



Millersville University
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

CAREER CENTER

NAVIGATE YOUR SUCCESS

YOUR ULTIMATE
PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO



ABOUT THE CAREER CENTER

The Career Center empowers students to achieve their personal and professional goals through comprehensive career development programs and experiences. We align our efforts with Millersville University's commitment to inclusive student success by fostering the six core (EPPIIC) values: Exploration, Professionalism, Public Service, Inclusion, Integrity And Compassion.

Career Center Location: Bedford House - 12 S. George St, Millersville, PA 17551

Our Hours: Monday–Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM | Phone: 717-871-7655

Email: careers@millersville.edu | **Website:** millersville.edu/careercenter/

Career Center Professional Staff:

- **Melissa Wardwell: Director**

Provides strategic leadership, manages daily operations, and supervises staff to ensure effective career development services for students.

- **Audrey Bare: Assistant Director, Mentorship**

Coordinates the activities of the Mentorship Office and the online Mentorship Collective community for student mentees and peer mentors.

- **Patty Taggart: Assistant Director, Internships**

Coordinates the academic internship approval and registration process and connects students with organizations offering internship and service-learning opportunities.

- **Kaila Germany: Assistant Director, Career Management**

Assist students and alums with building their professional portfolios, interview preparation, career and major exploration, and career advising.

We meet with students individually, host various events, and facilitate workshops.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO GUIDE

Resume Outline	4
Resume: Guide to Success	5
Action Words	9
Resume Example	15
Cover Letter Example	16
Cover Letter Guide	17
Cover Letter Outline	19
Professional References	20
Interview Process	22
Technology and Scannable Resumes	28
Important Resources	31

RESUME OUTLINE

Skully Miller

Phone Number | Email | LinkedIn URL

EDUCATION

Millersville University, Millersville, PA
Full Name of Degree; Minor (if any)

(Anticipated) Graduation Month Year
GPA: If 3.0+

Relevant Coursework (if applicable/optional): No more than 4-6 classes, course name only

STUDY ABROAD

University and Country

Month Year

Courses studied/transferable skills/research paper written.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (In reverse chronological order)

Most Recent Employer, City, State

Month/Year–Present

Title of Position

- Bullet summary (Lead with an action verb; describe task/duty, your actions, and the result)
- Primary duties

Employer, City, State

Month/Year–Month/Year

Title of Position

- Primary duties
- Primary duties

ACADEMIC PROJECTS

Class Name | Title of Project

Semester/Year

- Describe your actions and results regarding this project.
- Make sure it is relevant to the position you are applying for. Showcase the skills you learned/used.

ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP

Organization, City, State

Month/Year–Month/Year

Position Title

- Primary duties (These could be student organizations, volunteer, and leadership positions you have held.)
- Primary duties

SKILLS (Include what is relevant for you)

Languages: multilingual abilities (fluent in Spanish), separate from programming (proficient in C++)

Certifications: CPR, wildlife first responder, Gold Award/Eagle Scout, technical training

Technology: software applications, hardware, and other tools relevant to your field(s) of interest

Additional subcategories: social media, laboratory, business and innovation/design

HONORS AND AWARDS (optional)

Only include the name of the honor or award; you don't need to explain it.

RESUME

GUIDE TO SUCCESS

A resume is a document you—the job seeker—use to promote your skills, abilities, and knowledge to a potential employer. It uses your past experiences and accomplishments to position you for future opportunities. From an employer’s perspective, resumes are used to identify qualified candidates to invite to an interview. Resumes do not generate job offers, but well-written resumes facilitate interviews. They are a marketing tool. The resume is important, but it is just one of several steps that make up a successful job search.

How to Begin:

- Choose a standard font (Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica).
- Keep the font size between 10 pt. - 12 pt. (10 pt. is only recommended to keep to one page).
- Margins should be consistent and between 0.5" and 1.0" on each side.
- A resume should be one or two full pages.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Full Name: Prominently display your name at the top.
- Contact Info: Include a professional email and phone number.
- LinkedIn (Optional): Add your LinkedIn profile URL if it's complete.
- Avoid Personal Details: Omit address, birthdate, head shots and other personal information.

CAREER OBJECTIVE | RESUME SUMMARY

Not all resumes require a summary or objective, but these sections can be invaluable for those starting their careers or transitioning into new fields. Use this space to highlight your workplace experiences, interpersonal skills, and the specific qualities that align with the job description.

While optional, a well-crafted career objective can be essential if you have limited relevant work experience. This concise statement outlines your career direction and showcases your transferable skills. Tailor your objective to the specific job description, aiming for a unique and engaging statement.

Presently, there have been arguments regarding the usefulness of career objectives. Some experts consider them outdated, while others consider them useful. Although opinions on the value of career objectives vary, they can be crucial in many situations.

RESUME SUMMARY

When crafting your first resume with no experience or transitioning to a new career, it's better to use a resume summary instead of a career objective. A resume summary provides a professional preview of who you are, what you bring to the table, and how you can contribute to the company's success. This can boost your confidence when writing your resume

Example: Bilingual college graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in business marketing and an aptitude for marketing, copywriting, and brand management. Experienced in building advertising campaigns through student organizations and freelancing requests. Looking to secure a position in a fast-paced organization that fully utilizes my skill set to facilitate successful management and growth of clients' businesses.

Below are a few examples of phrases you could use for your Objective or Career Summary:

Entry Level: the level of position or the type of work you are seeking

Full-Time | Internship | Part-Time

First | Second | Third Shift

A Specific Title (Teacher Assistant) | Name of a field (Education)

Field: *career field, industry, or department you are seeking*

- Accounting
- Administrative Information
- Culinary Art
- Customer Service
- Educational
- Engineering
- Financial
- Food Service
- Health and Beauty
- Healthcare
- Human Resources
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Mechanical
- Medical
- Sales
- Technology
- Truck Driving
- Warehouse/Industrial Welding

Skills/Experience: your most outstanding strengths and abilities

- Ability to Learn
- Attendance Record
- Certifications
- Communication Skills
- Computer Skills
- Creativity
- Data Entry
- Follows Instructions
- Innovative Ideas
- Leadership Ability
- Logical Thinking Ability
- Maturity
- Observant
- Organizational Ability
- People Skills
- Persistence
- Problem-Solving Ability, Proven Success Record
- Public Speaking Ability
- Results Oriented
- Self-Starter
- Specific Educational Background
- Trade Skills
- Work Ethic

RESUME EXAMPLES

Objective Example:

Dedicated education graduate seeking a Teacher's Assistant position to leverage strong curriculum development, lesson planning and individualized student-support skills. Eager to contribute to a positive and inclusive learning environment and support student success.

Career Summary Example:

Dedicated special education teacher assistant with a proven ability to work effectively both independently and collaboratively. Possess strong communication and writing skills, as well as a commitment to leadership and teamwork. Skilled at adapting to new challenges and providing personalized support to students with diverse learning needs. Seeking a position where I can leverage my expertise to positively impact the lives of children and contribute to a supportive educational environment.

EDUCATION SECTION

The Education section is a crucial component of your resume, highlighting your academic qualifications and demonstrating your dedication to learning. Employers use this section to evaluate your knowledge, skills, and suitability for the role. To create a strong Education section, list your college or university, degree, major/minor, graduation date, GPA (if applicable), and honors. Start with the most recent institution and highlight relevant coursework. Consider omitting high school information unless you're a recent high school graduate. If you've earned any relevant certifications, list them under a separate "Certifications" section or include them in your Education section.

EDUCATION SECTION EXAMPLE:

EDUCATION

Millersville University | Millersville, PA

Bachelor of Science in Accounting

May 2025

Minor: **Marketing** | GPA: **3.87/4.0** | Honors: **Omicron Delta Kappa**

Relevant Courses:

- Marketing Strategies and Policies
- Marketing Management
- International Marketing
- Management of Information Systems

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of Certification | *Issuing Organization*

Effective or Expiration Date

National Board Certification | *Early Childhood Generalist*

Effective Date: August 2025–August 2030

EXPERIENCES

Remember, as a student, you might not have a lot of full-time work experience in your field, and that's okay! You might have been part of a club or organization, worked a part-time or summer job, or completed an internship. These experiences have helped you develop skills that are valuable to employers. They show your work ethic and your ability to balance school and work. Whether you volunteered or were paid, your experience is the most important thing on your resume. When you describe your responsibilities and achievements, focus on areas relevant to the job you want. It can be tough to explain these tasks on your resume, but feel free to look up examples for ideas, using them as a reference and not just copying them.

Crafting Effective Bullet Points:

- **Conciseness:** Keep your bullet points brief and informative.
- **Action Verbs:** Start each bullet point with a strong action verb (e.g., “managed,” “achieved,”)
- **Quantify Achievements:** Use numbers to quantify your accomplishments, whenever possible (e.g., “increased sales by 20%,” “supervised a team of 5”).
- **Relevance:** Highlight experiences that directly relate to the job you’re applying for.
- **Reference Examples:** Use examples from online resources to inspire your bullet points, but avoid plagiarism.
- **Consistency:** Maintain consistent formatting and grammar throughout your Experience section.
- **Avoid Vagueness:** Use specific, concrete language to describe your responsibilities and accomplishments.

EXPERIENCE SECTION EXAMPLE:

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Company Name | City, State

Position Title

Start Month, Year–End Month, Year

- [Strong Verb] + [Job Duty] + [Impact]

Signature Solutions | Lancaster, PA

Administrative Assistant Intern

- Streamlined office operations by effectively managing the reception desk, ensuring prompt and courteous responses to inquiries and directing calls to the relevant departments.
- Improved the efficiency of the department by creating a centralized filing system, reducing the time needed to retrieve important documents by 50%.

ACTION WORDS

Use action words to describe your experience and accomplishments. It would help if you used present tense (i.e., “Manage” or “Collaborate”) when describing tasks that you are still doing. Use past tense (i.e., “Managed” or “Collaborated”) when describing tasks that you are no longer doing.

- Achieved
- Acquired
- Adapted
- Addressed
- Administered
- Analyzed
- Anticipated
- Assembled
- Assisted
- Audited
- Budgeted
- Calculated
- Centralized
- Changed
- Collaborated
- Composed
- Condensed
- Conducted
- Constructed
- Contracted
- Converted
- Coordinated
- Created
- Cultivated
- Demonstrated
- Designed
- Developed
- Devised
- Discovered
- Doubled
- Drafted
- Edited
- Eliminated
- Generated
- Guided
- Hired
- Implemented
- Improved
- Informed
- Insured
- Interpreted
- Interviewed
- Launched
- Maintained
- Managed
- Marketed
- Minimized
- Motivated
- Negotiated
- Obtained
- Operated
- Organized
- Originated
- Oversaw
- Performed
- Planned
- Prevented
- Produced
- Programmed
- Promoted
- Provided
- Publicized
- Published
- Recruited
- Reorganized
- Reported
- Researched
- Resolved
- Reviewed
- Selected
- Separated
- Set Up
- Simplified
- Solved
- Surveyed
- Staffed
- Supervised
- Taught
- Tested
- Trained
- Unified

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE SECTIONS

These sections are essential to place on a resume if they are relevant to your position, prevent time gaps, or if you need to fill out the page. It provides additional examples of how you apply your skills and qualifications to practice. It may not be entirely relevant to the job you are applying for; however, it can be a determining factor for the employer to hire you. List the full name of the organization, including dates, location, offices/positions you have held, and description of duties.

STUDY ABROAD

When you want to highlight your international experience, include a study-abroad section. You can include your study-abroad experience under Education, Experience, Activities, or Additional Information. Include dates, locations, and specific skills or strengths you gained (for example, language skills or experience with cultural diversity).

Universidad Pablo de Olavide | Seville, Spain

Study Abroad

January 2022–May 2022

- Collaborated with seven students of varying cultural backgrounds to develop a marketing plan for a Spanish company.
- Gained an in-depth understanding of cultural variations and different perspectives.

Faculty-Led Course | Environment and Culture in Costa Rica

Education Abroad

Summer 2022

- Participated in immersive field experience in a country with the highest biodiversity levels in the world.
- Observed and recorded fragile and endangered ecosystems of Costa Rica, including several wildlife refuges.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND PROJECTS

Honors Thesis: The Impact of Mindfulness Meditation on Test Anxiety in College Students

May 2023

- Conducted a randomized controlled experiment with 50 participants to investigate the effectiveness of mindfulness meditation in reducing test anxiety.
- Analyzed data using statistical software (SPSS) to assess the impact of mindfulness meditation on test anxiety.

INTERNSHIP PROJECTS

Tinder (Remote) | Los Angeles, CA

Product Design Intern (INROADS)

June 2022–August 2022

- Assisted Senior Designers with technical drawings, sample making, product development, and retailing.
- Collaborated within a cross-functional, agile team of engineers, designers, and product managers to make sure transitions between scenes went seamlessly.

ON-CAMPUS LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (sports, clubs, volunteer activities, etc.)

African Caribbean Student Association | Millersville, PA

President

Spring 2023

- Coordinated cultural events to spread awareness and cultural visibility on campus through consistent communication with the executive board and student government members.
- Informed individuals about the conflicts within the Middle East and its connection to issues involving the United States through commissioning guest speakers to better educate the college community.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE SECTIONS CONTINUED

AWARDS

Who Gave the Award | Location | Name of Award | Year Awarded | Purpose of the Award | Selection Pool for Award

Food Bank of the Rockies | Millersville, PA

Pennsylvania Volunteer of the Year Award

June 2020

- Awarded to one volunteer each year among 200+ volunteers at multiple Food Bank of the Rockies locations.
- Volunteered 5 days a week throughout March and April during the COVID-19 pandemic, organizing inventory and distributing food to needy families.

SKILLS OR ADDITIONAL PROFICIENCIES

Languages: multilingual abilities (fluent in Spanish) | **Computer Languages:** proficient in C++

Technology: software applications, hardware, and other tools relevant to your field(s) of interest

Additional Subcategories: fieldwork skills, research skills, social media, laboratory, etc.



RESUME WRITING TIPS

1. Avoid Templates:

- They often use placeholders or predefined structures that can interfere with how job search engines read your document. When you save or export the template, these placeholders might not be replaced correctly, resulting in blank or incomplete sections. Templates lack customization and can make it difficult to tailor your resume to specific jobs.

2. Leverage Search Engines:

- **Brainstorming:** Utilize search engines to discover inspiration, guidance, and AI tools that can help you identify and highlight your key qualifications. This strategic approach can significantly increase your chances of securing an interview.
- **Keyword Research:** Identify relevant keywords that employers are likely to search for in job postings. Incorporate these keywords in your resume.

3. Prioritize Clarity and Accuracy:

- **Proofread Rigorously:** Have a few people review your resume for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- **Seek Feedback:** Consider asking a career counselor or mentor to provide constructive criticism.

4. Tailor to the Job:

- **Highlight Relevant Skills:** Emphasize the skills and experiences that directly align with the job requirements.
- **Quantify Achievements:** Use metrics and numbers to demonstrate your impact.

5. Organize Logically:

- **Reverse Chronological Order:** Present your work experience in descending order, starting with your most recent position.
- **Clear Sections:** Use headings to separate your resume into sections. Example: Objective, Education, Relevant Experience, Leadership Experiences, Proficiencies.

6. Keep it Concise:

- **One to Two Full Pages:** Aim for a 1-page resume.
- **Focus on Key Points:** Avoid including irrelevant details that do not add value to your application.

RESUME WRITING TIPS CONTINUED

7. Be Specific and Provide Examples:

- **Quantify Achievements:** Use numbers, percentages, or dollar amounts to demonstrate your accomplishments.
- **Provide Context:** Explain how your skills and experiences have contributed to your success.

8. Clarify Acronyms:

- **Define Terms:** If you use acronyms, provide their full names the first time you mention them.

9. Write Clearly and Concisely:

- **Avoid Jargon:** Use simple, everyday language that is easy to understand.
- **Be Direct:** Get to the point and avoid unnecessary wordiness.

10. Choose a Readable Font:

- **Standard Fonts:** Opt for a professional font like Times New Roman or Arial.
- **Consistent Formatting:** Ensure that your font size, spacing, and margins are consistent.

11. Showcase All Relevant Experience:

- **Transferable Skills:** Highlight skills acquired in previous jobs.
- **Volunteer Work and Internships:** Include relevant experiences from volunteer work, internships or clubs.

12. Be Honest and Authentic:

- **Avoid Exaggeration:** Present your qualifications accurately, and avoid making false claims.
- **Be Yourself:** Let your personality shine through in your writing.

13. Include Dates:

- **Time Frame:** Provide dates for employment, education, and other relevant experiences.
- **Consistency:** Ensure that the dates are consistent and accurate.

COMMON RESUME WRITING MISTAKES

- 1. Small Font:** Make sure that your document is legible. Recommended font size is 10-12pt.
- 2. Spelling Mistakes:** Use the spell-check tool but remember that the best proof is another set of eyes. Ensure there are no spelling errors, poor word choice, or misuse of language. These mistakes are not acceptable as you might be negligent with your work.
- 3. Repetitive Words:** DO NOT use the same verb to describe your experiences. Use a variety of action verbs to highlight your transferable and diverse skills. Utilizing different action verbs can show your wide range of skills and knowledge.
- 4. Missing Dates:** Include dates on your resume; leaving them out might seem like you are trying to hide certain information.
- 5. Inconsistent Layout:** Present your resume in a consistent layout. Set your margins evenly, have an even amount of space between each heading, and be consistent with your tense. For example, if you are describing current jobs, use all verbs in the present tense, and for past jobs, use past tense.
- 6. Using Someone Else's Words:** Preparing your resume in your own words is essential.
- 7. Not Having a Master Resume:** Having a master resume that lists all experiences will help create a one-page resume tailored to the job for which you are applying.
- 8. No Cover Letter:** A cover letter should go with every resume. It is your sales document and will supplement your resume.
- 9. Unprofessional E-Mail Address:** Use a professional e-mail address. Your professionalism must come through in your resume.
- 10. Cluttered Information:** Filter out information that might seem irrelevant to the position. Be wise in choosing specific facts to be included in your final resume.
- 11. Including Personal Information:** Age, gender, and headshot should not be included on your resume—unless you apply abroad.
- 12. Using Abbreviations or Contractions:** Remember your resume is a formal document; be sure to omit abbreviations or contractions in your text.



Skully Miller

717- 000-6541 | Skully.Miller@Millersville.edu | Millersville, PA

OBJECTIVE

Bilingual business administration student with a minor in Marketing, seeking to leverage my competence in marketing research, management, and finance within a business that values its employees and customers.

EDUCATION

Millersville University | Millersville, PA

Bachelor of Science in Accounting

May 2025

Minor: **Marketing** | GPA: **3.87 / 4.0** | **Honors College Student Association**

Relevant courses:

- Marketing Strategies and Policies
- International Marketing
- Marketing Management
- Management of Information Systems

LANGUAGE

Spanish: Read, Write, And Translate

English: Read, Write, And Translate

ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROJECT

"The Impact of AI on the Future of Accounting: A Case Study of Millersville University Accounting Graduates"

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Summer 2023

- Conducted in-depth interviews with recent accounting graduates
- Analyzed survey data to assess perceptions of AI in the accounting profession
- Contributed to the development of research questions and methodology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Learning Services, Millersville University | Millersville, PA

CRLA Certified Peer Subject Tutor

Spring 2020–Present

Courses Tutored: ART103, ART 265, BUS 155, COM 250, COM 260, DIG 201, PSY 100, SPA 101-204

- Tutored 33 students in their coursework, helping them retain themes and topics from their coursework
- Communicate with other tutors, professors, and directors of the Academic Learning Center and the Writing Center in a professional and timely manner to ensure students seeking tutoring get their desired academic assistance

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Tinder (Remote) | Los Angeles, CA

Product Design Intern (INROADS)

June 2022–August 2022

- Assisted Senior Designers with technical drawings, sample making, product development, and retailing
- Collaborated within a cross-functional, agile team of engineers, designers and product managers to make sure transitions between scenes went seamlessly

ON-CAMPUS LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Universidad Pablo de Olavide | Seville, Spain

Study Abroad

January 2015–May 2015

- Completed a semester-long course studying international business in Spain
- Collaborated with 7 students of varying cultural backgrounds to develop a marketing plan for a Spanish company

Student Business Association | Millersville, PA

President

January 2020–September 2023

- Managed a \$2,500 budget; advertised, coordinated, and hosted significant events
- Programmed an annual youth summit/conference for 150 high school and middle school students

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCIES

Software: Microsoft Office, Google Workspace, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign and Canvas

COVER LETTER

EXAMPLE

Skully Miller

Millersville, PA | 717- 000-1234 | Skully.Miller@Millersville.edu

February 10, 2023

Residential Life
Millersville University
40 Dilworth Rd
Millersville, PA 17551

Dear Residential Life Screening Committee,

I submit my application for the Resident Assistant position with great enthusiasm. I was inspired to apply due to a recommendation from an RA named Jenna Jones and because my first semester at Millersville University was so welcoming. With this passion and willingness to give back to the Millersville Community, I feel my task-oriented, empathetic, and easy-adapting team-leadership skills would make me a great candidate for the position.

With my experience in the workplace as a customer service representative, I have cultivated skills that have enabled me to feel comfortable even in stressful situations. These skills include communicating effectively, clearly, and in a way that leaves customers heard and satisfied. In addition to my workplace engagement, I also worked diligently throughout my academic career and became an active member of campus organizations, Student Business Association and Best Buddies.

Other achievements include:

- Receiving the Camden County Best of Class Award in the spring of 2022.
- I was the first member of the Global Scholars Program at Millersville University, where I developed intercultural competency skills through a study-abroad experience in Ecuador.
- Chosen alongside two other students to present academic findings at an AAPLAC International Conference.

As a first-generation college student, I am eager and willing to do what it takes to be an active community member. I am optimistic that I will make an excellent addition to the team. I enjoy connecting with my colleagues and believe successful workplaces are built on teamwork. Written communication can only tell you so much about my motivation and qualifications. I look forward to discussing my background with you in greater detail. Thank you for being so considerate.

Sincerely,

Skully Miller
717- 000-1234
Skully.Miller@Millersville.edu

COVER LETTER GUIDE

Address the letter to the supervisor, or director.

Only use "To Whom It May Concern" if you're unable to locate this information.

Paragraph 1: Intro

Should include:

- Purpose of the letter
- Name of the organization
- Job title
- Where you found the advertisement
- What makes you a fit for the organization?
- (Optional: If a current employee referred you to this position, state that and their name)

Paragraph 3: Story#2

Describe a second experience that is both impressive & relevant. Highlight the skills by providing examples.

Closing

Use a professional closing and include your first and last name. (Optional: Some applicants include a digital signature)

Jess Johan
1234 Main Street
Millersville, PA 19607

Contact Info

September 5, 2023

Date of Submission

Layla Tirado, Director of
Employment Solutions, Inc.
5678 Main Street
Millersville, PA 19607

Employer's Address

Dear Ms. Tirado,

I am writing to express my interest in the Career Advisor position with Employment Solutions, Inc. that is currently posted on your website. I have seen the impact of ESI's emphasis on assisting community members with their employment searches and would enjoy contributing my career counseling and teaching skills to this position.

While at Millersville University, I explored my passion for serving as a Peer Educator at the University's Career Center. During my final semester, I even served as a member of the Student Government Association. I could fine-tune my programming and event-planning skills in this position while working under tight deadlines. In addition to my experience with the University, I completed an internship at the PA Department of Commerce.

The opportunity to connect my passion for providing tools and information for employment-seeking individuals allowed my work to shine. I worked on over 60 job applicant caseloads and facilitated several workshops on career decisions. The internship required me to work closely with the workforce solutions team daily, which allowed me to advance my communication, teamwork, and attention to detail skills.

My experience and educational background would serve me well as a Career Advisor for Employment Solutions, Inc. I look forward to the opportunity to interview with you to discuss my qualifications for the position further. If you have any questions or would like me to provide any additional information, please contact me at (555) 555-5555 or Jess.Johan@email.com.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my resume.

Sincerely,
Jess Johan

Format Notes

- 1 page maximum
- 11–12-point font
- Choose "standard" fonts such as Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, Georgia, Verdana

Paragraph 2: Story # 1

Describe one experience that is both impressive and relevant to the job.

Examples:

- Student Leadership
- Part-Time Jobs
- Internships
- Volunteerism
- Research Projects

Paragraph 4: Conclusion

- Summarize your skills/experiences.
- Reiterate your interest in the position.
- Reiterate the job title and organization.
- Include your email & phone number.
- Close with grace and appreciation

In reference to the Career Center of University of North Carolina at Pembroke, -"Cover Letter Guide"

COVER LETTER COMMON MISTAKES

- **Forgetting to enclose your résumé:** Make sure you enclose any materials you mention in your cover letter, such as a résumé, transcript, etc.
- **Typographical errors:** Use the "spell check" and check your work.
- The most common typographical errors are:
 - Misspelling of the employer's name or title in the address, greeting, or on the envelope.
 - Forgetting to change the company's name each time it appears in the application or body of the letter.
 - Apply for one position and mention another position in the body of the letter.
- **Inaccurate information about the company:** Verify any information about the company you intend to use in the letter.
 - Be specific and match company needs to your skills.
 - Do not attempt to lie to the employer by stating you are familiar with the company when you don't have specific information to back it up.
- **Inappropriate Tone:** Always use a positive manner. Make sure the letter strengthens your candidacy.
- **Being Vague:** Make sure all the content in your letter supports how you will meet the employer's specific needs. Personalize each letter for the employer.
- **Emphasizing a lack of experience:** Do not mention your shortcomings in a letter. It would help if you only emphasized your strengths. Focus on your skills, knowledge, and abilities
- **Misrepresentation:** Never misrepresent your skills or experience in your cover letter or resume.
- **Too Long or Too Short:** A short cover letter will seem generic and lacking in effort, and too long will seem unfocused. For maximum impact, include compelling, brief descriptions of your experience and qualifications—all without repeating yourself.
- **Sounding Desperate:** You should sound confident and determined in your cover letter, not desperate.
- **Giving Everything Away:** A cover letter aims to generate curiosity and land an interview. Avoid explaining every single quality, and focus on your proudest accomplishments. Reveal enough about yourself to catch the hiring manager's interest, and encourage them to invite you for an interview.
- **Wrong Pronouns:** Speaking in the third person in a letter disconcerts an employer.
- **Templates:** Most employers prefer a simple, well-written letter to a generic template.
- **Personal Photos:** Photos are unprofessional unless you want to enter modeling, acting, or journalism.
- **Personal Information:** Do not include data such as age, gender, marital status, race, religion, or any other personal information unless you feel it directly pertains to the position you are seeking.
- **Forgetting to sign your letter:** Don't forget to sign your name at the end of the letter. This personalizes it for the employer.

COVER LETTER

OUTLINE

Your Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Today's Date

Employer Name
Company Employer Name
Company Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Employer Name,

Paragraph 1: State the position you are applying for and how you found it. State one company characteristic you admire (show you did some research).

Describe your excitement about bringing (two skills) to the position.

Paragraph 2 (and optional 3): Briefly describe your background and experience. Provide one example that illustrates the skills you mentioned in the opening paragraph. When providing examples, think of numbers and accomplishments. Remember that you are trying to show the employer what skills you will bring to their organization. Illustrate these skills with action/accomplishment statements.

Paragraph 3 (or 4): State that you are available for an interview or to further discuss your qualifications and give them a number to reach you. Describe any items you have enclosed. Reassert your excitement about being considered for the position, and thank them for their time

Sincerely,

Full Name
Phone Number
Email

Enclosure: Resume

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

START BUILDING YOUR REFERENCE NETWORK BEFORE YOU NEED IT

The time to start thinking about your postgraduation references is not when you begin the application process; it starts now.

Employers often ask for references:

1. How long/well have you known this candidate, and in what capacity?
2. How does this candidate stand out among their peers (academically, professionally, socially, etc.)?
3. How would you rate this candidate on the following skills?

The best references are those who have seen and been impressed by you in various situations. It helps when they can comment on what you offer that is relevant to the position. They should typically be supervisors, professors, and other professionals/peers who have seen you make valuable contributions in work, school, research, leadership, volunteer, or extra curricular settings.

HOW TO START BUILDING YOUR REFERENCE NETWORK

A reference list should include 3–6 professional contacts:

Start building your reference network now by:

1. Seeking out research assistant, teaching assistant, internship, employment, volunteer, or other extracurricular opportunities relevant to your career goals.
2. Ask supervisors and coworkers for reference letters and to recommend you on LinkedIn* while working together or shortly after that.

WHAT YOUR REFERENCE LIST SHOULD LOOK LIKE

Your references should be listed separately from your resume, with the same header/format as your resume and cover letter. They should include everyone's name, job title, relationship to them, phone number, and email. Below is an example of what to include. Remember, references should only be supplied when asked.

Kaila Germany
Assistant Director of Career Management
Career Center
Current Supervisor
KGermany@Millersville.edu
717-213- 6545

THE ETIQUETTE OF ASKING

WHEN TO ASK

Always let your references know when you list them as references, and give them several weeks' notice when you need them to write a letter. Because you cannot control the timing of last-minute opportunities, providing them with a previous letter they wrote could save them a lot of time. They may only need to make a few tweaks before submitting it.

HOW TO ASK

Instead of asking, "Could you be a reference for me?" say something like, "I am applying for a position. Do you feel you know me well enough to write me a strong recommendation for this position?"

Asking the question this way triggers a discussion of the job and how this person's specific perspective about you could be relevant and influential to your audience.

It also might help the recommender feel more comfortable declining your request without your taking it personally. Although that may be disappointing, you are better off not having them as a reference because having them as a reference could compromise your chances of getting hired or accepted in your desired graduate school program.

In addition, ask the reference about the two best ways they can be contacted (i.e., email, cell phone, etc.) and include this on your reference list.

WHAT TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDERS

- Information on the position or role you're applying for
- Details about how and when the letter should be submitted
- An updated resume or brag sheet
- A preaddressed, stamped envelope (for letters that need to be sent by mail)
- A sample letter (if requested)

FOLLOW-UP

Always send a thank-you note to each of your references, and keep them posted on your job search progress.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

If you've made it to the interview phase, the employer believes you meet the minimum skills and qualifications required for the job. Now, your goal is to connect your experience and successes to the position and demonstrate that your strengths, qualities, and work style fit the company. **Remember, the Career Center is here to help you prepare for and practice your interview.**

PURPOSE

The interview serves four primary purposes. It allows the employer to learn about you, your qualifications, and your experience and to decide if you are the best person for the job. It gives you, the job seeker, a chance to learn about the company, the position, its duties, and expectations and to convince the employer that you are the right person for their organization. It's a screening tool for future interviews. It's the point where hiring decisions are made.

PHASES

The interviewing process can be intimidating if you don't know what to expect. While each interview will differ, all interviews include three phases: before, during, and after.

BEFORE

- Research and investigate.
- The organization: its culture, economic conditions, structure, history, and mission statement.
- The position: review the requirements and duties, develop 3–5 questions beforehand, and have them written down.
- Review your responses
- Assess yourself. Make a list of strengths, abilities, and experiences that relate to the job.
- Determine significant points you want to stress in the interview, and decide how you will "sell" yourself.
- Identify three reasons for selecting this job and employer.
- List three assets you have that you feel will interest the employer.
- Study your resume
- Review your resume as it fits the position, anticipating questions or issues.
- Consider skills and experiences that you want to be sure to highlight in your interview.
- Practice, practice, practice.
- Answers to interview questions should be a brief, results-oriented view of your experience and skills.
- Participate in a mock interview at the Career Center.
- Get organized.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW CONTINUED

- Solidify travel arrangements for the interview, and identify backup options in case of issues.
- Choose your outfit: project a professional image, be comfortable (not casual), and dress conservatively.
- Bring your professional portfolio and any notes, questions to ask, or research you collected about the company or position.

DURING

- Ask if you can take notes and/or refer to notes you prepared in advance.
- Consider what the interviewer needs to know about you by the end of the interview to ensure that you are a good fit for the role and organization.
- Ask thoughtful questions that demonstrate you were listening throughout the interview.

Leave the interview knowing these three essential pieces of information:

1. How to get back in touch with your interviewer?
2. Next step in the recruitment process?
3. Anticipated time frame before the next step?

AFTER

- Send tailored thank-you notes to your interviewers that:
- Summarize the strengths of the conversation that will help the interviewer remember you.
- Introduce traits/qualifications that perhaps you were not quite able to convey initially.
- Express continued interest in the role and the organization.
- Understand that recruitment processes are not standardized. You may have to decide on one position before hearing back from another. There is a line between being proactive and overly nervous; if crossed, it could undermine your chances of getting an offer.
- Express thanks and politely ask for feedback if you are not selected to proceed. Not all interviewers will share a concrete assessment, but every bit helps you do better next time or may help the organization keep you top-of-mind when new roles open.

DECODING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

WHAT THEY ASK	WHEN THEY ASK	HOW TO RESPOND
"Tell me about yourself."	It allows you to be more relaxed during the interview and provides context to the experiences outlined in your resume.	Briefly summarize the past few years in 2-3 themes related to the role and organization. Provide context around your work, like how much time went into a project or your level of autonomy and responsibility.
"Why do you want to work for this company? "	To listen for more than a quote from the firm's website or generalities about the industry. Not being able to convey sentiments pertinent to the organization may signal you're not interested in working there.	Share what intrigues you from conversations with alums or others who work there or from what you read. Note admiration for the organization's growth or your desire to support its mission.
"Tell me about your senior thesis."	Independent research, like a senior thesis, is uncommon in undergraduate education elsewhere, so interviewers may be intrigued by the process and content of your study.	Speak concisely about why you chose this topic and summarize the significant steps you took, and the research sources you used. Quantify the length or scope of your project and plans to publish and/or present your findings to a broader audience.
"Tell me about a conflict you had with a supervisor or other authority figure."	Disagreements happen, and interviewers want to know how you handle them. Avoiding conflict may mean you lack the courage of your convictions, but just blaming the other party doesn't put you in the best light.	Be honest. Provide some detail and context but focus primarily on the resolution and lessons learned rather than belaboring the conflict.

DECODING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

WHAT THEY ASK	WHEN THEY ASK	HOW TO RESPOND
“Why did you change majors/ career paths?”	This might be a sensitive topic (e.g., poor GPA, didn’t get a return offer), but the interviewer wants to know if you can connect what you’ve done with what you want to do in the future.	Craft a narrative about how the transition came about, what draws you to this new opportunity, and some takeaways from previous roles that are transferable to this new setting.
“What are your greatest strengths?”	A way to assess your familiarity with the nature of the job or organization by the strengths you highlight. It is also a test of your confidence – if you don’t believe in yourself, neither will your interviewer!	Reflect on what you’ve been recognized for by supervisors or peers. Provide examples: If you say you have strong time management skills, highlight how you plan out your day, week, and semester.
“What is your greatest weakness?”	No candidate is perfect, but interviewers want employees who can honestly assess what they still need to learn and demonstrate a plan to know it.	For example, they may use a certain technology that you haven’t; demonstrate a situation in which you previously had to learn a new technology quickly to complete a project or task.
“Describe how you managed a team or group project when one member wasn’t carrying their weight.”	Collaboration is essential in most work environments but doesn’t always go smoothly. Interviewers look for how you position yourself in the group, how you communicate with your peers, and how you embrace or resolve conflict.	Frame the story with the context of the group’s goals and your role in the group. Display empathy for the team member who held up the project or take ownership if it was you. Outline how the issue was resolved and the lessons you learned from the experience.

Center for Career Development, Princeton University "Interview Guide."

COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES

- Being unprepared for the interview-lack of knowledge of the organization or position.
- Lack of enthusiasm, doesn't smile, appears bored.
- Didn't ask questions about the job or company.
- Overemphasis on money.
- Using slang or improper grammar.
- Overbearing or overaggressive, overconfident or conceited.
- No interest in organization or industry.
- Expecting too much too soon; unwilling to start at the bottom and work up.

A job interview allows an employer to learn more about you. But it's also your opportunity to learn more about the role, team, company culture, and more -so you can make an informed decision about the job.

- Learn more about the role: What do you think are some challenges that the person in this role will face?
- Learn about the employer: How does this team/role contribute to the company goals?
- Learn about the team you would join: Which other departments do you collaborate with on projects or tasks?
- Learn about the interviewer's experience: How long have you worked here? Have you had any other roles?
- Learn about performance evaluation: What do you want the person in this role to accomplish in the first six months?
- Learn the next steps before you leave: What are the next steps in the interview process?
- Can I answer any final questions?

INTERVIEW DO'S AND DONT'S

- Don't be late.
- Don't discuss personal issues.
- Don't speak too fast or too low.
- Don't use slang or poor language.
- Don't tell jokes during the interview.
- Don't answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no."
- Don't dress sloppily. Dress for the job you want, not the job you have.
- Don't discuss the salary until later in the hiring process or until the recruiter brings it up.
- Don't respond to unexpected questions with an extended pause or by saying something stupid.
- Do send a personalized thank you email to each person you interview with.
- Do focus on what you can do for the company rather than what the company can do for you.
- Always conduct yourself as if you're determined to get the job you're interviewing for.
- Do think aloud. Share your thought processes with the interviewer.
- Do try to get business cards from each person you interview with.
- Do fill out the job application completely, neatly, and accurately.
- Do provide a solid handshake, but don't hurt their hand.
- Do immediately take down notes after the interview.
- Do be polite to everyone you meet.
- Do ask intelligent, insightful questions.
- Do bring extra resumes.
- Do dress the part.

TECHNOLOGY AND SCAN-ABLE RESUMES

There are several types of online submissions of which you should be aware.
Email attachment | Word document uploaded to the website | Scan-able (website database); text file

Note: If the employer does not specify that they only accept resumes online, consider applying online and still drop off a hard copy. The letter you mail or drop off indicates that you also applied to the online system.

EMAIL ATTACHMENT & WORD DOCUMENT UPLOAD

1. Save your resume as firstname-lastname.doc. Chances are the employer will save your resume in a folder with others.
2. ALWAYS send a cover letter (unless the employer states specifically not to).
3. For email: Format it like a formal business letter but start with the greeting line (Dear Mr. Smith:)
 - a. For document upload: Write a formal business letter including addresses without leaving space to sign it at the end. You can use a script font for your name. Including a cover letter clarifies why you are attaching your resume and to which job you are applying. It also demonstrates your professional writing ability in email, which is important to employers.
4. Use a professional or nondescript email address for correspondence and include the job title and reference number in the subject line. In your email cover letter, it's a good idea to include "Attached is my resume for your review" in your last paragraph to ensure they don't miss your attachment.
5. ALWAYS check the upload or attachment as formatting can sometimes change.

SCAN-ABLE AND TEXT RESUMES

To save time sifting through numerous resumes, many companies utilize resume-scanning software to screen applicants. Both paper and electronic resumes (and sometimes cover letters) are scanned into a database. At times, a company may require you to upload a "text" version of your resume, which does not accept any formatting. Most software searches for keywords and phrases entered by the employer, often mirroring the exact wording from the job description. Once the number of resumes has been reduced to a manageable level, the recruiter gets involved and sifts through the remaining resumes.

.General Rules for Writing Scan-able (text) Resumes

- Left align your text.
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman or Calibri, preferably 10-12-point font.
- Do not use bold, italics, underlines, shadows, or unusual fonts. Use CAPS to highlight headings.
- Do not use bullets, parentheses, brackets, tabs, graphics, boxes, lines, shading, highlighting, or column formats. Instead, use asterisks for bullets and blank lines between sections.
- Make sure no characters are touching each other (if you have dashes or slashes in your dates, make sure you add spaces on either side of the dates: March 2011 – January 2012)
- Put your contact information on separate lines at the top of the page.
- Length is not essential in a text file. If you can see the page breaks, include your name and page number.

EMAIL ATTACHMENT & WORD DOCUMENT UPLOAD

The rise of AI has significantly impacted the job application process, particularly in how resumes are screened and evaluated. AI-powered resume-scanning software is becoming increasingly common, and understanding how these systems work is crucial for job seekers.

How AI Scans Resumes

1. **Keyword Matching:** AI algorithms search for keywords and phrases that match the job description.
2. **Pattern Recognition:** AI can identify patterns in your resume, such as the content and formatting.
3. **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** NLP enables AI to understand the context and meaning behind the words in your resume.

Tips for AI-Friendly Resumes

- **Use Relevant Keywords:** Incorporate keywords from the job description throughout your resume.
- **Quantify Achievements:** Use metrics and numbers to demonstrate your accomplishments.
- **Tailor Your Resume:** Customize your resume for each job application to highlight relevant skills and experiences.
- **Avoid Complex Formatting:** Keep your resume clean and straightforward, avoiding excessive formatting that can confuse AI.
- **Proofread Carefully:** Errors and typos can negatively impact your application.

Additional Considerations

- **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS):** Many companies use ATS to manage recruitment. Ensure your resume is ATS-compatible.
- **AI Bias:** Be aware of potential biases in AI algorithms. Tailor your resume to address any potential biases.
- **By understanding how AI scans resumes and following these tips, you can increase your chances of passing through the initial screening process and getting your resume in front of a human recruiter.**

KEYWORDS PREFERRED IN SCANNED RESUMES

When creating a scannable resume, it's crucial to incorporate relevant keywords that align with the job description. These keywords help AI systems identify your qualifications and match them to the specific requirements of the position. These keywords can be placed in a "word box" or within your bullet points. Here are some examples of keywords to consider:

General Skills and Qualifications

- **Soft Skills:** Communication, teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, adaptability, time management, organization, customer service
- **Technical Skills:** Microsoft Office Suite, data analysis, programming languages (e.g., Python, Java, C++), software development, project management, marketing, sales
- **Industry-Specific Skills:** Accounting, finance, engineering, healthcare, education, technology, human resources, legal

Action Verbs

- **Achievements:** Achieved, exceeded, surpassed, outperformed, improved, increased, reduced, saved, generated, developed, implemented, launched, led, managed
- **Skills:** Analyzed, assessed, designed, developed, evaluated, executed, identified, implemented, managed, monitored, negotiated, planned, researched, resolved, trained

Examples of Keyword-Rich Phrases

- **For a Marketing Position:** "Increased website traffic by 20% through SEO optimization," "Developed and executed successful social media campaigns," "Analyzed market trends to identify new opportunities"
- **For a Software Developer Position:** "Proficient in Python, Java, and C++," "Developed scalable web applications using cloud-based technologies," "Contributed to the design and implementation of software architectures"
- **For a Customer Service Representative Position:** "Provided exceptional customer service to resolve complex issues," "Exceeded customer satisfaction metrics by 25%," "Effectively handled difficult customer interactions"

Remember to tailor your keywords to the specific job you're applying for. Carefully analyze the job description and identify the key skills and qualifications that are most relevant. By incorporating these keywords strategically, you can significantly increase your chances of passing through AI screening and landing an interview.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

- **Handshake** is a free online database where students can search for jobs and internships, schedule appointments, and RSVP for events. Every MU student has a Handshake account. Use this option to access yours and either activate or update your account. You will need to sign in using your MU credentials.
- **CareerShift** is a comprehensive online platform revolutionizing the job and internship search process. Unlike traditional job boards, it focuses on providing users with the tools and information they need to bypass the competition and land their desired positions. It's accessible through the Career Center website and free for Millersville students and alums.
- **Focus2Career** is a computer-based career and education planning system designed to help individuals make informed decisions about their future. It provides various tools and assessments to help users explore their interests, values, and skills and match them to potential career paths. The system is accessible through the Career Center website and free for Millersville students and alums.
- **Forage** is a go-to resource for expert advice on mentorship opportunities, internships, jobs, graduate school, and career development. Explore practical guides, informative videos, and networking tips to help you achieve your personal and professional goals.
- **Guides and Web Resources** is a go-to resource for expert advice on mentorship opportunities, internships, jobs, graduate school, and career development. Explore practical guides, informative videos, and networking tips to help you achieve your personal and professional goals.
- **Identity-Based Career Resources** offers link-based resources that provide advice and electronic resources based on identity. We recognize that identities are intersectional and encourage you to explore the resources relevant to your unique needs and background.

Great thanks to the institutions below for their open resources that aided in the development of the Millersville University CAREER CENTER Building Your Professional Portfolio:
BYU Career Services, "Professional References."
Albright College, "Building Your Professional Portfolio"
RACC Career Services Center, "Career Development Guide."
Center for Career Development, Princeton University "Interview Guide."
Career Center of University of North Carolina at Pembroke, - "Cover Letter Guide"



Millersville University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution.
A member of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education. 9355-CC-0924-EE