YOUR ULTIMATE JOB SEARCH GUIDE

Includes information on finding job and internship opportunities, writing your résumé and cover letter, marketing yourself online, and more!
Assurity is a company that not only helps people through difficult times, but shines a light on social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency, too. As the first major insurance company to become a Certified B Corporation, we've evaluated how our practices impact our employees, our customers, our community and the planet.

We are more than just a business at Assurity, we are a business comprised of people that care, that listen and that are always finding new ways to help.

For employment opportunities, contact:

Reid Rauterkus
Human Resources
rrauterkus@assurity.com
402.437.4301
 WHEN YOU LOVE YOUR JOB,  
YOU HIT THE SNOOZE BUTTON  
A LOT LESS.  

BE A PART OF IT. LEARN MORE AT CAREERS.GARMIN.COM

WHAT WILL YOU BUILD?

For more than 130 years, Kiewit has evolved into one of the largest and most respected construction, engineering and mining corporations in North America and Australia. We commit to excellence in all we do with a focus on quality and continuous improvement, while caring for the well-being of our people, and helping them grow to be successful.

KIEWIT.COM
SECTION 1
CHECK YOURSELF

KNOW YOURSELF AND WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

Before starting your job or internship search, reflect on who you are and prioritize what you’re looking for in an employer. This will help you secure a job or internship but also will help you to understand what you have to offer and find an opportunity where you will be successful.

1 Identify, Narrow, and Prioritize

Beyond the work environment and culture, there are several questions to ask to learn what might be the right career path to pursue.

What are your priorities?
- What geographical areas do you want to live in?
- What industries, career fields, and/or job titles are you looking for?
- What is your ideal salary range?
- Are there certain employers/organizations that really interest you?

Examples:
- “I only want to live in New York City.”
- “I want to work in the Healthcare Industry.”
- “I want a minimum starting salary of $45,000.”
- “I want a summer internship that has a strong team environment.”

Select three priorities to help narrow down what is most important to you in your career search.

| 1 | 2 | 3 |

2 Research Potential Careers

- Conduct career searches based on top interests, skills, and values.
- Research industries that appeal to you to learn more about specific career paths.
- Research organizations that appeal to you to learn about their opportunities.

For more information about researching careers, see the Explore Majors and Careers brochure at: go.unl.edu/iqnf.
Now that you know more about what you are looking for, it's time to set yourself up for success by strategizing on how to meet your career goals.

Reflect on Your Skills and Experiences
Utilize this graph to think comprehensively about your experience thus far.
Then circle the experiences that best showcase your skills and what makes you best standout. To find and target additional opportunities to gain experience, see Section 2 of this guide (p. 5-9).

Identify and Articulate Your Transferable Skills
Most college students will not have direct experience in the field they are interested in. However, employers are often interested in skill sets that can be transferred from one industry or field to another. These skills are called “transferable skills” because they are often associated with professional success in any industry. The following is an adapted list of skills/qualities desired by employers of candidates as compiled by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE Job Outlook Survey, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSFERABLE SKILL</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>HOW/WHERE YOU DEVELOPED THIS SKILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal communication</td>
<td>Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization</td>
<td>Example: greeted customers as a cashier, utilizing communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Ability to work in a team structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving/decision making</td>
<td>Ability to make decisions and solve problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>Ability to obtain and process information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>Ability to analyze data, people, and/or situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical knowledge</td>
<td>Technical knowledge related to the job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Proficiency with computer software programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>Ability to create and/or edit written reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal communication</td>
<td>Ability to sell, influence, or lead others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MORE THAN A JOB,
START YOUR CAREER

At ReSource Pro, we deliver innovative services and solutions to the insurance industry. If you are committed, engaged and service-oriented, visit www.resourcepro.com/careers to explore exciting internships and career opportunities.
SECTION 2

FIND OPPORTUNITIES

Depending on your career goals, there are lots of ways to gain experience. This section describes types of opportunities, how to find and target them, and how to put forward your best application.

Husker Hire Link

Husker Hire Link allows students and alumni to search for internships, part-time jobs, on-campus jobs, full-time positions, career events, and/or interviewing opportunities.

Benefits
- UNL fosters relationships and reviews employers that post opportunities for students.
- The employers that post are more likely to look for entry-level candidates versus other online job boards.

Ways to Leverage
- Complete your profile and upload your updated résumé well before the career fair so you can be found by potential employers and have time to research organizations. See a sample Husker Hire Link profile on p. 35.
- To increase your visibility, make sure your résumé is accessible to employers.

Research
Participate and collaborate with UNL faculty/staff in research or creative activities. This is especially important for students who would like to go to graduate school or certain scientific professions. To learn more, visit ucare.unl.edu.

Leadership & Student Organizations
Growing as a leader and a team member is vital experience that employers look for in candidates. UNL offers hundreds of organizations in a wide variety of interest areas. To learn more, visit involved.unl.edu.

Volunteer/Service Learning & Civic Engagement
Engaging with UNL faculty, staff, and students to make a positive impact in the UNL and Lincoln communities demonstrates character and other valuable attributes. To learn more, visit engage.unl.edu.

Education Abroad
Gaining independence, developing communication skills, and learning about other cultures while taking courses abroad is another way to stand out. To learn more, visit educationabroad.unl.edu.

Coursework
Utilizing the knowledge and skills you have been building in the classroom can be marketed. Seek out class projects that allow you to demonstrate specific skills that are relevant to your career goals.
PART-TIME JOBS

Holding a part-time job develops transferable skills, builds a network, and establishes references. While looking for relevant positions to your career interests is ideal, remember you can still market your transferable skills from any experience.

Career Services advertises a wide variety of jobs on- and off-campus. Find current job descriptions and application instructions at careers.unl.edu/gain-experience.

On-Campus Jobs

Training, flexible schedules, and competitive wages are just a few benefits you may expect from an on-campus employer. Each UNL department hires independently for student openings and will have specific instructions for applying.

Work-study jobs are partially funded by federal financial aid. UNL Scholarships and Financial Aid (financialaid.unl.edu) may award work-study as part of your federal financial aid package. With work-study, you may apply for any on-campus job, and once selected, you will earn the award through a paycheck for the hours you work. Make your hiring department aware of your work-study award.

Off-Campus Jobs

Many employers depend on UNL students to make their organizations run. Lincoln offers employment opportunities in government, health and human services, retail, food services, technology, and other industries.

INTERNSHIPS

Internships have become a key to securing employment after graduation. They provide the chance to “test-drive” a career.

Many UNL academic departments allow interns to earn academic credit in conjunction with an internship or co-op. Regular tuition and fees will be incurred. Contact your academic advisor or department to explore credit options.

Open to all majors, Directed Field Experience (EDPS 496), is a course Career Services offers through the Department of Educational Psychology. Contact Career Services to pursue this option.

To find an internship, consider these resources:

- Husker Hire Link. This free tool allows you to post and send résumés to employers, request on-campus interviews, stay up-to-date on career opportunities, and search jobs, internships, and employers. See p. 35 for more details.
- Career fairs and events. Attend UNL career fairs and events to interact directly with employers. Check with other colleges to see if you can attend their events.
- InternNE.com and other geographic resources. Internship Nebraska lists internships from Nebraska employers. Consider websites from targeted cities or states.
- Employer websites. Review internships listed on employer websites.
- Nonprofit/volunteer organizations. Nonprofit employers may have internships or career-related volunteer positions. Check sites like idealist.org for ideas.
- Government employers. State and city government often hire interns. The federal government Pathways program is another resource.
- Professional organizations. Membership in professional organizations may allow access to internships in your field.
- Social networking sites. Let friends and family know about your internship search.
- Internship placement organizations. Providers find an internship for you. Program participation costs may be up to $15,000.
- Create your own internship. Talk to your employer about ways to enhance your part-time job or contact other organizations of interest and ask about them creating an internship for you.

For more information about internships, visit: careers.unl.edu/internships.

As a student employee or intern, make sure you have reviewed your rights and responsibilities. This information is available at careers.unl.edu/internships.
When you start seeking full-time job opportunities, it is important to be strategic throughout the process. Set goals, perform research, and truly think about what you want most out of a job. Reflect back on your interests, skills, values, and strengths to get started.

**Begin the Process**

Online job searching should only consume half of your job-searching time.

### PERSONAL CONTACT

- Put out the word that you’re in the market for a new job.
- Don’t be shy about sharing this in conversations with friends, family members, former colleagues and classmates, and anyone else you happen to meet.
- Share your résumé freely (e.g. career fairs, networking events, with family/friends, etc.).
- Spend the other half of your time networking face-to-face, cold-calling/emailing inquiries to organizations that interest you, and talking through your job search with people who want to help you.

### ONLINE

Use keywords to focus your searches on types of work that interest you. These can be in job boards, LinkedIn, Google, and anything with a search capability.

**Categories of keyword examples:**

- Location.
- Industry.
- Job type.
- Organization/company.
- Skills.
- Languages.

**Examples:** “start-ups in Omaha”, “nonprofits in Kansas City”, or “entry level public accounting jobs at mid-sized firms.”

Focus on sites and services that lead you to the data you really want, whether that’s networking groups, lists of potential employers, or job listings specific to your industry, job function and/or location.

**Example sites to use:**

- Husker Hire Link.
- LinkedIn.
- Indeed.
- Professional Associations.
- Industry Specific.
- Glassdoor.
- Nebraska Related Sites (CareerLink, InternNe.com).

For a complete list, visit: careers.unl.edu/job-and-internship-listing-resources.

When targeting organizations and deciding if you want to spend the time applying, research the following:

- Organizational history and type: (public/private/nonprofit).
- Recent news/press releases/social media feed.
- Products/services provided.
- Organization values/philosophies/culture.
- Desired skills and positions they hire for.
- What are they known for? What’s their reputation/brand?
- Who’s their consumer/client/market?
- Competitors/peer institutions and/or organizations.

Questions to Ask Yourself (After Research):

- Does this organization meet my requirements for a good match?
- How can I tailor my application materials to highlight that I am the candidate they need?
- What do I want to tell them during the interview to show that I am qualified?
- What can I mention naturally in the interview to show them I did my research?
- What questions do I want to ask them based on my research?
Create Your Target List

- Identify 10 organizations you have on your target list at one given time.
- If one organization seems to be going nowhere, put it on the backburner and replace it with a new prospect.
- Give organizations at the top of your list extra time and effort.
- Visit with career advisors to discuss your job or internship search.
- Consider making phone calls and email inquiries each week.

Track Your Progress and Develop Action Steps

Consider creating a list to both prioritize and keep track of your target organizations. See the example chart below to help you start:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>INDUSTRY</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>WARM CONTACT?</th>
<th>MOTIVATION LEVEL (1-5)</th>
<th>JOB POSTING</th>
<th>TYPE OF POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garmin</td>
<td>Tech</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Sales Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
<td>Tech</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Sales Representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After you have prioritized your target list, develop goals and action steps with dates to continue staying on track:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION/POSITION</th>
<th>GOALS, ACTIONS, AND DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google, Sales Representative</td>
<td>Call friend who interned with them to get more inside information by 5/15. Tailor résumé and application materials by 5/20. Apply before due date, 5/30.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apply

Job Boards

There are many websites and job boards that may help with your job search process. Some are general websites and some are industry-specific.

- Follow employer-specific website instructions, but be cautious in providing personal information such as your social security number.
- Target your information to the specific organization and position.
- Have an unformatted résumé on hand that allows you to cut and paste into an online application.
- Be cautious about including all of your contact information on your résumé if you choose to upload it to a job board. Your email is encouraged, but not your address.
- Submit applications for each position of interest, updating your profile as appropriate.
- Complete all fields, even those that are not required.

Remember to tailor your résumé for each and every position you apply for. See Section 4: Put it on Paper (p. 30) to understand how to do this effectively.
ATTEND CAREER FAIRS

Prepare for the Career Fair

Our career fairs are a great way to gain personal connections in the job search process. Visit careers.unl.edu/events for dates and details for each fair.

Get prepared by using the following checklist:

• Make sure your profile is up-to-date on Husker Hire Link.
• Identify and research employers attending the fair.
• Update and tailor your résumé.
• Plan to dress to impress. Selecting and wearing appropriate and professional attire will make a great first impression.
• Practice your introduction (elevator pitch).
• Be aware of employer information booths and on-campus interviewing opportunities.

The day of the fair tips:

• Prioritize and map out which employers you want to speak to.
• Have several résumés printed on résumé paper and store in a portfolio.
• Approach employers with a firm handshake, eye contact, and plenty of enthusiasm and interest.
• Ask the representative for any tips when applying online if that is the required application process.
  Note that some employers cannot accept hard copy résumés.
• Have an open mind to employers you may not have identified ahead of time; be open to surprises!
• Ask for a business card for contact information.

Remember to follow up within a week after the fair. Employers leave a career fair meeting many potential hires; this is a great way to stand out to recruiters!

We are hiring talent for entry-level business management / merchandising and facility management positions.

Visit us October 5 at the College of Agricultural Sciences Career Fair

www.scoular.com
In 1987, we started out to build a power plant. Today, Tenaska is one of the largest and most successful independent energy companies in the United States. Forbes magazine ranks Tenaska among the largest privately held U.S. companies, with 650 employees and gross operating revenues of $8.4 billion.

Headquartered in Omaha, with regional offices in Dallas, Denver, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Boston, and Calgary and Vancouver, Canada, Tenaska is highly respected for its expertise, pursuit of opportunities and uncompromising values.
SECTION 3
START NETWORKING

IDENTIFY AND BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Why Network?

Connecting with others and building your network is one of the most strategic methods of not only finding the right job or opportunity but continuing to develop as a professional in your field.

Not sure what you want to do after college? No problem! Take time to find professionals who are in positions you might like and ask them to have coffee with you so you can learn more about the field. This is called informational interviewing.

What is the hidden job market? Many times employers will not list a position, but if the right people are available, they will hire them. This starts from building relationships with these organizations early.

Connect and create professional relationships with those who are interested in the same thing—you never know when you might need advice!

Identify Your Network

1. Start building your network by identifying who is in it already.
   The best place to start is having an informal conversation with someone you already know. Examples include meeting with faculty or staff, attending a career fair, introducing yourself to a guest speaker in class or at a student organization meeting, discussing plans with family, friends, or others, or even posting messages on social media.

2. Begin to identify who you might want to connect with outside of your current network.

3. Use your resources:
   - Ask for referrals from people you know.
   - Ask those in your network, “Do you know someone who would know something about _____?”
   - Join professional associations or organizations.
   - Take advantage of opportunities to network with alumni.
   - Utilize LinkedIn (see p. 32-34).
Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn has a variety of features to find professionals and get connected to those you already know. Check these out:

- Click on “My Network”. This piece of LinkedIn allows you to find people you may know, connect with alumni, and research professionals in a certain industry or job title.
- Join groups to have access to potential connections and it will give you the functionality to message and connect with those with similar skills and interests. LinkedIn allows you to message people you haven’t connected with as long as you are in the same group.
- Use the “Filters” tool to narrow searches based on groups, keywords, location, industry, and more to target and personalize potential connections and organizations.

Start Your Contact List

Take a second to determine who is in your network and someone that you wish was in your network:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>PHONE</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before you start connecting, reflect and research. Why are you reaching out and how does it relate to the person you are connecting with? Each time you reach out to a professional or apply to a different position you need an individualized approach. Be as professional as possible.

What is the contact’s preferred way of connecting? If email is your preferred way to communicate, be willing to communicate through the channels your contact prefers.

---

**DO**

- Be as professional as possible.
- Use a professional email address.
- Write a clear and concise subject line.
- Keep the communication focused.
- Address your communication to a specific person.
- State who you are, how you found them, and what you are asking them for.
- Share your major or career aspirations.
- Be prepared to discuss your experiences, skills, and qualifications.
- Ask for advice, ideas, and referrals.
- Use proper grammar and spelling.
- Always have someone proofread your communication before you send it to a potential employer.
- Follow up and do what you said you would.

---

**AVOID**

- Thinking about only your needs. What can you do to help the other person as well? Being interested in them will make them more interested in you.
- Being too informal. Your communication and tone should be authentic and appreciative but professional.
- Sending a standard one-size-fits-all email or message to every networking connection. Personalize it to each person.
- Grammar, spelling, and other editing errors. Emails and other electronic messages are still forms of professional communication. Proofread!
- Asking for a job if requesting an informational interview or LinkedIn/networking connection.
Sample Written Networking Communication Messages

**CAREER EXPLORATION OR NETWORKING INQUIRY EMAIL**

**Dear Mr. Smith:**

I am a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln majoring in Psychology and exploring career opportunities in sales. As part of my exploration, I would like to learn more about this career and determine if it is the right fit for me.

I found your name on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Alumni Association LinkedIn group and am interested in the work you are doing in sales. Would you be willing to speak with me in person, over the phone, or via email about your job and career path? I am looking to complete a 30-60 minute informational interview in the next three weeks.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Riley Greene
riley.greene16@gmail.com
402-555-5555

**LETTER OF INQUIRY EMAIL**

**Dear Ms. Beck:**

I am a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln majoring in Psychology. My professor, Dr. Barbara Huxley, recommended I look into YYY Company and I was impressed by your organization's commitment to customer service in the sales process. I am inquiring to see if you have any opportunities in the sales field.

I have a strong background in sales and customer service. Specifically, my experience as an Executive Store Intern at Target and Phonathon Caller with the University of Nebraska Foundation helped develop strong customer service, communication, and problem solving skills needed to build and maintain relationships with clients.

Attached is my résumé, which details my qualifications for sales positions. I will call your office next week to see if a meeting can be arranged to discuss an opportunity. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 402-555-5555 or riley.greene16@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Riley Greene

**LINKEDIN REQUEST**

**Dear Mr. Davis:**

I am a student at UNL interested in sales. I found your profile on the UNL Alumni Association LinkedIn group and would like to connect with you to learn more about the sales field. Would you be willing to add me as a professional connection?

Sincerely,
Riley Greene

**CAREER FAIR FOLLOW-UP EMAIL**

**Dear Ms. Beck:**

Thank you for visiting with me about sales positions at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Career Fair last week. I was excited to hear about your opportunities and believe my skills and experiences are an excellent match for your needs. Specifically, my experience as an Executive Store Intern at Target and Phonathon Caller with the University of Nebraska Foundation helped develop strong customer service, communication, and problem solving skills needed to build and maintain relationships with clients.

Please find a copy of my résumé attached to this email. Per your recommendation, I have applied for the Technical Sales Representative position through your website. If you need more information or would like to discuss my qualifications further, please contact me at 402-555-5555 or riley.greene16@gmail.com.

Thank you again for taking the time to visit with me at the career fair. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,
Riley Greene
**Informational Interviews**

Informational interviewing is a great way to gain personalized information about a career, industry, or organization. Before the meeting, have questions in mind that will allow you to learn but also develop a relationship.

**Sample Questions to Ask**
- What has your career path been? How did you get to where you are today?
- What does a day in the life of a technical sales representative look like?
- What challenges and opportunities are associated with this type of position?
- What skills and experiences do you recommend I seek out if I would like to enter this field?
- What type of positions do most people in this industry start with?
- What should I expect for starting pay in an entry-level position within the industry?
- What advice would you have for me as I prepare to leave college and enter the work force?

**Informational Interviewing Tips**
- Map out a plan of who you want to talk with and how you will reach out.
- Review your résumé and be prepared to discuss your experiences.
- Prepare topics and questions to discuss.
- Share your career aspirations.
- Dress professionally (i.e. business casual) if you are visiting someone in-person.
- Bring a résumé.
- Get directions to the site beforehand.
- Arrive approximately 10 minutes early.
- Be prepared to talk about yourself.
- Listen closely.
- Take notes.
- Ask for referrals.
- Leave every networking experience with a concrete next step.

**Follow Up**
- Send a thank-you. See an example thank-you note on p. 43.
- Follow up and stay connected (LinkedIn is a great tool for this!).
- Keep a record of your contacts and referrals.
- Send an email to the additional contacts you were given.
- Stay in touch and maintain the contact.

**In Person Networking – Your 30 Second Elevator Pitch**

Think of your elevator pitch as your 30-second commercial. It’s your first impression and introduction of who you are, what you do, what you can offer, and what you are looking for. Having an elevator pitch that is well thought-out allows you to showcase your communication skills, preparedness, and qualifications in any type of networking scenario – from career fairs to actually meeting someone on an elevator.

The key to a smooth elevator pitch is practice and knowing how to adapt it based on the scenario. Review the parts of an elevator pitch below to learn what is vital to say and then practice your own.

**DO**
- Write out pitch
- Keep it short (less than 45 seconds)
- Practice without memorization – spontaneity will make it feel unscripted

**AVOID**
- Exaggerate or use too much jargon
- Summarize your resume
- Give too much personal information (i.e. siblings, marital status)
### WHO YOU ARE

When introducing yourself during your elevator pitch, it's important to think about the scenario in regards to what information might be the most important for your target audience. For a career fair, employers will want to know your educational background versus a networking scenario, an individual may be more interested in your current position and what you are good at doing.

To get started:
Hello, my name is (name), and I am a (class year) (major) student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

#### CAREER FAIR SCENARIO
Hello, my name is Riley Greene, and I am a junior psychology student.

#### NETWORKING SCENARIO
Hello, my name is Riley Greene, and I build relationships to create valuable partnerships.

### WHAT YOU DO + WHAT YOU CAN OFFER

Next in your pitch, think about what you do best, what's your impact, and what sets you apart. Ask yourself if there are any notable accomplishments you would want to share and what skills you should be advertising. Tie these ideas together to show you have something to offer.

To get started:
I am involved in/work at ___________ + explain skills and experience in relevance to an industry/position

My interest in _______ has grown through (experience) + explain skills in relevance to an industry/position

#### CAREER FAIR SCENARIO
I work at the Foundation as a phonathon caller and am part of the process of building relationships with alumni. In this experience, I have enjoyed learning how to collaborate with all kinds of individuals to continue to advance the University of Nebraska.

#### NETWORKING SCENARIO
My interest in relationship building comes from studying psychology at Nebraska, and working part-time for the Foundation. Last month, I established over 20 connections and want to continue utilizing my communication skills to meet the goals of any organization.

### WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR

Lastly, draw the connection between who you are + what you can do + what you can offer. From there, you want to end with a question or an “ask” based on the scenario. Bonus: You may also find the opportunity to showcase your research on an employer/position.

To get started:
- I was wondering what opportunities you have available next summer?
- Would you be willing to give me any advice about this type of position and the best way to enter the field?
- I am very interested in your organization and I was wondering what the selection process looks like?

#### CAREER FAIR SCENARIO
With this experience and my classes, I have become interested in sales. Could you tell me more about your sales internship position that I recently saw posted on Husker Hire Link?

#### NETWORKING SCENARIO
Can you tell me a little bit more about your role?

### HELPFUL TIPS

**Throughout the conversation:**
Be an active participant, listen and respond appropriately.

Then, ask questions to show interest:
- What does a day in the life of a ___________ look like?
- What challenges and opportunities are associated with this type of position?
- What skills and experiences do you recommend I seek out if I would like to enter this field?
- What type of positions do most people in this industry start with?

**End of the conversation with contact information and knowing next steps:**
- When do you anticipate accepting applications?
- May I contact you if I have additional questions?
- Say thank you and follow-up accordingly.
Whether you are applying for scholarships, internships, jobs or graduate/professional school, a well-crafted résumé, cover letter, or other professional communication can set you apart from other applicants.

Résumé

Contact information for 3-5 individuals who can attest to your qualifications.

Targeted letter addressing your fit for a specific opportunity or organization.

SECTION 4 AT A GLANCE

Professional document summarizing your qualifications, education, and experience.
RÉSUMÉ & PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Start early.
Build your skills by getting engaged inside and outside of the classroom through internships/co-ops, related part-time jobs, student organizations, volunteer opportunities, class projects, research experiences, etc. These experiences will develop skills to achieve your academic and career goals.

Document your experiences and skills regularly.
Do you remember what you did two weeks ago? Do you remember what you did two years ago? No? Regularly update your professional materials and keep them in a master document, so you will have this information for future applications. This can also help you identify gaps or areas to develop to make you a better candidate.

Personalize your documents to the reader.
While it is tempting to develop a basic template of these materials once, then simply update it as time passes, it is more effective to tailor each document you submit to the specific audience, often times the organization and hiring manager. To demonstrate your fit, reflect on your qualifications including experiences, skills, and abilities and specifically address how these meet the qualifications desired for the role.

Analyze the opportunity.
How do you know what qualifications the role desires? Read and analyze the job description to determine the skills and experiences sought.

Let's Practice!
Read the following sample job description and circle the keywords, skills, and experiences required of a successful candidate. This is applicable to scholarships, part-time jobs, and internships too.

Technical Sales Representative
YYY Company, named a “Best Place to Work” five years in a row, is seeking ambitious candidates for our technical sales representative position. At YYYY Company, we embrace working as a team to meet our clients’ needs and drive industry leading results. Our goal is to make a positive impact for our clients and on the world.

This entry level sales role will build relationships with internal and external clients managing the entire sales process including regular outreach and follow-up, maintain a deep understanding of the product, and ability to identify the unique needs of the client to provide appropriate products. When our clients win, we win.

Preferred Qualifications:
• Bachelor’s degree in related field
• Written and verbal communication skills to appropriately explain complex concepts to peers/clients
• Ability to work independently and as part of a team
• Strong problem-solving and critical thinking skills
• A self-motivated individual who is able to get results
• Knowledge of Microsoft Office programs

DO
• Use a common, easy-to-read font in a readable size (typically 10-12 point font).
• Set all margins between .5 to 1 inch.
• Use bold, underline, and italics purposefully and consistently to highlight and separate sections.
• Limit to one page unless more pages are typical in your industry.
• Develop a separate unformatted version of your résumé with no bold, italics, or other designs for online applications.
• List experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
• Make sure your GPA is accurate if you choose to include it.

AVOID
• Templates or “wizards” that reduce control, can limit content, or may not be readable by online application systems.
• Tables and grids that do not transfer well when emailing or applying online.
• Colors or designs, unless specifically required for the position or industry.
• Personal pronouns (i.e. my, I, our, we).
• Paragraph descriptions of experiences.
• Inconsistencies in structure, layout, or formatting.
• Photographs of yourself, clipart, or borders.
• Abbreviations except for states and GPA.
• Rounding your GPA up.
• Listing generic transferrable skills that lack proof.
What is a Résumé?

A résumé is your personal marketing tool to quickly show how and why you are the ideal candidate for the role. A strong résumé generates interviews or follow-up communication regarding your qualifications. Your résumé may look different depending on the industry and position you are applying for, so be sure to research these in order to guide your résumé format and make the best possible first impression.

Sections of Your Résumé

- **Required**
- **Strongly Recommended**
- **Industry Specific**
- **Optional**
- **Not Included**

**Contact Information**

Name, address, city, state, zip code, phone, email, and tailored LinkedIn profile URL, professional website, or blog.

*Example:*

Riley Greene  
1234 Kennedy Drive  
Lincoln, NE 68512  
402-555-5555  
riley.greene16@gmail.com  
www.linkedin.com/in/rileygreene

**Education**

Educational Background | Academic Background | Academic History

- Includes institution name, location (City, ST or City, Country), degree, graduation date, and major(s).
- Institutions listed with most recent degree first.
- May include GPA, minor, concentration, education abroad, etc.

*Example:*

University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE  
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, May 20XX (anticipated)  
Major: Management; Minor: Political Science;  
Cumulative GPA: #.##/4.00; Major GPA: #.##/4.00

**Objective**

Professional Objective | Career Objective

Skills and experiences you would contribute to the position.

*Example:*

Seeking a full-time position in technical sales demonstrating excellent organization, communication, and customer service skills

**Related Coursework**

Relevant Coursework | Professional Coursework | Academic Courses

- Include coursework specific to the profession or industry.
- Courses should be listed by their full name (Sales Communication not MRKT 257).

*Example:*

Human Nutrition & Metabolism, Human Physiology, Human Anatomy, Scientific Principles of Food Preparation

**Skills**

Computer Skills | Technical Skills | Certifications | Laboratory Skills

- Use for specific fields or jobs that list skills in the requirements.
- Include other skills based on your specialty and skill level such as computer, language, laboratory, certifications, etc.

*Example:*

Computer: Microsoft Excel, Access, Word, PowerPoint; SPSS, SAS  
Language: Proficient in Spanish; Basic knowledge of French

**Work Experience**

Employment History | Additional Experience | Work History

- Includes organization name, location (City, ST or City, Country), position title, dates of employment (month and year), and description of tasks and responsibilities (optional).

*Example:*

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

- Manage financial transactions in a quick and efficient manner.
- Communicate with 100+ customers daily to resolve concerns and answer questions.
Activities

Leadership Experience | Activities & Honors | Involvement

- Strongly recommended if you have been involved over several months/years.
- Includes organization name, location (City, ST or City, Country), position title, dates of involvement (month and year), and description of tasks and responsibilities.
- Could include student, academic, community, or social organizations.
- List in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Could be combined with a Volunteer Experience and/or Honors/Awards section.
- Include interests only if appropriate to your field or industry of interest.

Example:
Mexican American Student Association, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Vice President of Membership, January 20XX-Present
- Educate new members about the organization’s mission and activities.

Honors/Awards

- Strongly recommended if you do not include the information in the "Education" or "Activities" sections.
- Includes award, honorary, or scholarship name and dates. It is recommended to also include a brief description if it is not obvious from the award’s name.
- Most often used for academic honors, but could also include athletic, service, performance, work/professional, etc. honors.
- Honors listed in reverse chronological order (most recent first).

Example:
University Honors Program, 20XX-Present
Alpha Lambda Delta (first year academic honorary), 20XX-Present

References

- Do not include references on your résumé.
- Create a separate reference page that lists your references.

For a sample reference page see p. 25.

Relevant Experience

Related Experience | Professional Experience | Internship Experience | Volunteer Experience

- Includes organization name, location (City, ST or City, Country), position title, dates of employment (month and year), and description of tasks and responsibilities.
- Can include all relevant experiences, even unpaid positions, volunteer work, internships, summer and part-time jobs, extra-curricular activities, research projects, class projects, etc.
- Experiences listed in reverse chronological order (most recent first).

Example:
Citibank, New York, NY
Investment Banking Intern, May 20XX-August 20XX
- Researched and prepared offering documents for potential clientele.
- Generated financial models utilizing SPSS Comprehensive Statistical Software.

Additional Sections

International Experience | Certifications | Senior Design Project | Research Experience | Teaching Experience | Military Experience | Publications | Presentations | Professional Affiliations

- Include other sections to best highlight your skills and experiences for the opportunities you are seeking.
- Could be added to other résumé sections depending on how significant the experience is and how relevant it is to your industry or field.
Identify Your Transferable Skills

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

Attributes Employers Look For On A Résumé

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Comm.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solving Skills</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Comm.</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Skills</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Skills</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Skills</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail-Oriented</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Job Outlook 2017, National Association of Colleges and Employers

Writing Résumé Bullet Statements

Bullet statements describe your tasks, skills, and results for your experiences, which could include jobs, activities, volunteer opportunities, honors/awards, and/or academic courses. This allows the person reading your résumé to understand your past experiences and what skills you bring to the opportunity. Effective bullet statements answer “what,” “how,” and “why” questions about your experience.

3 Rules for Bullet Points

1. Start with an action verb
2. Describe what, how, why
3. Use numbers

Sell It, Don’t Tell It

What did you do?
Situation/Task. What did you do in the role? Think about every task you completed or are currently doing in that experience, no matter how big or small.

How did you do it?
Actions/Skills. How did you do the task? How many/often? Identify how you accomplished the task and what transferable skills you developed or utilized as you were completing it. Start your bullet statement with an action verb relating to the specific skill you want to demonstrate. Quantify your experience, timeframe, and/or results whenever possible.

Why did you do it?
Results/Purpose. Why did you do the task? Why does it relate to the job? This element adds context and results to the tasks so the reader understands why you did this responsibility and how it relates to the job you are applying for.
### Using Action Verbs

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

- **Leadership/Initiative**
  - Accomplished, Achieved, Chaired, Coached, Coordinated, Directed, Influenced, Initiated, Led, Oversaw, Managed, Mentored, Motivated, Supervised, Trained

- **Teamwork/Interpersonal**
  - Collaborated, Consulted, Cooperated, Contributed, Encouraged, Engaged, Ensured, Guided, Helped, Interacted, Networked, Partnered, Related, Resolved, Supported

- **Written Communication**
  - Authored, Briefed, Composed, Corresponded, Critique, Described, Documented, Drafted, Edited, Proposed, Reported, Reviewed, Summarized, Translated, Wrote

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

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

### Create Your Bullet Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What did you do? (situation/task)</th>
<th>How did you do it? How many/often? How does it relate to transferable skills? (action/skills)</th>
<th>Why did you do it? How does it relate to the job? (results/purpose)</th>
<th>Build your Bullet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: Answered phones</td>
<td>Example: Communicated with 100+ customers daily over the phone through individualized attention and service</td>
<td>Example: To enhance the customer experience</td>
<td>Example: Communicated with 100+ customers daily over the phone through individualized attention and service to enhance the customer experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Résumé Example 1: Getting Involved
Targeted toward students applying for scholarships, study abroad, or part-time jobs.

RILEY GREENE
860 North 17th Street #304 | Abel Residence Hall | Lincoln, NE 68508
402-555-5555 | riley.greene16@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE
To obtain a scholarship based on academics and financial need for study abroad in New Zealand

EDUCATION
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Arts
Major: Undeclared
Graduation: May 20XX (anticipated)
GPA: #.##/4.00

Lincoln North Star High School, Lincoln, NE
High School Diploma
Graduation: May 20XX

WORK EXPERIENCE
Subway, Lincoln, NE
Sandwich Artist, June 20XX – Present
• Perform informal oral satisfaction survey at checkout to show care for customers’ experience
• Complete financial transactions with attention to detail and accuracy
• Communicate with customers to determine their needs and create custom sandwiches to specifications

Private Families, Lincoln, NE
Babysitter, October 20XX – May 20XX
• Supervised the safety of three elementary school age children twice-weekly
• Created age-appropriate educational opportunities to support creative and academic growth

LEADERSHIP/VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Center for People in Need, Lincoln, NE
Volunteer, June 20XX – Present
• Prepare food for events of up to 100 people, emphasizing attention to known food allergens
• Coordinate “Teen for a Day” events in which young women in grades 6-12 may shop for new clothes for the upcoming school year for free to start the year off successfully

Orchestra & Marching Band, Lincoln North Star High School, Lincoln, NE
First Chair Trumpet, September 20XX – May 20XX; Member, October 20XX – May 20XX
• Earned first chair position out of 20 other students based on performance ability and leadership skills
• Practiced 2 hours daily while balancing academics and other activities

HONORS
James Canfield Scholarship, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, August 20XX – Present

SKILLS
Computer: Microsoft Word and PowerPoint
Languages: Basic written and conversational Spanish

TIP: If you are still deciding on your major, list it as “Undeclared” with a degree in Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. Remember to change this to the correct degree and major once you declare your major.

TIP: Include your GPA or major GPA if it is 3.0 or above.

TIP: You may include your high school education and experiences on your résumé initially but this information should be removed by your junior year.

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

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

TIP: If you have held more than one position at an organization, show the progression and save space by listing the organization first.

TIP: In the “Skills” section, focus on “hard” or “technical” skills relevant to your field. Integrate into bullet statements if possible (see sample on p. 21).
Résumé Example 2: Gaining Experience
Targeted toward students applying for internships, research opportunities, or major-related experiences.

RILEY GREENE
1234 Kennedy Drive | Lincoln, NE 68512 | 402-555-5555 | riley.greene16@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/rileygreene

OBJECTIVE
To obtain the Executive Store Intern position at Target utilizing analytical, communication, and teamwork skills

EDUCATION
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX (anticipated)
Major: Psychology; GPA: 3.5/4.00
Scholarships: James Canfield Scholarship and Global Gateway Scholarship

Lincoln University, Christ Church, New Zealand
New Zealand Study Tour (6 credits of history), Summer 20XX

WORK EXPERIENCE
University of Nebraska Foundation, Lincoln, NE
Phonathon Caller, September 20XX – Present
• Persuade alumni and friends of the University to make financial contributions totaling more than $200,000 in pledges within first three months
• Analyze potential donor information prior to call to identify specific resources for targeted sales approach

Subway, Lincoln, NE
Sandwich Artist, June 20XX – August 20XX
• Completed financial transactions with attention to detail and accuracy ensuring positive customer experience

ACTIVITIES
Undergraduate Psychology Organization, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Member, October 20XX – Present
• Learn more about the field of psychology from peers and faculty

University Program Council (UPC), University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Member, January 20XX – Present
• Collaborate in a team to coordinate and promote entertaining educational events to the campus community

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Alternative Service Break, Pine Ridge, SD
Participant, March 20XX
• Volunteered in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, tribal headquarters of the Oglala Sioux Tribe
• Tutored elementary school students to provide mentorship toward higher education goals

Center for People in Need, Lincoln, NE
Volunteer, June 20XX – October 20XX
• Coordinated events to support families and individuals in need with donations from the community
• Provided supplemental nutrition assistance to approximately 100 individuals monthly

SKILLS
Computer: Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel
Language: Basic written and conversational Spanish

TIP: Include a URL to your LinkedIn profile, professional website, or blog for networking purposes and to share additional information with employers.

TIP: If including an “Objective” section when applying to a specific position, include the job title and organization name.

TIP: Make sure your degree, major, and GPA (if included) are listed accurately.

TIP: At the internship level, employers do not expect a significant amount of related experience. For positions that seem unrelated to your career goals, highlight duties and responsibilities that are transferable.

TIP: Along with duties and responsibilities, focus on specific achievements or results.

TIP: Use quantities in your experience descriptions to communicate results and your level of responsibility.

TIP: Alter the format and structure of your résumé to highlight different activities and experiences.
Résumé Example 3: Getting the Job
Targeted toward candidates seeking full-time career opportunities.

RILEY GREENE
1234 Kennedy Drive | Lincoln, NE 68512 | 402-555-5555 | riley.greene16@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/rileygreene

EDUCATION
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX (anticipated)
Major: Psychology; GPA: B+/B+/A.00
Lincoln University, Christ Church, New Zealand
New Zealand Study Tour (6 credits of history), Summer 20XX

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
University of Nebraska Foundation, Lincoln, NE
Phonathon Caller, September 20XX – Present
• Persuade alumni and others to make financial contributions using acute speaking and listening skills
• Earned top 10% fundraiser status within first three months by generating more than $200,000 in pledges
Target, Kansas City, MO
Executive Store Intern, May 20XX – August 20XX
• Interacted with 50+ customers daily using effective customer service, organization, and multi-tasking abilities to ensure a positive experience and resolve any problems
• Cross-trained in all departments, including electronics, to appropriately support customers’ individual needs

Department of Psychology, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Research Methods and Data Analysis Research Project Participant, August 20XX – December 20XX
• Analyzed complex statistical data using Microsoft Excel and SPSS to test research project hypotheses
• Used critical thinking skills to evaluate appropriateness of research conclusions based on data
• Demonstrated technical writing ability by presenting research project in a concise yet detailed poster format

ACTIVITIES
Undergraduate Psychology Organization, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Vice-President, January 20XX – Present
• Recruit potential new members through social media announcements, classroom visits, and flyers increasing overall membership by 5%
Member, January 20XX–Present
• Build relationships with peers and faculty while learning more about the psychology field

University Program Council (UPC), University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Member, January 20XX – December 20XX
• Researched and conducted outreach to entertainment speakers and groups following up as needed
• Coordinated and promoted entertaining educational speakers to the campus community in a 5-person team

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Alternative Service Break, Pine Ridge, SD
Participant, March 20XX
• Tutored elementary school students on the Pine Ridge Reservation and encouraged participation in extracurricular activities

SELECTED HONORS,
Psi Chi (academic honorary in psychology), October 20XX–Present
James Canfield Scholarship (based on academic achievement), August 20XX-May 20XX

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE
Subway, Sandwich Artist, Lincoln, NE, June 20XX-August 20XX

TIP: Incorporate words or phrases directly from the job description that pertain to your skills and experience (shown in red for demonstration purposes only—do not use red in your résumé or cover letter).

TIP: Emphasize significant experience, paid or unpaid, by creating a “Relevant Experience” section.

TIP: Related coursework can highlight achievement, knowledge, or skills in areas of interest to the employer.

TIP: If you have held more than one position at an organization, show the progression and save space by listing the organization first.

TIP: See the red words as they relate to the sample job description on p. 28.

TIP: Additional, non-related experience may be listed simply to show work longevity and ability to manage time, handle money, work with the public, etc.
Reference Page

Employers are likely to ask for a list of individuals who are willing to provide information about your qualifications, work habits, character, and skills.

Reference Page Submission

You do not need to send a list of references automatically with every job application. Rather, you may be asked sometime during the hiring process (application submission, before the interview, after the interview, etc.) to provide the names and contact information for these individuals.

Selecting References

Generally, you will be asked to provide 3-5 references. If a job description asks for a specific number of references, submit exactly that number. Supervisors, professors, student/volunteer organization advisors, academic advisors, and other professional contacts able to positively attest to your skills, abilities, and work ethic are good choices.

Always ask potential references for permission prior to listing them if they would be willing to serve as a “positive” reference for you to eliminate those unwilling or unable to give positive feedback. Keep your references up-to-date on your job search, and be sure they have the most current version of your résumé so that they may better prepare for an inquiry.

Note: After you have concluded your job search, always send a thank-you note to your references to show your appreciation of their time and thoughtful comments about your skills and experiences.

Reference Page Format

Your references should be listed on a sheet separate from your résumé but reflect a similar look with the same header, format, and appearance:

- Use the same contact information heading and format as your résumé.
- Your references should be listed on a sheet separate from your résumé but reflect a similar look with the same header, format, and appearance.
- Selecting References
- Generally, you will be asked to provide 3-5 references. If a job description asks for a specific number of references, submit exactly that number.
- Supervisors, professors, student/volunteer organization advisors, academic advisors, and other professional contacts able to positively attest to your skills, abilities, and work ethic are good choices.
- Always ask potential references for permission prior to listing them if they would be willing to serve as a “positive” reference for you to eliminate those unwilling or unable to give positive feedback. Keep your references up-to-date on your job search, and be sure they have the most current version of your résumé so that they may better prepare for an inquiry.

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- Always ask potential references for permission prior to listing them if they would be willing to serve as a “positive” reference for you to eliminate those unwilling or unable to give positive feedback. Keep your references up-to-date on your job search, and be sure they have the most current version of your résumé so that they may better prepare for an inquiry.

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- Use the same contact information heading and format as your résumé.
- Your references should be listed on a sheet separate from your résumé but reflect a similar look with the same header, format, and appearance.
A cover letter (also called a letter of application) is used to apply for a specific part-time job, internship, or full-time position. It will be sent with your résumé and provides an overview to your background and qualifications. A good cover letter connects the information on your résumé to the job description. Some employers will read the cover letter first to determine if it is compelling enough to also read the résumé.

Tailor Each Letter to the Position
A strong cover letter takes time, planning, and effort. Write a new letter for each position rather than creating a general "template" to adjust each time. Before writing:

- Research the industry/field/employer.
- Study the job description and highlight important keywords.
- Target your content to a specific position and organization.
- Review your résumé to see which parts you would like to highlight but not repeat in the letter.
- Describe your strengths relating to the employer’s needs.
- Express confidence and a professional tone.

Build Your Cover Letter Content

The most common mistake people make when writing a cover letter is paraphrasing their résumé. Take time to think about the specifics of why you are qualified for this position and what contributions you will make if hired.

To know specifically what to write about, brainstorm by using the chart below to jot down experiences you have had that closely relate to the position, the action(s) you took in the situation, the skills developed or utilized, and how this will help you succeed in the position for which you are applying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOB QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO THE JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> Excellent verbal and interpersonal communication skills</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> Executive Store Intern at Target</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> Promoted products, Built relationships, Resolved customer complaints</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> Communication, Sales, and Problem Solving Skills</td>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> Will help me to build relationships with and relate to clients at YYY Company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cover Letter Tips

Focus
Explain the skills and experiences that qualify you for the position rather than simply repeating each experience or listing generic "soft" skills. Avoid repeating the information already on your résumé in your cover letter.

Keyword Approach
Study the job description carefully to identify important words/phrases from both the responsibilities and qualifications of the job. Incorporate these words and phrases in your cover letter.

Proof/Edit
Every cover letter should be proofread several times, not only by you, but also by at least two other readers. The employer will expect perfection in grammar, spelling, and content development.

Send
The cover letter may be the text of your email to which you attach a résumé or it may be attached separately. If attached, write a brief message in the email referencing the position for which you are applying. This message must be proofread as thoroughly as the cover letter.

Letter of Inquiry
A letter of inquiry is sent to an employer when a specific position is not posted. It allows you to inquire about a possible job/internship and shows your interest in the organization. Include details about your education, experience, and other qualifications that would suggest to the employer that you would make a good potential employee. Develop the content in a similar structure to that of the cover letter.

Cover Letter Description

Your Address
Your City, State ZIP
Date

Mr./Ms. First and Last Name of Organization Contact
Contact’s Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State ZIP

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

In the first paragraph, establish the purpose of the letter and indicate the position for which you are applying. Follow this with a specific statement about your qualifications. Make sure your first sentence immediately engages the reader and makes them want to read the entire cover letter.

The next paragraph(s) should emphasize the skills and experience that qualify you for the position. Relate your background to the individual job description. Include any special training or experience that might set you apart from your competition. Use factual terms rather than feeling terms. Focus on the benefits that your qualifications offer to the organization.

In the final paragraph, restate your interest in the position and refer to your included résumé. State your next action, how to contact you, and thank the reader for considering your application.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name
Attachment

Use standard business letter format with left-justified, block formatting.

Include your contact information, date, and the organization’s contact information.

Address each letter to a specific person. If you are not sure of the gender of the addressee, use the full name (e.g. Pat Smith) rather than Mr. Smith or Ms. Smith. Do not address the person by his/her first name only. If you cannot obtain the name, address the letter to the position of the recruiter (e.g. Dear Human Resources Director). End your salutation line with a colon.

Conclude with “Sincerely,” or “Respectfully,” followed by your signature and full name.

If you are attaching your résumé to an email or uploading it to a website, the last line should say “Attachment.” If you are mailing your cover letter and résumé, use "Enclosure" because you will be enclosing your résumé with your cover letter PDF.
Ms. Kathy Beck  
Human Resources Director  
YYY Company  
4444 Old Cheney Road  
Lincoln, NE 68516

Dear Ms. Beck:

My psychology major combined with my sales experience and interest in technology has prepared me for the Technical Sales Representative position at YYY Company. I found this opportunity on Husker Hire Link. YYY’s strong reputation in the industry, earning a Best Places to Work award based on your staff development and customer service focus, fits my work style. I am eager to apply the skills I developed from my relevant academic and work experiences to the role to make a positive impact on your organization.

I gained strong sales and customer service experience this past summer when I worked as an Executive Store Intern at Target and in my current role as a Phonathon Caller with the University of Nebraska Foundation. From these experiences I gained a good understanding of how to build relationships with a diverse clientele. Therefore, I will be comfortable creating an individualized sales approach when working with YYY’s various clients to provide technical options that meet their unique needs. In addition, both positions required me to work independently and in a team daily, so I can apply the necessary organizational, communication, and prioritization skills needed to achieve the best possible results for YYY Company and your clients.

Problem-solving and critical thinking are skills I gained and used in every psychology class. Specifically, in my Research Methods and Data Analysis course, I regularly reviewed research reports to evaluate the validity of their methods and conclusions based on data and explained complex concepts in both verbal and written form to peers and the professor. In addition, I learned SPSS and taught myself Microsoft Excel in order to conduct detailed analysis of complex issues, which also sparked my interest in technology. Therefore, I am eager to learn more about YYY’s products and am confident in my ability to communicate them in a simple and effective way to your clients in the Technical Sales Representative position. I understand what might be motivating people’s thoughts and actions which will allow me to find a sales approach that will resonate with the individual. In short, I want to help your clients win.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my qualifications for the Technical Sales Representative position at YYY Company. As you can see from my attached résumé, the communication, problem solving, and critical thinking skills I gained from my sales and academic experience will help me succeed in this role. I will contact you in two weeks regarding my application and the possibility of meeting to further discuss the position. My contact information can be found in the letterhead above. I am excited for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Riley Greene

Riley Greene
Attachment
Tailored Cover Letter Email Sample

In some cases, you may be asked to apply via email. In this case, use a condensed version of your cover letter as the body of the email.

---

Dear Ms. Beck:

As a psychology major with sales experience and an interest in technology, I was pleased to see the Technical Sales Representative position at YYYY Company posted on Husker Hire Link. I am eager to apply the skills I developed from my relevant sales experience to the role to make a positive impact on your client-focused organization.

I gained strong sales experience as an Executive Store Intern at Target and a Phonathon Caller with the University of Nebraska Foundation. From these experiences, I developed a good understanding of how to interact and communicate with a diverse clientele and will be comfortable creating an individualized sales approach when working with YYYY’s various clients. These customer-facing roles allowed me to demonstrate my problem-solving and critical thinking skills to resolve concerns and explain my decisions effectively to customers to achieve mutual satisfaction. In addition, both positions required me to work independently and in a team daily, so I can apply the necessary organizational, communication, and prioritization skills needed to achieve the best possible results for YYYY Company and your clients.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my qualifications for the Technical Sales Representative position at YYYY Company. My attached résumé will further detail the communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills I can bring to this role. I will contact you in two weeks regarding my application and the possibility of meeting to further discuss the position.

Sincerely,

Riley Greene
402-555-5555
riley.greene16@gmail.com

---

TIP: Attach your résumé saved as a PDF and titled with your name (e.g. RileyGreeneResume.pdf).
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Transitioning Your Résumé to LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a great marketing tool to strengthen your professional brand. It is important to create a LinkedIn profile that is positioned to where you want to go, i.e. industry, career fields, and jobs.

LinkedIn is an online professional networking platform that can be one of the best resources for finding professionals who can provide insight into organizations, industries, and opportunities. Recruiters are spending more time searching for qualified candidates through LinkedIn and some job advertisements allow you to apply directly through LinkedIn. Therefore, a LinkedIn profile is becoming as important in the job search process as a résumé. The good news? You can complete much of your LinkedIn profile using the same content as your résumé. This section will focus on the basics of creating a LinkedIn profile. For more information about using LinkedIn as a networking tool, go to p. 12 or review resources at university.linkedin.com.

LinkedIn Tips

- Thoroughly complete your profile and keep it current.
- Include a professional-looking individual photo that clearly shows your face.
- Use the headline and summary to focus the reader’s attention on your current or future goals.
- Proofread to avoid spelling or grammar errors.
- Ensure your profile is tailored to the position and/or industry you are seeking.
LinkedIn Sample Profile

Riley Greene  
Upcoming college graduate interested in technical sales 
Lincoln, Nebraska

Current: University of Nebraska Foundation
Previous: Target, Subway
Education: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Send a message

TIP:
Headline: Use this to capture the attention of your intended audience.

Photo: Make sure it clearly shows your face only and does not have a distracting background.

Contact information: Create a custom LinkedIn URL for your profile.

Summary

I enjoy understanding how people think and make decisions. Armed with a psychology degree, combined with my interests with technology and data, I am eager to dive into the world of technical sales.

Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology  
2014 – 2017

Experience

Phonathon Caller  
University of Nebraska Foundation  
September 2015 – Present (1 year) | Lincoln, Nebraska Area
- Persuade alumni and others to make financial contributions using acute speaking and listening skills
- Earned top 10% fundraiser status within first three months by generating more than $200,000 in pledges

Executive Store Intern  
Target  
May 2015 – August 2015 (4 months) | Kansas City, Missouri Area
- Interacted with 50+ customers daily using effective customer service, organization, and multi-tasking abilities to ensure a positive experience and resolve any problems
- Cross-trained in all departments, including electronics, to appropriately support customers’ individual needs

Sandwich Artist  
Subway  
June 2010 – August 2013 (3 years 3 months) | Lincoln, Nebraska Area
- Completed financial transactions with attention to detail and efficiency
- Performed informal oral satisfaction survey at checkout to show care for customers’ experience

TIP:
Summary: Use the summary to briefly share your story. Write it toward your desired audience and industry.

Education: Make sure your degree is listed correctly. Don’t automatically populate from the drop-down choices provided.

Experience: For branding and consistency purposes, use the same bullets as listed on your résumé. You can include additional bullets if space was limited on the résumé.
TAKE IT ONLINE

TIP:
Other categories (i.e. Projects, Organizations, Honors, etc): LinkedIn provides many options for students and professionals to showcase their experience in many ways. Choose only the categories that best highlight your experience and story.

Categories are moveable. Click and drag the category sections in the order you want displayed to readers.

Research Methods and Data Analysis Research Project
August 2015
- Analyzed complex statistical data using Microsoft Excel and SPSS to test research project hypothesis
- Used critical thinking skills to evaluate appropriateness of research conclusions based on data
- Demonstrated technical writing ability by presenting research project in a concise yet detailed poster format

Undergraduate Psychology Organization
Vice-President and Member
Starting January 2014
- Recruited potential new members through social media announcements, classroom visits, and flyers increasing overall membership by 5%
- Built relationships with peers and faculty while learning more about the psychology field

University Program Council
Member
January 2013 – December 2015
- Coordinated and promoted entertaining educational speakers to the campus community in a 5-person team

Skills
Riley, does Riley have expertise in these areas? Click the + to endorse them!

- Psychology
- Customer Service
- Public Speaking
- Sales
- Microsoft Office
- Teamwork
- Time Management
- Self-management

Groups
The Official University...
15,238 members
+ Join

TIP:
Skills: Ask friends and LinkedIn connections for skills endorsements and recommendations. When choosing skills, be aware of the skills that are needed for the job or industry you are seeking to help you be found easier by recruiters.

Groups: Use groups to connect with alumni or professionals in your industry of interest.

Groups can be the easiest way to connect with those who might have similar interests but you don’t know already.

Discussion boards in the groups can be a great way to gain insight into trends and key issues affecting your industry/profession of interest.
Husker Hire Link Sample Profile

Husker Hire Link allows students and alumni to search for internships, part-time jobs, on-campus jobs, full-time positions, career events and/or interviewing opportunities.

Benefits
- UNL fosters relationships and reviews employers that post opportunities for students.
- The employers that post are more likely to look for entry-level candidates versus other online job boards.

Get Started
- Look for the Husker Hire Link tab in Canvas or follow the steps below:
  1. Visit careers.unl.edu and hover over ‘Favorites’ and select ‘Husker Hire Link Login Page.’
  2. Under ‘Student/Alumni Sign In’ enter your NU ID and MyRed password.
  3. Follow the prompts to complete your Husker Hire Link Account.
  4. Select the ‘My Account’ tab from the left-hand menu to fill out your academic information. Then add your skills, projects, website, and social media under the ‘Profile’ tab.

Ways to Leverage
- Complete your profile and upload your updated résumé well before the career fair so you can be found by potential employers and have time to research organizations. See a sample Husker Hire Link profile below.
- To increase your visibility, make sure your résumé is accessible to employers.

TIP: Make sure your photo clearly shows your face only and does not have a distracting background.

TIP: Update and upload your résumé as employers will view your résumé when searching for qualified candidates.
An interview is a chance for the employer and the candidate to get to know each other. It is a two-way process. The employer is trying to gauge the candidate’s interest level, motivations, personality, and qualifications. The candidate should be using the interview to identify whether this employer fits their individual needs, interests, and work environment preferences.

**Identify and Articulate What Makes You Stand Out**

- In an interview, generic responses do not help candidates stand out from the crowd.
- The employer wants to get to know you as an individual.
- Are you able to articulate what is important to you and why?
- Are you able to provide examples of important skills and experiences?

**Research Organizations**

Once you know what is important to you and your skills, identify which are most important to the organization where you are interviewing.

- Every organization has its own culture, organizational structure, communication methods, and collaboration styles.
- In addition to understanding the specifics of the opportunity you are interviewing for, you should also prepare for all interviews by understanding the organization itself.

Let’s see how impactful research can be in the interview process:

**Interviewer:** “Why are you interested in our organization?”

**Interviewee A:** “I’m particularly interested in you because the position you have available aligns with my major and career interests.”

**Interviewee B:** “I love the team-oriented environment of your company. This industry is fast-paced and your team consistently pulls together to create the highest quality product for your clients. I thrive in both fast-paced and team settings. As you can see from my résumé, community service is something I care deeply about and I loved seeing that you allow a personal day each year for your employees to engage with a community service project of their choice. I want to work for an organization, like yours, that makes giving back to the community a high priority.”

Interviewee A shows that they know nothing of the organization other than they had a job opening. Interviewee B takes organization research and connects it with their own individual skills and values.

**How can you find this information?**

Organization websites, Chamber of Commerce, trade magazines, and websites such as Glassdoor.com. Making a personal contact who can provide you insights into the organization and position prior to the interview can be your most valuable research tool of all.
Things to research include:

- Organization mission.
- Primary service or product of an employer.
- Industry trends and current events.
- Typical customers and clients.
- Location(s).
- Competitors.

Remember, you are interviewing the organization as well. Therefore, research items that are important to you. See the example below to learn how to personalize your research:

**Interviewer:** “What do you know about our organization?”

**Interviewee A:** “I know you were founded in 1965, had over 4.5 million in profits last year, and were recently named a ‘Best Place to Work.’ All of these are quite impressive facts.”

**Interviewee B:** “I have seen family members and friends lose their jobs as companies have gone out of business. Therefore, the fact that you have been in business since 1965 and had over 4.5 million in profits last year proves that you are a stable organization who is doing things right. I am looking for an organization that I feel confident about growing with who will be here for the long haul. In addition, I want to enjoy where I work and was quite impressed with your recent ‘Best Place to Work’ award. In fact, I have a question about that. Can you share with me one or two examples of something your organization has done recently to create that ‘Best Place to Work’ culture?”

Interviewee A did research, but just recited facts from a website. Interviewee B took those facts and applied it to their own goals and values and asked questions to help further understand the organization. The more you can show you “fit” the organization, the more confident they will be about your potential for success.

**3 Practice, Practice, Practice**

Interviewing is not natural for most people, so make sure to practice your interview skills ahead of time.

**Ways to Practice:**

- **Mock interviewing** with a career advisor (or an employer if available) to gain experience answering typical interview questions. You can receive feedback on both your verbal and, almost more importantly, your non-verbal skills to improve your interview performance.

- **Big Interview** is an online tool available through UNL Career Services that allows you to simulate job interviews, respond to pre-recorded questions, and practice your verbal and non-verbal communication skills via webcam. Log in to Husker Hire Link on the Career Services website to access the system.

**Interview Formats**

Many interviews are conducted in-person between the candidate and one interviewer. However, a first interview may be conducted over the phone or video/webcam or with multiple people in the room for a panel interview. While you can prepare your research and examples the same as for an in-person interview, here are some tips for those other interview formats:

- **Testing**
  You may be required to complete an online or phone assessment before you even reach the interview process. This can be a formal assessment that tests your math or English skills or it could be a personality assessment to gauge your work style and other insights into who you are.

- **On-Campus Interview**
  An on-campus interview gives students and employers a chance to connect with students from one campus, in-person. Interviews are typically held in Career Services at the Nebraska Union (City Campus), the Business Career Center, and the Nebraska East Union (East Campus).
**Interview Formats Continued**

**Phone**
A telephone interview is one of the most common first interview formats for organizations that have multiple steps in the hiring process. This cost-effective way allows them to narrow down who they would like to continue on with the interview process.

- Ensure the room will be quiet and free of disruptions.
- Use a landline if possible to avoid poor connections.
- Have your résumé, questions, and organization research handy, but avoid rustling papers.
- Sit up straight or stand up to make your voice stronger.
- Have your calendar/class schedule available if you are asked to schedule another interview.
- Smile as you interview. The interviewer can only gauge your energy and enthusiasm through your voice.
- Dress professionally as if it were an in-person interview.

**Video**
Video interviews are another option that allows both parties to learn more about each other and feel connected despite the distance.

- Ensure you have an appropriate username.
- Become familiar with the technology and allow plenty of time to set up and test it.
- Dress professionally as if it were an in-person interview.
- Review the background that can be seen and avoid any inappropriate or distracting items.
- Check on the lighting of the room to make sure there are no dark shadows or excessive brightness.
- Look at the camera, not the screen, to maintain proper eye contact.

**Group/Panel**
A group or panel interview can include multiple interviewers or multiple interviewees. This can help employers gauge your ability to interact with others and how quickly you can react to problems on the spot.

*Multiple Interviewers*
- Try to find out who will be on the panel ahead of time, if possible, to brainstorm questions each individual might ask.
- Start speaking to the individual who asked the question, but make eye contact with all panel members during each answer.
- Follow-up with a thank-you note to all panelists.

*Multiple Interview Candidates:*
- Introduce yourself to other interview candidates and engage with them in a positive manner.
- Listen to other candidates’ answers and build on their responses, but don’t repeat anything that has already been said.
- Stay confident. Employers are looking to see how you may react to uncomfortable situations on the job.
- Strike a balance between talking and letting others talk.

**On-Site Visit**
The on-site visit is usually the final step in an interview process. This is often a full day of interviews and related activities at the employment site. It allows many in the organization to get a feel for the interview candidate and allows the interview candidate to learn more about the organization and its culture.

- Have questions prepared for people at different levels in the organization.
- Ensure you know how to get there and prepare for delays or heavy traffic on the day of the interview.
- Treat everyone, from the receptionist to CEO, with respect and courtesy.
- Maintain high energy throughout the day as you want to make the same positive impression with all you meet.
- Be prepared to answer the same question multiple times throughout the day. Pay attention as it provides insight into what everyone thinks is important for that position.
- Dress professionally as appropriate for each unique employer.
Did you know that a hiring decision can take place within the first few minutes of your interview? This means that dressing appropriately and making a great first impression is very important.

**BUSINESS FORMAL**

Business Formal is the standard dress code for a job or internship interview. Here are some attire tips and suggestions:

Your clothing options:
- Skirt suit (preferably a dark color), which includes knee-length skirt, tailored jacket, and solid (or subtle patterned) blouse/top.
- Pant suit (preferably a dark color), which includes tailored pants and a jacket.
- Two-piece, single-breasted suit (preferably a dark color and solid and/or conservative pinstripes).
- White dress shirt with a white undershirt underneath and a conservative tie.
- Solid (or subtle-patterned) blouse or top.
- Dark, polished shoes and matching socks.
- Closed-toed shoes with no more than 1-2 inch heels.
- Conservative and minimal jewelry.
- Small to medium size purse.
- Subtle make-up.
- Conservative, clean haircut and style.
- Trimmed facial hair.
- Avoid colognes, perfumes, and body sprays.
- Bring your portfolio, pen, and extra copies of your résumé.

**BUSINESS CASUAL**

Business Casual is often the dress code in many offices. While this type of attire is too casual for the formal job interview, you may want to wear business casual to a dinner, on the airplane or it may also be the work attire for the organization’s environment once you’ve landed the job or internship. Every work environment is different so be sure to observe and inquire about the dress code.

Your clothing options:
- Jacket, blouse, cardigan, or conservative top with pants or a knee-length skirt.
- Simple, knee-length dress.
- Collared button up shirt with a white undershirt underneath or a collared knit polo shirt.
- Dark pants or khakis.
- Leather shoes, or closed-toed shoes (no flip flops).
- Subtle make-up and avoid perfumes/body sprays.

Avoid:
- Jeans or casual sundresses, clothing with holes or rips, or athletic clothing or sneakers.
- Clothing too tight or revealing.
- Clothing with holes or rips, wrinkled or inappropriate images or athletic clothing or sneakers.

TIP:
Your culture, religion, and gender identity might influence your choice of business attire. We encourage you to incorporate those elements into your business wardrobe.
In order to best prepare you for your upcoming interviews, let's define some of the types and styles of questions they may ask and what the employer is looking for when asking these types of questions.

**Traditional Questions:**
- Enable the interviewer and job candidate to establish a rapport and get to know each other in a less pressurized environment.

**Open-Ended Questions:**
- Allows interviewees to respond how they wish, and to what length they wish.
- Are appropriate when the interviewer is interested in breadth and depth of reply.
- Refrain from sharing personal information and keep it professional.

**Behavioral Questions:**
- Aimed at getting you to provide specific examples of how you have developed the required skill set for the job.
- Use “Tell me about a time,” “Give me an example,” “Describe a situation,” etc.
- Use the START (Situation/Task/Action/Result/Takeaway) Method (see below).

**START Method: the way to answer behavioral based interview questions.**

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<td>Takeaway</td>
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- **Situation:** Describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized sense of what you have done in the past. This situation can be from a previous job, volunteer experience, or any relevant event.
- **Task:** Describe the action you took. Be sure to keep the focus on you, even if you are discussing a group project or effort. Describe what you did, not the efforts of the team. Don’t say what you would do, tell what you did.
- **Action:** Explain what happened, what you accomplished, or what you learned or took away from the experience. Wherever you can, quantify your results.

**Case, Problem or Puzzle Questions:**
- Evaluates how you might handle certain situations and how well you listen, think, use logic, and articulate your thoughts under pressure.
- Utilized to test a candidate’s logical thinking skills, intelligence, and the ability to think on their feet.
- Usually have one of the following: a correct answer, no correct answer but a recommended approach, or with no correct answer that tests the imagination.
- May also involve the employer asking you to perform a task.
- Used by management consulting, law, counseling, social work firms and organizations, as well as police departments.
Common Interview Questions

While it’s impossible to predict exactly what you will be asked, here are some common interview questions and styles.

Are You A Fit For Us?
- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you choose your field of study/major?
- What are your long-term and short-term career goals? How are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
- What do you know about our organization?
- How would a professor or a former supervisor describe you?
- What are three words you would use to describe yourself?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- Can you tell us about a time when you had to work independently?
- Describe a time when you had a conflict with a classmate or a co-worker. How did you handle it?
- Please share a time when you went above and beyond what was expected.
- Tell us about a difficult decision you had to make this year.
- Tell us about a time when you had too many things to do and how you handled it.

Are We A Fit For You?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Where do you want to be in five/ten years?
- Are you willing to travel or relocate?
- What kind of salary are you looking for?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- What motivates you?
- How do you like to be managed?

Can You Do the Job?
- Tell me about a time where you worked well on a team.
- What is a challenge or a conflict you’ve had to deal with lately? How did you address it?
- How will you add value and contribute to our organization?
- How do you manage stress in your daily work?
- What are your greatest strengths?
- What is a weakness or area for growth that you have?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- Tell me about a time that you failed.
- What are your key skills and how would they enrich this position?
- Give an example of setting a goal and being able to meet or achieve it.

“The ‘Tell Me About Yourself’ Magic Formula”
- Brief introduction and some biographical info.
- Your major field of study and any concentrations/specializations.
- Experiences that have reinforced your strengths and interest in your field.
- Why you’re interested in the position or organization.
- Your strengths as they relate to the position.
- End with a clear, positive summary statement.

Example:
As a psychology major, I am fascinated by how people think and react in different situations. As a Phonathon Caller with the University of Nebraska Foundation, I asked probing questions to determine what experiences the person might financially support. I quickly realized in sales you have to get to know the individual. During my internship at Target, I cross-trained in multiple departments. My favorite department was the electronics department and I found myself trying out the various technology options so I could better answer customers’ questions.

I couldn’t wait to open the boxes whenever a new item arrived to learn how it worked. My manager recognized me for going above and beyond to learn about our products to support our customers. These two experiences sparked my interest in technical sales as it combines my interest in people, how they make decisions, and technology. As I sought technical sales opportunities, YYYY Company kept coming up as a leader based on your customer-focused approach. I am very excited to be interviewing today to learn more about your organization and to share my experiences and skills.”
Preparing Questions to Ask

**DO**

Ask questions:
- That are of genuine interest and will help you make an informed decision.
- That show the depth of your research and preparation.
- That tailor your questions to the interviewer (an HR representative may not be able to answer day-to-day functions).
- Throughout the interview, you don’t have to wait until the end.
- That clarifies the position or organization, and can spark more depth in discussion.
- That consider both a broad view of the organization and the specific details of the position.

*Prepare at least 5 good questions and have them prioritized. You can have these in your portfolio and review them so you don’t forget!*

**AVOID**

- Asking questions that can easily be answered on the organization's website or by reviewing the job description.
- Asking about benefits (i.e. vacation) until you are offered a job.
- Any questions that may imply you see this as a short-term job/option.

Potential Questions to Ask

**REGARDING THE POSITION:**
- What are the primary challenges I will face in this position?
- What kinds of assignments can I expect in the first six months?
- Can you tell me about the primary people with whom I would be working?
- Is this a newly created position? If not, how long did the previous person hold it?
- Whom would I report to and how and when would my performance be evaluated?
- What’s the largest challenge facing your staff or department?
- What improvements need to be made on how the job has been done?

**REGARDING THE ORGANIZATION:**
- What are your organization's strengths and what major problems or challenges do you face?
- What significant changes do you foresee in the near future for the organization?
- How does your organization stand in comparison with its main competitors?
- Can you describe your organization's culture?
- How does your organization recognize diversity, both in its workplace and with its customers?
- Are training and development programs required or offered within your organization?

**QUESTIONS TO AVOID:**
- What is the salary for the position?
- Can you describe the leave policy?
- How quickly can I expect to be promoted?
- Do you financially support staff in graduate studies (or other questions that may imply you see this as a short-term job/option)?

Follow Up

After the Interview

1. Send a thank you to each of your interviewers.
2. Follow-up with a phone call or email if you have not heard from the employer within the time period indicated for a decision.
Additional Written Professional Communication

Interview Thank-You Letters
Sending a timely and well-written thank-you note to each of your interviewers is courteous and smart. Your note reminds the employer of your interest and qualifications while demonstrating that you are respectful and appreciative. Saying thank you can go a long way. Always thank someone for their time. A few tips:

- Send a thank-you to each person who interviewed you within 24 hours of your interview.
- Email or handwritten? Send a thank-you via the communication preference of the employer. How have you already been communicating? By email or phone? If by email, feel free to email a thank-you. Otherwise, send a handwritten thank-you note. Do you need a quick turnaround or really want to impress the organization? Send both an email and a handwritten note.
- Individualize each thank-you letter by referencing something specific from the interview.
- Be brief with the body of the text, writing less than half a page.
- Proofread thank-you letters as carefully as application materials.
When you receive an offer (or several) take some time to evaluate before you accept.

Evaluate

- Employers may provide a formal offer letter and clarification of terms, potentially including but not limited to: start date, salary, title of position, supervisor’s name, deadline for responding, etc. If not provided you may choose to request one.
- The employer may also make you aware if the offer is contingent upon passing a background check, credit check, and/or drug screening.
- Organizations may also include benefit information. If you do not receive this, you can ask for it before making your decision.

Background Checks

Many employers will conduct a background check to determine if you are a responsible person and good candidate for the position.

Criminal History

Always err on the side of honesty. It is better to put something on a violation report than to leave it off. If you have a criminal history or have received tickets in the past, Student Legal Services (asun.unl.edu) offers the following advice:
- A ticket equals an arrest even if the student does pretrial diversion.
- A ticket (arrest) will appear on a record forever.

Credit Checks

For positions involving financial duties, the credit report may be used to measure your financial competence. The Student Money Management Center (unl.edu/smmc) can help you establish a responsible approach to financial matters now, which will help you avoid issues in the employment process later.

Things to evaluate when given an offer:

- Compensation.
- Health, vision, and dental insurance.
- Retirement.
- Vacations and holidays.
- Bonus and profit sharing.
- Signing bonuses.
- Relocation reimbursement.
- Personal days and sick days.
- Performance and salary review.
- Travel reimbursement.
- Flextime.
- Daycare.
- Maternity/paternity leave.
- Gym membership.
- Dress code.

There will be trade-offs with every offer. Ask yourself what is important to you and what parts of an offer are priority.
How to Ask for More Time

You can ask for more time to decide but be prepared that this is part of your negotiation process and you will need to explain why and how much time is needed. Every organization is different, so they may not be able to give you more time. Be prepared, in case extending the offer deadline is not possible.

Examples:
“I am excited about the opportunity with YYY Company. This is a major decision and I would like more time to consider the offer. Is it possible to extend the deadline?”

“I have a previously scheduled interview and it is important to me to honor my commitment, therefore I need more time to make a decision.”

How to Balance Multiple Opportunities

It is possible to receive an offer from one organization before your preferred organization extends an offer. Do not accept an offer and then withdraw your acceptance or accept multiple offers. Let your preferred organization know you received an offer, and your interest lies with their organization. If this employer is interested in you, they will speed up the process if at all possible. If your preferred organization is unable to change the timeline or if the organization that extended an offer is unable to change the offer deadline, you will need to make a thoughtful decision on what to do—you can always utilize Career Services to discuss these situations.

HOW TO NEGOTIATE THE OFFER

Conduct Salary Research to decide if your offer was fair. Do know that many entry-level positions do not have a lot of room for negotiation.

Conduct Research
1. Location – what is the cost of living?
2. Level – determine what level you will be in the organization.
3. Industry – what is the salary range for the industry?
4. Public vs. Private – many public organizations have pre-determined salary for all levels of employment. Private companies determine the salary depending on many factors including skills, experience, and education.
5. Talk to professionals for their insight.

Glassdoor.com and Salary.com (along with many others) provide salary information. Although these sites are great resources, many times salaries are inflated so take this into consideration. Look at the average salary for UNL grads with your major via careers.unl.edu.

How to Negotiate

Approach the employer early in the decision-making process. Be prepared to indicate your interest and to present an appropriate salary range based on your research. Provide reasons for your request including your research, experience, special skills, or current competing job offers. Remember salary is not the only thing you can negotiate.

Other Factors You Could Negotiate
- Start date.
- Performance bonus.
- Early performance review and salary review.
- Vacation.
- Professional development.
- Relocation expenses.
- Flex time.
- Signing bonus.

Accepting, Declining, and Negotiating Offers

Once you have an internship or job offer from an organization, you have a big decision to make. Should you accept or decline the offer? Do you want to negotiate? Visit with Career Services if you are unsure of how to proceed. In general:
- Thank the employer for the offer and their confidence in your qualifications.
- Ask the employer by what date they need a final answer.
- Consider the whole compensation package (health and retirement benefits) provided, not salary alone.
- Propose a counter offer politely only if your qualifications and the industry, position, and location suggest a higher compensation package is appropriate.
- Request a final offer in writing.
- Send a courteous letter of acceptance or decline after informing the employer of your decision over the phone.
Dear Ms. Beck:

It is with great pleasure that I accept your offer to work for YYY Company as a Technical Sales Representative. As I mentioned in my interview, I feel this position will be an excellent match of my skills and interests with your needs.

As discussed, I will plan to begin my employment on May 20, 20XX at an annual salary of $38,000. In the meantime, if there is any paperwork that requires completion, please contact me at 402-555-5555 or riley.greene16@gmail.com.

I look forward to working at YYY Company and appreciate the opportunity.

Sincerely,
Riley Greene