



# JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH GUIDE

Preparing Wildcats  
for Career Success!





CHAPTER 1

# **Resumes, References, & Cover Letters**

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# RESUMES, REFERENCES, & COVER LETTERS

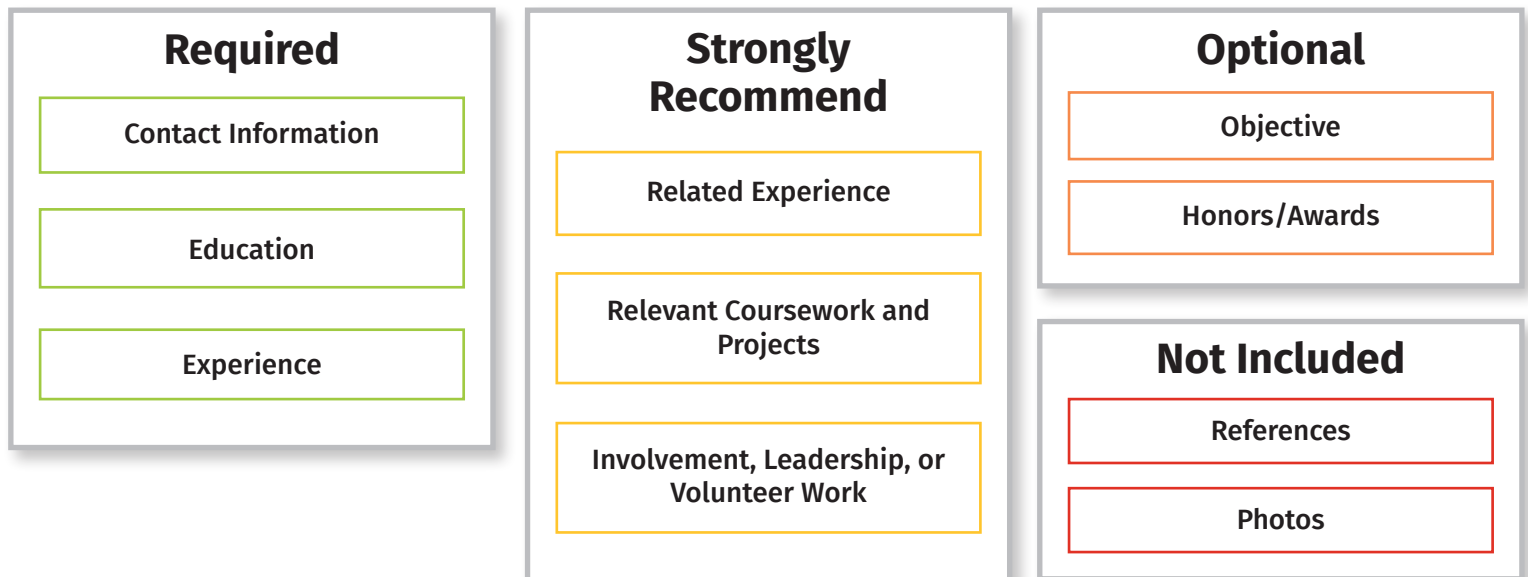
## What is a resume?

A resume is a written document summarizing your education, work experience, skills, and accomplishments. It is typically used as part of an application process that showcases your individual qualifications.

## What should I include on my resume?

Developing a resume is an individualized process with many possible sections to consider. Ultimately, each individual should select the sections that represent their qualifications in the best way possible.

Below are some recommendations for college students who need to represent their current skills and experiences while also featuring sections that highlight the careers they are building.



## Do's

- ✓ Use an easy-to-read font, typically 11-12 point font.
- ✓ Set margins to 1 inch on all sides.
- ✓ Bold or italics: Apply to headings, subheadings, or specific achievements to help emphasize.
- ✓ Bullet points: Use to help with the flow of reading. List accomplishments and skills within each section using bullets.
- ✓ Use consistent spacing, alignment, and font. Stay to one page unless necessary for relevant content.
- ✓ Format education and experiences in reverse chronological order, listing the most recent first.

## Don'ts

- ✗ Avoid typos and grammatical errors.
- ✗ Do not use pronouns that refer to yourself, i.e, I, my, we, and our.
- ✗ Avoid personal information, i.e., marital status, date of birth, or personal interests.
- ✗ Avoid templates that limit customization and may not be detected by online application systems.
- ✗ Do not use photos. This can lead to discrimination.
- ✗ Avoid distracting colors or designs, unless expected from the industry.

# TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

## Building and Articulating Transferable Skills

It is important to build a diverse skill set to become a valuable and accomplished professional as you enter your field. Additionally, it's essential to convey what skills you've acquired and how you've developed them.

Use this guide to articulate and enhance your skill-building, and to generate ideas for skill growth.



### Creativity and Innovation

The ability to think outside the box to generate ideas that explore unconventional ideas and solutions.

- Dedicate time to cultivate and foster creative and design thinking.
- Clearly define the challenges to maintain focus and guide problem-solving efforts effectively.
- Form a diverse team to gather insights and refine ideas effectively.



### Analytical and Decision-making

The ability to use logic, reasoning, and critical thinking to draw conclusions and make informed decisions.

- Collect and analyze information from diverse sources to fully grasp the problem at hand.
- Anticipate needs and prioritize actions in advance for efficient decision-making and problem-solving.
- Clearly communicate actions and rationale, considering diverse stakeholder perspectives.



### Empathy

The ability to see another person's situation and perspective to understand their position.

- Practice active listening, asking questions to understand and encourage diverse perspectives.
- Listen openly, setting aside biases and refraining from offering unsolicited opinions or advice.
- Acknowledge and validate a speaker's emotions, sharing similar experiences without redirecting the focus, offering perspective and lessons learned.



### Equity and Inclusion

The ability to appreciate diverse social identities while championing access, equity, and a sense of belonging for every individual.

- Actively seek and utilize feedback from individuals representing various cultural perspectives to facilitate more equitable decision-making.
- Advocate for inclusive practices and initiatives aimed at supporting marginalized communities.
- Engage in global and cross-cultural interactions to broaden your perspective and worldview.



### Leadership and Initiative

The ability to engage others toward achieving common goals, managing emotions, overcoming obstacles and adversity, and completing tasks.

- Provide clear vision, direction, and support to align team efforts with goals and objectives.
- Encourage the development and facilitation of innovative ideas to tackle complex problems effectively.
- Confidently take calculated risks and make tough decisions to drive progress and overcome challenges.



### Organization and Detail Orientation

The ability to focus on and prioritize tasks and utilize time and energy efficiently to thoroughly accomplish goals and tasks.

- Manage workload, timelines, and goals efficiently by identifying, prioritizing, and categorizing tasks and information.
- Deconstruct large projects into smaller tasks, establish completion timelines, and include breaks to sustain focus.
- Establish a habit of reviewing, proofreading, and verifying the accuracy of documents and reports.



## Problem-solving

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The ability to evaluate problems using knowledge, facts, and data to ideate possible solutions to make logical decisions.

- Define problems thoroughly from different angles to gain a comprehensive understanding.
- Engage others in the problem-solving process to generate a wider range of ideas and solutions.
- Conduct research, benchmarking, and strategizing to outline innovative approaches and solutions.



## Professionalism and Work Ethic

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The ability to consistently commit to a high standard, be a self-starter, follow through on tasks, and maintain a positive outlook.

- Commit to personal excellence by striving to achieve high standards for performance and outcomes.
- Cultivate a positive and open mindset when facing challenges and managing attitude, emotions, and overall well-being.
- Take responsibility for personal learning and development needs, ownership of decisions, and diligent time management and self-care.



## Resourcefulness and Adaptability

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The ability to be nimble and quickly respond to changing trends and industry and organizational shifts.

- Develop the ability to quickly adapt strategies and change direction as necessary.
- Maintain a balance between self-reflection and self-belief to foster motivation and growth mindset.
- Stay aware of environmental changes and seek ways to acquire skills that enhance your value proposition.



## Teamwork and Collaboration

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The ability to build relationships and work well with others to achieve common goals and objectives.

- Be open to new ideas and solutions and actively listen to understand others' perspectives.
- Support and recognize team contributions, collaborate, and compromise effectively to solve problems and find realistic solutions.
- Foster a harmonious workplace environment by conveying belonging, humor, and goodwill.



## Technology

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The ability to learn and leverage new and emerging technologies efficiently to help solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

- Continually seek certifications and training around new technologies that elevate your skill level.
- Subscribe to technology thought leaders in your industry to stay up to date on new trends.
- Seek mentorship and feedback from colleagues to gain valuable insight and grow professionally.



## Communication

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The ability to articulate and express thoughts and ideas effectively to inform, instruct, persuade, and tailor communication to multiple audiences.

- Ensure key points, themes, and thoughts are organized for easy understanding by the reader.
- Break content into digestible sections using bullet points, headers, and paragraphs to enhance readability.
- Maintain professionalism in communication by using a respectful tone and proofreading content for punctuation, spelling, and grammar errors to ensure quality.

# BUILDING BULLET STATEMENTS

Bullet statements help present and articulate key information, making it easy for hiring managers to assess your qualifications and achievements quickly. They can be used to describe internships, jobs, volunteer and leadership positions, relevant coursework, projects, and more.

To build a bullet statement, use the **What + How + Why Formula**



**Example:**

Mentored 25+ students | through individual and group sessions | to provide support and guidelines as they adjusted to college.

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

## Resources

The following resources can be great idea generators to help you describe your skills and experiences. Just be sure to refine and tailor the bullet statement to fit your experience.

- Thesaurus.com
- ChatGPT
- O\*NET
- Google keywords for your field



## Example 1: Getting Started

Transitioning a high school resume to a professional format

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787

#### Education

**Wayne State College**, Wayne, NE  
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX (anticipated)  
Major: Undecided

**Wayne Public High School**, Wayne, NE  
High School Diploma, May 20XX  
GPA: 3.3/4.0

#### Work Experience

**Pac N' Save**, Wayne, NE  
Clerk, June 20XX-Present

- Assist customers in locating products to provide excellent customer service.
- Manage cash register, process payments, and ensure accurate financial transactions.
- Maintain cleanliness and organization of store shelves to create a pleasant shopping experience.

#### Leadership

**Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)**, Wayne, NE  
Treasurer, August 20XX-May 20XX

- Managed the Chapter's finances, ensuring accurate record-keeping and transparency.
- Planned and organized five fundraising events by collaborating with other offices to raise funds for various initiatives.

**National Honor Society (NHS)**, Wayne, NE  
Member, October 20XX-May 20XX

- Collaborated with other NHS members on community service projects, dedicating 60+ hours to initiatives including park clean-ups and food drives.
- Engaged in school meetings and events to represent the NHS chapter by effectively communicating the organization's initiatives to students, parents, and staff.

#### Involvement

**Active Minds Student Organization**, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE  
Member, August 20XX-Present

- Learn about ways to support and promote positive mental health awareness.

**Little Red Hen Theatre**, Wakefield, NE  
Cast Member, May 20XX-July 20XX

- Rehearsed weekly to enhance performance skills to act in and produce seasonal productions for the community.

#### Honors and Awards

**Career Scholars Program**, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE, August 20XX-Present

- Engage in Career Development program to develop skills, experiences, and professionalism.

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

Start with a **strong action verb** at the beginning of your bullet statement.

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

## Example 2: Getting the Internship

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

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787 | www.linkedin.com/in/willy.wildcat

#### Education

**Wayne State College**, Wayne, NE  
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX (anticipated)  
Major: Communication Studies  
Concentration: Organizational Leadership and Public Relations  
GPA: 3.6/4.0

GPA is optional. If you have a 3.0 or higher, we recommend adding it to your resume.

#### Relevant Coursework and Projects

**Organizational Leadership**, Communication Arts Department, Wayne State College, Fall 20XX

- Studied prominent leadership theories, including transformational, situational, and servant leadership.
- Analyzed real-world examples to understand how different leadership styles impact organizational dynamics.
- Engaged in discussions and case studies to evaluate the applicability of leadership theories in diverse contexts.

**Communication Arts Department**, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE, Spring 20XX

- Led a team in developing a comprehensive communication strategy for a mock campaign.
- Conducted in-depth market research to identify the target audience and tailor messaging.
- Crafted compelling content, including persuasive press releases, and engaging social media posts.
- Presented the strategy to peers, receiving positive feedback for creativity and strategic thinking.

Identifying a course or project and writing bullet statements of the knowledge or skill you gained is a great way to position entry-level experience in a field.

#### Work Experience

**Jimmy John's**, Wayne, NE

*Team Member*, May 20XX-Present

- Demonstrate exceptional customer service by greeting customers, taking orders, and addressing inquiries in a friendly and efficient manner.
- Prepare and assemble sandwiches efficiently and accurately, adhering to Jimmy John's high-quality standards.
- Collaborate with co-workers to ensure smooth operations during busy periods, contributing to a positive and fast-paced work environment.

**Wayne State College**, Wayne, NE

*Student Activities Board - Treasurer*, December 20XX-Present

- Plan, organize, and manage events focused on entertainment for students on campus.
- Accurately record meeting notes and e-mail minutes from each meeting to members, informing them about upcoming events and ideas.
- Utilize social media to advertise and inform students of upcoming events through the school's website as well as Facebook and Twitter.

**Pac N' Save**, Wayne, NE

*Clerk*, June 20XX-May 20XX

- Assisted customers in locating products to provide excellent customer service.
- Managed cash register, processed payments, and ensured accurate financial transactions.

#### Leadership and Involvement

**Active Minds Student Organization**, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE

*Member*, August 20XX-Present

- Collaborated with five members serving on the Mental Health Awareness Committee to create and distribute handmade signs campus-wide encouraging students to stop the stigma.

#### Honors and Awards

**Career Scholars Program**, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE, August 20XX-Present

- Engage in career development program to develop skills, experience, and professionalism.

**Lambda Pi Eta** (National Communication Honor Society), Wayne, NE

*Member*, September 20XX-Present



## Example 3: Getting the Job

Employers and hiring managers use keywords, or specific sets of words and phrases, to identify which individuals are most qualified for the given position. Many employers also use applicant tracking systems (ATS) to scan resumes for these relevant keywords. Do your best to include the following in your resume:

- Skills and qualifications
- Industry-specific terminology
- Certifications and licenses / industry-specific tools and software
- Education
- Company names
- Action verbs
- Keywords from job descriptions

## Job Description

(see how Willy Wildcat highlights keywords in Resume Example 3 on the next page)

### Education and Outreach Coordinator

Responsible for the professional and liaison work in facilitating outreach projects and training community members by improving public awareness of various services, activities, programs, plans, and projects.

#### *Specific Duties Include:*

- ✔ Develop and **implement innovative programs** in conjunction with educational institutions, local **business groups**, and **service organizations**.
- ✔ **Facilitate** and coordinate committee activities, **training**, **service volunteers**, mentors, and staff.
- ✔ **Design** and **develop training** information **materials**.
- ✔ **Coordinate** and **engage** in **community events** and **programs**, **fundraisers**, and other forums.
- ✔ **Collaborate** with area schools and **civic** and **community associations** that may be related to the specific department's **awareness programs**.
- ✔ **Track income** and **expenses** for **outreach** activities and **provide** status **reports** relative to **grant funds**.
- ✔ **Establish** and **monitor goals** for **assessment** and **evaluation** of the department's specific program areas.



Research shows that hiring managers spend 6-7 seconds skimming a resume to determine if the candidate has what they are looking for.

## Example 3: Getting the Job

Seeking full-time opportunities after graduation

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787 | www.linkedin.com/in/willy.wildcat

#### Education

**Wayne State College**, Wayne, NE  
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX (anticipated)  
Major: Communication Studies  
Concentration: Organizational Leadership and Public Relations  
GPA: 3.2/4.0

#### Related Experience

**Haven House**, Wayne, NE

*Community Education and Outreach Intern*, May 20XX-August 20XX

- Developed **10+** presentations to give to multiple **community businesses and service organizations** to promote the mission and services of the organizations.
- Coordinated three **fundraising events** that brought together **community leaders** and raised over **\$10,000** for the organization.
- Refined and curated **database of donors** and **community leaders and stakeholders** to **streamline outreach efforts**.
- **Collaborated** with marketing team to create **training materials** to provide **guidance** and **support** to **volunteer advocates**.

**Qualitative Research Design Course**, Communication Department, Wayne State College

*Individual Research Project*, Spring 20XX

- Developed a mixed methods **assessment** to examine the impact of cell phone usage on college students.
- **Conducted 15+ in-depth interviews** and **facilitated five focus groups** on a variety of student identities inquiring about the average number of hours they use their phone and how it impacts their mental and physical health.
- **Analyzed, tracked, and summarized the results** via Excel and wrote a research paper outlining the findings.

**Active Minds Student Organization**, Wayne, NE

*Vice-President*, December 20XX-Present

- **Led a committee of eight peers** through regular meetings and email communication to **plan** the Send Silence Packing campus event each fall.
- **Collaborated with 10+ officers** through regular meetings and emails to outline meetings and events for the academic year.
- Coordinated the revision of the by-laws through collaboration with the executive board and submitted them to the National Organization.

#### Work Experience

**Jimmy John's**, Wayne, NE

*Team Member and Delivery Driver*, September 20XX-May 20XX

- Greeted and interacted with customers by taking their orders quickly and accurately to ensure customers satisfaction.
- Processed food and drink orders and received payment from customers through a point-of-sale system.
- Maintained health and safety standards by cleaning work areas after each transaction to comply with local, state, and federal regulations.

#### Honors and Awards

**Career Scholars Program**, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE, August 20XX-Present

- Selected to be **one of 40** scholarship recipients and participate in a professional development cohort program.

Recruiters often search for candidates using specific keywords related to the job opening. By including these keywords in your resume, you make it more searchable and increase the likelihood of being found by recruiters looking for candidates with your skill set.

- Position and highlight relevant experiences at the top of the resume that connect to the duties, skills, and qualifications in the job description.
- Including numbers, metrics, and keywords in your resume can help you stand out from the crowd.

Employers ask for references to gain insight into a candidate's work ethic, skills, and character. References also provide a way for employers to verify information provided by a candidate and can help them make informed hiring decisions.

You can ask current and past supervisors, professors, student organization advisors, academic or career advisors, and other professional contacts who can attest to your skills and work ethic to serve as a reference for you. Steer clear of having family and friends be references.

## Example:

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787 | www.linkedin.com/in/willy.wildcat

#### References

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**Dr. Teresa Garcia**

Professor of Communication  
Wayne State College  
1111 Main St.  
Wayne, NE 68787  
402-375-XXXX  
tegarci1@wsc.edu  
*Current Professor*

**Ivy Johnson**

Assistant Director, Student Activities  
Wayne State College  
1111 Main St.  
Wayne, NE 68787  
402-375-XXXX  
ivjohns02@wsc.edu  
*Current Advisor for Student Activities Board*

**Marcus Smith**

Manager, Jimmy John's  
100 Main St.  
Wayne, NE 68787  
402-375-XXXX  
msmith@jimmyjohns.com  
*Current Supervisor*



### TIP:

1. Always ask potential references prior to listing them if they are willing to serve as a positive reference for you.
2. Share a copy of your resume with your references and describe the types of positions you are applying for so they can prepare to discuss your strengths and qualifications ahead of the requests.

# COVER LETTERS

Cover letters provide an opportunity to make a compelling case as to why you are the right person for the job. It gives you a chance to tell your story by elaborating on your experiences and sharing your accomplishments. A strong cover letter can significantly enhance your chances of getting noticed by potential employers during the application process.

## Example:

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787 | www.linkedin.com/in/willy.wildcat

Date  
Contact Name  
Contact Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip

Dear First and Last Name:

The **first paragraph** of a cover letter serves as an introduction to help establish the purpose of why you are writing. Start with an engaging sentence or two that states why you are interested in the internship, position or industry. Additionally, state the specific position you are seeking. Draw a connection to the employer and their needs and how your experience, interests, or skills can add value to the organization.

In the **body paragraphs**, highlight specific experiences and skills that qualify you for the position. Tailor your qualifications to the job description through using keywords. This is an opportunity to build on your resume bullets by sharing more of the story of how you developed and honed your skills through specific experiences such as through your coursework, internship, work experience, student involvement, and more.

In the **conclusion paragraph** restate your interest in the position and the organization. Consider sharing what you look forward to bringing to the role, the organization, or the culture. Share how to contact you and thank them for their time and consideration in reviewing your application.

Sincerely,

*Signature*  
Your Name (Typed)

Utilize the same heading you have on your resume to show consistency across your materials.

Even electronic materials should have a formal business style with all the text left-aligned.

If you don't have the contact name, you can address the letter based on how the organization has the hiring information listed, such as, "Dear Human Resources," "Dear Talent Acquisition," or "People Operations Team."

Be sure to highlight and promote the contributions that you will make to the organization.

Include your name in a cursive font to serve as an electronic signature.



## TIP:

In an online application, if you are asked to copy your cover letter into a text box, take the following steps:

- Remove your header, date, and contact information and only copy the greeting through your signature.
- Review and edit as needed and add returns between the paragraphs to make it more readable.

## Example 1: Gaining Experience

Utilize the same heading you have on your resume to show consistency across your materials.

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787 | www.linkedin.com/in/willy.wildcat

April 5, 20XX  
Cathy Anderson  
Executive Director  
Haven House  
340 E 7th Street  
Wayne, NE 68787

Dear Cathy Anderson:

Throughout my coursework and involvement at Wayne State College, I have found that I enjoy building relationships, leading people and projects, and sharing stories of causes that make a difference. I was excited to come across your posting for the Education & Outreach Internship, as I believe the combination of my skills and abilities make me a great candidate for this opportunity.

As a communication major, I study various theories and approaches on how to build and maintain positive relationships with others. In my Organizational Leadership course, I have learned about the relational leadership theory that outlines five steps to increase trust and rapport with others which help increase a leader's influence on people and situations. This insight has been helpful as I work to get more involved on campus and given me more confidence to run for an officer position in Student Activities Council. As the Treasurer, I serve on the Executive Board that helps plan over 10+ events and I take detailed notes to share with the members in meetings. By demonstrating approachability and responsibility, I find that many of the members are willing to listen to my ideas and that I am making an impact on the programs that we offer.

In addition to learning how to lead and putting it into practice in my extracurricular activities, I have also had the opportunity to lead a team of my peers in a communication strategy project where we had to conduct in-depth market research surveys to our target audience, write persuasive press releases and social content and present our overall strategy to our peers in the course. I enjoyed collaborating and leading others on this project immensely and the work connects to the skills and qualifications that you are looking for in your Education & Outreach Intern.

In closing, I would like the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications and interest in this position. I believe I will bring the leadership, relationship-building, communication and the project coordination skills you are hoping to see in this position. Thank you for your consideration and you can contact me at (402) 375-XXXX.

Sincerely,

**Willy Wildcat**

Willy Wildcat

Scan me to access  
builders for your  
resume, cover letter,  
and references!



[www.wsc.edu/cs-builders](http://www.wsc.edu/cs-builders)

# COVER LETTER EXAMPLES

## Example 2: Getting the Job

### Willy Wildcat

(866) 972-2228 | wiwild01@wsc.edu | Wayne, NE 68787 | www.linkedin.com/in/willy.wildcat

October 10, 20XX  
Selma Garcia  
Human Resources  
Department of Health and Human Services  
194 M Street  
Lincoln, NE 68506

Dear Selma Garcia:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Education & Outreach Coordinator position at DHHS. Not only do I bring experience in facilitating multiple education and outreach projects, but I also find this work deeply meaningful, which drives me to stretch my skills to continuously learn and grow in this profession.

You are looking for a candidate with experience in engaging multiple business and community stakeholders. As the Community Education & Outreach Intern for Haven House, I presented persuasively to 10+ businesses and organizations sharing our mission to eliminate violence against survivors and promoted the many free and confidential services offered by the organization. Through these presentations, I was able to recruit 30+ community volunteers to serve in a variety of capacities, as well as lay the groundwork for our fundraising efforts.

In addition to my experience in community engagement, I was tasked with creating and facilitating five training sessions that provided both vision and inspired action to the community volunteers helping us fundraise and spread the Haven House mission and purpose. To provide inspiration, I shared several stories about the survivors and families who were supported and empowered to leave a challenging domestic situation. The testimonials that I shared helped the volunteers conceptualize the often-unseen work that the Haven House does to help survivors in the community navigate very challenging situations. Overall, the training and testimonials resulted in the volunteers assisting us in raising over \$10,000 at the summer fundraising event.

In closing, I am very excited about the opportunity to bring my skills, experience, and enthusiasm for this work to DHHS. Thank you for your time and consideration and I would welcome discussing the opportunity further and can be reached at (402) 375-XXXX.

Sincerely,

*Willy Wildcat*

Willy Wildcat

Utilize the same heading you have on your resume to show consistency across your materials.

This paragraph is using the STAR model to help describe the work they accomplished during their internship.

S - described the situation  
T - described what they were tasked with  
A - outlined the actions they took  
R - shared one or more positive results that came from the actions they took

# HANDSHAKE & LINKEDIN

Handshake is an online platform designed to connect students like you with valuable career opportunities. It serves as a gateway to explore internships and job listings, and network with potential employers to kickstart your professional journey.

## Handshake

BY THE NUMBERS  
2023-24 Academic Year

**850K+**

employers in Handshake

**100%**

of Fortune 500 companies use  
Handshake to recruit

**84,476**

opportunities posted in  
Handshake

**400+**

career coaching appointments  
scheduled by WSC students

### Handshake Overview

#### Claim Your Account

WSC students are provided with a Handshake account after enrollment. To log in, download the Handshake app or access Handshake through myWSC. Use your WSC single sign-on credentials.

#### Build Your Profile

Fill out the prompted questions with information about you, your interests, your coursework, and what you are seeking in an internship or job opportunity. 80% of students with their locations, job types, and job roles completed on their profile will receive a message from an employer.

#### Discover Opportunities

Handshake uses the information provided on your profile to curate opportunities specific to your interests. Discover employer profiles and follow them to be the first to know when a new opportunity or event is posted. Narrow your search for opportunities by filtering for cities you are interested in working in.

#### Connect to Career Events and Fairs

Don't miss a chance to engage with employers and advance your skills through events. Career Services and employers post events in Handshake. These in-person and virtual events include career fairs, industry-specific networking events, employer panels, and information sessions.

#### Get Recruited

Top employers from non-profits and startups to Fortune 500 companies are recruiting students on Handshake. Your resume can be stored on Handshake and shared to your profile. An employer can view your experiences and message you directly.

### Top Three Profile Must-Haves

- ✓ **Location:** Which cities do you want to work in?
- ✓ **Job Type:** Are you looking for an internship, part-time job, or full-time job?
- ✓ **Job Roles:** Select the types of jobs you want, like data analyst or marketing coordinator.

# HANDSHAKE PROFILE

## Build out your Handshake profile through your resume.

(Do this before you begin adding to your profile)

- **Step 1:** Select “My Documents” from the drop-down menu.
- **Step 2:** Upload your file.
- **Step 3:** Select “Build Profile from Resume” and review your auto-filled profile before “adding” each section.

The screenshot shows a user's Handshake profile. At the top left is a green 'H' logo. At the top right are a notification bell and a profile picture of a wildcat. A dropdown menu is open, showing options: My profile, My jobs, My meetings, My documents (highlighted with a yellow box), My career interests, My reviews, Notifications, Settings, Help, and Log out. An arrow points from the 'My documents' option to the 'Documents' section at the bottom of the profile. The profile itself is divided into several sections: a profile card for Willy Wildcat (Wayne State College, GPA: 3.6), a 'My Journey' section with a bio, an 'Education' section for Wayne State College (Bachelors, GPA: 3.6), a 'Work & Volunteer Experience' section with two roles (Active Minds Student Organization and Jimmy Johns), and a 'Documents' section with a resume file named 'Willy\_Wildcat\_Resume.docx'. A black callout box on the right says 'Access “Settings & Privacy” to make your profile visible to employers, students, and alumni.' A yellow arrow points from the 'Settings & Privacy' callout to the 'Your profile is visible to employers...' section.

**Willy Wildcat**  
Wayne State College  
Bachelors, Communication Studies/Organizational Leadership & Public Relations  
Graduates May 20XX  
Sophomore • GPA: 3.6

Your profile is 100% complete

Your profile is visible to employers, students and alumni across all Handshake education institutions.

You'll be able to message students and alumni who have similar interests or experiences.

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

[See Employer View](#)

**Documents**

Resume

[Willy\\_Wildcat\\_Resume.docx](#) Dec 14

[Manage Documents](#)

**My Journey**

I am a sophomore at Wayne State College majoring in Communication Studies with a concentration in Organizational Leadership and Public Relations. My enthusiasm for building and advocacy has grown through my involvement in the Active Minds student organization. Through this organization, I have developed strong team-building, communication, and problem-solving skills which I look forward to bringing to my next team. I am currently seeking an internship opportunity with a non-profit organization such as community engagement and outreach. I am excited to connect and learn more about your opportunities.

**Education**

**Wayne State College** primary education  
Bachelors  
August 20XX - May 20XX  
Major in Communication Studies/Organizational Leadership & Public Relations  
Cumulative GPA: 3.6

[Add School](#)

**Work & Volunteer Experience**

**Active Minds Student Organization**  
Member  
August 20XX - Present (1 year, 5 months) | Wayne, NE

- Learn about ways to support and promote positive mental health awareness.
- Collaborate with five members serving on the Mental Health Awareness Committee to create and distribute handmade signs campus-wide encouraging students to stop the stigma.

**Jimmy Johns**  
Team Member  
May 20XX - Present (1 year, 8 months) | Wayne, NE

- Demonstrate exceptional customer service by greeting customers, taking orders, and addressing inquiries in a friendly and efficient manner.
- Prepare and assemble sandwiches efficiently and accurately, adhering to Jimmy John's high-quality standards.

Access “Settings & Privacy” to make your profile visible to employers, students, and alumni.



## Building a Professional Brand on LinkedIn

Creating a compelling professional brand is important in today's competitive job market because employers are seeking more ways to evaluate the potential of a candidate.

### Why LinkedIn?



Market your skills, strengths, and experiences



Connect with WSC alumni, professionals, and recruiters



Gain insight on industries, organizations, and opportunities



Apply for internships and job opportunities

With more than a billion members worldwide, the LinkedIn platform offers a variety of benefits for students as they break into their career fields of interest through:

- Serving as a job and internship search to discover opportunities.
- Facilitating professional connections in fields of interest.
- Keeping students up to date on the latest industry trends.

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7130192671003791360/>

### Using LinkedIn to Find Internships

LinkedIn is a powerful tool for finding opportunities:

- Use the job search feature: You can search for internships based on your field of interest, location, and more.
- Leverage your network: Reach out to your connections about potential opportunities. Even if they don't have an open position, they might know someone who does.
- Stay active and engaged: Post updates, participate in discussions, and share relevant articles. This keeps you on the radar of potential employers.

### Ways to Leverage LinkedIn

To start networking on LinkedIn:

- Connect with people you know: Start by connecting with your classmates, professors, and family friends in professional fields.
- Reach out to alumni: LinkedIn allows you to find alumni from your institution. They can provide valuable insights and connections in your field of interest.
- Join groups and participate in discussions: This strategy will increase your visibility and keep you informed about industry trends and job and internship openings.
- Follow companies and influencers: Stay updated on job openings, company news, and industry trends.

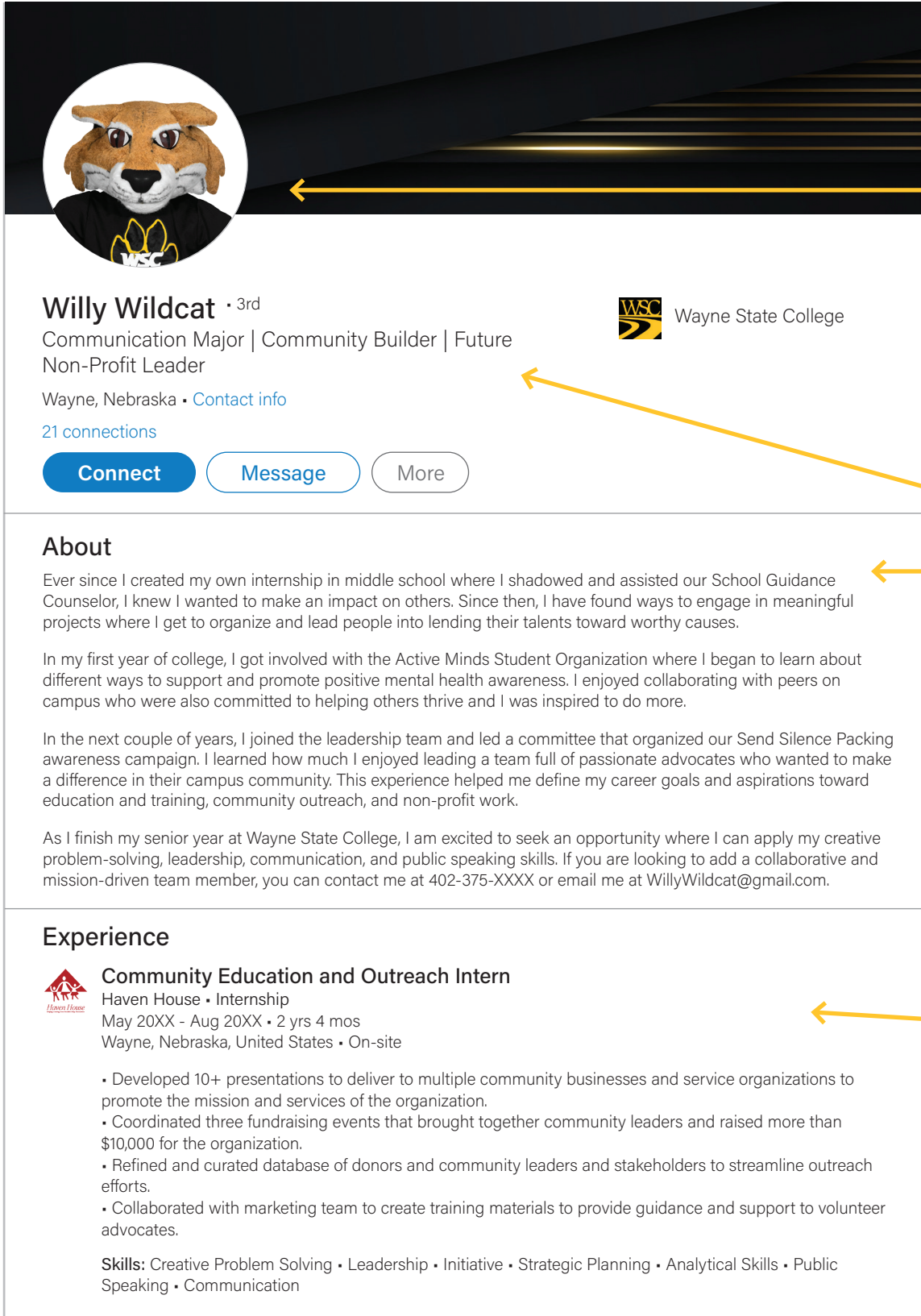
Scan Willy's QR code to join Wayne State on LinkedIn!



## Maximize Your LinkedIn Profile

An optimized profile can increase visibility and engagement on LinkedIn.

### LinkedIn Profile Checklist



**Willy Wildcat** • 3rd  
Communication Major | Community Builder | Future Non-Profit Leader  
Wayne, Nebraska • [Contact info](#)  
21 connections  
[Connect](#) [Message](#) [More](#)

**Wayne State College**

#### About


Ever since I created my own internship in middle school where I shadowed and assisted our School Guidance Counselor, I knew I wanted to make an impact on others. Since then, I have found ways to engage in meaningful projects where I get to organize and lead people into lending their talents toward worthy causes.

In my first year of college, I got involved with the Active Minds Student Organization where I began to learn about different ways to support and promote positive mental health awareness. I enjoyed collaborating with peers on campus who were also committed to helping others thrive and I was inspired to do more.

In the next couple of years, I joined the leadership team and led a committee that organized our Send Silence Packing awareness campaign. I learned how much I enjoyed leading a team full of passionate advocates who wanted to make a difference in their campus community. This experience helped me define my career goals and aspirations toward education and training, community outreach, and non-profit work.

As I finish my senior year at Wayne State College, I am excited to seek an opportunity where I can apply my creative problem-solving, leadership, communication, and public speaking skills. If you are looking to add a collaborative and mission-driven team member, you can contact me at 402-375-XXXX or email me at WillyWildcat@gmail.com.


#### Experience


 **Community Education and Outreach Intern**  
Haven House • Internship  
May 20XX - Aug 20XX • 2 yrs 4 mos  
Wayne, Nebraska, United States • On-site

- Developed 10+ presentations to deliver to multiple community businesses and service organizations to promote the mission and services of the organization.
- Coordinated three fundraising events that brought together community leaders and raised more than \$10,000 for the organization.
- Refined and curated database of donors and community leaders and stakeholders to streamline outreach efforts.
- Collaborated with marketing team to create training materials to provide guidance and support to volunteer advocates.

**Skills:** Creative Problem Solving • Leadership • Initiative • Strategic Planning • Analytical Skills • Public Speaking • Communication

 **Professional Headshot**  
Your profile photo is the first thing noticed, so make sure it's professional.

 **Compelling Headline**  
Draft a brief statement that will spark interest that may include information such as a title, your unique skills, your experiences, or your career aspirations.

 **Summary/About Section**  
This section is like your digital elevator pitch, so be sure to share your interests, skills, experiences, and career goals. Sprinkle in keywords that are relevant to your field to increase being included in search results.

 **Experience Section**  
List and describe your internships, part-time jobs, and relevant course projects that demonstrate your interest and experience in your field of interest.

## Experience



### Vice President

Active Minds Student Organization  
September 20XX - May 20XX • 1 yr 9 mos  
Wayne, Nebraska, United States • On-site

- Led a committee of eight peers through regular meetings and email communication to plan the Send Silence Packing campus event each fall.
- Collaborated with 10+ officers through regular meetings and emails to outline meetings and events for the academic year.
- Coordinated the revision of the by-laws through collaboration with the executive board and submitted them to the National Organization.

**Skills:** Collaborative Leadership • Event Planning • Conflict Resolution • Communication

## Education



### Wayne State College

August 20XX - May 20XX  
Grade: Junior

Activities and societies: Active Minds, Career Scholars Program, Lambda Pi Eta



### Education Section

Include Wayne State College and the degree you are pursuing, plus add courses, extracurricular activities, and academic honors.

## Projects

### Communication Art Department

January 20XX - May 20XX



Associated with Wayne State College

- Led a team in developing a comprehensive communication strategy for a mock campaign.
- Conducted in-depth market research to identify the target audience and tailor messaging.
- Crafted compelling content, including persuasive press releases, and engaging social media posts.
- Presented the strategy to peers, receiving positive feedback for creativity and strategic thinking.

**Skills:** Critical Thinking • Strategic Planning • Public Speaking • Time Management



### Projects

Whether you worked on a project for a school assignment, or created your own, talk about what you did and how you did it.

## How to Write a LinkedIn Summary

Think of your LinkedIn summary as a digital elevator pitch that should provide a clear idea of who you are, what sets you apart, and describes your career interests and aspirations.

- Hook readers with a strong opening statement to spark interest
- Share what you do and why
- Speak to your experience in the field (even if you're just getting started)
- Sprinkle in keywords from your field to boost your searchability
- Highlight your unique qualifications, skills, and professional interests
- Share what kind of opportunities you're looking for and include your contact information to make it easier to reach you
- Make sure to break up your content into smaller chunks to ensure it's easy to read

## Drafting Crafty LinkedIn Headlines

Check out these examples to help you conceptualize how to write your LinkedIn summary.

### Position | Skills or Experience | What you are seeking

Financial Analyst Intern | Problem Solver | Data Nerd

### Major | Skills or Strengths | What you are seeking

Education Major | Child Whisperer | Future Elementary Teacher

### Current Position and Organization | Sentence on what you do

Peer Mentor | Wayne State College | Mentor incoming students to provide support in their transition to college

#### Example 1:

Financial Analyst Intern | Problem Solver | Data Nerd

I was the nerdy elementary kid who enjoyed doing math problems in my free time, and ever since then, I knew my future career would involve problem-solving and my love for numbers.

I am currently a third-year finance major at Wayne State College who interned at (XYZ Organization) in Norfolk, Neb., last summer. After my internship, I realized how much I enjoyed financial analysis and tackling real-world business challenges. I feel energized and accomplished when I get to collaborate with a team to evaluate and forecast financial data.

I am looking forward to my senior year when I get to take Intermediate Managerial Finance, Financial Accounting and Analysis, and Money and Banking and Investments. These courses will provide even more background knowledge in profit and loss management, and operational and capital efficiency.

I am looking for opportunities to serve as a financial analyst for a mid-sized company in Nebraska. You can contact me at WillyWildcat@gmail.com if you have interest in learning more about how I can contribute to your organization or if you would like to connect professionally on LinkedIn.

Crafty headline to spark interest

An opening statement to hook the reader and spark interest

Share what you are doing and why. Sprinkle in some keywords to increase searchability.

A call to action sharing the types of opportunities you are looking for and how to contact you

#### Example 2:

Education Major | Child Whisperer | Future Elementary Teacher

Ever since I taught my little brother how to write his name, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. Teaching a child something new and seeing their face light up with pride is the most exhilarating feeling.

Between being a teacher's aide, working with kids in an after-school program, and working as a Peer Mentor for the First Year Experience program at WSC, I've spent many hours in the classroom. I especially enjoy focusing on early childhood learning and helping young children develop and learn new skills.

As I finish my senior year at Wayne State College, I am excited to learn more about child development and classroom best practices through my student teaching experience. I hope to be an elementary teacher who inspires my students and provides them with a strong foundation to build from.

If you are looking to hire an elementary school teacher at your school or district for the 2024-2025 school year, please contact me at WillyWildcat@gmail.com.

# JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

## Set Realistic Expectations

Embarking on an internship or job search can be both exciting and daunting. To navigate this journey effectively, it's crucial to set realistic expectations.

- 1 Be Prepared for Competition**  
Understand that internships are highly competitive. You may need to apply to several before finding the right one.
- 2 Start Your Search Early**  
Begin looking for internships ahead of time. Many companies have early deadlines, so getting a head start is key.
- 3 Networking Matters**  
Recognize the importance of networking and forming professional connections. Attend career fairs, networking events, and informational interviews to expand your network.
- 4 Customize Your Applications**  
Tailor your resumes and cover letters for each internship you apply to. Generic applications are less likely to catch the eye of employers.
- 5 Stay Flexible**  
Keep an open mind during your internship search. You may need to explore opportunities in different locations or industries to increase your chances of finding a position.
- 6 Seek Feedback**  
Don't hesitate to ask for feedback on your application materials and interview skills. This feedback can help you improve and stand out as a candidate.
- 7 Consider All Opportunities**  
While paid internships are desirable, gaining experience and connections is essential for your future career. Explore all types of experiences to broaden your horizons.
- 8 Stay Positive and Persistent**  
Understand that rejection is a normal part of the internship search process. Stay positive and persistent in your efforts, and keep pushing forward toward your goals.



**Make an appointment on Handshake with a WSC Career Services professional who can provide tailored guidance for your job and internship search!**



# INTRODUCTION PREPARATION

## Part 1: Searching at In-Person Events

Prepare your introduction by answering these questions:



You only have approximately 20 seconds to make a good first impression!

- 1 Who are you? What do you do or what are you interested in doing?**
  - Hi, I'm Willy Wildcat, a junior majoring in Communication Studies with interest in building a career in community education and outreach.
- 2 Why are you interested in this employer?**
  - I'm interested in (XYZ) as an organization whose mission is to provide education and outreach in health-related areas that are important to me.
- 3 What can you offer the employer?**
  - I have experience in public speaking, fundraising, and event coordination, and I learn things quickly.
- 4 Conclusion/Transition: What do you want to talk to the employer about? What questions do you have?**
  - I'm curious about (XYZ's) internship opportunities. Would this intern have an opportunity to work on the new (XYZ) campaign that I see you are developing?

### Put it all together:

Hi, I'm Willy Wildcat, a junior majoring in Communication Studies with interest in building a career in community education and outreach. I'm interested in (XYZ) as an organization whose mission is to provide education and outreach in health-related areas that are important to me. I have experience in public speaking, fundraising, event coordination and learn things quickly. I'm curious about (XYZ's) internship opportunities. Would this intern have an opportunity to work on the new (XYZ) campaign that I see you are developing?

## Good Questions to Ask Employers at the Career Fair

- What kinds of skills are you looking for?
- Which courses do you suggest I focus on to gain the technical skills you look for?
- What's your favorite part about working at (XYZ company)?
- For how long does a typical employee stay with the company?
- What made you choose to work at (XYZ company) and why do you stay?
- I saw (XYZ company) really values \_\_\_\_\_. Could you tell me how they demonstrate that?

## Questions Not to Ask (X)

- What does your company do?
- What is the salary for an intern?
- What benefits do you offer?

## Additional Ways to Prepare for In-person Events:

1. Create/update your resume
2. Prepare professional attire
3. Create/update your Handshake profile
4. Download the Handshake mobile app
5. Meet with a career coach

## Part 2: Searching in the Digital World

- In today's digital age, applying for internships and jobs is faster than ever, leading to a surge in applicants due to the convenience of applying to multiple opportunities with just a click.
- Due to the flood of resumes submitted to company websites, job portals, and recruiting platforms, relying on this method alone can lead to your resume getting lost in the void, with little chance of receiving a response. This is called the **resume black hole**.



Employers face a challenge in connecting with suitable talent amid a surge in applications, often from unqualified candidates. The most effective solution: an employee referral program for sourcing quality candidates.

An **employee referral** is when a current employee recommends a candidate, often incentivized by the organization. It's a simple and reliable method to find pre-screened, suitable candidates.

## Steps to the Job and Internship Search

### Step 1: Develop a Strong Resume

Developing a strong resume is critical because employers review resumes to evaluate and compare candidates' skills and experiences in a competitive job market. An advocate will want to know about you before they would be able to recommend you for any opportunities.

### Step 2: Prioritize Your Target Employers

According to Steve Dalton, author of *The 2-Hour Job Search*, creating what he calls a "LAMP List" is a systematic and efficient process for making a prioritized list of target employers when searching for an opportunity. The goal of the LAMP list is to give you an ordered and organized list of target employers so you are spending your time on the ones that are most important and the most promising first.

## Where to Find Employers

Handshake



LinkedIn



Glassdoor



Indeed



Google Careers



Company websites



**Leverage career-based platforms to connect with potential employers by:**

1. Researching company profiles
2. Following industry influencers
3. Joining relevant groups

**This proactive approach helps you to build relationships with organizations you're interested in and stay informed about potential job openings and networking opportunities within those companies.**

## LAMP stands for:

- **L**ist - a way to catalog employers that spark your interest
- **A**dvocacy - an effort to gain a referral from a current employee of the organization
- **M**otivation - an indication of your interest and enthusiasm for the employer (ranked 3 as high and 1 as low)
- **P**osting - a position is formally posted on websites by an organization (yes/no)

Your goal with the LAMP List is to write down **as many employers of interest** as you can, at least 25-40, to work the process effectively. Begin by reaching out to your top five targets. It's recommended that you work on only five targets at a time to not overwhelm yourself and to be thorough and focused on your search.

- List any organization you have interest in working with and/or the ones you wish were coming to campus to recruit.
- Research employers in the top locations that you're interested in residing in and add the ones of interest to your list.
- Add employers in any LinkedIn groups that look appealing using any industry groups or WSC alumni LinkedIn groups that you are affiliated with.

## Wildcat LAMP List Template

From *The 2-Hour Job Search* by Steve Dalton

#	Employer List	Advocacy	Motivation	Posting	Link/Platform
1	Super Clean Computing	Y	3	Y	Career Fair
2	Old Corporation	Y	3	Y	Handshake and Career Fair
3	Agriculture Company	Y	3	Y	<a href="https://jobs.norfolknow.org/">https://jobs.norfolknow.org/</a>
4	Wherdu Credit Services	Y	3	Y	<a href="https://jobs.norfolknow.org/">https://jobs.norfolknow.org/</a>
5	Excellent Ed's Equipment Emporium	Y	3	N	
6	Wingit Food Trucks	Y	3	N	
7	Bann & Krupt Financial Services	Y	2	Y	
8	Emperor Emporium	Y	2	Y	
9	Associated Halfsale Suppliers	N	2	Y	
10	Nebraska Territory Bank	N	2	Y	
11	Defs Legit Bank	N	2	Y	
12	Carl's Herald	Y	2	N	
13	Basic Vehicle Sales	Y	2	N	
14	Default River Bank	Y	2	N	
15	Here & There Things & Stuff	Y	2	N	
16	Broken Arm Medical Center	Y	2	N	Met at Speed Interviewing
17	Aggregate Corporation	N	1	Y	Handshake
18	XYZ Industry	Y	1	N	
19	City of Carl	Y	1	N	
20	Southspoon Chamber of Commerce	Y	1	N	
21					
22					
23					
24					



## How to Fill Out the Advocacy Portion of the LAMP List

Once you have all your employers listed, efficiently fill out the advocacy column in the LAMP List by following the format below:

- Add a Y to an employer where you have a friend or family member who could serve as an advocate for you within that organization.
- If none of the above, list an N in the column, but this doesn't mean you won't be able to pursue the employer down the line, especially when you learn how to cultivate internal advocates.



	Advocate/Contact Name	Initial Contact Date	Follow-up 1	Follow-up 2
		Emailed 11/1/20XX		
	Berniece Ball Uncle Jim	Emailed 11/1/20XX	11/8/20XX	11/16/20XX
	Edward Gideon Goliath IV	Emailed 11/1/20XX	11/8/20XX	11/16/20XX
	Neil Newsley Robert Rech Walter Waters			
		Emailed 10/20/20XX		
	Indiana Isle	Called 12/8/20XX	Follow-up on 12/15/20XX	

Source: The 2-Hour Job Search by Steve Dalton

## Step 3: Seeking Advocates at Target Employers

Knowing that employers prioritize internal referrals, the next step is to pinpoint individuals with whom you can establish a connection. These contacts should be open to offering guidance and sharing their insights. Ideally, they'll also be willing to advocate for you within their organization.

Consider the following platforms when trying to message advocates:

1. LinkedIn groups - you can message folks for free through groups
2. Direct email to the person's work email or their personal email (if voluntarily offered)
3. LinkedIn invitation to connect with a personalized note

**A**

Send Outreach  
Messages to  
Advocates

**B**

Build Rapport  
with Advocates

**C**

Maintain  
Connections with  
Advocates

### A. Send Outreach Messages to Advocates

The hard part is not messaging these contacts; rather, it's getting them to respond. No matter how tailored and customized your outreach message is, many still won't respond, which is OK.

Dalton recommends the following outline when reaching out to potential advocates:

1. The email should be brief, less than 100 words.
2. Ask only for insight and advice, never job or internship leads.
3. State your connection first.
4. Make your request in the form of a question.
5. Define your interests both narrowly and broadly.
6. Keep more than half the word count about the contact.

### Target outreach examples:

#### **Alumni or Weak Connection Email**

Subject: Your experience at (employer) or (in a specific field)

Hi Molly,

I am soon to be a fellow WSC alum, and my career advisor shared that you might be a great contact to learn more about working in the recruitment and talent acquisition space. Would you have a few minutes to have a brief phone conversation about your experience in the field?

Your advice and insight would be greatly appreciated, as I consider building a career in the field.

Sincerely,  
Willy Wildcat

### **Consider this approach if there's a current job or internship posting**

Subject: Your experience at (employer) or (in a specific field)

Hi Phil,

I am a fellow member of the Nebraska Collegiate Career Services Organization group on LinkedIn. May I have a few minutes to ask you about your career coaching experience at Wayne State College?

Your insights would be greatly appreciated since I'm now in the process of deciding whether to apply for your open career coaching position.

Best regards,  
Willy Wildcat

### **The Fan Mail Approach**

Subject: Your insight in the (the field you're entering)

Dear Dr. Keibler,

I am completing my communication degree at WSC, and I found your thoughts on relational leadership to increase inclusion and retention in the workplace recently published in the Wayne Stater.

Would you be open to discussing your work further with me in a brief phone call? I have a few follow-up questions, and your insights would be invaluable. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Willy Wildcat

### **Follow-up when you haven't heard back**

Subject: Your experience at (employer) or (in a specific field)

Dear Dali,

I just wanted to follow up on my message from last week. Perhaps this week might be a more convenient time for you to briefly chat about your experience.

Please let me know if you're available.

Best regards,  
Willy Wildcat

If you haven't heard back in seven business days, consider sending a brief second email. If they don't respond to the second message, cross them off your list and move on to the next prospective advocate.

## **B. Build Rapport with Advocates**

To connect with potential advocates, consider organizing informational meetings where you can ask insightful questions and establish both personal and professional rapport. The goal is to gather valuable information while also showcasing your likable personality, with the aim of earning their admiration, trust, and **ultimately, their support and advocacy**.

### **How do these meetings work?**

Shoot for about 20-30 minutes and go longer only if the advocate seems to be extending the conversation.

#### **1. Small-Talk Phase**

- Always start off the meeting off with ease and take time to develop rapport.
- Take genuine interest in the person you are meeting with.
- Asking follow-up questions is effective in building likability because it shows you are listening and want to know even more about that person's experience.

#### **Questions**

- How is your day going so far?
- When did you attend WSC and what was your favorite part about being a Wildcat? (Only ask this question if it's a fellow WSC alumnus.)
- What drew you to this industry?
- What's been your path to joining (the organization of interest)?
- What's your favorite part about your job?

#### **2. The Q & A Phase**

- Thank you again for taking time to talk with me today. I did prepare some questions for you. May I ask you them now?
- One of the best ways to obtain information is using the TIARA method which stands for: Trends, Insight, Advice, Resources, and Assignments.

#### **Questions**

**Trends** - What trend is most impacting your business right now?

- How has your sector changed most since you started?
- What do you predict will be the most dramatic changes in your industry in the years to come?
- How is technology/AI impacting your industry?

**Insight** - What surprises you the most about your job?

- What's the best lesson you've learned thus far on the job?
- What's been your best professional decision so far and why?
- If you had to attribute your 10 years of success at your employer to one skill or trait, what would it be? (This question is for someone with 10+ years' experience.)

Q & A Phase Questions continued...

**Advice** - If you were me, what would you be doing right now to best prepare for a career in this field?

- If you were me, what's the one thing you wish you knew when you were in my position?
- What do you know now that you wish you knew when you were in my position?
- If you were me, what would you be doing right now to maximize your chance of breaking into this industry or field?
- If you had just been hired into this role, what's the most important thing you'd do in your first 30 days to ensure you got off to the best possible start?

**Resources** - What resources should I be looking into next?

- What resources would you recommend I investigate next and alternatively?
- What next steps would you recommend for someone in my situation?
- Are there any annual conferences, websites, or LinkedIn groups connected to your work that you would find helpful to me?

**Assignments** - What's been your favorite or most interesting project so far?

- Which project of yours do you feel has had the greatest impact on your organization?
- Has any project increased in popularity recently in your organization?
- Have you used interns or contractors in the past? If so, what sorts of projects have they worked on?

Along with asking questions, **be prepared to answer the big four questions** that are often asked of you:



Tell me a little about yourself (i.e., walk me through your resume/experience).



What interests you in our organization?



Why do you want to work in this role?



What draws you to this career field?

## C. Maintain Connections with Advocates

How to begin the next-steps phase:

- Thank you so much for your time today. You've given me a lot to think about.
- I am going to take the week/weekend to reflect on all that you shared, but if I have additional questions, may I reach back out to you?
- I learned so much from our conversation. Would you have any other colleagues in your field that you recommend I talk with? And if so, would you introduce me via email or LinkedIn?

### How to Follow Up and Maintain Connection with Advocates:

#### Example 1:

Subject: Ad Age / Brand Week & Update

Hi Marcus,

I wanted to send you a quick update. I found the insights you shared last month incredibly helpful, especially those on the increasing number of touch points in the last six weeks of the semester. Per your advice, I've noticed a difference in my ability to bring up more sensitive issues impacting my advisees at this point in the semester, which is helping them make decisions.

Might you have any additional suggestions? Your insights are greatly appreciated, and I'll keep you posted on my progress.

Sincerely  
Willy Wildcat

#### Example 2:

Subject: Checking in & update

Hi Maria,

How are things and how is your new puppy doing? I hope it's going well, and I would love to see another photo when you have time.

On my end, my networking conversations are continuing, and your insights have been invaluable. I've had some traction with a few of the agencies you suggested and am about to interview with one later this week.

Thanks again for your mentorship in this process, and I hope to have some good news to share with you soon.

Sincerely,  
Willy Wildcat

# INTERVIEWING

## What role does the interview play in the job search process?

- The interviewing process facilitates the opportunity for hiring managers to evaluate a candidate's work experience, assess a candidate's hard and soft skills, discover the most qualified candidates, and define the position and company needs and expectations.
- Interviewing is a mutual selection process where the employer and the candidate assess compatibility. Both the organization and the candidate should be assessing if the other will fulfill their needs, match their values, and fit into the culture.

### Prepare for Your Interview!

- Interviewing can be nerve-racking, and it's hard to come up with things on the spot.
- Interviewing requires you to reflect on your unique skills, abilities, experiences, and values, which improves your ability to better articulate how you will best contribute to an organization.
- Interview preparation helps relieve stress, pressure, and angst and helps you channel that energy into equipping yourself with an arsenal of stories and tangible examples to answer any question that comes your way.

**PREPARATION  
IS**

**ESSENTIAL**

## How should I prepare for an interview?

### Step 1: Research

Start by researching the organization to ask more informed questions and demonstrate your knowledge and enthusiasm for the position and organization during the interview.

Below are some reliable websites where you can gather a well-rounded understanding of the company's background, culture, financial health, and industry position.

- **Company Website:** Start with the company's official website for information on their mission, products/services, leadership team, and recent news.
- **LinkedIn:** Explore the company's LinkedIn page for insights into their culture, recent updates, and employee profiles.
- **Glassdoor:** Read employee reviews and ratings to understand the company's culture, management, and interview process.
- **Crunchbase:** Get information on a company's funding, investors, leadership team, and recent news related to funding rounds or acquisitions.
- **Hoover's:** Access comprehensive company profiles, financial information, key executives, and industry analysis.
- **Bloomberg:** If the company is public, you can find detailed financial data, news, and analysis on Bloomberg's website.
- **Google News:** Stay updated on recent news articles, press releases, and announcements related to the company.
- **Industry-specific Websites:** Depending on the industry, there may be specialized websites or publications that provide in-depth analysis and insights.

# INTERVIEWING

## Step 2: Interview Prep

Download the **WSC Interview Preparation Guide** to organize and reflect on your thoughts to identify specific skills, stories, and examples to share during your interview.

- Writing out your answers to each one of the questions will help you organize your thoughts and reflect on specific skills, experiences, and values that you wish to convey to prospective employers

**KNOW THE FACTS**

Employers want answers from **your experience**, not hypotheticals. Think of real situations from your work history, coursework and projects, leadership and involvement, and your life experiences.

Scan to access the preparation guide!



[www.wsc.edu/cs-guide](http://www.wsc.edu/cs-guide)

## Use the STAR method to help you construct detailed answers:

STAR method by Tim Howard | <https://fortifyexperts.com/using-the-star-method-in-your-interviews/>



### Prepare

- Listen to the question
- Think of an event
- Plan, organize in 5-8 seconds

One-sentence summary

**S**

### Situation

- Provide context and background
- "Our customers complained..."

**T**

### Task

- Describe problem and challenges
- "We faced supply chain shortages..."

**A**

### Action

- Explain what you did and how
- "We solved..."
- "I calculated..."

**R**

### Results

- State benefits, savings, rewards, recognitions, etc.
- "The impact of..."

Use the responses you prepared for your practice questions and relate them to the actual questions. Make sure to answer the questions fully using the **STAR** method.

- **Situation:** Outline the situation. What was happening? What was the setting? Who was involved?
- **Task:** Identify your task or assignment. What was the challenge? What was the problem needing to be solved?
- **Action:** Describe what you did to accomplish the task. What did you do? How did you decide what to do? What skills did it require?
- **Result:** Share the results. What was the outcome? Was the challenge met or was the problem resolved?

## Closing the interview on a strong note:

- This is when you ask the questions you prepared ahead of time or if some came up during the interview (write them down in your padfolio).
- Express your continued interest in the position.
- Inquire about the next steps in the hiring process.



## Common Interview Mistakes

Not preparing or practicing	Fidgeting, playing with hair tie or accessories
Not reflecting on real-life stories and examples	Not showing interest, enthusiasm, or engagement
Saying “um” or other filler words too much	Not being YOURSELF

### Step 3: Prepare Questions

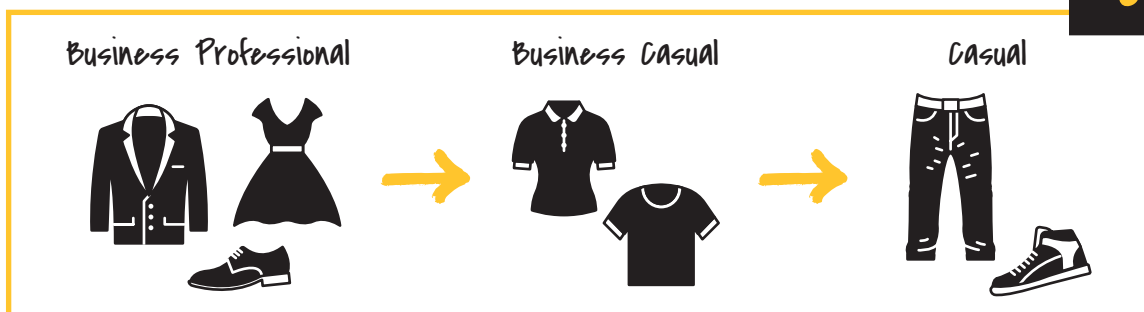
Prepare questions for the interviewers. This is your chance to dig deeper and make sure the organization is the right fit for you. Below are some great questions to ask during your interview:

- If I were to start in this position today, who would I be reporting to?
- I saw on the company website that you value [value], can you tell me how that's implemented?
- I recently saw on the news that [competitor] launched a [new initiative/product], will [this company] be following suit?
- I'm really interested in this position. Is there anything I can elaborate on to strengthen my application?
- How has your sector changed most since you started?
- How do you predict your industry will change most dramatically in the next several years?
- How is technology/AI impacting your industry?
- If you had just been hired into this role, what's the most important thing you'd do in your first 30 days to ensure you got off to the best possible start?
- Thank you so much for your time. When can I expect to hear back about the next steps?

### Step 4: Dress for Success

During the interview, be intentional about your first impression.

! Dress one step above the expected dress code for employees



### Body Language and Clothing

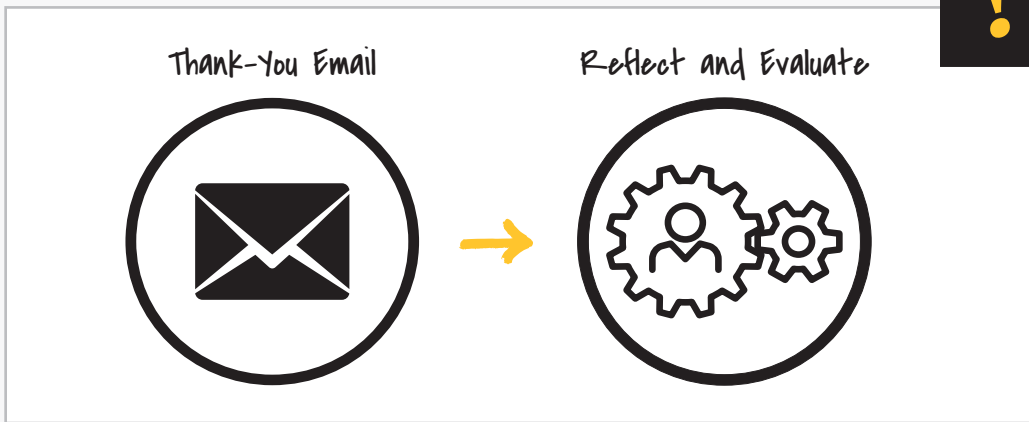
- Are they a suit-and-tie place or do they wear jeans? Try to find out and dress one step above to make a good first impression and show you are serious about the position.
- Pick out your clothes ahead of time; make sure they are clean and pressed and that you feel comfortable in them.
- Punctuality: arrive 10-15 minutes early. If you are unfamiliar with the location, drive there the night before so you know the route.
- Introduce yourself to anyone you meet in a courteous manner; be respectful to the office personnel. Shake their hand firmly and look them in the eyes.
- Stay off your phone while waiting for your interview. Consider turning it off.

## Communication and Social Skills

- Practice active listening - make sure to listen to the entire question before answering. Don't be afraid to ask them to repeat or clarify.
- Effective verbal and non-verbal communication - sit up and do not slouch. Lean forward, nod your head to show understanding, and smile.
- Handling difficult questions (behavior-based questions)
  - Take your time. Breathe. You do not need to blurt out the first thing that comes to mind when they finish asking the question. Take a few moments to gather your thoughts.
  - If it is a multipart question, you may need to write down the questions, so you make sure to cover them all in your response.
  - Bring copies of your resume. Print off several copies of your resume to take to the interview. Put them in a padfolio along with a pen and paper.

## Step 5: Next Steps

### What To Do After the Interview



Follow these steps after your interview

### Follow up by sending a thank-you email.

- Write your draft right away while everything is still fresh. You could write it in your car in the parking lot.
- Tell them how much you appreciated the meeting.
- Mention something specific about the interview or items discussed.
- Include a brief description of why you'd be a good fit for the job.
- Offer to send additional information to make their hiring decision easier.

### Reflect and evaluate the interview experience.

- How did you feel it went?
- What went well?
- Identify areas for improvement.
- What do you think could have gone better?
- How can you prepare differently for the next interview?
- Do you need to revisit your responses?

*Why Interviews Are an Important Part of the Recruitment Process | Indeed.com*

*The Pros and Cons of Virtual and In-Person Interviews (shrm.org)*

*Common Phone Interview Questions (and How to Answer) - Forage (theforage.com)*

*How to Give a Great Elevator Pitch (With Examples) - Harvard FAS | Mignone Center for Career Success*

*AAEE Job Search Handbook for Educators, 2023*

# OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

Receiving a job offer can be an exciting time in your career journey. It's a validation of your skills and qualifications. Read the content below to help you understand your offer and decide how you would approach negotiation.

There are several items you need to consider before accepting. Negotiating a job offer is a common and expected part of the hiring process. It allows you to ensure that the terms are mutually beneficial.

## Understanding Job Offers

### 1. Do the job title and responsibilities align with your career goals?

- Ask yourself: Will this position provide you with the skills/development that you need for your career goals?
- Clearly understand your role and responsibilities to avoid surprises later.
- Double-check because it is possible that the actual job tasks do not match what was discussed in the interview.

### 2. What is the full compensation package?

- Evaluate the health insurance, retirement plans, and other benefits offered.
- Consider other elements like bonuses, stock options, and benefits.
- Take note of additional perks such as flexible hours, remote work options, or professional development opportunities.
- Is it competitive for your industry and location?

### 3. Where will you be located and how long is the commute?

- Consider the job location and evaluate the commute.
- Is the location suitable for your lifestyle and preferences?
- Are you comfortable with how long you will be in traffic each day?

### 4. Does the company culture and values align with yours?

- Research the company's culture and values to ensure they align with yours.
- Look for opportunities to connect with current employees and ask them about the culture.
- During the hiring process, reflect on what you learned to determine if they will be a good fit.

## Negotiating the Job Offer

Be prepared to do research and discuss your expectations professionally, and if you plan to ask for more, you should be prepared to justify why.

### 1. Research Salary Ranges:

- Research industry standards and salary ranges for your position and experience. Use this information to support your negotiation. Some of the best websites to research are:
  - Salary.com
  - PayScale
  - Glassdoor
  - LinkedIn Salary
  - Bureau of Labor Statistics
  - Indeed
  - Idealist

### 2. Prioritize Your Needs:

- Identify your priorities, whether it's salary, benefits, or work-life balance. Be prepared to compromise on certain aspects while prioritizing others.

### 3. Express Enthusiasm:

- Begin the negotiation on a positive note by expressing your enthusiasm for the role.
- Emphasize your interest in contributing to the company's success.

### 4. Be Professional and Respectful:

- Approach negotiations professionally, avoiding confrontational language. Especially if the offer comes in a lot lower than you expected.

### 5. Consider the Entire Package:

- Don't focus solely on salary; consider the entire compensation package.
- Evaluate the value of benefits, bonuses, and potential for growth within the company.
- **For an entry-level professional, gaining experience and career growth is invaluable.**

### 6. Ask for Time to Consider:

- If needed, ask for time to carefully review the offer before finalizing negotiations.
- You do not need to answer right away, but be respectful of their time and ask for **a few days up to a week to decide.**
- Take time to make informed decisions without feeling pressured.

## Accepting, Declining, and Negotiating Offer Email Samples

### Asking for More Time

- In the phone call to your hiring manager, express appreciation and enthusiasm for the offer. Below is a way to ask for more time to consider the offer.

Dear (Name of Hiring Manager),

Thank you for the offer. I'm very interested, but I'd like a bit more time to carefully evaluate everything. Would it be possible to have [specific timeframe] to make my decision?

Sincerely,

Willy Wildcat

### Negotiating an Offer

- Below is some language you could use on the phone or in an email if you want to negotiate an offer.

Dear (Name of Hiring Manager),

I am very excited about this offer and for the opportunity to join your team. After carefully considering the responsibilities of the role and the [share specific skills and experience] that I bring, I believe a salary of [specific amount or range] would be more aligned with market standards and my contributions to the organization. I'm open to discussing this further and finding a mutually beneficial solution.

Sincerely,

Willy Wildcat

- Both you and the employer want to feel good about the outcome.
- Negotiation is easier during this period.
- Asking for a raise larger than normal once you have been at the organization for a while is difficult and will need special approval.
- Approach it with confidence and a clear understanding of your worth and career goals.



## Accepting an Offer

- In the phone call or email to your hiring manager, express appreciation and enthusiasm for the offer and ask what steps you should take next to move forward. Always follow up with an email to confirm.

Dear (Name of Hiring Manager),

As discussed, I am happy to accept your offer for the Education and Outreach Coordinator position with a start date of May 20, 20XX. I understand that the annual salary will be \$45,000 and will include the benefits listed in your offer letter on April 15, 20XX.

Please let me know what the next steps are to move forward, and I look forward to being a part of the (XYZ) team!

Sincerely,

Willy Wildcat

## Declining an Offer

- In the phone call or email, express your appreciation for the offer and their confidence in your qualifications. Below are some talking points you could use when declining a position.

Dear (Name of Hiring Manager),

Thank you for the offer and your confidence in my qualifications. Unfortunately, I must decline this offer as I have accepted another position that is a better fit for me at this time. I enjoyed learning more about your organization and meeting your team through the interview process, and I hope our paths cross again down the road.

Sincerely,

Willy Wildcat





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