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This is Eastern Michigan University's Career Corner hosted by the career coaches of the University Advising and Career Development Center. And welcome to season 4, Career FAQ.

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Welcome back to the Career Corner podcast. This is career coach April Calkovsky. And I am so excited to be back for another great episode in our series, Career FAQ. Our episode today addresses a common concern for so many students seeking internships and full time positions-- how do I get a job with no experience?

The first thing you'll want to do is expand your understanding of the term experience and then consider the context or the opportunity you're seeking. For example, if an internship or job posting describes the need for excellent communication skills and strong time management skills, I can almost guarantee you've gained those skills simply by participating in group projects, student organizations, and by holding down a part time job while taking college courses.

If you're applying to internships, take comfort in knowing that employers don't demand a lot of experience prior to taking on an internship. Usually, your coursework, combined with either volunteerism or student organization involvement, will be enough to provide you with the skills needed. When it comes to full time jobs, more specific experience may be required and will be listed in the job posting.

In general, though, transferable skills are just as important as specific experience. Transferable skills are skills you gained in a context different from the one you're applying to, but the skills are just as valuable in the new context. These essential skills include things such as interpersonal communication skills, insight into how you interact with and value different people from diverse backgrounds, skills, and organization, time management, teamwork, and understanding of organizational hierarchy and the importance of following rules, protocol, and structure.

Think about all of your experiences thus far. Your experience can come from involvement in student organizations, volunteering in the community, at school or church, participating in organizations such as 4-H, Future Farmers of America, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the YMCA or the Boys & Girls Club. Another place you've gained skills could be from school or community sports teams.

Now think about any part time jobs you've held. Maybe you started babysitting or mowing lawns or had a paper route. Maybe you've helped neighbors or family members with yard work, minor home renovations or pet sit for the neighbors. Maybe you've worked in fast food at a clothing or grocery store or at your aunt's cleaning business. During any and all of these experiences you've practiced essential skills an employer seeks in a candidate.

Believe it or not, you do have the skills needed to create a solid resume showcasing the value you will bring to an employer. Employers need to understand what skills and abilities you bring to the table. And you'll need to represent these in a cover letter, on a resume, and during an interview.

If you're feeling unsure about how to best present yourself and your skills to an employer, know that career coaches are here to help. We are happy to meet with you to brainstorm about what you can add to your resume and cover letter to accurately represent the depth of your experiences and skill sets. Make an appointment with a career coach today at emich.joinhandshake.com. And remember, we support your goals.

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