

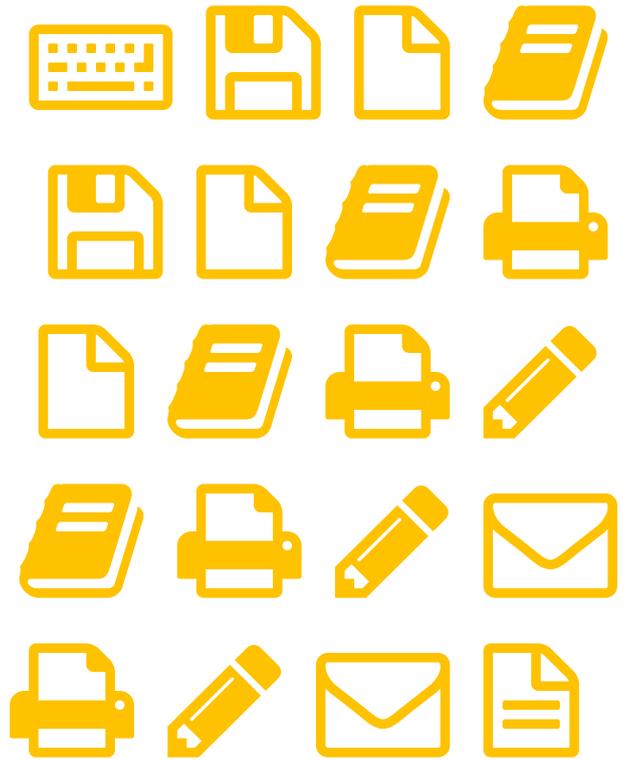
# RÉSUMÉ & PROFESSIONAL WRITING GUIDE



CAREER CENTER



# RÉSUMÉ & PROFESSIONAL WRITING GUIDE



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# RÉSUMÉ- WRITING BASICS

## WHAT IS A RÉSUMÉ?

For current students and recent graduates, the **traditional U.S. résumé** is typically a one-page document that highlights your educational background, experiences, accomplishments, skills, and interests. This length could vary depending on the industry and depth of your experiences, so knowing expectations within your field is critical for résumé success. A **master résumé** allows you to keep track of everything you have done so that you can pick and choose which experiences to use and tailor.

An **industry résumé** allows you to have a version tailored for a specific industry that you will only need to make small adjustments to when adapting for a **specific position résumé**. Your résumé is the most important document in marketing yourself professionally, and will evolve over time. Some international employers will ask for a CV, which is actually a traditional résumé and different from an academic CV. Visit the Career Center for resources on writing academic CVs.

Résumés are initially viewed for 30 to 60 seconds and put into “yes,” “no,” or “maybe” piles. To maximize your chances of making it to the “yes” pile, be sure to follow some basic résumé rules, as outlined throughout this guide. Since your résumé is a reflection of your abilities and your personality, you want to make the best first impression possible.

RÉSUMÉ TYPE	AUDIENCE	PAGE LENGTH
Master	Self	No limit
Specific Industry (may create for more than one industry)	Self	Typically one, maybe two – depending on industry norms
Specific to Position	Future Employer	Typically one, maybe two – depending on industry norms

## WHY CREATE A RÉSUMÉ EARLY?

You may think that you don't need a résumé until you start applying for internships or full-time jobs, but the Career Center recommends you get started as early as possible. Listed below are three primary reasons why beginning your résumé early will be advantageous.

### PROMOTES SKILL BUILDING

When you write a résumé early in your college career, you can use it as a guide to see what skills, experiences, and activities you need to develop while in school to help as you apply for internships, full-time jobs, or graduate school.

### HELPS YOU BE PREPARED

By preparing a master or industry version of your résumé early, you will be better prepared for any opportunity that arises. You may need a résumé when applying for career-related summer jobs and/or internships, admission into an academic program, scholarships, or on-campus job opportunities.

### HELPS KEEP TRACK OF WHAT YOU DO

If you start your résumé early, you will be able to keep track of everything you do throughout your college career. Many students who create their first résumé as seniors have forgotten the details of what they did their first and second years. Your master résumé can be used as a document that helps you remember information as you modify future résumés and prepare for interviews.

# POSSIBLE RÉSUMÉ CATEGORIES

Listed below are definitions and recommendations for the different sections of a résumé.

- ✔ REQUIRED
- ✔ STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
- ✔ OPTIONAL
- ✔ NOT INCLUDED

## ✔ CONTACT INFORMATION

Includes name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number, e-mail address, and LinkedIn profile URL.

### EXAMPLE

Jonathan Wolverine  
303 Kearsley Street  
Flint, MI 48502  
(810) 555-5555  
mwolverine@umflint.edu  
www.linkedin.com/in/XXXX

## ✔ OBJECTIVE

Professional Objective • Career Objective

Recommended for all jobs and internships, but typically not included for graduate school or scholarship applications where personal statements are being submitted.

This is generally a brief sentence that clarifies any of your skills, abilities, or experience that would positively contribute to the opportunity for which you are applying. This sets the order of importance for the remaining categories on your résumé.

### EXAMPLE

Seeking an internship in sales utilizing communication, active listening, and organizational skills.

## ✔ EDUCATION

Educational Background • Academic Background • Academic History

Area where educational institutions, city, state, degree, and anticipated graduation date are listed. GPA may be listed. Educational institutions are listed in reverse chronological order, with highest degree-conferring institution at the top.

May also include: Minor, Concentration, Relevant Courses, Study Abroad, Honors, Dean's List, GPA, Certifications

### EXAMPLE

University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, MI  
Bachelor of Arts, Sociology, May 20XX  
Minor in Psychology GPA: ###/###

SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12

## ✔ WORK EXPERIENCE

Work History • Employment • Additional Work Experience

Document work history that highlights skills to employers. These jobs don't need to be relevant to the Objective statement. These are typically paid job experiences. This shows employers that you have held jobs and have some understanding of work responsibilities. You don't need to include every job you've held.

SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12

## ✔ ACTIVITIES

Campus Involvement • Leadership – if you have held leadership roles and/or had leadership responsibilities

Strongly recommended if you have been involved in certain activities for several months/years

Any campus and community involvement.

SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12

## ✔ VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Community Service • Service • Community Engagement

Strongly recommended if you have been involved in community service.

Activities you were involved in that help individuals and/or the community. This work is generally unpaid, but may also be part of a workstudy program.

SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12

## ✓ RELATED COURSEWORK

Relevant Coursework • Professional Courses • Coursework

Strongly recommended if looking for an internship.

Dependent upon length of résumé and field of interest if applying for a full-time job.

Any coursework that is level 200 or higher that is specific to the profession or industry in which you are seeking employment. It is usually recommended to list between four and eight courses.

### EXAMPLE

#### Relevant Coursework

- Human Development: Infancy through Adolescence
- Legal Aspects of Family Life
- Family Interaction Processes
- Individual and Family Development

## ✓ INTERESTS

Optional, often used as a space filler.

Things you like to do that aren't structured activities.

**SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12**

## ✓ SKILLS

Relevant Skills • Qualifications • Skills and Certifications • Computer Skills

Strongly recommended that all students include computer skills.

Any specialized knowledge.

If you have other industry related skills, you should include those too (e.g., a biology major with lab skills).

### EXAMPLE

#### Relevant Skills

Computer: SAS; Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Laboratory: Spectrophotometry, Gel Electrophoresis, Microscopy (compound and dissecting), PCR, DNA Isolation and Amplification, Sephadex Column Chromatography

## ✓ ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

Research Experience • Awards • Professional Affiliations • Presentations • Publications • Honors

Strongly recommended if you have experience and/or affiliations with any category listed above (or any others that apply).

These categories may be added if relevant to you. Some people add these items to categories previously listed. Determining if a separate category is necessary depends on how significant and/or unique the experience is for you and how relevant it is to the Objective.

**SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12**

## ✓ RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Related Experience • Professional Experience • Practicum • Clinical Experience • Internship Experience • Research Experience

Strongly recommended if you have experience related to your Objective statement.

Can be volunteer work, internships, summer and/or part-time jobs that are directly related to a desired position.

May also include:

- Relevant research
- Senior design projects

**SEE SAMPLES P. 10 – 12**

## ✓ REFERENCES

Not typically listed on résumé. Have a separate page that lists your references.

List people who will serve as a positive reference for you.

**SEE SAMPLE P. 19**

# WRITING RÉSUMÉ BULLET POINTS

## WHAT DID YOU DO? (SITUATION/TASK)

To start, brainstorm a list of every task you have completed in that experience. Think about the various aspects of the position you held.

*Bullet points describe what was accomplished or learned in a certain experience. They allow the employer to understand how each experience relates to the one for which you are applying and answer the questions “What?” “How?” and “Why?”*

## WHY DID YOU DO IT? (RESULTS)

This element adds context to the tasks so the person reading the résumé better understands your previous experiences. Consider the importance and end result of your tasks. Quantify results whenever possible.

## HOW DID YOU DO IT? (SKILLS USED/ACTION VERBS)

Review the list of tasks and locate patterns in the types of responsibilities you had. These tasks demonstrate the skills gained from the experience. Look at the job description for the position you are applying for, highlight the skills most desired for that position, and incorporate them into your bullet points.

Each bullet point should start with a strong action verb (see P. 8 of this guide). If the experience is still occurring, the verb is in present tense. If it has ended, past tense is used.

## BULLET FORMATION EXERCISE

SITUATION/TASK	SKILLS USED — ACTION VERBS	RESULTS
What did you do?	How did you do it?	Why did you do it?
Example: Planned large event (responsibilities included: food, seating & slideshow)	<u>Coordinated</u> and <u>communicated</u> with staff / <u>ordered</u> food / <u>organized</u> seating / <u>reserved</u> technology	To recognize students who completed certificate program

## BUILD YOUR BULLET (FOR YOUR CURRENT OBJECTIVE OR PURPOSE OF RÉSUMÉ)

Example:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated recognition event for over 100 students completing a certificate program by communicating with on-site liaison to order food, organize seating, and reserve audio and visual aids.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

# IDENTIFYING TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

*Transferable skills are abilities, attributes, and personal qualities obtained during your study and experiences that you can use across industry lines. The following are examples of transferable skills:*

## ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS

Identifying resources, delegating tasks, and initiating new ideas

## ANALYTICAL SKILLS

Compiling, sorting, and analyzing data

## CREATIVE SKILLS

Creating and designing new concepts or methods, or adding to existing ones

## \*CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Making reasonable judgments that are well thought out after analyzing and evaluating a situation, event, or experience

## CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS

Working with the public and interacting with customers with professionalism and efficiency

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Interacting effectively with others

## LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Motivating and leading a group toward a common goal

## MULTITASKING SKILLS

Successfully completing multiple tasks at one time

## \*ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Using time, energy, and resources in an effective way in order to accomplish tasks and achieve goals

## PERSUASION SKILLS

Changing a person's attitude or behavior toward a project, idea, object, or other person(s)

## \*PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Recognizing an issue and identifying ways to solve the problem

## \*QUANTITATIVE SKILLS

Sorting, analyzing, and applying mathematics to numbers and other data

## TEACHING SKILLS

Transferring knowledge and skills to others

## TEAMWORK SKILLS

Collaborating with others in order to accomplish a goal or task

## \*TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS

Using appropriate technology to accomplish a task

## TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Using one's time effectively or productively

## \*VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Listening and expressing one's self with words

## \*WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communicating ideas and concepts in writing

*\* Skill most valued by employers, according to National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)*

# NACE SKILLS & THE JOB OUTLOOK SURVEY

## ABOUT NACE

Since 1956, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has been the leading source of information about the employment of college graduates.

For more information, visit [naceweb.org](http://naceweb.org).

## ABOUT THE JOB OUTLOOK SURVEY

The Job Outlook Survey is a forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates. Each year, NACE surveys employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues in order to project the market for new college graduates for the current class and to assess a variety

of conditions that may influence that market. The survey was completed by 161 companies that hold NACE membership. By region, 21.7 percent of respondents are from the Northeast, 28 percent are from the Southeast, 31.7 percent are from the Midwest, and 18.6 percent are from the West.

# ACTION VERBS

Organized by skills (in past tense). Begin each bullet statement with a strong action verb to describe accomplishments and experiences.

## ANALYTICAL/ QUANTITATIVE

Analyzed  
Appraised  
Ascertained  
Assessed  
Audited  
Balanced  
Budgeted  
Calculated  
Clarified  
Compared  
Derived  
Diagnosed  
Estimated  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Financed  
Formed  
Improved  
Increased  
Inquired  
Inspected  
Measured  
Processed  
Purchased  
Qualified  
Quantified  
Rated  
Reconciled  
Regulated  
Specified  
Surveyed  
Synthesized  
Targeted  
Tested  
Verified

## CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzed  
Annotated  
Discovered  
Evaluated  
Formulated  
Interpreted  
Investigated  
Measured  
Qualified  
Quantified  
Recorded  
Researched  
Searched  
Studied  
Surveyed  
Traced

## INNOVATIVE

Created  
Designed  
Developed  
Displayed  
Exhibited  
Illustrated  
Invented  
Made  
Named  
Performed  
Produced  
Publicized  
Recruited  
Shaped  
Staged  
Visualized

## INTERPERSONAL

Collaborated  
Competed  
Contributed  
Cooperated  
Coordinated  
Ensured  
Interacted  
Intervened  
Interviewed  
Involved  
Joined  
Negotiated  
Participated  
Perceived  
Promoted  
Recognized  
Referred  
Related  
Represented  
Resolved

## LEADERSHIP

Accomplished  
Achieved  
Attended  
Chaired  
Coached  
Convened  
Enlisted  
Excelled  
Facilitated  
Focused  
Guided  
Initiated  
Instilled  
Led  
Strategized

## MANAGEMENT

Acted  
Applied  
Assigned  
Balanced  
Concluded  
Conducted  
Contracted  
Delegated  
Directed  
Exercised  
Exhibited  
Financed  
Forecasted  
Generated  
Implemented  
Managed  
Mentored  
Projected  
Provided  
Reinforced  
Succeeded  
Supervised  
Trained

## ORGANIZATION

Arranged  
Cataloged  
Categorized  
Classified  
Collated  
Collected  
Compiled  
Coordinated  
Designed  
Documented  
Grouped  
Inventoried  
Located  
Maintained  
Modified  
Ordered  
Organized  
Planned  
Prepared  
Prioritized  
Reorganized  
Scheduled  
Simplified  
Updated

## PERSUASION

Acquired  
Committed  
Elicited  
Empowered  
Encouraged  
Influenced  
Inspired  
Led  
Mentored  
Motivated  
Persuaded  
Recruited  
Sold  
Solicited  
Stimulated  
Suggested  
United

## PROBLEM SOLVING

Adjusted  
Allocated  
Changed  
Completed  
Concluded  
Controlled  
Defined  
Delivered  
Distributed  
Established  
Expanded  
Expedited  
Implemented  
Investigated  
Monitored  
Obtained  
Planned  
Recommended  
Selected  
Solved  
Staged  
Utilized

## HELPING

Advised  
Aided  
Clarified  
Coached  
Counseled  
Enabled  
Encouraged  
Guided  
Listened  
Protected  
Provided  
Served  
Supported  
Taught  
Tended  
Trained  
Volunteered

## TEACHING

Coached  
Corrected  
Critiqued  
Educated  
Graded  
Informed  
Instructed  
Learned  
Lectured  
Mastered  
Memorized  
Mentored  
Modeled  
Observed  
Studied  
Taught  
Tutored

## TECHNICAL

Analyzed  
Built  
Coded  
Computed  
Corrected  
Debugged  
Detected  
Developed  
Identified  
Installed  
Invented  
Licensed  
Operated  
Printed  
Programmed  
Protected  
Recorded  
Reinforced  
Repaired  
Reproduced  
Restored  
Retrieved  
Treated  
Utilized

## VERBAL

Addressed  
Advertised  
Conveyed  
Demonstrated  
Described  
Discussed  
Explained  
Expressed  
Facilitated  
Illustrated  
Informed  
Introduced  
Marketed  
Negotiated  
Presented  
Promoted  
Publicized  
Reported  
Responded  
Shared  
Showed  
Suggested  
Summarized

## WRITTEN

Authored  
Briefed  
Communicated  
Composed  
Constructed  
Corresponded  
Critiqued  
Drafted  
Edited  
Interpreted  
Outlined  
Proofread  
Published  
Reviewed  
Revised  
Translated  
Wrote

# TIPS AND STRATEGIES

## DESIGN

- Be consistent with format. List the month, year, organization/company, location, and position title.
- Use bold and italics consistently yet sparingly.
- Use the same font throughout the document—font size should be 10 to 12 pt; your name can be larger.
- Choose a common font (e.g., Times New Roman or Garamond) that will easily translate from older to newer versions of software.
- Establish equal margins all the way around the page (0.5-inch minimum, 1.0-inch maximum on all sides).
- Avoid using tables, grids, and templates as they do not transfer well when emailed.
- Keep the length of a traditional undergraduate résumé to one page; certain industries, job fields, majors, and graduate programs may require longer ones.
- Create a résumé that is unique to your personality—avoid templates in software programs.

*“Stay positive - résumés change often and can be updated to fit your circumstances.”*

## CONTENT

- Have someone else look over your résumé.
- Have the correct information—double-check your facts, position titles, and locations.
- Personalize your experience and skill set to the position, department, or company to which you are applying.
- Demonstrate an obvious connection between Objective, Skills, and Experience sections so the résumé reads easily and clearly.

## GRAMMAR

- Make sure there are no typos, and don't rely completely on spellcheck.
- Check your grammar; errors are unacceptable.
- Avoid abbreviations, except for states.

*“Look at the job description for the position you are applying for and highlight the skills... Have you covered all aspects of the position?”*

## GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- References belong on a separate page. (See sample on P. 19 of this guide.)
- Save résumé as a PDF document not as a PDF picture file. (See P. 18 for more tips on how to save documents.)
- Purchase quality résumé paper (bonded) in a light or subdued color (white, ivory, cream, etc.) with no speckles or designs (speckles or designs will show if the document is copied).
- Do not include personal information on the résumé. Marital status, age, weight, religion, etc. should not be listed. If you are applying for a job in another country, you will need to check the appropriateness of personal information on the résumé. Some countries will expect you to include these facts. Content and format can also vary in different countries.

*“Résumés are road maps that assist you with identifying areas where you need to obtain experience... Since your résumé is a reflection of your abilities and your personality, you want to make the best first impression possible.”*

# SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ: GETTING INVOLVED

## Jonathan Wolverine

303 East Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48502  
(810) 555-5555 • jonathanwolverine@umflint.edu

### Objective

Seeking membership in Pi Sigma Epsilon, applying leadership, organization, and communication skills

### Education

**University of Michigan-Flint**, Flint, MI  
Bachelor of Arts, Undeclared Major, May XXXX  
Emerging Academic Interest: Communication

**Francis T. Maloney High School**, Flint, MI  
High School Diploma, June XXXX

**GPA:** 4.7/5.2

**Honors and Awards:** Honor Roll (XXXX-XXXX), National Rotary Scholarship (XXXX)

### Leadership and Volunteer

**Relay for Life, Francis T. Maloney High School**, *Team Leader*, Fall XXXX-Spring XXXX

- Fundraised donations by promoting cause online and door-to-door; team raised over \$5,000 for cancer research and support for current cancer patients and survivors

**National Honor Society, Francis T. Maloney High School**, *President*, Fall XXXX-Spring XXXX

- Led monthly meetings, facilitated leadership trainings, and organized annual weekend retreat with two other officers, for 20 members and two advisors at a local team-building ropes course site
- Coordinated community service opportunities with local food pantry; managed can drive by communicating with food pantry to provide a list of most needed items for volunteers to collect

**Youth Alive, Francis T. Maloney High School**, *Secretary*, Fall XXXX-Spring XXXX

- Documented weekly meetings by taking meticulous minutes; organized and tracked member participation for monthly reports and trend analysis

### Experience

**American Eagle Outfitters**, Flint, MI  
*Sales Associate*, September XXXX - Present

- **Demonstrate** comprehensive merchandise knowledge with customers which cultivates sales and encourages repeat business
- Organize inventory and maintain welcoming appearance of store; properly categorize merchandise to create an inviting atmosphere

**Target**, Flint, MI

*Sales Floor Team Member*, June XXXX

- Designed and highlighted Back-to-School product displays resulting in 15% increase in sales

### Skills and Interests

**Computer:** Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint; WordPress

**Interests:** Fashion blogging, interior design, service projects, sculpting, and creative writing

As a first-year student, Jonathan has included high school information on his résumé. By junior year all high school information should be removed.

Since Jonathan is still working at American Eagle, he needs his action verbs in the present tense.

# SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ: GETTING EXPERIENCE

Jonathan included a link to his LinkedIn profile for networking purposes and to share additional information with potential employers.

As Jonathan gained more experience, the format of his résumé changed to highlight different activities and experiences.

## Jonathan Wolverine

303 East Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48502  
(810) 555-5555 • [www.linkedin.com/in/jonathanwolverine](http://www.linkedin.com/in/jonathanwolverine)

### OBJECTIVE:

Seeking copywriting internship with a national publishing organization utilizing written and verbal communication, organization, and presentation skills

### EDUCATION:

University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, MI  
Bachelor of Arts, Communication, May XXXX  
GPA: 3.4/4.0

Relevant Courses: Creative Writing, Public Speaking, Web Design, Market Research

### LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES:

**The Michigan Times**, University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, MI  
Staff Writer, September XXXX-Present

- Author numerous articles, including front-page piece on U.S. foreign affairs
- Proofread articles and provide staff with edits ensuring accuracy and high standards in writing
- Pitch story ideas to editorial staff for features and editorial pages

**Pi Sigma Epsilon**, Professional Business Fraternity, University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, MI  
Vice President of Recruitment, September XXXX-Present

- Coordinate four recruitment events each semester – delegate assignments to current members and monitor the process so organization stays on deadline and meets goals
- Create marketing materials for the campus paper and social media sites to publicize events and fraternity
- Recruit new members into organization through formal and informal efforts while addressing questions and concerns from students and parents

**Campus Big Buddies**, University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, MI  
Mentor, January XXXX-Present

- Tutor 10-12 Spanish-speaking middle school students on basic English grammar and writing skills
- Introduced a creative writing contest to students and located a local paper to publish the winning entry

### EXPERIENCE:

**American Eagle Outfitters**, Flint, MI  
Sales Associate, August XXXX-Present (Seasonal)

- Manage customer transactions, increasing credit card sales by providing a clear description of benefits
- Engage customers in friendly conversations and regularly promote the store's Twitter account through daily personal Tweets and interaction with followers
- Presented with manager commendation and recognition as Employee of the Month

**Target**, Flint, MI  
Sales Floor Team Member, May XXXX-August XXXX

- Designed and highlighted Back-to-School product displays resulting in 15% increase in sales

### SKILLS:

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint; Adobe Photoshop  
Social Media: Tumblr, WordPress, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest  
Language: Conversational in Spanish

# SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ: GETTING THE JOB

CREATED FOR THE "SAMPLE  
JOB DESCRIPTION" ON P. 16

Jonathan is highlighting his major GPA because it is higher than his cumulative GPA.

In the Skills section, Jonathan is focusing on "hard" or "technical" skills relevant to his field. He integrates transferable skills into his bullet points.

Jonathan created a Relevant Experience section to highlight his writing and communication skills.

The formatting for The Michigan Times positions illustrates how Jonathan was promoted to Assistant Editor.

## Jonathan Wolverine

303 East Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48502 | 810-555-5555  
jonathanwolverine@umflint.edu | www.linkedin.com/in/jonathanwolverine

### OBJECTIVE

To obtain junior copywriter position with Design My Home utilizing creative writing, editing, and communication skills

### EDUCATION

#### University of Michigan-Flint

Bachelor of Arts, Communication  
Minors: Studio Art, English

Flint, MI  
May XXXX

**Major GPA: 3.57/4.00**; Cumulative GPA: 3.41/4.00

Honors: Dean's List, Spring XXXX

Relevant Courses: Cultural and Global Diversity in Advertising, Advanced Persuasion and Communication, Marketing Research, Consumer Behavior, New Communication Technologies, Web Design

#### University of New South Wales

Study Abroad

Sydney, Australia  
January - June XXXX

### SKILLS

**Computer:** Proficient in Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Access; Adobe Photoshop, InDesign; Familiar with Java, Lexus Nexus

**Social Media:** Proficient in Tumblr, WordPress, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Facebook

**Language:** Conversational in Spanish

### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

#### Publishers Clearing House

Copywriting Intern

New York, NY  
May XXXX - August XXXX

- Wrote content for targeted populations to be reviewed by copywriters; proofread e-mails and banners before e-mailing customers and publishing on website
- Created visual designs in Adobe Photoshop with a team of interns and advanced the company's brand strategy
- Conducted focus groups and researched potential campaign ideas; presented proposal to senior copywriting staff
- Developed mock-ups and prototypes for presentations to marketing teams to meet short deadlines

#### The Michigan Times, University of Michigan-Flint

**Assistant Editor**

Flint, MI  
January XXXX - Present

- Edit content for 10 staff writers, checking for grammatical and spelling errors before going to press
- Attend and cover large-scale on-campus events that are often picked up by national media outlets
- Design content for print and online versions of the campus paper using InDesign

Staff Writer

September XXXX - Present

- Authored numerous articles including front-page piece on U.S. foreign affairs
- Pitch story ideas to editorial staff for features and editorial pages

### LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

#### Pi Sigma Epsilon, Professional Business Fraternity, University of Michigan-Flint

Vice President of Recruitment

Flint, MI  
September XXXX - Present

#### Campus Big Buddies, University of Michigan-Flint

Mentor

Flint, MI  
January XXXX - Present

### ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Relay for Life**, Volunteer, Flint, MI

September XXXX - Present

**American Eagle Outfitters**, Sales Associate, Flint, MI

August XXXX - Present (Seasonal)



# PROFESSIONAL WRITING IN THE JOB SEARCH



# NETWORKING COMMUNICATIONS

PURPOSE	METHOD	DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express interest in a specific organization</li> <li>Inquire about possible job opportunities</li> <li>Request an informational interview</li> <li>Market yourself to an organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E-mail, letter, or LinkedIn message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State who you are, how you found them, and what you are asking them for</li> <li>Ask for a specific amount of time (20-30 minutes) to discuss your career path and seek their advice</li> <li>State when you will follow up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be too authoritative (this is a request letter)</li> <li>Ask for a job if requesting an informational interview</li> </ul>

## EXAMPLE MESSAGES

### INQUIRY BY E-MAIL

#### (REQUESTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW)

Dear Ms. Smith:

As a junior majoring in psychology at the University of Michigan-Flint, I am interested in exploring a career path in human resources. I received your information from the local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management, and write to make your acquaintance. As I'm exploring an HR career, I'm hoping to speak with you regarding your background and your own career path, as well as any advice you have for someone in my position. Might you be able to set aside time for a brief informational meeting or telephone call?

My résumé is attached to provide you with some information about my background, including my work with the local chapter of SHRM. I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Thank you for your time,  
Jamie Hill

### LINKEDIN CONNECTION REQUEST

#### REMEMBER, UNDER 300 CHARACTERS!

Mr. Jones:

I enjoyed meeting you at the Career Center's Mechanical Engineering Panel yesterday and appreciate your willingness to connect on LinkedIn.

Regards,  
Kyle

### CAREER FAIR FOLLOW-UP MESSAGE

Hello Ms. Matthew:

Thanks again for your time at the Career Fair yesterday – I really enjoyed learning more about the Communication Associate role at XYZ Associates, especially the opportunity it provides to rotate through your various business units. I know that my marketing experience, which we discussed at the Career Fair, would apply well to your company, and I'm excited to learn more about the internships you're offering.

In addition to applying through your online application portal, I've attached my résumé here for your convenience. I look forward to further discussing my qualifications with you in an interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,  
Terry Jones

# COVER LETTERS

PURPOSE	METHOD	DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailored to job announcement for a particular position</li> <li>• Introduces the résumé and serves as a marketing tool</li> <li>• Convinces the employer to invite you for an interview</li> <li>• Proves that you can do the job</li> <li>• Shows enthusiasm for the job and the organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal business letter (regular mail or as an attachment in an email)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research the position and the company prior to beginning the cover letter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write "Hello my name is..."</li> <li>• Write more than 1 page</li> <li>• Just repeat your résumé</li> <li>• Indent your paragraphs</li> <li>• Write "To Whom It May Concern"</li> <li>• Write general statements regarding your desire to work for the organization, or how you are impressed with it</li> </ul>

Your Address  
City, State Zip  
(Or use the letterhead from your résumé)

Date (January 1, XXXX)

Name of Employer Contact (or HR Director)  
Title  
Organization  
Street Address  
City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_: (use last name)

*When possible, direct your cover letter to a specific person. If you can't find a contact name, use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Search Committee."*

## INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH:

- **Why are you writing?** Specifically mention the position and company you are applying to.
- Make a connection with the reader by mentioning a common professional acquaintance or by expressing your interest in the organization.
- Conclude the paragraph with a statement similar to a thesis statement, indicating the skills you are going to address in the next two paragraphs.

## BODY PARAGRAPHS:

- **Show that you can do the job** by providing specific examples of past work, internship, volunteer, leadership, or classroom experiences to illustrate that you have the skills from the position description.
- Explain why **you are a PERFECT FIT for this position** and this organization.
- Explain how you can add value to the company, and **why you want to work there specifically**.

## CLOSING PARAGRAPH:

- Thank the employer for looking over your application materials, and reiterate your interest in the position and/or organization.
- Express your willingness to follow up with more information if needed, and provide your phone number and e-mail address for contact.

"Sincerely," or "Respectfully,"

*Signature*

Your Name (Typed)

# SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

FOR MATCHING RÉSUMÉ SEE P. 12; FOR MATCHING COVER LETTER SEE P. 17

Position: Junior Copywriter  
Company: Design My Home Inc.  
Location: Boston, MA, US  
Area of Interest: Creative Services  
Position Type: Full Time

*Note items in bold. These are points of significance to be emphasized in the résumé and cover letter.*

## JOB DESCRIPTION

The Junior Copywriter is responsible for product copy for the "Design My Home" brand. We are seeking creative individuals with **strong writing and editing skills**. Ability to work as a **member of a team** is a must!

The Junior Copywriter will play a vital role in **writing product and website copy** that aligns with the company brand. The successful applicant will work closely with our in-house Project Management, Catalog Content, and Website Creative teams, and **lead meetings** with designers to develop an understanding of new products. He/she will partner closely with our in-house Web Development team to ensure accuracy of information and consistency of style in website product descriptions. **Manage** copy requests, **proofread and edit** incoming copy, and make changes as needed. **Research and conceptualize** new campaign ideas. **Prioritize deadlines** and manage multiple projects and assignments.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Experience with project management
- Experience with in-house advertising
- Familiarity with **Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, and Java**
- Personal passion for interior design

## REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Four-year bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- One to three years of copywriting or editing experience
- Positive and flexible attitude, with the ability to roll with any situation
- Superior **editing, writing, proofreading, and communication skills**
- Very strong ability to prioritize and work efficiently
- Strong competency as a **team player** as well as flexibility to **work individually**
- Strong sense of **accountability**, especially regarding deadlines, and follow-through on commitments

## TO APPLY:

Submit cover letter and résumé to John Smith, Human Resources Manager, at [j.smith@designmh.com](mailto:j.smith@designmh.com)

## DID YOU KNOW

You can search for open positions in Career Connection, an exclusive service for UM-Flint students and alumni to connect with employers for job, internship, and co-op opportunities.

[umflint.edu/careerconnection](http://umflint.edu/careerconnection)

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

WRITTEN TO MATCH “SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION” ON P. 16

303 East Kearsley Street  
Flint, MI 48502

March 1, XXXX

Mr. John Smith  
Human Resources Manager  
Design My Home  
1 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

*For the purposes of this cover letter example, items in bold highlight main points that are emphasized in the job posting.*

Dear Mr. Smith:

Having experience as a copywriting intern and enthusiasm for interior design, I am excited to apply for the Junior Copywriter position with Design My Home. After speaking with Sarah Brown at the University of Michigan-Flint information session about copywriting opportunities in your Boston office, I knew Design My Home would be the perfect company for me. Design My Home's creative approach to promoting contemporary décor connects with my personal **passion for interior design**. My interest in home design in addition to my **creative writing, editing, and communication skills** make me a strong candidate for this position.

As a copywriting intern I gained direct experience **writing, proofreading, and editing copy**. One of my largest projects at Publishers Clearing House was to **communicate** with my fellow interns to **research and construct** a potential marketing proposal. Our **team worked together** to **design** innovative online marketing materials using **Adobe Photoshop**, for our new e-reader product, to be implemented through our social media sites. I created copy content to complement the design work of my fellow interns. After proposing our ideas to the senior copywriters and marketing managers, our design was selected to be incorporated into the new social media campaign. I look forward to applying my **communication and teamwork skills** to the Junior Copywriter position at Design My Home.

While working for UM-Flint's on-campus newspaper, I was promoted from Staff Writer to Assistant Editor. As Assistant Editor it was vital that I **managed production deadlines** to ensure our paper was published on time and without errors. Working for an independent, student-run paper increases my appreciation for Design My Home's history as a startup company.

I look forward to discussing how I could apply my skills and experience to the Junior Copywriter position. Please contact me with any questions at 810-555-5555 or jonathanwolverine@umflint.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Jonathan Wolverine*

Jonathan Wolverine

# ADDITIONAL APPLICATION MATERIALS

## WRITING SAMPLE

- Should be no more than two to three pages while still expressing a complete thought.
- Do not submit with grading or comments
- Include prompt when relevant.
- Choose a relevant topic when possible.
- If you do not currently have a relevant writing sample, consider writing a synopsis of a recent article relevant to your industry.

## UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

- You can view and print your unofficial transcript in your Student Information System (SIS) account. See the Office of the Registrar's website for specific steps ([umflint.edu/registrar/transcripts](http://umflint.edu/registrar/transcripts)).

## APPLICATIONS BY E-MAIL

- Always include a brief note in the body of the e-mail stating what you're applying for, what materials you have attached, and how to contact you.
- This can also be a good opportunity to reiterate your excitement for the position.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION & REFERENCE PAGES

- Letters of recommendation are commonly requested for graduate school and fellowship positions.
- Employers generally ask for three to four professional references; these should be provided only when requested, on a reference page that is separate from your résumé (see sample on P. 19 of this guide).
- Always ask your references if they are comfortable being a **STRONG** reference for you before you list them as a reference.
- Letters of recommendation should be requested two to three months in advance of due date.
- If possible, meet with recommender to provide a copy of your résumé and let them know about the type of opportunities you are applying for.
- Keep recommender updated if you know references are being contacted for a specific position.
- Consider asking if your reference will share a recommendation on your LinkedIn profile.

## APPLICATION FILE NAMES & SAVING DOCUMENTS

- Employers receive dozens of cover letters and résumés a day. Saving your documents with clear and appropriate file names will ensure your materials don't get lost.
- For example:  
JonathanWolverineRésumé.pdf or  
JonathanWolverineCoverLetter.docx
- When sending by e-mail, saving as a PDF prevents your formatting from getting jumbled.
- Some online application systems cannot process PDFs, so always follow specific system instructions.

## ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS BASED ON INDUSTRY

- Some industries may require or suggest additional documents, such as online or printed portfolios for creative industries or a statement of teaching philosophy in education. Check with industry professionals or a career consultant to determine your industry's expectations.

# SAMPLE REFERENCE LIST

WRITTEN TO MATCH SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ: GETTING INVOLVED, P. 10

## Jonathan Wolverine

303 East Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48502  
(810) 555-5555 • jonathanwolverine@umflint.edu

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### REFERENCES

#### Reference #1 Name

Reference's Job Title  
Reference's Organization Mailing Address  
City, State Zip  
Phone Number  
E-mail Address  
Relationship:

#### Reference #2 Name

Reference's Job Title  
Reference's Organization Mailing Address  
City, State Zip  
Phone Number  
E-mail Address  
Relationship:

*(Example Reference Below)*

#### Ms. Janet Lee

Assistant Manager  
American Eagle  
1075 Kennedy Rd  
Flint, MI 48502  
(810) 907-3068  
Janet.Lee@ae.com

Relationship: Janet is my current supervisor at American Eagle.

Choose professional references. Good choices include: past/current supervisors (internship, summer job, or volunteer experience), professors, and colleagues.

Do not include family or friends unless specifically requested.

List your references in order of relevance and priority.

# THANK YOU LETTERS

PURPOSE	METHOD	DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay on the employer's mind</li> <li>• Indicate continued interest</li> <li>• Show good manners</li> <li>• Introduce additional relevant information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-mail: within 24 hours</li> <li>• Mailed letter or card: In addition to e-mail (optional but encouraged)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank employers for their time</li> <li>• Reiterate your interest and strengths</li> <li>• Send individual notes to each person you interact with (if possible)</li> <li>• Send after any significant interaction with an employer (career fair, employer panel, networking event, interview)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write it ahead of time</li> <li>• Use snail mail if it needs to get there quickly</li> <li>• Assume you have the job</li> </ul>

## SAMPLE POST-INTERVIEW THANK YOU NOTE

Dear Dr. Grossman:

It was a pleasure to meet you this morning. Thank you for your willingness to interview me for the Communications Associate job at ABC Laboratories. Your team really seems to enjoy working there, and I'd be fortunate to count myself among them.

I was particularly interested in the upcoming projects you mentioned this afternoon and believe my internship at the UM-Flint Communications Office – especially with social media – provided me with a solid foundation to help spread the word about the good work going on at ABC Laboratories.

Please let me know if you require any additional information. I hope to hear back from you soon about the next steps.

Respectfully,

*Jonathan Wolverine*

## PROFESSIONAL WRITING TIPS TO REMEMBER

- Professional writing should be concise, on-point, and focused.
- Always proofread and make sure your content is grammatically correct.
- Follow traditional business letter formatting.
- All professional communication must be tailored; generic letters go in the trash.
- Address your letter to a specific person; if you can't find a name, use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Search Committee."
- Cover letters and letters of inquiry, like résumés, are formal documents that need to be printed on high-quality paper when mailed or distributed in person.



CAREER CENTER

[umflint.edu/careers](http://umflint.edu/careers)

[careers@umflint.edu](mailto:careers@umflint.edu)

810-424-5450