Dark polished closed-toed shoes with no more than 1-2 inch heels



BUSINESS CASUAL

Often too casual for an interview, following a Business Casual dress code may be appropriate for some settings or interview activities and indicates the following:

- Sports jacket or cardigan with coordinated slacks or skirt
- White or light color and subtle-patterned dress shirt, blouse or top
- Polished, closed-toed shoes with heels under 2 inches



Other elements to minimize distractions include:

- Conservative, minimal accessories
- Small to medium size handbag
- Subtle makeup
- Well-kept hair
- Well-groomed appearance



Elements typically not appropriate for an interview include:

- ✗ Denim with holes or rips
- ✗ Athletic clothing
- ✗ Tight or revealing clothing
- ✗ Logos and provocative statements or images
- ✗ Colognes, perfumes, and body sprays



FOLLOW-UP EXAMPLES

THANK YOU EXAMPLE

In addition to demonstrating you are courteous, sending a thank you note after the interview reinforces your interest, skills, and commitment to the position. Send your note within 24 hours of the interview to all those who interviewed you.

Address them by their first name only if your conversation suggests it would be expected.

Refer to something specific from the interview, changing it for each Thank You written.

Reinforce your strengths.

Restate your interest.

Subject: Thank You for the Interview

Dear Kathy,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you and your staff regarding the Account Manager position with XXX Organization. Your team clearly enjoys working with each other which is no doubt part of why they are so successful. It was fun to get to know them and learn more about how XXX works on a day-to-day basis. I am even more excited about the position and with my communication and analytical skills, can really see myself as a strong part of the team.

If you have any additional questions for me, please contact me at this email address or at 402-555-5555. I look forward to hearing from you. Thanks again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

RECONNECTING NOTE EXAMPLE

If you have not heard from the organization within the time-period they indicated for a decision, reach out to your contact to re-connect and reinforce your interest in the position.

Address them by their first name only if your conversation suggests it would be expected.

Restate your interest.

Be brief and upbeat.

Subject: Follow-up on Account Manager Interview

Dear Kathy,

I want to check in for any updates available on the status or decision timeline of the Account Manager position I interviewed for on March 3. I am still very interested and look forward to hearing back from you.

I hope all is well with you and XXX Organization. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Herbie Husker

OFFERS & NEGOTIATION

You got a job offer – congratulations! Before accepting or declining:

Express your appreciation and excitement for the opportunity.

- Ask for the details of the offer to be sent to you.
- Ask by what date they need your decision.
- Ask, if necessary, for more time to decide:
“I am excited about the opportunity but want to make a thoughtful decision. Would it be possible to have until (reasonably extended date) to evaluate the offer?”
- Evaluate the full offer when you receive it, considering all elements including:
 - Salary
 - Cost of living in the location
 - Health care benefits
 - 401K or other retirement benefits
- Decide if you will accept, decline, or negotiate.

NEGOTIATION

Research and consider the following to determine if negotiation is appropriate in your situation:

- Expectations regarding negotiating vary by industry
- Public and nonprofit organizations often have little or no option to adjust an offer
- Entry-level positions may have a predetermined salary that cannot be negotiated
- Salaries for the type of position offered in the location you would work
- The strength of your qualifications for the position

If you determine you want to negotiate, connect with a Career Coach to explore best practices in your field.



ACCEPTANCE & DECLINING

ACCEPTING AN OFFER

In a phone call to your contact, express your appreciation for and excitement to accept an offer and ask what steps you should take next to move forward. Follow-up with an email to confirm.

Dear XXX (get from cover letter),

As we discussed, I am happy to accept your offer for the Account Manager position with XXX Organization with a start date of May 20, 20XX. I understand the annual salary will be \$38,000 and will include the benefits listed in your email of April 16, 20XX. In the meantime, if there are any additional steps I need to take to move forward, please just let me know. I look forward to being a part of the XXX Organization team!

Sincerely,

Herbie Husker

SECOND CHOICE OFFER CAME BEFORE YOUR FIRST CHOICE

When you have the offer in writing and know the date by which they need your decision, reach out to contact with the other opportunity you are being considered for:

Dear XXX (from cover letter),

I am following-up on the Account Manager position with XXX Organization. As I said in my interview, I am excited about the opportunity and feel it is a great fit for my skills and experience. I want to let you know I have received an offer from another company. The position with XXX Organization is my top choice but their offer is of interest to me. They would like an answer by the end of this week. Do you anticipate making a decision on the Account Manager position soon? I want to have as much information you can offer.

Sincerely,

Herbie Husker

You may need to decide about your first offer before knowing if you will receive an offer for your preferred position. Make and communicate your decision on the offer given by the date required. If you accept, maintain goodwill with the other organization by withdrawing yourself from consideration for their position immediately, thanking them and briefly explaining you have accepted a position elsewhere.

ACCEPTANCE & DECLINING

DECLINING AN OFFER

Express again your appreciation for the offer and their confidence in your qualifications. Tell them you are declining the position with a brief explanation such as,

“While I appreciate the offer, I am declining as I have accepted a position elsewhere which at this time is a better fit for me. Again, thank you for the offer and your generosity throughout the interview process.”

Follow up by sending an email to confirm:

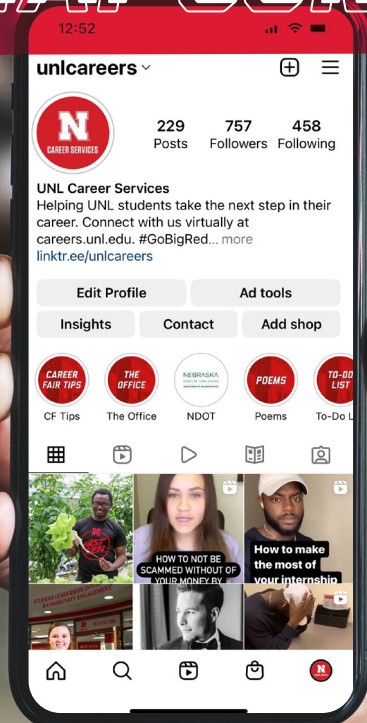
Dear XXX (from cover letter),

As I mentioned in our recent conversation, I regret to inform you that I am declining your offer for the Account Manager position with XXX Organization as I have accepted another position which is a better fit for me at this time. Thank you for your help through the interview process. Please extend my appreciation also to your entire team for the exceptional courtesy and kindness they showed me.

Sincerely,

Herbie Husker

STAY CONNECTED



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