

## Ellen Varhol

Ellen Varhol is currently pursuing an MBA with a specialization in Strategic Human Resources Management at the Wisconsin School of Business, University of Wisconsin–Madison. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Communication from the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota.

After completing her undergraduate degree, Ellen began her career as an Admissions Intake Specialist. While the role provided valuable administrative and interpersonal experience, she soon realized that it did not align with her long-term career aspirations. Seeking guidance, she reached out to her aunt, a seasoned Human Resources professional, who introduced her to the diverse opportunities within the HR field. Inspired by their conversation, Ellen applied for her first role in HR as a Talent Acquisition Assistant. It was in this position that she discovered her passion for helping employees feel heard, valued, and supported while also helping the company grow sustainably through its people and, ultimately, build trust between employees and leadership.

While working as a Talent Acquisition Assistant at Center for Independence, Ellen gained foundational experience in human resources by supporting recruiting efforts, coordinating interviews, maintaining candidate records, and assisting with onboarding tasks. She developed strong organizational and communication skills through cross-team collaboration and contributed to a positive candidate experience. This role also introduced her to HR software systems and basic project coordination within the hiring process.

While in the MBA program, Ellen is working to learn skills and gain experiences to become a knowledgeable and effective strategic human resources professional. She is actively pursuing a Human Resources management position within the healthcare industry, where she can apply her academic training and practical experience in human resources and psychology. She is passionate about fostering positive, efficient, and enriching work environments that empower individuals and support organizational success. Ellen aims to contribute to a mission-driven healthcare organization by aligning people strategies with business goals to enhance both employee well-being and operational effectiveness.

In her free time, Ellen enjoys spending time outdoors, exploring new activities, reading, boating during the summer, and skiing in the winter.