



North Central Michigan College Career Services

How to Succeed in your Job Search/Internship: Resumes, Cover Letters, and Interviews



North Central Michigan College Career Services
Borra Learning Center
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Welcome to your newest adventure!

Looking for a job or internship can be exciting, intimidating, nerve-wracking, thrilling, and sometimes overwhelming. It takes patience, perseverance, and persistence. The goal of this booklet is to try to help you succeed in your search by providing guidance and information for your journey.

The information in this guide is intended to assist you through many parts of the process of securing a job or internship. You can jump right to the part that will answer your questions or start at the beginning and work through the process. What it won't do is place you in a job. That's up to you to find a position that suits you.

If you find that you would like more information about resumes, cover letters, interviewing, and networking, Career Services is here to help. This service is provided in room 125 of the Bora Learning Center. You can get your resume and/or cover letter reviewed, practice your interviewing skills, and find out about the latest resources being offered by the office.

As you proceed, believe in yourself and feel free to ask for help!



Table of Contents

FOUNDATION FILE.....	4
RESUMES.....	5
RESUME TYPE AND CONTENT	6
<i>Resume Tips</i>	6
RESUME HEADERS	7
<i>Action Verbs</i>	8
<i>Transferable Skills</i>	9
<i>Chronological Resume Example</i>	10
<i>Education</i>	10
<i>Skills</i>	10
<i>Community Engagement</i>	10
YOUR NAME.....	11
<i>Education</i>	11
<i>Summary of Qualifications</i>	11
COVER LETTERS.....	12
Do.....	12
DON'T	12
SAMPLE COVER LETTER.....	13
<i>Sending your resume and/or cover letter</i>	14
REFERENCE SHEET	15
INTERVIEWS	16
COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	17
<i>What to wear</i>	18
RESUME PREPARATION WORKSHEET	19
PERSONAL INFORMATION	19
<i>Education</i>	19
<i>SKILLS</i>	20
WORK EXPERIENCE	21
<i>HONORS, AWARDS, ACTIVITIES, MEMBERSHIPS</i>	22
NETWORKING.....	23
CAREER FAIRS	24
FINAL THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	26



First things first. Let's get started.

Foundation File

A foundation file contains the building blocks for your resume. The file is a chronological list of each job held; degree, certificate, or license earned; internship, volunteer experience, and/or activity participated in; and award or honor received during your life. Your most current activities should be the first entries you see when you open this document. If possible, every entry should include what you did in detail, who you did it with, where you did it, when you did it, and the contact information for the supervisor or leader. When you finish a new certificate, change jobs, or participate in a new volunteer experience, add it to the file. If you keep the file current, it will make updating your resume much easier. The worksheets in this booklet provide one way to record the information to be used in your file. If you build the file in a word processing program, it will be easier to copy and edit your entries when you build your resume.

Your foundation file holds the raw materials for building your resume. Through the experiences you have had, including education, work, volunteering, and other activities, you have acquired and developed skills that may be relevant to a potential employer. Spend some time thinking about all the tasks you have done in each job or experience you have had. Were those tasks related to communication, customer service, managing people, managing resources, research, negotiating, organizing, teaching, or caring for people, (just to name a few areas)? By using the detailed descriptions in your foundation file, you can begin to craft confident, concise action statements for your resume. How to build your resume will be discussed in-depth in the Resume section of this booklet.

Another important use for the information in your foundation file is networking. Keeping track of all the people, (and their contact information), that you have gone to school with, worked with or for, or volunteered with will come in handy as you start to look for new employment or an internship. The more people you can connect with the better chance you have of finding the job you want. Specific information about networking is presented later in the Networking section.

An entry in your foundation file could look like this:

What – Clerk at JC Penney's, a department store. Worked in housewares, shoes, and fragrances. Responsible for helping customers; making sales using the cash register and credit card machines; restocking the inventory; tidying displays; closing or opening the cash register at my station to start the day or end the day; being on time to work; doing other tasks as assigned by my boss; working with other team members; doing inventory when needed.

Skills - customer service, attention to details, money handling, punctual, can handle stress of a sale.

Where – Lansing, MI

When – Christmas and summer breaks during college – Nov 2015 – Dec 2015, June 2016 – Aug 2016.

Who – Boss, Joseph Roberts, family friend, phone, address; Kim Johns, co-worker, knew her younger brothers in high school, phone, email.



The next area of exploration and development is the resume.

Resumes

A resume is one of the most important tools you will use in your job or internship search. It is a way to market yourself; a means to communicate your potential value to an employer. The point of the resume is to get an interview. Investing the time in creating a powerful resume could mean more money in your pocket down the road. Employers usually spend less than a minute, and as little as 10 seconds, initially reviewing your resume. Let's look at how to make those seconds work in your favor.

- The resume should be visually appealing, easy to read, and contain no errors.
- Be bold, confident, and honest in your action statements. Sell your story.
- Tailor your resume to connect your abilities with what the potential employer is seeking in a candidate.

How do I create a resume?

Your dashboard in College Central Network is available to help you with each step of the resume writing process, including getting started. Career Coach also has resume writing resources.

1. Review the qualifications for the position you are seeking. Compare them to your skills and experiences. Your foundation file can be helpful as you do this.
2. The next step is to decide on a format. The most common styles of resumes are chronological or functional. The next page has more details.
3. Use your information to develop the sections of the resume. You may not need to use each part. Remember to think about what the employer wants as you are writing. Think about how your experiences are transferable to the position that you are seeking.
4. There are a number of websites that provide sample resumes, cover letters, thank you notes and job-hunting techniques. To get you started you may want to visit the following:
 - <http://www.rileyguide.com>
 - <http://onetonline.org>
 - <http://www.quintcareers.com>
 - <https://www.collegecentral.com/ncmich>

After creating an account at <https://www.collegecentral.com/ncmich>, you can view short videos on resume writing, cover letters, interviewing and other career related topics. Podcasts and career support documents are also available.

Resume Type and Content

As previously mentioned, the two most common types of resumes are chronological and functional. Each resume style has advantages. Choose the format that best fits your situation. The chronological resume is the most widely used and accepted format. The chronological resume lists your experience in reverse chronological order (listing your latest job first). The functional resume focuses on your relevant skills rather than job progression.

Resume Tips

- ✓ The goal of the resume is to get an interview.
- ✓ The format matters! Avoid overcrowding (use at least one-inch margins.) Your resume needs to be visually interesting and easily navigated.
- ✓ Make sure your font is readable (10-12 point and common fonts).
- ✓ Avoid logos, clip art, or photos.
- ✓ Don't include personal information (social security number, religion, age, etc.).
- ✓ Use **bold print** or underlining in your headings but don't overuse those tools.
- ✓ Avoid big blocks of text. Use bullets when possible.
- ✓ Be positive, brief, and quantify results when possible. Numbers are persuasive.
- ✓ Use action verbs to illustrate your responsibilities, see the list beginning on page 7.
- ✓ Limit your resume to one page. If you have ten years of work experience, a two-page resume may be reasonable.
- ✓ Don't include references or the words "references available upon request" (references go on a separate sheet of paper). This will be discussed in a later section.
- ✓ Be honest! Employers will verify information on resumes.
- ✓ Read your resume from the prospective of the potential employer.
- ✓ Proofread and then do it again. Ask someone else to proofread your resume.

Which Resume Format to Use:

When to consider using a Chronological resume:

- The situation calls for a more traditional looking resume.
- You have a stable, consistent work history.
- Your current job is in the same field in which you are applying.
- You want to show advancement and increasing levels of responsibility.

When to consider using a Functional resume:

- Your work history is limited, (periods of unemployment - not as a student, or varied career fields).
- You are applying for your first job.
- Your recent work experience is completely different than the job you are seeking.
- Your job titles do not reflect your experience.



- ✓ Use quality, neutral colored resume paper. Your cover letter, references, and resume should all be on the same type of paper.
- ✓ Watch out for spills, smudges or low-quality printing.

Resume Headers

Personal data (you don't actually list this title)	Name, address, phone number and email.	It is very important that your voicemail, email and/or website are professional. Don't forget to add your area and zip codes.
Education	Name of school, degree earned or pursuing, area of study, graduation date (or expected finish date), location with city and state.	Start with the most recent school. If including coursework, list only relevant courses. Listing your HS may not be necessary.
Experience	Name of employer or organization, position title, location with city and state, dates of your employment. Highlight relevant accomplishments and skills.	Start with the most recent experience. Use action verbs to highlight the relevant skills and accomplishments that are related to the desired position. Can include work internships and volunteer experiences.
Skills	Highlight specific abilities. May include computer skills, foreign language fluency, or specialized proficiencies	Typically, not more than five or six bullet points
Certifications/Licenses	List items that are required in your field of work, i.e. CPR, Serve Safe, X-ray license.	Any items should be relevant to the position for which you are applying or enhance your employability.
Volunteering/Community Involvement	This shows that you have diverse interests and are invested in your community.	Best to use broad labels rather than identify specific political or religious organizations.
Other Activities	Can include campus groups, student organizations, athletic groups, professional associations, etc.	This section can highlight positions of responsibility and diverse interests.
Awards/Honors	Scholarships, honors, and awards. These highlight your work ethic, dedication, and commitment.	A need-based scholarship is not considered an honor/award.



Action Verbs

The following verbs can be helpful in developing your action statements for your resume. The titles are not meant to limit your search but rather offer some starting points. You may find it helpful to read through several lists to be reminded of your biggest accomplishments or those that are most relevant to the job for which you are applying. This is not a comprehensive list. It is intended to inspire your writing so that you can boldly and confidently convey your actions.

<u>Clerical/Detail/</u>	Collaborated	Displayed	<u>Teamwork</u>
<u>Organization</u>	Communicated	Drew	Adapted
Approved	Consulted	Entertained	Aided
Categorized	Contacted	Fashioned	Arranged
Charted	Convinced	Illustrated	Assisted
Collected	Debated	Initiated	Attended
Compiled	Discussed	Innovated	Contributed
Composed	Explained	Invented	Cooperated
Corrected	Influenced	Modeled	Coordinated
Correlated	Interacted	Modified	Counseled
Corresponded	Interpreted	Originated	Consulted
Distributed	Interviewed	Performed	Facilitated
Documented	Lectured	Photographed	Fostered
Edited	Listened	Revitalized	Fulfilled
Filed	Marketed	Shaped	Guided
Gathered	Mediated		Helped
Maintained	Moderated	<u>Financial/Data</u>	Integrated
Operated	Negotiated	Allocated	Mentored
Organized	Observed	Analyzed	Motivated
Prepared	Participated	Appraised	Represented
Processed	Persuaded	Assessed	Resolved
Proofread	Presented	Audited	Shared
Purchased	Promoted	Budgeted	Simplified
Reorganized	Publicized	Calculated	Supported
Responded	Recruited	Earned	Treated
Revised	Referred	Estimated	Volunteered
Reviewed	Reported	Financed	
Scheduled	Specified	Forecasted	<u>Leadership/</u>
Screened	Suggested	Grossed	<u>Management</u>
Tabulated	Summarized	Measured	Analyzed
Updated	Translated	Predicted	Appointed
Validated	Wrote	Projected	Assessed
Verified		Purchased	Attained
	<u>Creative</u>	Raised	Authorized
<u>Communication/</u>	Acted	Reconciled	Carried Out
<u>People</u>	Adapted	Saved	Chaired
Addressed	Composed	Sold	Coached
Advertised	Created		Commanded
Briefed	Designed	<u>Helping/</u>	Conducted



Contracted	Streamlined	Critiqued	Remodeled
Coordinated	Supervised	Encouraged	Repaired
Demonstrated		Facilitated	Restored
Directed	<u>Research</u>	Focused	Specialized
Eliminated	Analyzed	Guided	Standardized
Enforced	Collected	Inspired	Upgraded
Established	Compared	Lectured	Utilized
Evaluated	Conducted	Motivated	
Facilitated	Diagnosed	Reinforced	<u>Other</u>
Founded	Discovered	Simulated	Accomplished
Generated	Documented	Trained	Achieved
Headed	Evaluated	Translated	Began
Hosted	Examined	Tutored	Completed
Implemented	Experimented		Delivered
Incorporated	Gathered	<u>Technical</u>	Equipped
Increased	Identified	Adapted	Expanded
Influenced	Inspected	Applied	Improved
Initiated	Investigated	Assembled	Improvised
Launched	Located	Built	Initiated
Led	Measured	Constructed	Piloted
Managed	Researched	Converted	Pinpointed
Merged	Reviewed	Designed	Pioneered
Mobilized	Sorted	Devised	Published
Motivated	Specified	Engineered	Refined
Negotiated	Studied	Fabricated	Restored
Oversaw	Surveyed	Fortified	Revamped
Presided	Tested	Installed	Revived
Prioritized		Maintained	Simplified
Restored	<u>Teaching</u>	Manipulated	Spearheaded
Reviewed	Adapted	Operated	Surpassed
Scheduled	Advised	Overhauled	Transformed
Secured	Coached	Programmed	
Started	Conducted	Redesigned	

Transferable Skills

These are appealing to employers. These skills can be acquired from and applied to a variety of experiences. Address them in cover letters, functional resumes, and interviews.

- Written communication
- Manage/supervise people
- Teach/Train people
- Tutor/demonstrate ideas
- Project management
- Public speaking
- Assemble/build/construct things
- Repair machinery

- Maintain records
- Manage money/budget
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Planning/organizing
- Computer skills
- Fluency in a foreign language
- Ability to handle stressful situations



Chronological Resume Example

Your name

Address
City, State, and Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Education

North Central Michigan College

Associate of Science

- Cumulative 3.8 GPA; Dean's List, 4 semesters

Petoskey, MI

May 2020

Experience

North Central Michigan College

Admissions Intern

Petoskey, MI

August 2020-present

- Planned the 2021 Spring Prospective Student visit day for 200 new or transfer students.
- Engaged with over 150 prospective students during campus tours.
- Reviewed international application packets to ensure all necessary items were submitted and reported to supervisor the items that were missing.

Montessori School

Intern/Summer Camp Leader

Petoskey, MI

June 2019-August 2019

- Interned in both the infant/toddler and preschool rooms
- Co-created and implemented nature-based curriculum
- Conducted training sessions for volunteers

Skills

- Microsoft Word and Excel
- Multi-line phone system
- Spanish fluency

Community Engagement

Campus Cupboard, NCMC, Petoskey, MI

Outreach Coordinator

April 2020 – Present



Functional Resume Example

Your name

Address

City, State, and Zip

Phone Number

Email Address

Education

North Central Michigan College, Petoskey, MI

Associate in Applied Science – Business Administration

Expected Graduation, May 2021

Summary of Qualifications

Communication Skills

- Conversation partner for ESL students.
- Compose written and email correspondence for Insurance office.
- Collaborates with coworkers to promote organizational effectiveness.
- Ability to transcend cultural boundaries to develop working relationships.

Training/Teamwork

- Demonstrated daily procedures and oversaw training of new employees. □
Volunteered with club members to meet fund-raising goal of \$8,000.

Planning/Organizing

- Committee chair for Winter Fun dance for 2 years.
- Volunteered in Guatemala for the Cultural Awareness Program.
- Facilitated language development events for foreign exchange students.

Skills

- QuickBooks, Microsoft Word and Excel
- Scheduling and multi-line phone systems
- Fluent in Spanish

Experience History

Bud's Moving
Corner Bistro

Office Assistant
Waitress

My Town, MI
My Town, MI

2014-2018
2012-2014

Cover Letters

A cover letter is a great partner to your resume. It gives you an opportunity to tell an employer why you are the candidate they are looking for to fill a posted position. Your cover letter should demonstrate how your experiences fulfill the employer's needs and why you would be a great fit for the organization. A good cover letter is not a repeat of your resume, but links your skills and experience to the qualifications for the position. It gives you a chance to engage the employer about setting up an interview. Your cover letter should convince the employer that it is definitely worth the time to interview you!

Do

- Address the letter to a specific person. If you cannot find the person's name use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Selection Committee."
- Use the job description to develop your letter. State why you are qualified for the position. Think about your skills.
- Proofread. Then have someone else proofread your writing. □ Sign the letter, if you are mailing your employment packet.
- Use the same contact information from the header of your resume.
- Use the same paper as your resume.
- Use results statements. Be honest.
- Let your personality come through in the letter.

Don't

- Send a letter opening with "To whom it may concern".
- Use a form letter – write it to fit the job.
- Overuse the pronouns I, me, my.
- Give a summary of your life story.
- Repeat your resume in the letter.
- Explain questionable/objectionable issues in your history.
- Make salary requests or discuss benefits. This is not the place.
- Speak poorly of any past experiences.
- Sound desperate for a job.
- Forget to ask for an interview.
- Staple your cover letter to your resume

Layout Guidelines

1. One page in length with 3-5 paragraphs.
2. In the first paragraph, clearly state your interest and how you found out about the position.
3. The body addresses the skills relevant to the job and how your abilities and experiences make you qualified to fulfill the employer's needs. Choose 2-3 skills to discuss. Articulate the connection between your skills and the posted needs of the employer. Consider your transferable skills.
4. The closing paragraph is gracious in tone. Thank the person for considering your resume. Confidently restate your belief that you would be an asset for the company. Ask for an interview or state that you look forward to hearing from the company.



Sample Cover Letter

Home Street Address

My Town, My State, My Zip

My Phone

My Email

January 10, 2021

Ms. Ima Helpful
Human Resources Director
North Central Michigan College
1515 Howard St
Petoskey, MI 49770

Dear Ms. Helpful:

I am very excited and interested in the position of Office Manager in the Career Development Office that I saw posted on the North Central Michigan College website. My 5 years of office experience at Huntington Bank have equipped me with a multitude of professional and personal skills that I would like to bring to your department.

Throughout my life, I have demonstrated efficiency and exceptional people skills. I am an adaptable individual, with the ability to balance a busy office while still putting customer service first. I have been recognized by Huntington Bank on three different occasions, being honored with the Excellent Service Award. I am very detail oriented and believe that would be beneficial in maintaining your relationships with employers as new job postings are received. I have proven that I can multi-task and have the motivation to do anything that I put my mind to. I have been working in a confidential and secure environment, therefore I understand and respect the need to protect your clients' personal information as they prepare their resumes and job applications. I am certain I would prove to be an asset to North Central Michigan College, and most importantly to your office.

I am interested in using my people and technical skills in an environment where I can develop relationships and foster growth within people's lives. Because of my solid five years of business background and my commitment to the organization in which I work, I know I have the talent and knowledge necessary to succeed and enrich the Office Manager position. Thank you for considering me. I would appreciate the opportunity to introduce myself to your search team in person to discuss this partnership. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Emily Smith



Sending your resume and/or cover letter

You may be asked to send your resume by mail, email attachment, in the body of the email, or as an upload on the employer's website. Make sure you find out from the hiring person/team which method is preferred.

If you are asked to mail your resume and cover letter:

1. All the paper should be the same in your package. The paper for your resume, cover letter, and envelope should be a quality grade product in a neutral color. You may neatly fold the resume and cover letter to fit in the envelope, preferably just 2 creases. If you are not electronically printing the envelope, make sure your handwriting is neat and legible.
2. Your cover letter should be signed in blue or black ink in the signature block.
3. The cover letter is placed on top of the resume.
4. Keep your reference sheet until you get an interview, unless you are asked to send it.

Attaching your resume to an email:

1. Consider saving your resume as a .PDF file before attaching it to the email. This should ensure that all of your formatting arrives intact.
2. Send your resume to someone you know to make sure that the file opens properly before you send it to your potential employer. This will let you catch any problems that may arise.
3. It is helpful to save your resume with a specific file name, like yournameresume.pdf, yournameresume.docx, and/or yournameresume.txt. By using your name in the file name, you make the document clearly identifiable for the employer.

In the body of an email:

1. Place the cover letter before the resume so that the flow is maintained.
2. If you cut and paste your documents into the body of the email, you may need to proofread carefully. Your formatting, italics, and bold type may not transfer well. Proofread carefully. Take your time and edit wisely. You can use the uppercase option for headings and the asterisk for bullet points.
3. It will be best to have all the text align to the left.
4. Definitely send this email to people you trust that have different email programs to see if your editing has worked. Do your best to fix the problems. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

As a scan-able document:

1. This gives you a heads up that the employer will likely read your resume with a software program. It is best, in this case, to make sure that your resume contains the keywords from the job posting. This would include specific skills such as Excel, Spanish fluency, CPR certification. You may also want to incorporate words directly from the job description into your resume, for example, customer service or management.

As an upload:

1. Use the file name rule recommended above and upload your resume as a .pdf file.



Reference Sheet

Use the same header and font from your resume. This sheet is generally taken to your interview so that you have it available if the interviewer asks for it.

Kathy Smith

Street Address

My Town, State, Zip

My Phone

My Email

REFERENCES

Name (include title, Dr. Ms.)

Company title

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

Email

How you are connected to them (Advisor, Former employer)

Name (include title, Dr. Ms.)

Company title

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

Email

How you are connected to them (Advisor, Former employer)

Name (include title, Dr. Ms.)

Company title

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

Email

How you are connected to them (Advisor, Former employer)



Congratulations, you have an interview! Now what can you do to make the best impression and convince the interviewer of your value?

Interviews

You've made it to the short list of candidates. You have the employer intrigued enough to want to speak with you. Let's discuss some of the things you can do to walk away from your interview feeling great about your chances for a job offer.

- First of all, it is important to prepare for the interview. Take time to do some research about the organization at which you are interviewing. This will show the interviewer that you are serious about the position. It also helps you better understand the organization.
- Reread your resume and cover letter and spend some time thinking about how you can benefit the employer so that you can articulate the skills, experiences, and personal attributes you possess that are beneficial to the employer.
- Put yourself in the position of the interviewer and consider the questions that might be asked. How would you handle different problems on the job? Practice your answers so that you can confidently convey your enthusiasm and potential fit in the organization.
- It is important to know yourself. You should be able to speak comfortably about yourself if asked.
- Make sure your attire is appropriate for the interview.
- Practice your handshake if this is not something you are comfortable doing.

Contact Career Services to set up an appointment for a mock interview. The key to a successful interview is practice, practice, practice!

Carry a portfolio/binder/folder to your interview. It should be clean, neat, and organized. You do not want papers flying in all directions during your interview. It's also handy to be able to quickly find papers when asked for them. Helpful items to have in your binder:

- ✓ Paper and pen
- ✓ Extra copies of your resume
- ✓ Reference sheet
- ✓ Letters of recommendation (if you have these)
- ✓ Work samples (only if this applies to you; e.g., photos for a photographer)
- ✓ A list of your questions for the employer

Remember to follow-up after the interview with a thank you letter. A thank you letter is another opportunity to express your interest and enthusiasm for the position. Keep the letter short and simple; less than one page in length. The letter should:

- Thank the interviewer for the meeting.
- Express interest in the position.
- Reiterate how you would fit in to the organization.
- Emphasize skill(s) that will make you an asset.

You can find sample thank you letters on the websites listed at the beginning of this booklet.



Common Interview Questions

1. Please tell me about yourself.

This is a great spot to tell your professional story. Your professional story should tell the employer about your education, work and professional history while engaging and connecting with the interviewer.

2. Why should we hire you? What experience qualifies you for this job? This is where you talk about the skills you have, which include job skills and life skills. Give solid examples of the skill. Give an example of how you used the skill in a past situation.

3. What do you think you can bring to our company?

It is a good thing you researched the company and can relate your skills to their needs and desires. Let the employer know you would fit in well.

4. What is your strongest skill and your weakest skill?

This is not the time to be down on yourself. Think of this answer beforehand so you can state both skills in a positive manner. Consider approaching your weakest skill from the perspective of being willing to learn from your mistakes, consider what you could have done differently. Being willing to learn and adapt is important.

5. Do you have any questions for us?

Absolutely! Not having questions for interviewer makes you seem unprepared and, potentially, disinterested. The interviewer wants to know if you have career goals and critical thinking skills. Have at least three questions prepared ahead of time.

EXAMPLES:

1. What would your perfect candidate possess?
2. I noticed on your website that your organization believes in professional development, what programs do you offer?
3. Is this a new position? If so, can you tell me what caused the creation of the job?
4. How long was the last person in this position? What did that person bring to the company that everyone hopes will continue?
5. When can I expect to hear about the hiring decision?

What to wear

- ❖ Women should wear a pant or skirt suit.
- ❖ Men should wear a conservative suit and tie if job is in an office, a collared shirt with optional tie for other situations.
- ❖ Dress professionally. Never wear jeans.
- ❖ Minimal jewelry. No body piercings or inappropriate tattoos visible.
- ❖ Bare legs are unprofessional. If wearing a skirt or dress, wear tights or pantyhose.
- ❖ Wear conservative makeup and nail polish, unless you are applying for very specific jobs.
- ❖ No heavy perfume or cologne.
- ❖ Remove the lint/hair from your clothes. Clothes should be clean and neat.
- ❖ Smell nice – use deodorant and bathe.
- ❖ Avoid low cut shirts and/or pants.
- ❖ If in doubt, don't wear it!

Interview Tips

- ❖ Arrive 10 minutes early
- ❖ Do not chew gum, turn off cell phone, breathe
- ❖ Introduce yourself to front office staff, offer firm handshake
- ❖ Maintain comfortable eye contact, smile, be enthusiastic, use humor when appropriate, do not swear or use like, um and ya know's.
- ❖ Be honest, sell yourself, Breathe! Believe in yourself!



Resume Preparation Worksheet

Personal Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Education

Most recent listed first

School Name _____

City, State _____

Degree seeking or completed _____

Expected date of completion _____

Course of study _____

School Name _____

City, State _____

Degree seeking or completed _____

Expected date of completion _____

Course of study _____



SKILLS

Skills come in different types. The skills you need to do a particular job are called hard skills. These include specific computer programs, fluently speaking more than one language, how to use multi-line phones, making dental impressions, running a lathe, operating a vehicle, and using specific tools to name a few. These are the type of skills that might be listed on a resume.

Soft skills are another type and are quite important to employers. Examples of this type include being able to work as part of a team, being flexible and willing to adapt, being punctual and responsible, and being able to problem solve. These are generally addressed in your cover letter where you have more space to relate your abilities to the job description.

Transferable skills may be another term you may encounter. These are the skills that seem specific to a job but the knowledge can actually be applied in a variety of settings. Negotiating, writing, coaching, managing money, researching, supervising, planning are examples of these.

Check out www.quintcareers.com for more information on these different types of skills. Websites like onetonline.org and acinet.org will have information about the skills related to a particular job type.

List below the skills that you bring from life experiences. They may be skills you have from previous jobs, volunteer work, participation in school organizations, special class projects. Since you will be targeting your resume to a specific type of position it may be helpful to list the duties and qualifications for that position and begin by listing your related skills.



WORK EXPERIENCE

List most recent experiences first, including jobs and internships.

Job Title _____

Employer _____

Employer Address _____

Dates of Employment _____

Skills, Duties, Accomplishments _____

Job Title _____

Employer _____

Employer Address _____

Dates of Employment _____

Skills, Duties, Accomplishments _____



HONORS, AWARDS, ACTIVITIES, MEMBERSHIPS

Group/Activity _____

What you do _____

Position(s) Held _____

Dates of Participation _____

Group/Activity _____

What you do _____

Position(s) Held _____

Dates of Participation _____



Networking

Networking is using your personal connections to find a job. Your contacts from your foundation file, or a contact list that you have created, can help you learn about potential job openings. The more people who are aware that you are looking for employment, the more chances you have of learning about vacancies.

This is a list of some the people that could make your networking list of contacts:

- Family members
- Friends
- Neighbors – from any time
- Classmates – from any class
- Teachers – from any class
- Co-workers – from all your jobs
- Employers
- Doctors, dentists
- Volunteer coordinators or co-volunteers
- Club or service organization contacts
- Employers you meet at job fairs

Each contact will likely have varying amounts of the following attributes:

1. Has a reason to want to help you
2. Is connected to lots of people
3. Knows about the current job market

Reach out to the contacts that you believe will be most able to help you find potential employers. The goal is to re-establish contact and gather information from these folks. It's inappropriate to ask any of your contacts for a job.

Be prepared with a concise, 30-second summary about the intent of your conversation. When phoning a contact, politely present your summary, let them tell you if they know of any openings or expansions, and thank them for their support. Have a pen and paper ready in case you are given contact information for a possible lead. The same idea is used if speaking to the contact in-person. Don't forget to practice before using this approach.

An example of a call:

Hello, Mr. Jones. My name is Ann Barnes. My neighbor, Jennifer Smith, gave me your number. I am currently looking for a summer internship in graphic arts. I have been studying design for two years at North Central Michigan College. Jennifer mentioned that as an illustrator, you might be aware of companies in the area that would be looking for, or interested in, a summer intern. Would you have any recommendations for people that I could contact that would be able to use my expertise and allow me to gain some experience? Thank you for taking the time to help me with this endeavor.



Career Fairs

What to expect before the fair:

A career fair gives you the opportunity to meet and interact with many potential employers, in one venue, over a few hours. What a great use of your time and energy! Don't expect a job offer on the spot. However, it is a superb chance to make a positive first impression.

Before the fair, you will want to find out if you need to register. Fairs are generally free for job seekers. Make sure your resume is current. Your contact information should be up-to-date so recruiters can contact you. Review the list of participating employers, if it is available. You can create a list of employers you want to make contact with and tailor your cover letter with the appropriate contact information. You will also want to research the companies before the fair so that you can engage with the recruiters. You can't be sure there will be time to gather information at the fair prior to having a conversation with a company representative. Your attire should be the same as what you would wear to an interview. You can review those recommendations in the previous interview section.

It will be helpful to have a quick pitch ready. Your pitch will be a quick, concise way to market yourself to individual recruiters. A pitch contains the following:

1. Introduce yourself.
2. State what occupation you are seeking.
3. Briefly tell the recruiter about your pertinent experiences, skills, and accomplishments. Include something that is unique and sets you apart as a job prospect for the company.

It is imperative to practice this out loud and in front of a mirror until you are confident with the pitch. You would be amazed how many people forget to introduce themselves! It may be loud and crowded in the event space, so being comfortable with what you will say will be beneficial.

Expect the recruiter to ask you questions. Some possible questions are:

- Tell me about your skills.
 - Consider what your top 3-5 skills are and give a quick example of how you have used it.
- Why did you decide to pursue a career in _____?
 - This is the time to share a brief version of your story.
- Why do you want to work for this company?
 - Put your previous research to use. It's okay to tell the recruiter that you are a customer, use the product, etc..
- What does your career look like in 5 years?
 - Be positive and honest. Recruiters can spot a fake a mile away.

Questions that you may want to ask the recruiter:

- What do you like most about your job?
- What is the best thing about being an employee at XYZ Company?
- What are you looking for in the ideal candidate?
- How soon do you plan to fill the position?

Please do not ask about pay, benefits, or vacation policies. This is not the time.



What to expect at the fair:

On the day of the fair, take time to be well-groomed and appropriately dressed. Arrive a bit early so you have time to check your appearance and get a map of the booths, if one is available. Wear a name tag if one is provided. Note on the map where your preferred companies are located so you can plan your time. Think positively and smile before you head in to introduce yourself. Good luck!

There may be waiting lines, so recognize that you may only have a few minutes to make your great impression. When it is your turn, shake hands, look the recruiter in the eye, and introduce yourself. Give your pitch. If the recruiter has questions, answer them. If you have questions, ask them, briefly. Let the recruiter know that you are interested in the position. Offer your resume. It is important that you ask for the recruiter's business card so that you have their contact information. Indicate your interest in an interview and find out how to follow-up. Do you contact the recruiter or is there someone else? Feel free to take some notes. Shake hands again when you wrap up the conversation. Be sure to let the recruiter know that you appreciated the meeting and the conversation. It's time to walk away. After you have stepped away. Make sure that you have good notes while the information is fresh in your mind. Don't go to the next recruiter until you are sure you have all the details about the meeting you just finished. There is no way you will remember it all if you wait until the end of the day.

During your time at the fair, interact with as many people as possible, including the people in line with you. You never know who you are going to meet. Their uncle may be looking to hire someone with your exact qualifications. Be present and seize the moment!

What happens after the fair:

It is a great idea to send a thank you note after the fair, preferably that same day. A handwritten note is exceptional, but an email will do. This attention to details is an important message to convey to the recruiter. Your note should be gracious and appreciative in tone, contain specifics about which fair you met at, a quick summary of your qualifications, and your interest in an interview. Feel free to include something specific and unique from your conversation at the fair. Don't forget to thank them for speaking with you. Pop it in the mail or hit send, after you have proofread for errors.



Final Thoughts to Consider

You have made it to the end of this booklet. Hopefully, you feel more equipped as you venture into the job market. Your resume will evolve as you proceed through life and gather more experiences that you can share with an employer. It will be wise to keep your resume current since you never know when your dream job is going to become available.

Before closing, it is important to consider what employers want. It is valuable to consider the job-seeking process from the other side of the desk. These are just a few of the important areas that may help you understand what matters to your potential boss:

- 1) Communication skills – verbal and written; in house and with clients
- 2) Honesty and integrity
- 3) Teamwork - do you play well with others?
- 4) Interpersonal abilities - can you relate well to others?
- 5) Motivation and initiative - how are you at decision making and problem solving?
- 6) Strong work ethic - can you prioritize work, your time, and your responsibilities?
- 7) Analytical skills -- gathering data and critical thinking
- 8) Flexibility and adaptability
- 9) Computer skills
- 10) Self-confidence

Finally, please remember that help is available. Career Services is located in room 125 of the Bora Learning Center. Please drop in or make an appointment to discuss your questions or concerns.

Career Development Specialist – careerservices@ncmich.edu

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