

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MOORHEAD

JOB SEARCH

2013-2014 HANDBOOK



Our Mission

The MSUM Career Development Center supports students in discovering their passions by providing programs, education, and services throughout their journey from student to professional.

Career Development Center *Job Search* Handbook

www.mnstate.edu/career
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218.477.2131

Career Four-Year Plan	2
Internships	3
Graduate School	4
How Do I Find a Job?	5
How to Survive a Job Fair	6
Steps to a Great Resume	7
sample resumes	8
resume headings	13
action words	14
what employers look for	16
the magic bullet	17
sample reference page	18
How to Write a Cover Letter	19
The Interview	20
interview questions	21
interview attire and tips	22
interview skills	23
Following Up (Thank You)	24

What can the Career Development Center do for you?

EXPLORATION

- ▶ Career counseling
- ▶ Major and career exploration
- ▶ Career assessments

JOB SEARCH

- ▶ Job search advice and assistance
- ▶ Resume and cover letter reviews
- ▶ Interview help
- ▶ Internship assistance
- ▶ Graduate school support
- ▶ Resource Center
- ▶ Fairs and events
- ▶ Workshops
- ▶ Online resources and videos

CONTACT US

careers@mnstate.edu | 218.477.2131 | www.mnstate.edu/career
Visit us at Flora Frick 151 to check out our walk-in office hours.

Career Development *Four-Year Plan*

I'M EMPLOYMENT BOUND

YEAR 1 Join multiple student organizations. Get involved on your floor; meet people!

With the CDC: Attend March Major Madness events; take a career test to explore your interests

SUMMER Make money; or, take classes or a trip to further explore your interests.

YEAR 2 Make it your goal to meet 5 interesting people this year who are employed in jobs you find interesting. Use course projects as opportunities to explore job leads in your field.

With the CDC: Attend a Resume Workshop and a Career Fair

SUMMER Arrange a job shadow with one or more of the 5 people you met this year. Take their advice—what experience(s) did they recommend? Be sure to pursue those specific opportunities.

YEAR 3-4 Dive into your major courses. Pursue leadership positions in student organizations. Stay in touch with the 5 people you met last year and meet 5 more. Share your resume with the people you meet. Start a LinkedIn account.

With the CDC: Attend EVERY Career Fair; Have your resume reviewed

(YOUR MOST VITAL) SUMMER Participate in a job or internship that closely relates to the position you desire after graduation. Stay in touch with all the contacts you meet. Build up your LinkedIn profile.

YEAR 4-5 **Begin actively applying to professional positions about 4 months before graduation.** Stay in touch with professionals you met during your internship. Perfect your resume. Attend EVERY career fair possible; generate a long list of job leads and contacts.

With the CDC: Sit down for an individual consultation with staff; Have your resume reviewed; Attend EVERY Career Fair

I'M GRADUATE SCHOOL BOUND

YEAR 1 Take at least one class in your major. Join a student organization related to your interests.

With the CDC: Attend March Major Madness events; take a career test to explore your interests

SUMMER Make money; or, take classes or a trip to further explore your interests.

YEAR 2 Build quality relationships with your professors. Read articles by current researchers. Explore ideas for further research and share your interests with your advisor.

With the CDC: Attend Graduate School Workshops & Graduate School Fair

SUMMER Begin researching graduate programs. Which are most interesting to you? Where are current researchers teaching? Begin narrowing down top choices, and make a list of goals so you can meet admission requirements.

YEAR 3-4 Participate in undergraduate research. Share future plans with faculty and seek input. Present at Student Academic Conference. Join professional organizations in your field. Pursue leadership positions in your student organization. Start a LinkedIn account.

With the CDC: Attend a Resume Workshop; Have your resume reviewed

(YOUR MOST VITAL) SUMMER Narrow down graduate school options and prepare a list of requirements and deadlines. Take entrance exams (GRE, etc.). Fulfill as many admission requirements as possible (extra courses, job shadow, volunteer, etc.).

YEAR 4-5 **The graduate school application process begins DAY ONE of first semester.** Perfect your resume. Contact your references; meet in person to discuss your future and ask for a positive recommendation. Write personal statements and prepare your applications. Stay in touch with the academic departments at your chosen graduate schools.

With the CDC: Sit down for an individual consultation with staff; Have your resume reviewed

Internships

Why get an internship?

- Gain valuable work experience
- Network with professionals
- Apply the skills and knowledge from your coursework
- Earn money and/or credit for your work
- Expand your knowledge about your field by exploring careers first hand

Where do I look for an internship?

- Network: Set up meetings with people you know and trust (Career Development Center staff, family, friends, other professionals) and talk to them about your career path. See page ____ for more tips on networking
- DragonCareers postings on the Career Development Center website
- Faculty and Departments
- Career and Internship Fairs

What about credits?

For information about completing an internship for credit contact your academic advisor or the Career Development Center.

Due to the economy, interns are being given more responsibilities and opportunities to contribute.

STATISTICS SHOW...

42.3%

seniors who had internships and applied for jobs received a job offer compared to 30.7% of seniors without an internship experience.

53.3%

of eligible interns were offered full-time jobs

Median accepted salary for seniors with an internship was nearly 31% higher than the median accepted salary offered to non-intern seniors

31%
HIGHER

Employers want to see a candidate that is *passionate, enthusiastic, and confident.*

of employers surveyed said the primary focus of their internship programs is to feed their full-time hiring program.

83%

Graduate School

How to write a graduate admission essay (also known as a personal statement)



Recommended reading: *Graduate Admissions Essays* by Donald Asher

WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

- ▶ Communication style/writing ability
- ▶ Future plans after grad school
- ▶ Research area(s) of interest
- ▶ Ability to organize an essay
- ▶ Ability to follow directions (essay length, answering the question)

THE 4-5 PARAGRAPH ESSAY

- ▶ Length may be decided by number of words, 4-5 paragraphs, or 2-3 pages.
- ▶ It is usually recommended that you write your letter in the 1st person. (Using “I” and “my.”)

1 Introduction

- a Attention-getting first 1-2 sentences
- b Explain what you will talk about in essay
 - i Past
 - ii Present
 - iii Future

2 The Past

- a What got you interested in physics (or, your topic area)
- b Background/why graduate school/why this program

3 The Present

- a Experiences in college
- b Grades, research, clubs, jobs... (things that expanded your interest)
- c Your academic record
- d Personal characteristics you have that will help you succeed in graduate school

4 Future

- a Why this graduate school (you will likely apply to more than one graduate school—explain why you chose to apply to this school—what are the positive attributes the school has that caused you to apply)?
- b What you want to research/do in the future? How will this graduate program prepare you?

5 Conclusion

- a Summarize your essay
- b Restate interest in specific school

APPLICATION TIPS

- ▶ Visit the graduate school’s website to make sure you meet the minimum qualifications for the program
- ▶ Contact the university to talk with a current student in the program to answer your specific questions
- ▶ Make yourself familiar with the school and the work of their faculty
- ▶ Give your references 6 weeks notice to prepare your recommendation letters
- ▶ Have a trusted faculty member and Career Development Center staff review your letter of application
- ▶ Submit your application 30 days before the deadline

How Do I *Find* a Job?

1. GET A MEETING

Use your network

- ▶ Start today: ask the next 50 people you meet, “Who do you know who does..?” (Works in marketing? Works in Los Angeles?)
- ▶ Find their contact information (have that person introduce you, google them, etc.)
- ▶ Don’t forget to ask those who are close to you! (friends, family, advisor, etc.)
- ▶ Write the contact an email
- ▶ The **KEY** is: You must **NEVER ASK FOR A JOB**

Dear Mr. Jones:

My name is Sara Andersen and I am a junior marketing major at Minnesota State University Moorhead. Sylvia Smith recommended I contact you. I am very interested in learning more about marketing firms in this region as I consider where to take my major.

Is there any chance you would be willing to meet with me briefly? I would be honored to buy you a coffee and ask just a few questions about marketing.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Sara Andersen

2. AT THE MEETING

- ▶ If you are persistent, you **WILL** win a meeting like this
- ▶ The **KEY** is: You must **NEVER ASK FOR A JOB**
- ▶ See the Informational Interview section for questions you could ask

3. AFTER THE MEETING

- ▶ Send a handwritten thank you note. If you have terrible handwriting, send a printed letter but sign your name at the end
- ▶ In one month follow up with another email. Thank them again, explain any changes or updates with you, and explain that since you do not have a business card you will now attach your resume!
- ▶ In two months do the same, give another update. This person is now in your network
- ▶ The **KEY** is: You must **NEVER ASK FOR A JOB**

Why do informational interviews work?

- ▶ According to the Ben Franklin Effect, a person who has done a favor for someone becomes more likely to do them another favor, not less.
- ▶ By asking them to do the favor of allowing you to interview them, you are increasing the chances that they will connect you with opportunities in the future [The Defining Decade. (2012).]

ELEVATOR SPEECHES

- ▶ An elevator speech is a short (30-60 seconds) summary of who you are
- ▶ This is helpful at career fairs, conferences, and other events
- ▶ Your elevator speech should include: Name, major, career goal, timeline, and a question

Be persistent

- ▶ Give them about a month to reply, two weeks if you are in a hurry. If you still haven’t heard from them then email them again

Dear Mr. Jones:

My name is Sara Andersen and I had contacted you a few weeks ago about setting up a brief meeting to talk about your career in marketing. I would still be very interested in a short meeting with you.

I know you keep a very busy schedule and I understand if a brief meeting would not work for you. If you feel it would be more appropriate I would be happy to meet with a recommended member of your staff.

Thank you again!

Sincerely,
Sara Andersen

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

- ▶ These are important because they build your network and can lead to valuable information or contacts
- ▶ Stick to gathering information and leads, and do not treat this as a job interview

Common Questions

1. How did you get started in the business?
2. What do you like/dislike most about your job, your company, your industry?
3. What are the current career opportunities for college grads in the industry?
4. Is there a trade association, trade publication, or website that might aid me in my job search?
5. Where do you see the industry heading in the near future?
6. What advice would you give a college grad looking for a job in the industry?
7. Could you recommend someone else for me to contact in the industry?
8. Is there anything else I should know about the industry?

[The Complete Job Search Book for College Students. (2007).]

How to *Survive* a Job Fair

BEFORE

- Have a plan
- Research employers/organizations in advance
 - Visit official websites to learn about open positions, mission and goals
- Prepare 1-2 questions you might want to ask each organization
- Practice an introduction, or “elevator speech”
- Practice an effective handshake (yes, really!)
- Dress professionally
- Have your resume reviewed at the Career Development Center
- Print your resume on Resume Paper

DURING

- Approach employer representatives with confidence
- Allow for volley of conversation (i.e., let them talk, too) but share your introduction speech and questions
- Provide a copy of your resume
- ASK for a business card/contact information of each booth visited

AFTER

- Send an email to the representative; say thank you, express your continued interest and attach a resume

WHAT TO BRING

Resumes on Resume Paper
(bring 2 per employer you plan to visit)

Portfolio/Paper/Pen

⊘ **NOT** a cell phone

WHAT TO WEAR

A suit.

Don't have a suit? Wear dress pants, dress shirt, and dress shoes.

⊘ **NOT** jeans, tennis shoes, skin-revealing items, Cologne

WHAT TO SAY

(sample introduction speech)

“Hi! My name is _____ and I’m a/an _____ major graduating in _____. I noticed _____ on your website. Will you tell me more about _____?”

⊘ **NOT** What does your company do?

For more help preparing for a job fair, contact the Career Development Center at 218.477.2131.

Steps to a *Great* Resume

1. BRAINSTORM

- ▶ Make a list of work experience, volunteer experience, certifications/training, memberships, skills and extra-curricular activities

2. CATEGORIZE

- ▶ Decide which headings to include in your resume
- ▶ Group the items on your list according to these headings
- ▶ For common resume headings see [page 21](#)

3. EXPAND

- ▶ Elaborate on duties performed and on skills used or gained through your experiences. These will be turned into bullet points under each item
- ▶ To learn how to turn your duties and skills into professional bullet points, see [page 26](#). For action verbs you can use to begin each bullet, see [page 24](#)

DO

Keep it down to one page (there are few exceptions)

Use an appropriate font (Times New Roman, Arial) and font size (11 or 12 pt.)

Use consistent formatting (spacing, capitalization, bullets)

Emphasize your transferrable skills

List the university from which you received your degree

Use high-quality bond paper with an attractive texture

Use a professional sounding email address (ex: firstlastname@example.com)

DON'T

USE A TEMPLATE

Include a photograph or personal information such as age, marital status, or national origin

Try to make your resume look creative through colored paper or pictures

Use personal pronouns (I, my)

List hobbies or interests unless they contribute to your overall objective

Include information about your high school

4. FORMAT


- ▶ Organize your items by using a consistent format such as:
 - Position Title, Organization, City, State Date
- ▶ Follow this section with relevant bullet points that begin with action verbs

5. REVIEW

- ▶ Proofread your resume and bring it in to the Career Development Center for review



The Career Development Center is located in Flora Frick 151. Call us at 218.477.2131 to set up an appointment.



→
The next few pages provide samples of well-written resumes.



Sally Jones

1819 479th St S Apt 1754 Fargo, ND 58103
701-895-3791 | sjones@coldmail.com

Education

Bachelor of Arts in **Communication Studies**

Minor in **Community Health**

Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) Moorhead, MN

May 2015

- GPA 3.34; Deans List 2 semesters
- Earned college expenses working 20 hours per week while enrolled full time

Sales & Marketing Experience

International Reservation Sales Specialist, Airports International, Chicago, IL

April 2012-Present

- Developed excellent communication skills by booking routine to complex corporate domestic and international air, hotel, and car reservations by phone or email
- Established strong customer relationships through providing client support in regard to navigating company website and changing/cancelling client reservations
- Gained problem solving skills by communicating with airlines to assist clients with reservations

Marketing & Promotions Intern, Rick's Corner Grill, Fargo, ND

November 2011-May 2012

- Distributed event information to local businesses to promote events
- Photographed events to update company website and create company newsletter
- Updated daily event information on company website using BrightEyes software

Account Management Intern, Altru, Grand Forks, ND

July 2010-September 2011

- Gained communication skills observing sales executives and account managers in sales presentations and client visits with employees and brokers
- Developed knowledge of insurance industry by completing projects in the large group tracking system and broker certification process
- Obtained knowledge of internal and external communications through observing marketing and public relations departments
- Observed corporate departmental responsibilities including pharmacy, corporate communications, and human resources

Related Experience

Customer Care Associate, Jade Systems, Atlanta, GA

February 2009-May 2010

- Demonstrated strong organization skills by assisting health care providers in updating and verifying insurance information
- Communicated with patients and pharmacists by phone/email answering insurance questions

Volunteer Experience

Dogs are Special, Moorhead, MN; Chicago, IL, Atlanta, GA

September 2010-Present

- Demonstrated responsibility and resourcefulness by walking dogs
- Gained excellent problem solving and event planning skills by arranging dinner for 50 donors
- Raised \$5000+ in 2001 for Moorhead Area Humane Society

Computer Skills

- GDS travel agency software including BobsUncle and FraydieKat
- Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe and Photoshop



Ben Jefferson

214 96th Ave N, Moorhead, MN 56560 | 218.500.7396 | benjeff@greatmail.com

Education

Bachelor of Science in **Business Administration**, Emphasis in **Management** May 2013
Minor in **Leadership**

Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), Moorhead, MN

- Recipient of MSUM Upper Class Scholarship
- Served on College of Business & Industry Dean's Advisory Board
- Maintained **3.25 GPA** while working 35-40 hours per week

Internship

Administrative Intern, Mercy Hospital, Allina Health, Coon Rapids, MN, Summer 2012

- Acquired expertise of hospital departmental functions
- Supported analysts with data research regarding patient flow and demand capacity
- Expanded knowledge of HIPAA and OSHA standards and regulations

Related Experience

Service Manager, Red River Valley Ford, Fargo, ND, August 2011-present

- Directed operations and supervised 9 service repair technicians and 4 detailers
- Delivered excellent customer service to concerned customers; upheld corporate warranty policies
- Monitored loaning of fleet vehicles and facilitated customer check-in and check-out
- Managed use and maintenance of complex repair equipment, estimated \$3,000,000 in value
- Interviewed, hired and oriented new service repair technicians
- Provided input for marketing team recommending service coupons and promotions for customers

Resident Assistant, Housing and Residential Life, MSUM, 2010-2011

- Acted as leader and mentor for students living in campus residence halls
- Coordinated programs to encourage academic and social success for residents
- Completed intensive paper work as required by campus policy and state regulation
- Executed leadership skills through serving in multifaceted supervisory role

Leadership

Healthy Students Committee, Hendrix Health Center, MSUM, 2010-2011

- Developed professional communication skills while working with campus stakeholders on student health issues
- Communicated feedback from students to committee members to ensure effective advocacy for student concerns

Dragon Ambassador, Office of the President, MSUM, Summer 2010-present

- Served as public relations representative for MSUM at alumni banquets and presidential socials
- Provided campus tours for prospective students; ushered and assisted during commencement

Students For Now Leaders Always, MSUM, October 2011-Present

- Donated time and talents to multiple nonprofit organizations in the Fargo-Moorhead Area
- Collaborated with other students to determine new and best ways to help community



Resume including coursework

*Low on experience? Applying for an internship?
This format can show employers how your classroom experience has prepared you.*

Samantha Wagner

1795 Appletown Road
Octopusland, ND 12346
(212) 555-8914
wagner.s@mnstate.edu

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in **Paralegal**
Emphases in **Probate/Tax, Civil Litigation, and Commercial Law**
Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), Moorhead, MN Expected May 2015
• **GPA 3.12**; Dean's List, 3 Semesters

EMPLOYMENT

Cumberson Family Restaurants, Green Lake Township, MN May 2009 -Present
• Enhanced leadership abilities through supervising and training new employees
• Communicated effectively with customers to resolve concerns

Dragon Swim School, MSUM September 2010 - Present
• Acquainted children ages 3 to 8 with water and life saving swimming skills
• Informed and discussed with parents concerning progress of children

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

President, Minnesota State Paralegal Association Moorhead (MSPAM)
• Nominated and elected by peers
• Raised \$500 for Women's Center
• Participated in Children's Book Fair; Hornbacher's Community Day
• Team Captain for 2010 Relay for Kids

RELATED COURSEWORK

Civil Procedure

- Studied procedures, documents and techniques used in trial practice
- Drafted Complaint, Answer and Motions based on Minnesota Law

Debtor-Creditor/Bankruptcy

- Studied laws on extension of credit, debtor/creditor rights, and bankruptcy, including liquidation, business reorganizations, and adjustment of debts
- Drafted Chapter 7 Bankruptcy using BestCase Software

Elder Law

- Studied public benefits programs that provide economic maintenance and financing of health care for elderly citizens, including Medical Assistance and Medicare
- Prepared Health Care Directive for senior citizen in the community

Interviewing

- Developed and practiced skills to elicit comprehensive factual information about legal issues to assist client in understanding legal procedure

Legal Ethics

- Studied laws governing professional ethics of attorneys with emphasis on Rules of Professional Conduct and their implications for paralegals

Legal Research and Writing

- Developed skills using the United States Code, North Dakota Century Code, Minnesota Statutes, and Westlaw



Research Resume/CV

For students applying to research-related fields and/or graduate school

Jordan Walburg

8859 Intersect Blvd. Moorhead, MN 56560

jordanwalburg@mnstate.edu | 701-999-8156 (cell)

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Arts in **Biology** with an emphasis in **Health and Medical Science**

Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), Moorhead, MN Expected May 2014

- GPA 3.65, Dean's List 3 semesters

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH:

Original habitats of turtles and slugs, MSUM Spring 2013-present

Under the direction of Dr. Olivia Smitherwather

- Employed population genetics to compare genetic diversity within populations of turtles and slugs in Northern Minnesota
- Isolated DNA, utilized gel electrophoresis, NanoDrop spectrophotometer, & PCR

Goldfish predator detection, MSUM Spring 2012

Under the direction of Dr. Beltrom VonBeakerson

- Monitored goldfish behavior as a response to predator cues in order to test whether bowl-raised goldfish can be trained to detect predators prior to release
- Published in the *American Journal of Fish*, Summer 2012

PRESENTATIONS:

Turtles are not sluggish! Spring 2013

Will present at MSUM Student Academic Conference Spring 2013

- Composed 20-minute presentation on results of turtle and slug research for researchers/peers

Fish are awesome Fall 2012

Presented at National Association for Fish Science conference, Chicago, IL March 2012

Will present at MSUM Student Academic Conference Spring 2013

- Poster presentation on process of publishing goldfish predator detection research

RELEVANT COURSEWORK:

Super Advanced Biology, MSUM Spring 2012

- Developed laboratory research skills and gained proficiency with XYZ and ZBS technologies

Incredibly Related Biology, MSUM Fall 2011

- Advanced writing ability producing weekly 12-page lab reports in multiple topic areas

EMPLOYMENT:

Administrative Assistant, Memorial Hospital, Moorhead, MN Summer 2012

- Displayed organizational skills by sorting and prepping patient medical records

America Reads Tutor, Robert Asp Elementary, Moorhead, MN 2011-2012

- Performed literary assessments based in fluency and comprehension

Jumpstart Teacher's Assistant, Fargo Public Schools, Fargo, ND Summers 2008 & 2009

- Assisted with orientation program for incoming high school freshmen

ATHLETICS:

Intramural Basketball, MSUM 2010-present

- Maintained time management skills managing complex practice schedule
- Demonstrated high work ethic and dedication recruiting new team members

VOLUNTEER:

Suicide Prevention Walk, Foundation for Suicide Prevention; Fargo, ND Fall 2012

Homeless and Hungry, Set up and organized food/clothing tables; Fargo, ND Fall 2012



Sarah Jackson

1203 7th Avenue North, Underwood, MN 56586 | s.jackson@mnstate.edu | 219-555-2135

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in **Elementary Education** emphasis in **Social Studies**

Minor in **Teaching English as a Second Language**

Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), Moorhead, MN **GPA 3.95** May 2013

CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

ELL Student Teacher, Fargo High School, Fargo, ND Spring 2013

- Initiated and designed team-building/language enhancing activities for students to gain language skills and build personal connections
- Planned and implemented summer curriculum through collaboration and teamwork with cooperating teacher and other summer school teachers

ELL Tutor, Lincoln Elementary School, Fargo, ND Spring 2012

- Tutored caseload of 7 students, 3 days a week, to help students reach academic goals
- Collaborated with classroom teachers to enhance student success

ELL Tutor, Fargo South High School, Fargo, ND Spring 2012

- Helped students with homework while maintaining a positive and welcoming environment

PRACTICA EXPERIENCE

5th Grade, Ellen Hopkins Elementary, Moorhead, MN Fall 2011

- Integrated fluidly into 5th grade classroom as student/co-teacher for 3 weeks, all day-every day
- Successfully taught: Everyday Mathematics, differentiated reading groups, reading recovery and running records

2nd Grade, Madison Elementary, Fargo, ND Fall 2011

- Collaborated with 2 student teachers to create meaningful, hands-on, inquiry based lessons
- Became familiar with the school wide discipline plan, “Nurtured Heart” including positive reinforcement, praise, and being proactive with student behavior

6th Grade, Fargo South High School, Fargo, ND Fall 2010

- Created interactive game for ELL students to review test material and highlight language skills
- Observed, interacted, and taught students in 5 sheltered instruction classes including; Economics, Western Civilization, U.S. Government, Political Science and Introduction to Social Studies

1st Grade, Cheney Middle School, Fargo, ND Spring 2010

- Executed hands-on social studies lesson plans that utilized PowerPoint and Smart Board

5th Grade, Reinersten Elementary, Moorhead, MN Spring 2009

- Observed specialized classroom that focused on behavior and etiquette
- Participated in “Parent Night” and implemented activities for students

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Recreation Leader and Coach, Parks and Recreation, Underwood, MN Summers 2003-2011

- Planned curriculum 6 consecutive summers for children ages 3-12 in day camp environment
- Co-created and implemented Tiny Tots Sports program; coached ages 3-4

Student Orientation Counselor, MSUM 2010-Present

- Assisted incoming students to enable welcoming transition to MSUM
- Provided individualized support for group of 20-30 college freshmen throughout school year

Ideas for Resume *Headings*

The following is a list of headings from which you may wish to make selections as you plan the organization of information on your resume. If you do not find a heading on this list that best describes an area of strength you have to offer, create one.

Related Course Work
Special Courses
Relevant Courses
Special Electives
Course Highlights
Significant Courses

Study Abroad
International Study
Licenses/Certifications
Concentrations
Areas of Concentration

Internship: Examples
Computer Internship
Accounting Internship
Social Work Internship

Areas of Expertise
Related Experience

(Major) Experience: Examples
Business, Accounting, Teaching, Electronic, Management, Sales, Design, Illustration, Counseling, Theater

Professional Development
Organizational Involvement
Professional Organizations
Professional Involvement
Professional Activities
Professional Workshops and Seminars
Workshops
Seminars
Special Training

Consulting
Communications Consultant
Business Consultant

Special Projects
College Activities
College Achievements
Regional/State Honors
National Honors
Professional Workshops
Professional Honors
Professional Recognition
Professional Achievements

Research
Research Experience
Research Interests
Thesis Topic

Leadership Experience
Leadership Skills
Leadership Roles

Computer Experience
Computer Skills
Computer Languages
Computer Expertise
Technical Background
Technical Skills

Instructional Skills
Communication Skills
Speaking Skills
Writing Skills
Photography Skills
Publications
Communication Specialty
Organizational Ability
Capabilities
Special Skills

Volunteer Involvement
Volunteer Activities
Volunteer Services
Civic Activities

Civic Involvement
School and Community Activities
Community Involvement
Community Activities
Human Service Experience
Youth Experience
Public Contact Experience
Community Service
Volunteer Experience

Languages
Spanish
French
Fluency in Spanish
International Experience
Language Background
Language Experience

Other Experience
Other Employment
Summary of Experience

Involvement
Awards
Academic Honors
Honors
Leadership
Leadership Roles
Significant Achievements
Honors/Awards
Personal Achievements
Personal Recognition
Achievements
Accomplishments
Other Recognition
College Honors/Activities
Activities/Organizations
Special Honors
Athletic Honors

LEADERSHIP/ MANAGEMENT

Administered	Led
Advised	Managed
Analyzed	Mediated
Approved	Monitored
Assigned	Motivated
Attained	Negotiated
Authorized	Organized
Chaired	Originated
Consolidated	Oversaw
Contracted	Pioneered
Coordinated	Presided
Delegated	Prioritized
Determined	Produced
Developed	Promoted
Directed	Recommended
Enforced	Represented
Ensured	Responded
Evaluated	Reviewed
Executed	Scheduled
Formalized	Sponsored
Guided	Streamlined
Headed	Steered
Hired	Strengthened
Initiated	Structured
Influenced	Supervised
Instituted	Trained
Launched	

CREATIVE

Acted	Established	Pioneered
Adapted	Fashioned	Planned
Colored	Founded	Produced
Composed	Formulated	Projected
Conceived	Generated	Redesigned
Conceptualized	Illustrated	Remodeled
Constructed	Initiated	Revitalized
Created	Innovated	Shaped
Customized	Instituted	Sketched
Designed	Introduced	Stimulated
Developed	Invented	Transformed
Devised	Originated	Visualized
Directed	Performed	
Drew	Photographed	

TECHNICAL

Analyzed	Interfaced
Assembled	Launched
Built	Maintained
Calculated	Mastered
Charted	Modified
Compiled	Molded
Computed	Operated
Conceived	Overhauled
Conducted	Pioneered
Designed	Prepared
Detected	Processed
Developed	Programmed
Devised	Reconstructed
Eliminated	Remodeled
Engineered	Repaired
Expedited	Researched
Fabricated	Revamped
Facilitated	Solved
Forecast	Streamlined
Formed	Supplemented
Generated	Surveyed
Improved	Systematized
Inspected	Tested
Installed	Upgraded
Instituted	Validated
Integrated	

Action Words

ALL OF YOUR BULLET POINTS
SHOULD BEGIN WITH A VERB.

TEACHING

Acquainted	Explained
Adapted	Facilitated
Advised	Formulated
Answered	Generated
Apprised	Graded
Augmented	Grouped
Briefed	Guided
Built	Implemented
Certified	Influenced
Charted	Informed
Clarified	Initiated
Coached	Innovated
Collaborated	Instituted
Communicated	Instructed
Conducted	Integrated
Delivered	Lectured
Demystified	Listened
Designed	Originated
Developed	Persuaded
Directed	Presented
Distributed	Revolutionized
Educated	Set Goals
Effected	Stimulated
Empowered	Summarized
Enabled	Taught
Enacted	Trained
Encouraged	Translated
Evaluated	Tutored
Expanded	

OFFICE

Administered	Enlarged	Prepared
Allocated	Evaluated	Processed
Arranged	Executed	Procured
Assisted	Filed	Proofread
Balanced	Followed up	Provided
Budgeted	Formalized	Purchased
Catalogued	Hired	Recorded
Charted	Identified	Resolved
Collected	Implemented	Scheduled
Compiled	Inspected	Screened
Completed	Justified	Secured
Contributed	Maintained	Solved
Corresponded	Managed	Specified
Defined	Monitored	Systematized
Determined	Operated	Tabulated
Dispatched	Ordered	Transcribed
Distributed	Organized	Word processed
Documented	Packaged	
Drafted	Planned	

SALES

Arbitrated	Obtained
Bargained	Ordered
Bought	Performed
Catalogued	Planned
Centralized	Processed
Consulted	Produced
Convinced	Promoted
Documented	Proposed
Established	Publicized
Familiarized	Purchased
Identified	Realized
Implemented	Recruited
Improved	Reduced
Increased	Reported
Influenced	Researched
Inspired	Retailed
Installed	Reviewed
Investigated	Routed
Judged	Saved
Launched	Served
Led	Set Goals
Maintained	Sold
Marketed	Stimulated
Mediated	Summarized
Merchandized	Surveyed
Moderated	Translated
Negotiated	Vended

COMMUNICATION

Addressed
Arbitrated
Arranged
Articulated
Assessed
Authored
Briefed
Clarified
Collaborated
Communicated
Composed
Conducted
Confronted
Consulted
Contacted
Convinced
Corresponded
Critiqued
Defined
Deliberated
Demonstrated
Described
Directed
Drafted
Edited
Enabled
Enlisted
Facilitated
Formulated

Influenced
Informed
Interacted
Interpreted
Interviewed
Lectured
Mediated
Moderated
Negotiated
Persuaded
Presented
Promoted
Publicized
Published
Reconciled
Recruited
Rectified
Reported
Spoke
Summarized
Taught
Trained
Translated
Transmitted
Unified
Wrote

RESEARCH

Administered
Amplified
Analyzed
Applied
Articulated
Assessed
Audited
Augmented
Balanced
Calculated
Charted
Clarified
Collected
Compared
Compiled
Concentrated
Conducted
Constructed
Consulted
Critiqued
Detected
Determined
Diagnosed
Discovered
Documented
Evaluated
Examined
Exhibited
Experimented

Explored
Extracted
Focused
Forecast
Found
Generated
Grouped
Identified
Inspected
Integrated
Interpreted
Interviewed
Invented
Investigated
Located
Measured
Obtained
Pinpointed
Planned
Prepared
Processed
Researched
Reviewed
Screened
Searched
Summarized
Surveyed
Systematized
Unearthed

HELPING

Advanced
Advised
Aided
Arbitrated
Assessed
Assisted
Attended
Augmented
Backed
Braced
Boosted
Clarified
Coached
Collaborated
Comforted
Consoled
Consulted
Counseled
Diagnosed
Educated
Encouraged
Expedited
Facilitated
Familiarized
Fostered
Guided
Helped
Inspired

Instilled
Mediated
Mentored
Ministered
Motivated
Negotiated
Nourished
Nursed
Nurtured
Optimized
Promoted
Reassured
Referred
Rehabilitated
Represented
Served
Settled
Supported
Supplied
Stabilized
Streamlined
Translated
Treated
Tutored
Unified
Volunteered

FINANCIAL

Adjusted
Administered
Allocated
Analyzed
Appraised
Audited
Balanced
Bought
Budgeted
Calculated
Conciliated
Cut
Decreased
Developed
Dispensed
Disbursed
Distributed
Doubled
Downsized
Eliminated
Economized
Exceeded
Figured
Financed
Forecast
Funded
Gained
Generated

Increased
Invested
Maintained
Managed
Marketed
Planned
Projected
Purchased
Reconciled
Reduced
Reported
Researched
Retailed
Saved
Secured
Sold
Solicited
Sourced
Specified
Supplemented
Systematized
Tested
Tripled
Underwrote
Upgraded
Upsized
Vended

GENERAL

Accelerated
Accomplished
Accredited for
Achieved
Adapted
Adept
Adhered
Advanced
Advocated
Appraised
Appreciated for
Arranged
Assured
Attained
Augmented
Awarded
Built/Cultivated
relationships
with...
Cared for
Changed
Charged with

Chose
Chosen for
Co-authored
Collected
Communicated
Conceptualized
Conserved
Consultant to
Contributed
Converted
Coordinated
Copy-edited
Dealt with
Decided
Demonstrated
Earned award
for
Elected to
Emphasized
Envisioned
Estimated
Evaluated

Excelled
Executed
Expanded
Facilitated
First to
Founded
Gathered
Guided
Handled
Improved
Increased
Initiated
Integrated
Involved in
Known for
Launched
Led
Optimized
Organized
Originated
Outlined
Overhauled

Perceived
Performed
Performed
Pioneered
Printed
Prioritized
Promoted
Proposed
Recognized as/for
Reduced losses
Reduced the cost
Regulated
Reorganized
Resolved problems
Restored
Restructured
Retrieved
Revised
Selected from/for
Simplified
Solved
Spearheaded

Specialized
Standardized
Stimulated
Streamlined
Strengthened
Succeeded
Synthesized
Tailored
Tracked
Trained
Traveled
Uncovered
United
Updated
Upgraded
Validated
Visualized
Won
Worked closely

What Employers Look for When *Hiring*

(From *National Association of Colleges and Employers Annual Report*, 2011–present)

The following are some of the skills and personal characteristics employers seek as they hire or staff projects for the 21st century:

- interpersonal/written/oral communication skills/public speaking
- integrity, honesty, reliability and realistic job expectations
- problem solving
- ability to learn quickly — demonstrated commitment to learning
- flexible/adaptable
- energetic
- creative/innovative
- ability to adapt to changing systems and to handle multiple tasks
- visionary/ability to see the bigger picture
- teamwork – works well with others and with diverse populations
- management skills
- ability to delegate
- strong work ethic (willingness to do the necessary mundane tasks and the challenging work)
- self-starter/initiative/consistent follow-through/drive/passion
- organizational ability/detail oriented/time management
- ability to prioritize
- commitment to meeting deadlines/personal accountability
- strategic & breakthrough thinking — analytical ability
- active listening skills
- effective customer service skills/service-oriented attitude
- leadership and willingness to accept supervision
- risk-taker/entrepreneurial skills
- technical skills related to specialty/computer capability
- understanding of e-commerce
- efficiency minded; ability to economize; attention to bottom line
- conflict resolution/negotiating skills
- decision-making skills
- positive attitude, self-confident, friendly, outgoing personality
- tactful/positive sense of humor
- professionalism/business etiquette
- Career goals/focus – employers expect you to know what you want to do and why you are interested in their organization

Do you have
what it takes?

The *Magic* Bullet

Bullet points can be powerful tools to show an employer detailed facts about your performance in a quick, easy and visually appealing manner. An employer only knows what you tell them directly. There is no need to put too much pressure on yourself as you write resume bullet points. Start small. Begin by making a list of your basic job duties. They might include: open/close the store, prepare deposits, make phone calls, or keep track of files. Once you have a list, use these steps to help you create effective bullet points:

STEP #1 – DUTIES & SKILLS

- **Answered phones.**

As you look at each duty on your list, think to yourself, “What did I get out of performing this job function?” Perhaps it was communication skills, customer service experience, organizational skills, attention to detail, or leadership. If you need help, see “What Employers Look for When Hiring” on page 22.

STEP #2 – STRUCTURE

Structure your bullet point around your duty and connected skill. Use this statement as a guide:

- “I learned __[skill]__ by doing/because I did/while I did __[duty]__.”
- **I learned communication skills while answering phones.**

STEP #3 – ACTION

It is important to avoid the use of personal pronouns (I, my) on your resume. Also, not all of your finished bullet points can start with the phrase “I learned.” However, now that you have a structure, select a compelling verb to replace “Learned.” If you need help, take a look at the list of “Action Words” on page 24.

- **Developed communication skills while answering phones.**

STEP #4 – CLARIFY

Take a second look at your duty. Ask yourself who, what, when, where and why. In the case of the ‘Answered phones’ example, ask yourself: Who was I talking to? What did we talk about? To add to the example, if you spoke to customers at a billing center, you could potentially change ‘answering phones’ to “addressing customer billing concerns.

Original Bullet Point:

- Answered phones.

Revised Bullet Point:

- Developed excellent communication skills addressing customer billing concerns.

If you saw these bullets on two different resumes,
who would you rather hire?



Sally Jones

1819 479th St S Apt 1754 Fargo, ND 58103
701-895-3791 | sjones@coldmail.com

References

References Notes:

Separate sheet from your resume.
Paste the header from your resume.

Reference 1 Cooperating Teacher,
or Professor, Advisor or
Current Supervisor

Reference 2 Professor, Advisor or
Current Supervisor

Reference 3 Another professional who
can speak about your
work experience/skills

ONLY people that know you well and
they need to know they are on this list!

Ask: Would you feel comfortable giving
me a positive recommendation for...?

Name of reference, their relationship to you

Current job title

Complete address of reference

Phone number

Email address

Dr. Mary Jenkins, Undergraduate research supervisor

Assistant Professor of Psychology

Bridges 399

Minnesota State University Moorhead

1104 7th Avenue South

Moorhead, MN 56363

218.555.1000

mary.jenkins05@mnstate.edu

Matilda Rhodes, Internship supervisor

Director of Human Resources

Sanford Health

1000 Sanford Street

Fargo, ND 58103

701.555.9999 Office

218.555.2222 Cell

rhodes@sanford.org

Steve Jackson, Former supervisor at Technology Services, Inc.

Project Manager

Microsoft

5000 Microsoft Street

Fargo, ND 58103

701.555.7777

sjackson29@microsoft.com

How to write a *Cover Letter*

▷ Copy and paste the resume header.

▷ Include the date. Full month and year.

▷ Include the address of the company. If you know the name of the hiring manager, be sure to add this at the top.

▷ Address the letter to a person. Don't know the name? LEAVE THIS LINE BLANK. (Note: NOT "to whom it may concern", etc.)

PART I: Why THIS Job?

▷ Who are you?

▷ Why are you qualified and/or interested in this position?

▷ What specifically interests you about working for this company?

Part II: Why ME?

▷ Why are you the most qualified person for this position?

▷ What specific experience do you have to prove this?

▷ What skills will you bring to this position and where/how did you learn them?

PART III: Conclusion

▷ Ask for the next step (usually an interview)

▷ Say thank you.

Sally Jones

1819 479th St S Apt 1754 Fargo, ND 58103
701-895-3791 | sjones@coldmail.com

December 14, 2013

Gerald Brown, Director of Human Resources
Microsoft
100 Lone Tree Road
Fargo, ND 58103

Dear Dr. Brown:

I am writing this letter to express my interest in the Accounting Intern position. From the position description on your website, **I noticed you are looking for an accounting major, but also someone who understands multiple software programs. As an accounting major and a computer science minor at Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), I feel I have the ideal background and experience for the position.** I am especially interested in working for Microsoft because I know the Fargo campus is a leader in the country when it comes to accounting software and programs.

For the last two years I have worked two part time positions while attending MSUM as a full time student. I work at MSUM in the IT department, providing technical support on Microsoft Office software; I also work at the MSUM Business office where I process faculty travel requests and receipts for over 100 employees in 12 academic departments. I frequently interact with students, staff and faculty to troubleshoot programs professionals use on a daily basis. **In the summer of 2012 I had the exciting opportunity of combining my knowledge of accounting and technical savvy when I worked on a team to help the MSUM Business office reduce a complex multi-signature travel accountability system with 14 steps to a 3-step paperless system using ImageNow software.**

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you in person and discuss my qualifications in an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sally Jones

Sally Jones

If you will send a paper cover letter, sign your name; if the letter will be sent electronically, just leave a few blank lines.

The *Interview*

BEFORE

- Research the company
(things to consider: position description, basic functions of the company, products and services offered, mission statement)
- Dress professionally. Wear a suit
- PRACTICE talking through positive examples of your work experience
(this will help reduce nervousness and increase confidence)
- In an unfamiliar place, drive there the night before to plan route and parking
- Prepare 5 questions to ask the employer. You will likely ask 2-3
- Get excited!

DURING

- Arrive 5-10 minutes early
- Greet employer professionally; smile and shake hands
- Use examples in your answers (STAR method)
- Display a positive attitude
- Ask for a business card so you can keep in touch
- Be enthusiastic!

AFTER

- Send a thank you note/email within 24 hours
- Stay in touch with the employer; call/email once per week until hiring decision is made

Common questions YOU should ask an employer

1. What would a typical day-in-the-life be like in this position?
2. What are 3 characteristics in an ideal candidate for this position? (this is a great question because you can respond by addressing how you fulfill those characteristics!)
3. How would you describe the culture of the office?
4. What is your favorite aspect of working for this company?
5. What training do you typically provide for new employees?

Interview Questions

Typically, a wide variety of questions can be used to gain information about a candidate's job skills. Use these questions to practice so you will be able to market specific job skills effectively in the interview. You probably won't be able to anticipate every question they will ask, but practicing will help you recall skills and experiences you can use when forming your responses.

Answer Questions Using S.T.A.R.

To ensure a complete and effective response, include the following information:

Situation – What were the circumstances?

Task – What was the task/project/assignment?

Action – What did you do?

Result – What was the outcome?

1. Describe a time on any job which you've held in which you were faced with problems or stresses which tested your coping skills. What did you do?
2. Give an example of a time in which you had to keep from speaking or not finish a task because you did not have enough information to come to a good decision.
3. Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
4. Tell me about a time in which you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
5. Can you tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up in order to be sure that other people knew what you thought or felt?
6. Give me an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your co-workers or subordinates at work.
7. Give me an example of a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
8. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.
9. Give an example of a time in which you had to use your fact finding skills to gain information for solving a problem - then tell me how you analyzed the information to come to a decision.
10. Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
11. Describe the most significant written document/report/presentation which you have had to complete.
12. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
13. Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
14. Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their individual needs or values.
15. What did you do in your last job in order to be effective with your organization and planning? Be specific.
16. Describe the most creative work related project which you have carried out.
17. Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
18. Give me an example of a time when you had to carefully analyze another person or a situation in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.
19. What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.

For a list of more questions or to schedule an appointment for a practice interview, contact the Career Development Center at 218.477.2131.

Interview Attire

WHAT TO WEAR



WHAT NOT TO WEAR



Thanks to LSU Baton Rouge, LA for this Graphic.

Interview *Tips*

Adapted from "Secrets to Interview Success" by Tanya Misner Letourneau in *Job Choices 2011: For Business & Liberal Arts Students*

Do Your Homework: Learn as much about the employer and industry as you can (their competition, products and services, number of employees, possible growth for the industry, and more). Review common interview questions and rehearse your response.

Make a Good First Impression: Be on time and dress appropriately. Wear a dark or gray suit and keep jewelry and cologne to a minimum. Shake the interviewer's hand and make eye contact. Balance your speaking and listening, and speak at an appropriate speed. Be specific and support your answers with examples or descriptions.

Show an Interest: Be enthusiastic. Ask appropriate questions (How would you describe the atmosphere of your department? What challenges will the person in this position be likely to encounter?) After the interview, write a note to thank the interviewer for their time.

How good are your *interview* skills?

EXCELLENT

★ First Impressions

Your appearance is professional; you're wearing a business suit. You greet and shake hands with your interviewer correctly. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging.

★ Interview Content

You are knowledgeable about the organization and position. You display poise and confidence. You relate your skills to the job very well

★ Interview Skills/Techniques

You have excellent eye contact with your interviewer (without staring). Your language and grammar are appropriate (No use of "um"!) You speak at the correct speed.

★ Closing

You successfully convey your interest in the position. You ask appropriate questions. You thank the interviewer.

★You get a job offer!

AVERAGE

• First Impressions

You look nice, but do not wear a suit. Your greeting is appropriate, but you forget to shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging.

• Interview Content

You are knowledgeable about the position, but not about the organization. You display adequate confidence in your answers. You state your skills, but do not adequately relate them to the job.

• Interview Skills/Techniques

You have adequate eye contact with your interviewer. Your language and grammar are adequate; you use "um" and other inappropriate terms a few times, but not enough to disrupt the interview. You speak a little too quickly or too slowly.

• Closing

You convey some interest in the position. You are not prepared to ask questions. You thank the interviewer.

You could get called back, but it is not certain.

NEEDS

IMPROVEMENT

⊙ First Impressions

Your attire is unprofessional: You wear jeans or shorts to the interview. You do not greet or shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is not energetic.

⊙ Interview Content

You are not knowledgeable about the position or the organization. You are not confident in answering questions about yourself. You do not state the skills you have to do the job.

⊙ Interview Skills/Techniques

You look at the floor or ceiling when speaking. Your language and grammar are inappropriate. You speak too quickly or too slowly.

⊙ Closing

You do not show any interest in the position. You do not ask any questions. You do not thank the interviewer.

⊙ You did not get this job.

Following Up (*Thank You Note!*)

A thank you letter is one of the most important yet least used tools in a job search. Use it to express your appreciation and to strengthen your candidacy. Send a thank you letter (or note) to those who helped you in your job search. When used to follow up on interviews, send within 24 hours to the individual who will be making the hiring decision and to the person who arranged the interview asking that your thanks be expressed to others who were part of the interview process (name them, if possible).

Keep thank you letter brief—never more than one page.



Set the tone of your letters to be warm and personal.



Sign your name!



FYI:

Sending a thank you note via email is also acceptable.

Date
Name of Person
Title or Position
Name of Company
Street Address
City, State (Zip)

Dear _____:

(First Paragraph) State the position for which you interviewed and the interview date and place. Express your sincere appreciation for their time and information.

(Middle Paragraph[s]) Include some reference to your conversation. Re-emphasize your strong points, or better yet, share a capability or accomplishment you forgot to mention in the interview. Draw attention to the match between your qualifications and the job requirements.

(Last Paragraph) Reaffirm your interest in the position and the company and use this as an opportunity to offer concise, helpful, job-related information not previously shared. Your appreciation and enthusiasm should be apparent.

Sincerely,

Your Signature
Typed Name

ADDITIONAL TIP FOR FOLLOWING UP:

Handwritten notes are often preferred. If you believe that you have established rapport with the interviewer/employer and you have good handwriting, a handwritten thank you card would be a good choice. Also, it may help make you memorable in a positive way.

■ **Note:** If you are not interested in the position, it is appropriate to thank the employer (by phone or letter) and ask that your application be withdrawn.



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Minnesota State University Moorhead is an equal opportunity educator & employer and is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities System.

Flora Frick 151
www.mnstate.edu/career
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Walk in hours daily—hours vary
careers@mnstate.edu
218.477.2131

