



Career
Development
Center

Career Guide

 **Handshake**

Your access to jobs, internships, events,
appointments, and career resources

Ronan Hall 240 • 989-774-3068 • careers.cmich.edu

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REACH Career Peers

Stop by Ronan Hall 240 for a walk-in peer-to-peer career coaching appointment. Our Career Peers are trained to help you with resumes and general career guidance.

bit.ly/cmichreach



OutREACH

Registered student organizations may request a Career Development Center overview presentation as well as specific topics like resumes.

bit.ly/cmichoutreach



First Impressions

Our dedicated student Sales Associates are here to help you look your best at your next interview or networking event. Learn more on how to submit an application for FREE professional clothing.

bit.ly/cmichfi



Mock Interview

Mock Interviews provide an opportunity to practice communication and interviewing skills in a simulated interview setting. Our peer-to-peer interviewers craft an experience that fits your field of study while providing feedback that focuses on verbal and non-verbal strategies. Schedule a Mock Interview through Handshake.

bit.ly/cmichmock



Employer Spotlight

The Employer Spotlight program educates undergraduate and graduate students as early as freshman year to prepare for their careers. Network with featured employers on campus to learn about future internship and job opportunities. Utilize Handshake to see who will be visiting campus and when.

bit.ly/cmiches



Learn about Resources and join our team at bit.ly/cmichca

Reflect AND Research

04

Utilizing Handshake

05

Personalize Your Career Plan

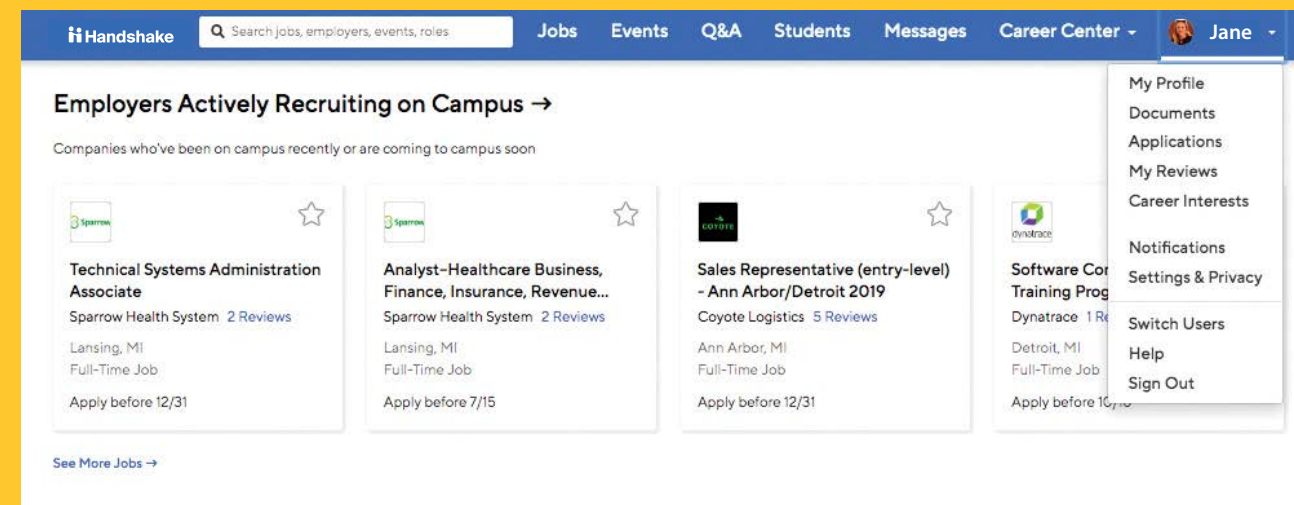
07

Career and Personality Assessments

Utilizing Handshake

Providing students access to jobs, internships, events and career resources

- 1 Sign-in with your CMU email, Global ID, and password at cmich.joinhandshake.com.
- 2 Complete your profile and upload your resume.
- 3 Fill out your "Career Interests" profile. The system adjusts to your preferences.
- 4 Schedule an appointment for career coaching or a mock interview.
- 5 Search for opportunities and resources based on key words.
- 6 Check your news feed, which adapts to user preferences.
- 7 Scope out events related to your area of study and career interests.
- 8 Explore full-time jobs and internships.
- 9 Discover additional career resources in the "Planning" section.



NEED HELP NAVIGATING HANDSHAKE?

Call the Career Development Center at **(989) 774-3068** for assistance.



Personalize Your Career Plan



Increased time and effort with the process above develops
Clarity, Competencies, Comfort, and Confidence

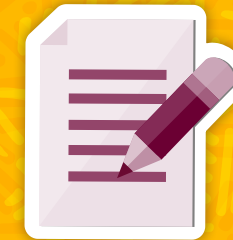
STEPS TO DEVELOP THE PROCESS:



Read
through information focused on career fields and occupations (ex. LinkedIn)



Listen/Observe
to professionals in your fields and occupations of interest (ex. Informational Interviews, job shadowing)



Test/Try
a variety of experiences (ex. Internships, jobs, volunteering)



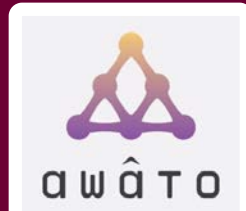
Teach
others about your profession (ex. Professional conferences)

The Career Development Center facilitates discussion and strategic decision-making for our students and alumni to promote life-long student success through:

- › **Self** Awareness
- › Exploring Career **Options**
- › Empowering **Action** through Personal and Professional Experiences



Career and Personality Assessments



These assessments highlight career and major exploration, decision making, and action planning in one comprehensive resource.



Market ^{AND} Manage

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Academic Applications: Curriculum Vitae

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Online Branding

Your Experiences



Steps to Adapt your Brand and Applications

Medium

What type of resource or material will allow you to best showcase your overall value within each unique situation?



Electronic
Social Media Profiles,
Website/e-Portfolio,
Video Resume



Traditional
Resume, Cover Letter,
Personal Statement, Business
Card, Curriculum Vitae

Appearance (Format & Style)

Based on the medium you select; how can you present your information in a clean and consistent format and style that makes your most relevant information stand out? Do you want to start from scratch or find templates to help?



Resume Builder Resources
Canva.com
Microsoft Word,
Hloom, Media Graphix



Style Spectrum
Basic/Simple,
Contemporary/
Modern, Creative/
Artistic



Format
Chronological vs Functional
vs Cross-Functional (clean,
consistent, easy to scan,
no spelling errors, relevant
information stands out)

Organization (Experiences)

How will you categorize and label all of your relevant experiences so that the most important stand out?



Headings
The more unique/specific the situation (ex. Reflection vs. Networking vs. Application) the more targeted your headings can be using keywords. See examples below:



Professional Experience
Marketing Sales Experience



Professional Development
Campus Leadership



Employment
Customer Service Experience

Details (Skills)

Storytelling through descriptive language and sentences brings your experiences to life! The key is to develop language that is balanced in showing value without being too short or lengthy. An example Bullet-Point is below:

Strong Action Verb + Who and What = Why/Result of Action



Basic
Shared career resources
with students to help them
find jobs

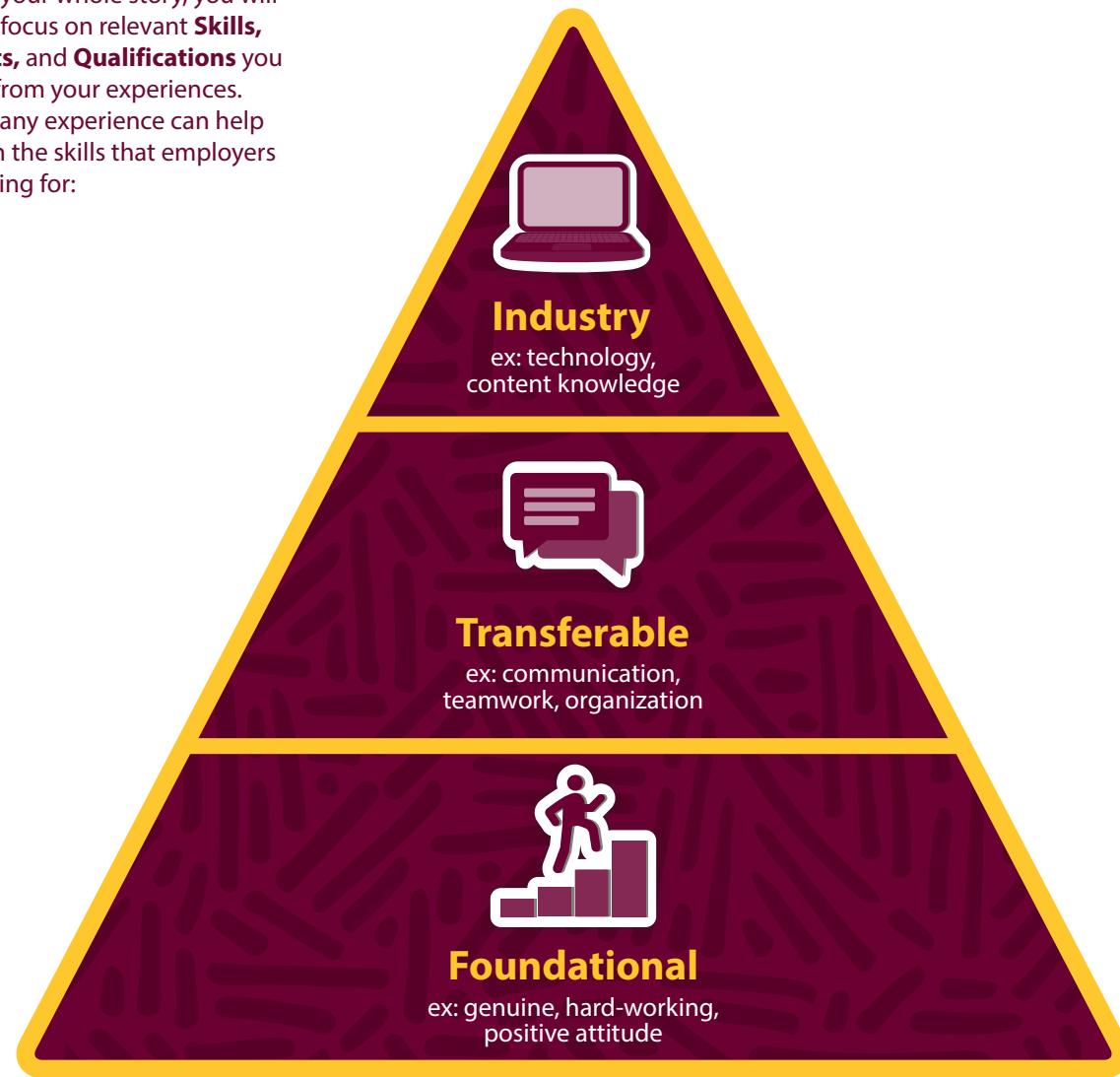


Better
Advised over 1,000 undergraduates
on application materials, career
development, and search strategies to
help them secure jobs and internships

Note: Use the correct verb tense when writing bullet point statements. If you currently hold the position, or are currently performing a task, use a present tense verb (ex: Coordinate). If it is a position you've held in the past, or a past task, use a past tense verb (ex: Coordinated).

Your Skills

In order to better understand and present your whole story, you will want to focus on relevant **Skills, Interests, and Qualifications** you gained from your experiences. Overall, any experience can help you gain the skills that employers are looking for:



Top 10 Transferable Skills

- 1 Communicating with others
- 2 Working well on a team
- 3 Problem-solving
- 4 Organizing and prioritizing work
- 5 Processing information
- 6 Analyzing data
- 7 Obtaining job-related technical knowledge
- 8 Understanding computer programs
- 9 Writing and editing
- 10 Influencing others

Useful Action Verbs to Showcase Skills

Technical	Communication	Financial/Data	Teamwork	Management
› Adapted	› Addressed	› Adjusted	› Advocated	› Administered
› Applied	› Advertised	› Administered	› Aided	› Coordinated
› Assembled	› Arranged	› Allocated	› Answered	› Developed
› Built	› Collaborated	› Analyzed	› Clarified	› Directed
› Calculated	› Composed	› Appraised	› Contributed	› Executed
› Computed	› Described	› Assessed	› Cooperated	› Hired
› Constructed	› Edited	› Audited	› Counseled	› Implemented
› Designed	› Incorporated	› Balanced	› Demonstrated	› Initiated
› Engineered	› Interpreted	› Budgeted	› Educated	› Managed
› Maintained	› Interviewed	› Calculated	› Ensured	› Motivated
› Operated	› Marketed	› Corrected	› Familiarized	› Organized
› Printed	› Negotiated	› Estimated	› Furthered	› Planned
Creative	Research	Teaching	Organization	Personal Qualities
› Acted	› Collected	› Advised	› Cataloged	› Accurate
› Composed	› Compared	› Coached	› Categorized	› Analytical
› Condensed	› Conducted	› Consulted	› Classified	› Confident
› Created	› Determined	› Critiqued	› Coded	› Consistent
› Customized	› Diagnosed	› Encouraged	› Compiled	› Deliberate
› Displayed	› Evaluated	› Explained	› Corrected	› Dependable
› Entertained	› Examined	› Facilitated	› Distributed	› Efficient
› Fashioned	› Explored	› Focused	› Inspected	› Enthusiastic
› Illustrated	› Gathered	› Guided	› Logged	› Flexible
› Initiated	› Identified	› Informed	› Maintained	› Independent
› Integrated	› Inspected	› Instructed	› Monitored	› Innovative
› Invented	› Interpreted	› Motivated	› Obtained	› Organized

Career Readiness Competencies

- › Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- › Global/Intercultural Fluency
- › Oral/Written Communications
- › Digital Technology
- › Teamwork/Collaboration
- › Career Management
- › Leadership
- › Professionalism/Work Ethic

Resume Formats

Chronological

The **Chronological Resume** is the most frequently-used resume format.

1 STUDENT NAME

100 Washington Ave Mount Pleasant, MI (989) 555-2222

2 Ronan240@education.edu www.karimguide.com www.linkedin.com/in/studentname

EDUCATION

Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI
Bachelor of Science, May 2020 (expected)
Major: Communications; Minor: Marketing
Overall GPA: 3.5 (Major GPA: 3.6) 3

HONORS

Elected to Alpha Kappa Delta, International Sociology Honor Society: Fall 2017
Dean's List: Fall 2017, Spring 2018 and Fall 2019
Best Undergraduate Communications Paper Award: Spring 2019

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE 4

Special Olympics, Mount Pleasant, MI
Public Relations Intern, January – August 2017

- 5
- Managed social media marketing content for Facebook and Twitter including event promotion, participant recognition and community partnerships
 - Established "Athlete of the Week" and "Volunteer of the Week" series to highlight and promote program involvement
 - Created promotional fliers for Summer Games using InDesign that were posted to social media and handed out to organizations throughout community 6

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 7

Central Michigan University Program Board

President, Fall 2016 – Present 8

- Lead weekly meetings with elected officers to discuss recruitment, programming, campus outreach, and professional development opportunities for members

General Member, Fall 2015

- Developed educational programming on diversity, health and professional development for 100 members to meet Registered Student Organization (RSO) guidelines

Media for Millennials (Capstone Project), Fall 2015 9

- Researched trends in social media engagement amongst millennials to develop marketing plan for college admissions offices when communicating with potential students

The Social Mitten Conference, Summer 2014

Presenter: "A Study of Technology's Impact on Diversity Awareness"

EMPLOYMENT 10

Mountain Town Station, Mount Pleasant, MI

Host, September 2015 – Present 11

1 Keywords are Crucial

Your overall goal is to clearly showcase transferable and industry/area skills that fit the employer and position. Use intentional headings and bullet points that explain your skills and experiences.

2 Including a professional website can allow an employer another opportunity to learn more about you and your experiences.

3 Maintain a strong GPA and showcase it.

4 **Adapt Headings**
Tailor headings to fit opportunities and positions. This heading could become "Public Relations Experience."

5 **Bullet Points**
Include Major Responsibilities.

6 **Bullet Points**
Include specific tasks and projects.

7 **Adapt Headings**
Consider utilizing headings such as "Campus Leadership."

8 If you've had multiple positions within one organization, you can split up the experiences.

9 Include Class Projects, Research, Group work and area/industry content knowledge.

10 **Adapt Headings**
This could become "Customer Service Experiences."

11 **Bullet Points**
Not all experiences have to include a description.

Functional

The **Functional Resume** showcases relevant information through experiential and skill-based categories.

STUDENT NAME

100 Washington Ave Mount Pleasant, MI (989) 555-2222

Ronan240@education.edu www.karimguide.com www.linkedin.com/in/studentname

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Communication Skills

- Familiar with a variety of office-related software packages including: Word, Publisher and WordPerfect Office
- Able to utilize, and understand, the following social media and communication platforms: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype, webinars and various conferencing packages
- Composed information letters for clients seeking agency services
- Wrote reports for agency directors on the volume of clients served, in addition to utilizing SurveyMonkey for timely follow-up with clients
- Maintained good working relations with clients including: daily telephone contact with current clients, researching problem areas and providing thorough follow-up for agency director
- Counseled residents and served as a campus/ community resource

Analysis Skills

- Familiar with analysis software (including SPSS and Excel) for quantitative data and NVivo for qualitative data
- Planned and executed a web satisfaction survey to assess seniors served by health awareness program
- Completed a statistical analysis of survey data, and presented results to Central Michigan University's Council of Chairs
- Wrote a 25-Page data analysis report for agency director and staff based on survey findings
- Provided PowerPoint presentations to agency director and board members summarizing survey results
- Assisted with the development and implementation of focus groups with parents of youth served by agency

Organization Skills

- Assisted with the transition from a paper to a web-based system for managing schedules of Multicultural Advisors
- Created educational and social programs that focus on diversity themes for residence hall of 300 students
- Assisted with training entire residence life student staff and making them aware of cultural sensitivity issues
- Designed and implemented new program for seniors facing multiple health issues
- Developed a nine-part documentary series for campus audience, averaging an attendance of 85 persons per showing
- Raised \$10,000 for programs for seniors through the Isabella County Commission on Aging; this was the largest amount ever raised by students in the country

EDUCATION

Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan
Bachelor of Science, May 2020 (Expected)
Major: Sociology; Minor: Psychology

EXPERIENCE

Ruby Tuesday, Mount Pleasant and Novi, Michigan
Bartender, September 2016-Present

Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan

Multicultural Advisor, Office of Residence Life, August 2016-Present



Consider using this skills-based format when a chronological format may not allow your most relevant skills/experiences to be emphasized.

Cover Letter

Reference Page

1 Create a consistent look for your application materials by using the same heading as your resume.

2 When possible, address the letter to a specific person. If you don't have a specific person to address, include the company, office/department, and address.

3 When you are e-mailing, mailing, or posting the letter, be sure to include the date.

4 Introduction

› Identify the position you are seeking.

› Mention names/titles of any referrals.

› Thank the person for past communication.

› Connect through common skills, experiences, goals that fit the opportunity, and why you are interested.

5 Body

› Highlight and expand on your strongest qualifications that match the position and employer's culture.

› Develop themes based on experiences or skills that match the opportunity.

› Include transferable skills, industry specific skills, or experiences.

› Provide concrete evidence throughout to showcase skills.

› Avoid generic statements that are not validated with any specific information.

STUDENT NAME
100 Washington Ave Mount Pleasant, MI (989) 555-2222
Ronan240@education.edu www.karimcguide.com www.linkedin.com/in/studentname

August 1, 2019

Mr. John P. Johnston
Vice President
Ajax Accounting Company 555 Tamarack Drive
Billings, ND 55221

Greetings Mr. Johnston,

Thank you, once again, for speaking with me during your recent visit to the City College of New York's Accounting Career Day. I enjoyed learning more about your background in forensic accounting and the Staff Accounting positions available with Ajax. During our meeting, you suggested that I send a resume and cover letter to you as application for the position.

As I complete my Accounting major and the required 150 credits to be eligible for the CPA exam, there are several classes that have prepared me for the Staff Accountant position. In the Auditing and Accounting class, for example, we had to complete five case studies on different departments on campus. We were given limited access to their past years financial statements to determine any discrepancies and were able to present cost-saving recommendations to the Directors in each area. I also completed two Forensic Accounting classes, which gave necessary auditing and detail skills needed to succeed with Ajax. In addition, my advisor gave me the opportunity to prepare taxes for college students. I have completed over 35 tax returns through this hands-on program.

Communication skills are essential in this position, as I would be meeting with clients and traveling to corporate locations to complete audits. As the president of two organizations on campus and having spent a semester in Italy, I have focused on developing strong communication and interpersonal skills. In addition, I have worked for two consecutive summers and over holiday breaks in the clothing retail field. Strong communication skills are certainly a must when handling returns the day after a major holiday in a high-traffic mall.

I know the skills attained in my coursework, through internship and work experiences, and from my co-curricular involvements make me a well-qualified candidate for this position. I look forward to speaking with you further about the position; my contact information is above. I look forward to hearing from you as you begin to make hiring decisions.

Thank you for your time,

Kari McGuide

Kari McGuide

6 Show enthusiasm in your salutation instead of common "Dear Mr. Last Name." If you don't know his/her last name, you could use "Hiring Committee."

7 **Conclusion**
Consider Summarizing your qualifications and mention when you are available (relocating to a specific area, interview, start date, or hire).

Additional Tips:

› The best cover letters are customized for the employer receiving them.

› Show an employer that you're the best candidate by tailoring your experiences with what they're looking for in the job description.

› Be professional and direct while showing a personal interest and passion for their industry and your field of study.

› Applying By Email: Your email message can become a quick summary of your cover letter. Avoid using the same language as you letter. Simply stating "see attached" can be a missed opportunity and shows lack of interest.

STUDENT NAME
100 Washington Ave Mount Pleasant, MI (989) 555-2222
Ronan240@education.edu www.karimcguide.com www.linkedin.com/in/studentname

References

Ms. Carol M. Dotson
Instructor
Department of Physical Education and Sport
Central Michigan University
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
Dotsco1cm@cmich.edu
989-555-1234

Dr. Benjamin I. Fine
Vice President
Alpha Company, Inc.
12123 Auto Alley
Livonia, MI 48452
Fine1ac@alphaco.com
111-555-3333

Mr. George H. Smith
Human Resource Specialist
Omega Services, Inc.
1234 Greek Avenue
Troy, MI 48123
smithgg@omega.com
235-555-6622

1 List the person's full name and position title.

2 Provide the company name and department office/address.

3 List a professional email address and full phone number. Consider adding online credentials as well, such as LinkedIn profiles.

Reference Etiquette

› Start by asking your references if they would agree to serve as a reference for you, confirm which contact information they would prefer you use. Then, be sure to stay in touch with them. Notify them of each position you have applied for and how to best speak on your behalf.

› Use a separate page to list your references. Be sure to use a consistent font and heading from your resume and cover letter.

› Include 3-5 professional references, including past or current supervisors, internship coordinators, and/or professors. Consider avoiding personal references such as family and close friends.

› Select your references who can speak about your different professional qualities, abilities, or accomplishments.

› Make sure your references can help build a strong case for your candidacy.

Taking It a Step Further

› When applicable, ask your references to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf for your professional portfolio and to attach to your application.

› Remember to give your references adequate time to write the letter, and gently suggest a date to complete the letter.

› Consider adding a reference section to your professional website.

› Write your references a thank you note shortly after they write you a letter of recommendation or give a verbal reference on your behalf. Also, be sure to stay in touch with them to share your job success!

Academic Applications

Personal Statement

Your Full Name – Program Name
Statement of Purpose

Why You: Multiple paragraphs regarding your primary qualifications for the program. This may include many relevant experiences from your background: i.e. education, research, work experience. You may also include (before or after your relevant experiences) a personal story about your path to this moment in applying to their program. Doing so may show challenges you've had to overcome on your journey, why you've decided to make a career change, or even how your soft skills would cause you to thrive in their program.

Why Them: Multiple paragraphs (certainly more than one paragraph recommended) on why exactly you're interested in their program and institution. Go beyond the location or how they're the "best" in the nation or world. Do your homework on them, and point out what you find appealing about them. For instance, if they're doing research that really intrigues you, include this while stating/restating how you're qualified to work with them on this research, why you're interested in this research (i.e. a possible career path for your future), and recognize the professor open to other opportunities in their program so they don't rule you out if that research area is full.

Future Intentions: Multiple paragraphs (at least one paragraph) on how you intend to use this new degree if given the opportunity. This usually includes showing how the degree aligns with your future career aspirations. You may also include how you intend to give back to the program once you are an alumnus.

Additional Tips

- › Rearrange the content order above to fit you and/or the requirements.
- › The above template is general in nature and recommended if the graduate program **does not specify** the content to include. If they indicate specific topics/questions to be addressed, make sure you do so!
- › Your statement of purpose/intent should be approximately two pages unless the graduate program specifies the length. They may also specify whether or not your content should be double-spaced, a certain font size/type, etc. **Follow their requirements!**

Curriculum Vitae

STUDENT NAME
100 Washington Ave Mount Pleasant, MI (989) 555-2222
Ronan240@education.edu www.karimcguide.com www.linkedin.com/in/studentname

EDUCATION
Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI
Ph.D. in Military History (focus in American Military History), May 2016

Drew University, Madison, NJ
B.A., December 2012
Major: History; Minor: English

RESEARCH
Dissertation: "A Winter Campaign: General Phillip H. Sheridan's Operations on the Southern Plains, 1868"

TEACHING EXPERIENCE
Hunter College, New York, NY
Assistant Professor, August 2014 – Present

- Teach the following undergraduate courses: U.S. History to 1877; U.S. History from 1865; and the Civil War

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
New York Military Affairs Symposium (NYMAS), *Board of Directors*, September 2013 – Present

American Historical Association, *Member*, November 2014 – Present

PUBLICATIONS
Attack at Dawn: Phil Sheridan's Winter Campaign, 1868-1869. In preparation for University of Oklahoma Press.

"Los Diablos Tejanos." Review of Lone Star Justice: The First Century of the Texas Rangers, by Robert M. Utley. *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, November 2011.

The Little Bighorn Campaign, March-September, 1876. Revised paperback edition. Conshohocken: Combined Publishing, 2010.

ACADEMIC SERVICE
Hunter College- *College of Humanities Tenure Committee*, Fall 2013 – Present

Central Michigan University-*Academic Senate's General Education Committee*, Fall 2012 – Spring 2013

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Madison Parks and Recreation, *Little League Baseball Coach*, Summers 2007 – 2009

Resume vs. CV

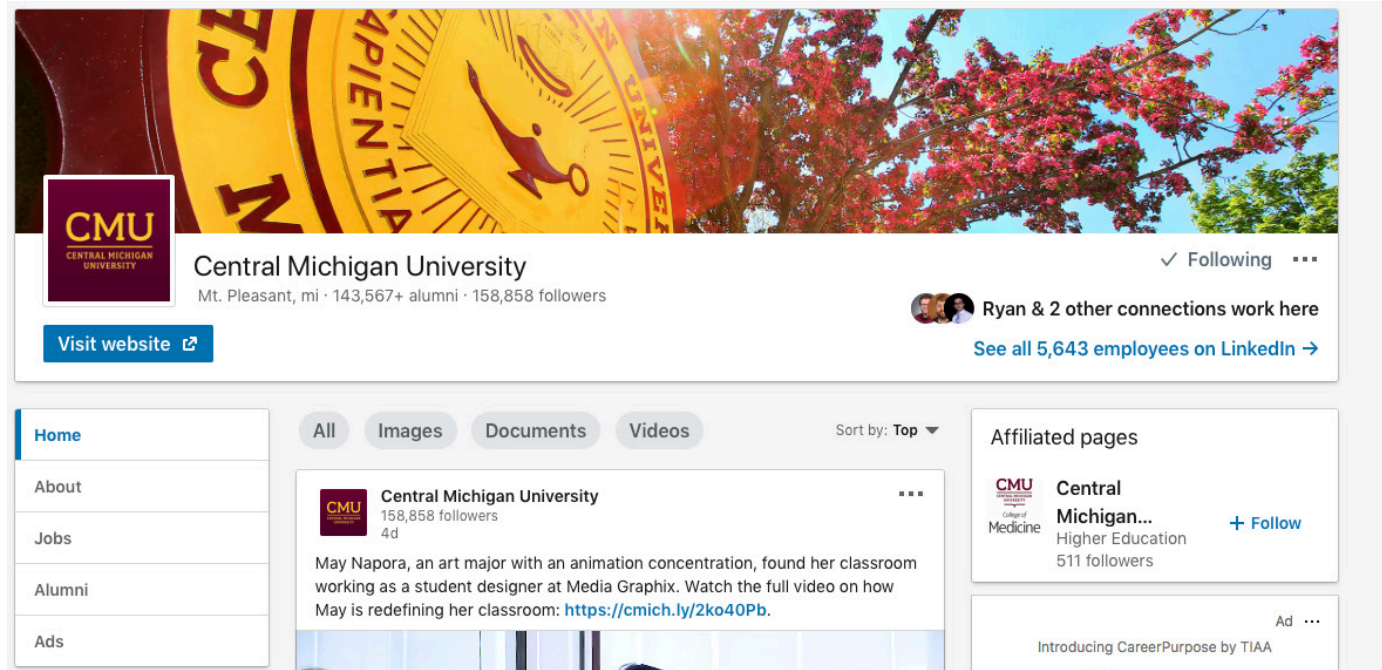
<p>Medium Information typically presented on a resume can be adapted and showcased through a variety of traditional and electronic mediums. Curriculum Vitae information is typically represented through traditional documentation such as Word document.</p>	<p>Appearance Resumes can vary in format and style based on use, whereas curriculum vitae typically follow a prescribed look that tend to have a basic style. Typically, curriculum vitae are multiple pages and longer than a resume.</p>	<p>Organization (Experiences) Resumes focus heavily on hands-on experiences that show relevance to employers where as curriculum vitae focus more on research, publications, and academic achievements.</p>	<p>Details (Skills) Resumes typically utilize short, yet informative bullet-points to describe experiences and skills while curriculum vitae utilize paragraphs and bullet points to describe experiences.</p>
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In Summary

- › Use a curriculum vitae (CV) when applying outside of the United States and Canada or when applying for grants, fellowships, academic/faculty positions, and scientific/medical/research positions. This is a lifelong document, so add to it frequently. It can be multiple pages in length.
- › Include your dissertation, thesis, class projects, and papers.
- › Use this format to highlight your teaching experiences.
- › Use the correct format for publications, presentations, and papers by referring to the most recent APA manual.



Online Branding



Explore AND Experience

21

23

Expand my Brand

Navigating Career Fairs

To best utilize LinkedIn, follow these five basic steps to **research, discover, and connect**:

- 1 Develop an engaging, original, and clear summary of who you are.
- 2 Search for people you may know and connect with them. Try using the "Alumni" search to connect with fellow Central Michigan University graduates in your field of study.
- 3 Send your contacts inMail to network professionally.
- 4 Join groups based on skills, interests, and industries.
- 5 Search job and internship postings.

LinkedIn



Your LinkedIn profile is one of the most valuable pieces of real estate you have when it comes to showcasing your authentic, genuine, and amazing self. As a job-seeking candidate, you will be able to research people and employers by industry that will help you develop and build your own network. Employers will also be able to view your information by conducting keyword searches and seeking out profiles that match those searches.



Full library of support sources: university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students

Expand My Brand

There are a variety of ways to find and secure opportunities that best fit your interests, skills, values and personal and professional goals. Discovering and solidifying resources and people that can best support your unique situation is a great way to begin a successful search. Find a balance between building your **Network** and utilizing a variety of **Online Search Tools** that best fits YOU!

CMU Resources



Location-Based



Industry-Based



Employer Directories



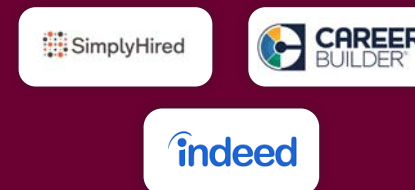
Employer Review Sites



Social Media



Large Search Engines



Navigating Career Fairs



Before

- › View event details and participating employers in Handshake
- › Visit REACH Advising to polish your resume
- › If you need professional clothing seek out First Impressions, a program that provides free, professional attire
- › Schedule a Mock Interview to practice talking about your experiences and skills
- › Research your targeted employers and prepare specific questions to ask them



During

- › Dress professionally and bring a padfolio with copies of your resume
- › Refer to the registration packet to view a map of the event, as well as each employer's desired majors and available positions
- › Use your elevator pitch to initiate a conversation about your experience/skills and how you are a good fit for the employer and your desired position
- › Connect with employers by asking relevant questions
- › Exchange business cards or contact information



After

- › Keep the employers' contact information and your job/internship leads in one place
- › Connect with and thank the recruiter via e-mail or LinkedIn
- › Follow up with any additional materials or information
- › If you were interviewed, send a thank you note
- › Make notes about the experience and personal areas of growth for the next career fair

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THE

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Salary Negotiations and Job Offers

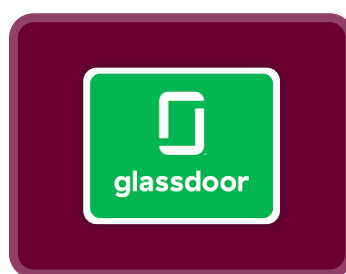
34

Creating a Realistic Budget

Interview Preparation

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU'VE FINALLY LANDED THE BIG INTERVIEW!

To ensure a successful interview, it is important to keep a few things in mind to prepare you for the big day. Look over the interview preparation steps on the following page, and check each box off before going into your interview. **The five online resources below can be helpful in your preparation.** Being well-prepared is key, as it reflects responsible qualities that employers will take notice of.



Checklist

- Create and Rehearse Your Elevator Pitch**

Create a concise, memorable summary (commonly referred to as an elevator pitch) for introducing yourself to the interviewers. Highlight your most relevant experience, accomplishments, abilities, and future goals that relate to the position. You can use this introduction in response to the prompt, "Tell me about yourself." If you need help verbalizing how your skills and experiences match the job posting requirements, schedule an appointment with a Career Coach.
- Select Your Interview Attire**

Make a good first impression! If you are in need of interview attire, we encourage you to apply for professional clothing through First Impressions. Visit www.cmich.edu/firstimpressions for more details. Tips for professional dress are in this section.
- Schedule a Mock Interview**

The best way to prepare for an interview is to actually do it! Through our Mock Interview Program, we will simulate an interview for you to strengthen your interviewing skills. Sign up for a Mock Interview by logging into Handshake.
- Prepare Questions for Interviewers**

Interviewers expect you to ask questions. Asking questions is another way to express your genuine interest in the position and organization. Keep in mind that you will likely develop additional questions on-the-spot based on what transpired during the interview.

Dress for Success

PROFESSIONAL DRESS

Business Professional



Suit and tie (matching top and bottom)



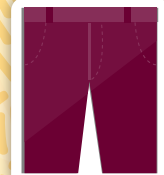
Blouse or dress shirt

VS.

Business Casual



Blouse or dress shirt



Skirt or pants (can add a blazer for more formal work environments)

General Tips

- › Find a comfortable pair of dress shoes
- › When it comes to jewelry, stick with quality over quantity
- › Avoid bright colors and busy prints
- › Keep makeup natural and hair groomed
- › Avoid heavy cologne and perfume
- › No jeans, yoga pants or leggings
- › Align tattoos and piercings to company standards
- › Make sure clothing fits (if not, visit a tailor)
- › When in doubt, stick with dark, neutral colors
- › Bring a padfolio to write down questions and notes

Types of Interviews

Online

Software, such as Skype, is commonly used to connect you, as a potential candidate, with the hiring committee in a convenient, cost-effective way. Prepare and test your video/audio equipment by practicing with a friend or having a Skype mock interview. Your video screen name should be professional and appropriate. For the interview, make sure that your backdrop is plain and lighting is appropriate. Dress professionally and look at the camera (not your screen) to maintain eye contact.

Telephone

This is typically the method used for the first round of interviews and will be your first "live" interaction with the employer. Make sure your cell phone has a strong signal and connection or use a landline phone. Dress professionally to help yourself get into a professional mindset and be free of distractions and background noise.

Group

You, along with multiple candidates, will be assessed in the same room for the same job. Candidates may be asked to all respond to the same question or different sets of questions in either a round table or random format. Group interviews often involve interaction between candidates, which will allow the interviewers to see if you stand out and how well you interact with others. The interviewers will also be able to assess your ability to deal with pressure, take on leadership roles, work well with a team, and remember details such as the other candidates' names and responses.

Panel

Congratulations! You are most likely one of the finalists when invited for a panel interview, as you will meet multiple key stakeholders. Appearance, eye contact with each person on the panel, posture, and overall demeanor are as important as your responses to their questions.

Throughout your interview, consider displaying these 4 things:

1. How you will make an impact in the new position, starting on Day #1.
2. Your ability to fit in with the existing team structure.
3. Your enthusiasm about the job and organization.
4. Your sparkle. Be yourself and let your personality shine!

Interview Questions

Responding to the #1 interview prompt: "Tell me about yourself"

A concise summary of yourself is needed in the form of a 30 second "elevator" pitch at a career fair or networking event, as well as in response to the #1 interview prompt, "Tell me about yourself." So, what should you say?



Do Include:

- › **The basics:** your name, CMU major/minor, and year in school (i.e. sophomore)
- › **Experience:** work experience, volunteer work, projects related to the position of interest
- › **Distinctions:** your top, relevant accomplishments, strengths and skill sets
- › **The future:** your educational and career goals as they relate to the position



Don't Include:

- › Your age, marital status, ethnicity and other potentially discriminatory information
- › Details about family, friends, co-workers, etc. Keep the focus on you!
- › All of your work experiences - stick to what is most relevant for your listener
- › Hobbies, unless you are able to make a clear connection between them and the position



Interviewer: Tell me about a time when you successfully handled a difficult situation.

Your response: In my HR Training and development class at CMU this past semester, I worked with two classmates to complete a semester-long training project for our business client, Enterprise Holdings. I decided to take the lead during meetings. I had a classmate that did not complete his first task on time, so I approached him individually to discuss the issue. He mentioned that he was having difficulty understanding the first task and was too embarrassed to speak up. I walked him through the task using visual aids to make sure it fit his individual learning style. I'm proud to say that we achieved an A on the project and Enterprise Holdings will be implementing our work into their new employee training program. I also learned that, as a leader, you should check your team's understanding of the tasks before moving forward.

During the Interview

During an interview, you will be asked a variety of questions that will assess your qualifications and character. This will involve general and behavior-based questions. Your goal is to provide clear evidence that you have the skill sets and experiences that best match. This will help you to showcase **Foundational, Transferable, and Industry-Specific** skill sets. Consider using the **BAR Method** or **STAR Method** to develop answers.

B.A.R. Method:

- › Background
- › Action
- › Result

S.T.A.R. Method:

- › Situation/Task
- › Action
- › Result

- Background/Situation/Task:** Orient your interviewer by providing the "who, what, when, where, why" of the situation.
- Action:** Describe what exactly you did in this situation and why you did it in that particular way.
- Result:** Conclude your example with the outcome of your actions and what you learned from the experience.

Example Elevator Pitch:

"My name is Victor Student, and I am currently a junior studying Human Resources at Central Michigan University. For the past two years, I have been the Recruitment Chair of the society for Human Resource Management at CMU, as well as a Mock Interviewer for CMU Career Development Center. I also recently completed an employee recruitment and retention project with three classmates, and we won 'Best in Class'. I welcome the opportunity to 'Go Further' with Ford Motor Company and enhance my recruiting skills through this internship."

Position of interest:

Human Resources:
Recruiting Internship with
Ford Motor Company

Closing the Interview

It is important to sell yourself at the beginning and end of your interview. Ending the interview on a positive note can be done by incorporating the following:

- › Summarize your key points: relevant experience, distinctions, your passion for the position, and how you see a future with that employer
- › Respond to information revealed by the hiring team, especially if it intrigues you and fits your skills/experience
- › Ask appropriate, specific questions regarding the employer or position that haven't already been answered by the job description or hiring team
- › Leave out salary/benefits questions until the employer initiates the discussion or presents you an offer

The above points may naturally weave into your responses. Even if they do (and especially if they don't!), make sure to mention them as you close the interview.

Following Up

If you are looking for ways to stand out from other applicants, be the one who sends a thank you note or email immediately following the interview. The thank you note is a chance to stand out, demonstrate follow-up skills, add to interview conversations, and reiterate your top qualifications.



Use the guidelines below for why, when, and how to write a thank you note:

- ➔ Send a thank you note after a phone interview. You don't have to wait for an in-person interview to write a thank you note. A quick, simple note can go a long way.
- ➔ Thank you note etiquette can be a challenge when you meet multiple people during an interview. A good rule to follow is to write an individual follow-up note to each person. Before leaving, ask for business cards of each person interviewing you.
- ➔ If you don't have the contact information for each person on the interview panel, it is important to name each person you met with.
- ➔ Use the thank you note to expand or reinforce your interview conversations. If you mentioned a project, organization, or article, you can include a link to further information.
- ➔ You can also add information that you didn't cover in the interview. You know that feeling when you walk out of an interview and think, "Why didn't I say X? I should have told about that project!" The thank you note can be your second choice.
- ➔ Finally, if you are working with an HR representative or recruiter who is coordinating the interview process for you, follow up with him/her as well. When you finish a round of interviews, let your recruiter know how it went.

Salary Negotiations and Job Offers



The Conversation

When you get an offer:

DO:

- › Thank them and demonstrate appreciation for the offer
- › Tell them you'd like to consider the offer and would like to know who you can speak to about negotiating salary and benefits
- › Ask for the offer in writing so you can take your time to review it
- › Ask when the individual needs to know your decision by

DO NOT:

- › Accept the offer on the spot – even if it is more than you expected
- › Come to the conversation unprepared (your employer may be ready and available to enter the negotiation process upon extending the offer)
- › Neglect to negotiate things beyond base pay such as:
 - bonuses, salary reviews – timing, basis, percentage, benefits, retirement, parking, overtime policies, sick days/vacation, tuition reimbursement, employee discounts, relocation/moving expenses, professional memberships, professional development, certifications, sign on bonuses



When is it appropriate to negotiate?

Once an official offer has been extended:

- › **AVOID** asking or answering any questions about desired salary throughout the interview process. These questions can be deflected with responses such as "I'd like to continue to learn more about this position and its responsibilities before estimating my value in this position." If an employer absolutely persists on you giving a specific amount, you can demonstrate that your research has indicated that you can expect to make between \$____ and \$____ based on the position and the skills you bring to the table.
- › If you have tangible evidence that your current salary is too low, you may be in a position to negotiate.

Salary Negotiations and Job Offers

If the offer is lower than expected, then you should attempt to negotiate upward.

Useful phrases:

- › I understand there may be some challenges in processing my request. Based on my research, the range I've asked for is fair market value and reflects the contributions and value I bring to this position. Is there a more realistic range that we can consider and work towards?
- › Given my experience with (inset accomplishments, skills, experiences), I was expecting to start in this position with a salary that was between \$_____ and \$_____. Do you think we can work together to come to a salary that reflects my qualifications within that range?
- › If the salary is non-negotiable, can we talk about benefits or other non-monetary benefits?

Be mindful that often this conversation is a process. It may take several separate sessions of going "back and forth" before you receive your "top" or "final" offer from the employer. Throughout the process remember to remain positive and appreciative for the employer taking interest in you and working with you to reach an offer that you are both satisfied with. The employer should know that you have a continued interest in supporting the company's goals and that you are reaching for a win/win situation.

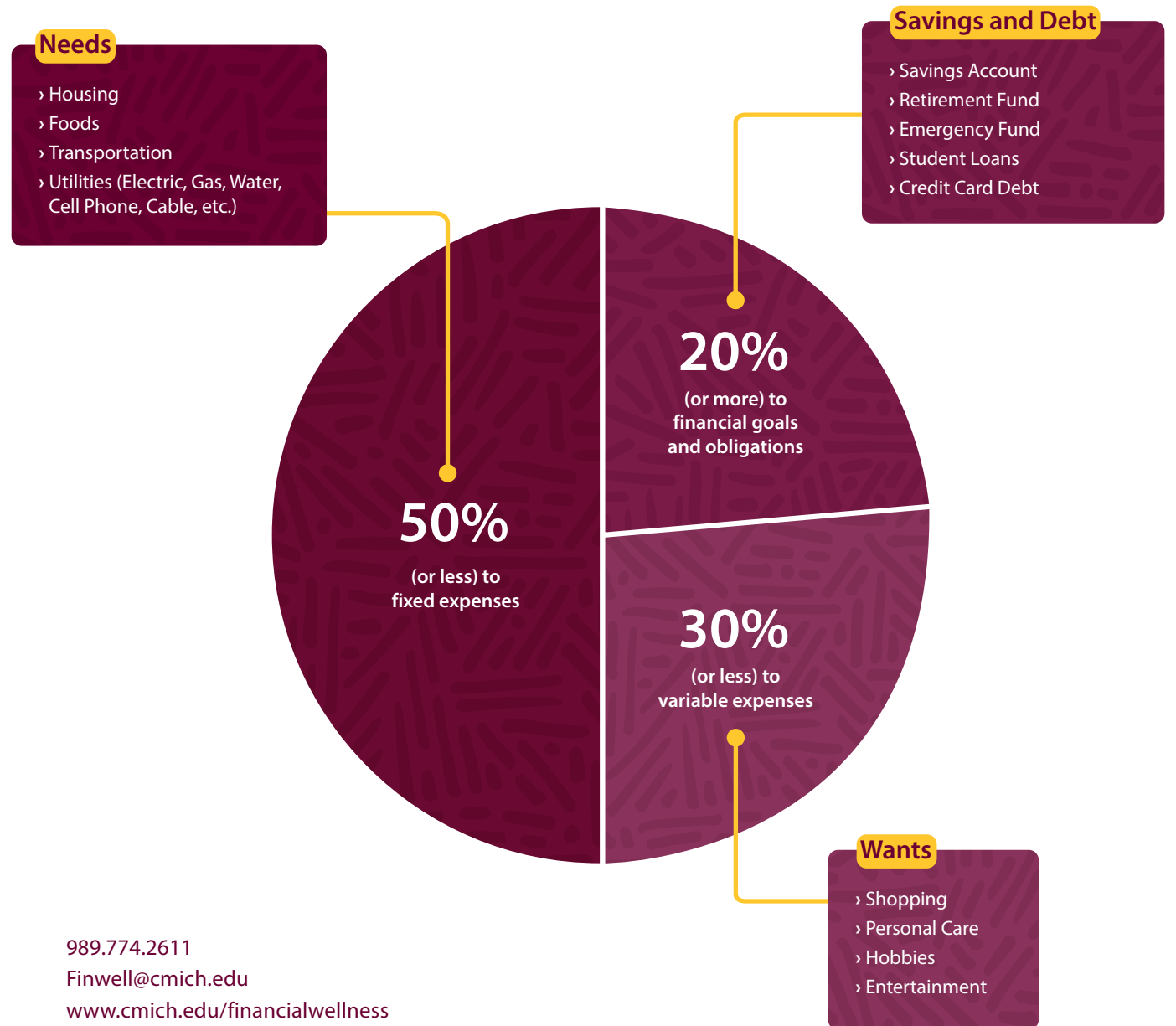
If the offer is at or above your targeted salary - Congratulations! Be sure to look at the overall package and decide whether you want to negotiate further on salary or benefits.

Decide - Concluding the Negotiation

Based on your objective research and your personal values in a position, you should know whether or not the final salary and benefits offer is worthy of consideration.

- › If you are satisfied with the salary and benefits you negotiated, you can give verbal acceptance of the offer in the negotiation. Be sure to ask for the complete job offer in writing and read it carefully before signing to make sure everything you discussed is included.
- › If you decide the final offer is not one that you're able to consider, it is okay to decline that offer. Make sure to do so in a professional and respectful manner and thank them for the offer and the experience of going through their selection process.

Creating a Realistic Budget



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