



Pull Ahead With Leadership Skills

Add leadership experience to your résumé and set yourself apart from other job candidates.

Not every job or career path requires a leadership role. Yet, employers consistently rank “Leadership” as a top skill when hiring. Leadership experience signals potential job performance, provides insight into a job seeker’s character, and helps define a candidate’s fit. Students, new grads, and military vets who demonstrate good communication, decision-making, interpersonal, and motivational skills show they can take charge, organize, and work well with others. For recruiters, these candidates are likely to get more done and generate desired outcomes. Leadership experiences offer valuable opportunities for growth and better prepare students for the job market. Through them, one learns how to manage people and projects *and* how to be a better follower—critical soft skills for everyone, even if you’re not actively pursuing a supervisor or principal position.

Develop, demonstrate, and apply

Vince Lombardi said, “*Leaders are made; they are not born.*” Even if you’ve never held a class office or worked before, there are plenty of ways to acquire leadership skills, bolster your credentials, and make your résumé stand out. Class projects, internships, extracurricular activities, and jobs all provide great opportunities to work on communication, problem-solving, management, motivational, and other transferrable skills. When assigned group work for class, volunteer to take the lead: organize the group’s activities, or focus on supervising a certain part of the project. Interested in a graphic design career? Offer to manage your group’s presentation materials. If an Italian major, consider being the Italian Club Secretary. Try out for a forward position on the soccer team. Or, be a mentor. All are excellent ways to hone your leadership skills and build confidence. Practice, persevere, and learn to take accountability. Focus on becoming great at whatever you are learning in school. As Abraham Lincoln said, “*whatever you are, be a good one.*” Most important, you can easily translate the following and other top types of leadership skills and experience to your career.

Communication. “*Leaders understand the ultimate power of relationships.*”—Tom Peters. Leaders use communication skills—verbal, written, listening, and body language—to build connections. Cultivate these same skills in your job search. Create ties with

others in your field. Practice communicating your personal career objectives and what you have to offer in a networking setting. As a leader, you’ll need to clearly communicate your goals and objectives to others and motivate them to achieve the same.

Problem Solving. The ability to solve and resolve issues is a necessary skill in both job searches and the working world. In fact, a common interview request is “provide an example of an issue you have dealt with at work and how you resolved that issue.” “*The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.*”—John Foster Dulles, Former Secretary of State.

Innovation and drive for results. Leaders think of new ways to do things—then find ways to make them happen. Use an internship, first job, or a team setting to practice suggesting new ideas and to present tangible plans for putting those ideas in place. “*Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there.*”—John P. Kotter.

Boost your hireability

Enhance your résumé. Bullet point direct leadership roles and experience from a work environment: “Manage front desk and as Shift Supervisor at Bella Hair Salon,” or “Promoted from assistant camp counselor to group camp leader.” No direct work-related leadership credentials? Highlight where you have helped lead projects at work or at school: “Managed compiling final presentation as part of summer internship sales team,” “Conducted monthly nature walks for urban youth,” or “Co-Founded College Robotics Club.” Vets, draw upon your military experience. Show how you set priorities and achieved goals for yourself and your company, and how your decisions and actions made a difference.



i n a nutshell:

Choose to stand out. Your actions and influence show employers that you:

- **Communicate effectively—verbally, in writing, through body language, and by listening to others**
- **Recognize, assess, and solve problems**
- **See the big picture, strategize, and achieve desired results through resourcefulness**
- **Make decisions, are consistent, and will persevere through challenges**
- **Inspire teamwork, organize, and motivate others to achieve; give credit where credit’s due**

Leadership experience shows that, when called upon, you have the confidence, know-how, and authenticity to step up, set goals, and deliver results. And THAT makes you a great fit for the organization!

CollegeCentral.com/

Visit the above URL to access our school’s exclusive jobs database **and MORE!**