

Western

Social Science Career Services

# Summer Job Guide

Everything you  
need to know  
to get a  
summer job!



Western

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**The Summer Job Guide is  
brought to you by:**

Social Science Career Services

&

Social Science Student's Council

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# Job Searching...

## Finding a Summer Job

Getting Started? Ask yourself:

What expertise are you looking to gain?  
How much money are you hoping to earn?  
What is the minimum you can accept?  
How many hours per week are you planning to work?  
What geographical locations do you prefer?

## Locate Job Opportunities

### **Tip: Conduct a Focused Search**

Identify organizations, companies and businesses that are doing work that relates to your interests.  
Search organization and company websites.  
Attend job fairs on campus and in the community.  
Talk to everyone you know about your search!

### **Online Resources**

CareerCentral- <https://careercentral.uwo.ca>  
[www.ssc.uwo.ca/careers](http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/careers)

[www.career.uwo.ca](http://www.career.uwo.ca)

## Reality Check:

While online searching can be a helpful way to locate jobs and information, there is a higher success rate in finding an opportunity through networking. We encourage you to do both to experience a successful summer job search.

## What is Networking?

Networking is simply gathering information and making contact with individuals you know. The key to developing your network is to obtain additional contacts each time you talk to someone. Building your network and developing relationships with people will broaden your knowledge and increase your access to job opportunities.

## Who is In Your Network?

Friends, family, family friends, professors, former co-workers, supervisors...everyone!

## Remember:

Networking is a give-and-take relationship, always thank someone you talk to and give back whenever possible.

Great  
way to  
network



# Informational Interviewing

## What is It?

Informational interviewing is gathering information from people who are already working in your target area, either in person or over the phone.

## Why Conduct an Informational Interview?

Informational interviewing can help you:

- ✓ Gain the most up-to-date information about an organization, company or position.
- ✓ Identify the skills and qualifications employers are seeking.
- ✓ Understand trends in the industry.
- ✓ Identify current and future opportunities.

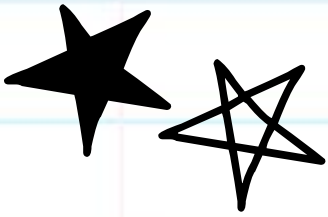
## Where Do I Find People to Interview?

Use your network, contact professional organizations, utilize company directories, and use CareerCentral to find employers who recruit Western students.

## How Do I Conduct an Interview?

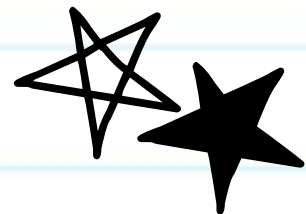
Start by asking for 20-25 minutes to ask a few questions.

***Don't forget....you are not asking for a job, you are just gathering information, be respectful of the employers time, and always follow up with a thank you.***



## Sample Information Interview Questions

- ✓ How did you get started in your career?
- ✓ What qualifications do you have?
- ✓ How would someone get started in the field now?
- ✓ What experiences have helped you most?
- ✓ What professional organizations do you belong to?
- ✓ What experience or preparation would you recommend?
- ✓ What job titles are common in this field?
- ✓ What are alternative career paths related to this field?
- ✓ Do you know anyone else that might be helpful for me to speak with?



# What Are Employers Looking For:

Employers are looking for common traits among individuals they hire. Personal qualities such as:

Self-confidence  
A strong work ethic  
Enthusiasm  
Energy  
Self-knowledge

Employers are not only looking for individuals who can demonstrate the qualifications they mention in the job posting, but also an ability to make the connection between personal transferable skills and the position.

## Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are skills that you have been developing throughout your lifetime and can be used in any environment. Highly sought after transferable skills include:

Communication  
Teamwork  
Leadership  
Initiative  
Flexibility

Critical thinking  
Time management  
Dependability  
Problem Solving  
Multi-tasking

# Every Experience Matters

While your main objective may be to gain experience directly related to your career goals, keep in mind that employers will value any experience you have. You will inevitably develop and sharpen your transferable skills, which will be an asset in any future job.



**Did you know that according to a recent survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, employers reported that they were most interested in a new graduate with a core set of transferable skills?**



**Reality Check:**  
Seasonal work is a great way to gain work experience and sharpen your transferable skills!

Identify places that count on hiring seasonal workers. For example: landscaping companies, the service industry, provincial parks, amusement parks, community centers and city programs.

# Let's Get Started... RESUMES

A resume is often your first impression to a potential employer. It should be organized so that all your information is easily accessible and conveys why you would be a great candidate.

## Key Points:

1. It is essential for your resume to project a clear and concise picture of your skills, professional qualities, and achievements.
2. Refer to a job posting to be sure you are including relevant skills and qualifications, which will create a targeted and one of a kind document.
3. Your resume should be accomplishment based, focusing on your achievements versus your job duties.
4. Make sure your resume is free of grammar and spelling errors.
5. Rule of thumb: keep your resume to one or two full pages in length.

## Elements of the Resume

Create a header with your contact information. List your name, address, reliable phone number and e-mail address. Make sure your e-mail address sounds professional. Above all, make sure that any potential employer can easily reach you.

# Objective/Summary of Qualifications

When using an objective, state the type of position you are seeking and include how you will benefit the employer-not what you are seeking from the employer.

An alternative to an objective is a summary of qualifications, sometimes called key features, profile, or summary. This section highlights your experiences, skills, and certifications that are relevant to the job.

## Education

List names and locations of educational institutions that you have attended, degree(s) awarded with completion dates, majors and minors, and anticipated dates of graduation.

You can also include honours, awards, recognitions and/or scholarships in this section.

## Employment History

Alternate headings include work experience, or employment. In this section, list employment experience in reverse chronological order, including any summer, part-time jobs and internships.

## Leadership & Activities

List any leadership positions, or activities you have been involved in, including dates. You can include volunteer opportunities, club memberships or any other involvement that demonstrates your skills and abilities.

# Creating Strong Accomplishment Statements

An accomplishment statement refers to bulleted points that are listed after each work experience. People often list their duties or responsibilities, however this will not give a potential employer a sense of the value or skill set you can add to their team. Accomplishment statements market your skills by showing evidence of your contributions.

What you did + *the skill you used* + **the result/benefit of your contribution**  
= your accomplishment

## Examples

- Served customers in a friendly and efficient manner **resulting in repeat customers**
- Planned and organized fundraising event for over 500 people **that successfully raised \$25 000 for charity**
- Took initiative to develop new children's series for museum's 100th anniversary **promoting the value of history to younger generations**

Skill Action Words = Powerful  
Accomplishment Statements

## Clerical Support

Answered	Handled	Prepared	Provided	Assisted	Mailed
Processed	Recorded	Compiled	Monitored	Proofread	Typed
Filed		Photocopied	Measured		

## Coordination/Organization

Analyzed	Followed up	Overhauled	Revised	Chose	Identified
Prepared	Scheduled	Coordinated	Initiated	Revamped	Strategized
Streamlined	Pioneered	Directed	Redesigned	Organized	Constructed
Reviewed	Appraised				

## Administration/Design/Planning/Project Management

Administered	Delegated	Initiated	Planned	Approved	Designed
Instituted	Prepared	Arranged	Developed	Introduced	Produced
Assembled	Established	Located	Reported	Conceived	Generated
Reviewed	Conducted	Handled	Matched	Revitalized	Created
Implemented	Orchestrated	Re-invented	Transformed	Streamlined	Cultivated
Accelerated	Launched	Streamlined	Spearheaded	Simplified	

## Analysis/Problem-Solving/Research/Troubleshooting

Alerted	Designed	Eliminated	Researched	Analyzed	Determined
Estimated	Resolved	Assessed	Devised	Evaluated	Reviewed
Calculated	Discovered	Identified	Solved	Diverted	Classified
Mediated	Submitted	Collected	Compiled	Effectuated	Proved
Referred	Accelerated	Tested	Justified	Gained	Replaced

## Communications/Customer Service/Marketing

Advised	Demonstrated	Listened with	Promoted	Authored
Developed	Mediated	Proposed	Channeled	Directed
Merchandised	Published	Collaborated	Facilitated	Negotiated
Represented	Conducted	Enhanced	Oriented	Sold
Convinced	Handled	Participated	Solicited	Counselled
Interpreted	Persuaded	Spoke	Created	Led
Presented	Supervised	Delivered	Fostered	Devoted

# Resume Example 1

**John Smith**

121 University Drive London, Ontario, N6H 5P3 (519) 555-1212 johns@uwo.ca

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## **Education**

### **Bachelor of Arts**

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario  
*Specialization in Geography*

Deans Honor List 2009, 2010

June 2011

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## **Employment Experience**

2008-Present

### **Customer Service Representative**

*The Clothing Company, London, Ontario*

- Enhanced customer shopping experience by taking initiative to welcome customers and answer inquiries swiftly and professionally
- Prepared schedules for 8 staff members, taking into account budgetary restrictions, availability, and store demands while easing transitions between shifts
- Supervised evening staff and maintained accurate sales records
- Recognized for meticulous nightly accounting practices

May- August 2004-2008

### **Waitress / Cook**

*The Food Shop, London, Ontario*

- Decreased customer wait times using by preparing numerous meals simultaneously
- Communicated and assisted customers in a pleasant and professional manner while working with other staff to improve the customer experience
- Successfully served large groups by taking detailed orders, following up with satisfaction inquiries, and listening to any concerns that arose

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## **Volunteer Experiences**

2009-Present

### **Camp Counsellor**

*Summer Camp, London, Ontario*

- Developed and organized daily activities for 20 children to promote reading and to increase literacy

### **Leadership, Activities and Achievements**

- Geography Student Association Member, 2007-Present
- Leadership Education Program (LEP) Participant, University of Western Ontario, 2009
- Outstanding Volunteer Award, Summer Camp, 2009

# Resume Example 2

**JOHN SMITH**

121 University Drive  
London, Ontario, N6H 5P3

(519) 555-1212  
johnQ@uwo.ca

## Education

### **Bachelor of Arts**

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario  
Honours Specialization in Geography

Expected 2011

## Customer Service Experience

### **The Clothing Company, London, Ontario**

2008-Present

- Enhanced customer shopping experience by taking initiative to welcome customers and answer inquiries swiftly and professionally
- Prepared schedules for 8 staff members, taking into account budgetary restrictions, availability, and store demands while easing transitions between shifts
- Supervised evening staff and maintained accurate sales records
- Recognized for meticulous nightly accounting practices

### **The Food Shop, London, Ontario**

May-August 2004-2008

- Decreased customer wait times using by preparing numerous meals simultaneously
- Communicated and assisted customers in a pleasant and professional manner while working with other staff to improve the customer experience
- Successfully served large groups by taking detailed orders, following up with satisfaction inquiries, and listening to any concerns that arose

## Leadership Experience

### **Summer Camp, London, Ontario**

May 2010-Present

- Developed and organized daily activities for 20 children to promote reading and to increase literacy interest
- Oversaw multiple activities simultaneously ensuring the safety of each child and staff while uphold procedures, rules, and guidelines

### **Leadership Education Program (LEP)**

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario

September-April 2009

- Completed multiple modules successfully developing leadership, interpersonal, and communication skills while working with individuals from various backgrounds

# Cover Letters

For every resume you submit, you should also submit a cover letter. A cover letter serves as your introduction to the employer.

## Purpose of a Cover Letter

Your letter is an introduction, it will state who you are, what position you are applying for, and where or how you learned about the position/organization.

A cover letter highlights your strengths and qualifications, reviewing specific areas of your background that will be of interest to the employer. This is not a repeat of your resume.

## Cover Letter Format

### **Paragraph 1: Statement of Interest**

- ✓ Mention the position you are applying for and how you learned about the position.
- ✓ Express your motivations for applying and knowledge you have gained through your research about the organization/company.
- ✓ If you have a personal contact, include it here.

### **Paragraph 2: "All about YOU"**

- ✓ Highlight your skills, accomplishments, and experiences pertinent to the position.
- ✓ Incorporate statements addressing the value you add.

### **Paragraph 3: Statement of Appreciation**

- ✓ Express your interest in an interview, and how you can be reached.
- ✓ Include a statement of appreciation for the employer's time.

# Common Cover Letter Questions

## Do I have to send a cover letter?

Yes, it is standard for a cover letter to accompany a resume.

## How long should my letter be?

There is not a length requirement. You should usually aim to keep your letter to one page; however, you may not need to take an entire page to say what you need to say. Clear and concise writing will be appealing to any perspective employer.

## Is it necessary to have a header that matches my resume?

It is not necessary to have header that matches your resume, however some people like to have one to show consistency and make it easy to see that the two documents go together.

## I'm not sure who I should address my letter to.

### Should I address it "To whom it may concern?"

Ideally, you should do a little research to identify who will be reading your documents. If you are unable to find out who your reader will be, omit the line completely.

## Do I submit my letter as an attachment when sending my documents electronically?

When using e-mail, it is recommended that you make your letter the body of the e-mail and attach your resume. In other instances you may be asked to upload your documents.

## Should I include my references on my cover letter or resume?

Your references should be listed on a separate page including names and contact information. Unless otherwise stated, your references should only be submitted by request.

# Cover Letter Example 1

686 Wilkins Street  
Athens, ON M6H 5H7

December 8, 2010

Mr. Philip Meyers  
Volunteer Coordinator  
ABC Organizations  
1 Green Street  
Farmington, ON N7Y 9L7

Dear Mr. Meyers:

I recently spoke with Mr. Dawson at the Job Expo at The University of Western Ontario regarding a summer job opportunity within the not-for-profit sector, and he suggested that I contact you. ABC organization's recent project involving newcomers to Canada is particularly impressive; I am very interested in a resource counselor position with ABC Organization and have attached my resume for your review.

My Political Science Major and Sociology minor have provided me with the opportunity to sharpen my skills in problem solving, multitasking, showing attention to detail and strategic thinking. As the Vice President of the Political Science Student Association, I applied and developed my ability to identify individual needs, communicate effectively and locate necessary resources. Through my interaction with faculty members, staff and my fellow students I fostered the ability to collaborate and work with a diverse group of people. Additionally, I am committed to achieving results. For example, my new approach to marketing on-campus events increased student participation by 25%. Given my passion for making a difference, I am confident that I can make a positive contribution to your clients.

I would like the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications and any summer opportunities with ABC organization. I can be reached by phone or e-mail at your convenience and look forward to an opportunity to speak with you. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

Mary Jones

# Cover Letter Example 2

March 10, 2010

Ms. Shelly Smith  
Program Development Specialist  
Allied Group  
291 Cottage Road  
Loveland, ON N6H 1M9

Dear Ms. Smith:

Please consider my attached resume for the Allied Group Leadership Development Summer Internship Program. Currently, I am a 3rd year student majoring in History. The qualities I have to offer Allied Group in this internship program include:

Outstanding interpersonal skills and work ethic: While working as a research assistant I was selected to participate in a conference presentation to over 150 individuals. I volunteered for a local non-profit organization where I worked with clients with diverse backgrounds. Based on my contributions and commitment to the organization, I earned recognition as "volunteer of the Month."

Demonstrated leadership and teamwork: I held a Vice President position of a student association and increased student involvement by 25%. I also served as a Resident Assistant in one of the University's largest residence halls while each year receiving the Dean's honour award for academic achievement.

Allied Group's mission to help people lead healthier, more secure lives aligns with my own personal values and interests, as demonstrated through my community service efforts. I hope to add continued value and contribute to Allied Groups Program Development team.

Please consider placing me on your interview schedule during your campus visit. Thank you in advance for your consideration. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

John Meyers

# Interview Preparation

Interviews allow employers to see you as a complete person, rather than just your qualifications on a resume and cover letter. The interview will gauge whether or not you would be a good “fit” for the company or organization and is considered the most important part of the hiring decision.

## TipS:

1. Review the details of the job and the company or organization that you are hoping will hire you.
2. Understanding the values, needs, skills and qualifications necessary for the job. You will be able to draw inferences about questions the employer may ask to assess these areas by reviewing the posting.
3. When practicing answers to interview questions, try to develop answers that illustrate how your education and life experience can benefit the employer.

## Did you know?

You can access questions and even practice using your webcam with Interview Stream!

It's FREE for Western students!

[www.ssc.uwo.ca/careers](http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/careers)

## Sample Traditional Interview Questions

- ✓ Tell me about yourself.
- ✓ Why do you want to work for us?
- ✓ What are your long-term and short term goals?
- ✓ What three adjectives best describe you?
- ✓ How would you describe your ideal job?
- ✓ What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- ✓ What did you learn from your past part-time job?

## Sample Behavioural Questions

- ✓ Tell me about a situation where you were challenged.
- ✓ How have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do?
- ✓ Tell me about the riskiest decision you have made.
- ✓ Tell me about a time on any job when you faced a stressful situation or problem.
- ✓ Can you tell me about a time when you needed to work with a group to get a job done?
- ✓ Describe a time when you had a conflict with someone.
- ✓ How did you work it out?

# Strategy to Answer Behavioural Questions

## STARS

**Situation:** Give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome.

**Task:** Describe the tasks involved in that situation.

**Action:** Talk about the various actions involved in the task.

**Result:** What results directly followed because of your actions.

## Example

**Situation:** During my job last summer, I was responsible for planning staffing schedules for a summer camp.

**Task:** When I started, I noticed that the current schedule was difficult to read and understand. We were also unexpectedly understaffed and unable to maintain proper staff to child ratios. I needed to do something to improve this quickly.

**Action:** I redesigned the schedule taking into consideration staffing regulations and child to staff ratios. I collected feedback from staff and supervisors.

**Results:** As a result I utilized some of the wonderful ideas I received and made our scheduling system more understandable, ensuring that we always maintained proper ratios.

## Questions to Ask the Interviewer

It is appropriate for you to always ask one or two questions at the end of an interview. This will convey your true interest in a position.

### Examples:

- ✓ What are the most challenging aspects of this job?
- ✓ What types of initial training do you offer?
- ✓ Could you describe a typical day on the job?

# Interview Do's and Dont's

## Do:

- ✓ Arrive 10 minutes early.
- ✓ Use a firm handshake.
- ✓ Be aware of your body language and maintain good eye contact.
- ✓ Show enthusiasm and good manners.
- ✓ Keep a positive attitude.
- ✓ Remember to thank the interviewer(s).
- ✓ Always follow up with a thank you e-mail, phone message or written note.
- ✓ Be aware of nervous habits such as foot tapping, leg bouncing or fidgeting.

## Don't:

- ✗ Give rambling answers.
- ✗ Choose to "Pass" on a question, this isn't a buffet!
- ✗ Interrupt the interviewer.
- ✗ Discuss your personal problems.
- ✗ Criticize yourself or former employers.
- ✗ Arrive late.

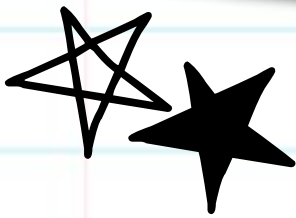
# What to Wear

The following are general tips; check with Social Science Career Services for more information.

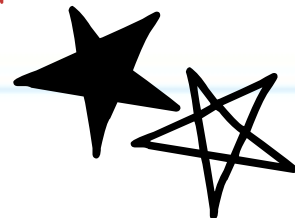
1. Dress a step above normal work attire for the position you are seeking.
2. Clothes and shoes should be clean and neat, pressed if necessary.
3. Accessories should be limited.
4. Your appearance should be well groomed.
5. Avoid fragrances.

## What to Bring:

- Directions to the interview site.
- Copy of your resume.
- References.
- Something to write with.
- A folder or portfolio with something to write on.



Finding a job can be challenging and time consuming. Don't be discouraged if you can't find a position right away, adopt the go early stay late philosophy and keep at it!



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Don't forget!

We are here to help you succeed!

Social Science Career Services  
Room 2040 SSC

or  
[www.ssc.uwo.ca/careers](http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/careers)