

UTAH 4-H



Career Readiness Workshops



Cover Letter & Resume Development

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Resume Development

Introduction



Resumes and cover letters are the very first thing an employer or scholarship provider/foundation will review to determine if an applicant may be worthy of employment or a scholarship. Learning how to create documents that summarize an individual's knowledge, skills, experience, and accomplishments is a great way to earn opportunities. Portraying professionalism and infusing personality throughout the documents will give applicants a competitive edge in the application process. An important thing to remember is that the content of resumes and cover letters are unique to the person creating them. Their formatting, however; are a little more standardized.

Supplies

- Printed Resume Worksheets (Optional; available in different formats for age appropriateness)
- Blank paper for each person
- Pen/pencil for each person

Activity One: What is a resume?



Explain to the youth that a resume is a document that summarizes their accomplishments/experience, and highlights the skills and knowledge they have gained in an organized fashion. Writing a resume can be a daunting task, and knowing where to start is often the biggest challenge. Creating resume content for youth who may have not yet had previous employment can also be a difficult task, but this activity will help young people start to compile their information. Ask youth to write down quick answers to the following questions. Give them about 30 seconds – 1 minute to record their answers, and then ask the group to share a few of their responses between each topic.

1. Write down anything you've been involved with outside of school. Be specific and include how long you've participated in the activity. For example: sports, church, 4-H, Boys/Girls Scouts, etc.
2. Explain three experiences you've had where you learned a new skill. List where and when they took place.
3. Share a time when you were the leader. This can be a formal role, or just a time that you helped a peer or friend.
4. Write down anything you've done to make your community a better place.

Discussion Questions



1. What did this activity help you recognize about your experience? Are there any areas where you may be lacking?
2. If you are lacking in some areas, what are things you can do to help you add to those areas?
3. How does compiling a resume help you to set short and long term goals?
4. Does writing down your accomplishments boost your confidence? How will this help you prepare for an interview?



Cover Letter Development

Activity Two: A Convincing Cover Letter



Talk with the group about the role of a cover letter – this document is the chance to preface your resume with a narrative. The cover letter should be tailored to the people who are selecting the applicants, and should follow the traditional cover letter format. Cover letters should be professionally personal, and like a resume, they are unique to each individual. To help youth get started writing a competitive cover letter, show them the following sample application requirements:

1. Must have previous experience in _____(each person may select their own topic from step one of the resume activity)
2. Must have excellent organizational abilities
3. Must be a good team member with exceptional communication skills

Explain that the first step to writing a cover letter is to understand how to mesh what the opportunity is seeking, with your current skills. Next, ask youth to address how their past experiences have prepared them to meet the requirements by writing down 3 – 5 sentences for each point. Stop between each one to give them a chance to share what they wrote with the group. When they have written three paragraphs, show them that they have already created the main content of the cover letter.

To finish off the letter, they need to create an introductory line that flows into the first paragraph, and a conclusion. The conclusion should briefly summarize what they have shared in the body of the letter, and show interest/excitement in the potential of being interviewed. Give youth a moment to write the remaining two items, then ask the group to share how they introduced themselves and finished the letter.

Discussion Questions



Share the following cover letter tips by asking others to read them to the group and share any personal examples (good or bad) they may have noticed as they compiled their own documents:

- Maintain professional language – a cover letter is much more formal than a note to a friend
- Try to avoid using “I” but still emphasize your skills and knowledge
- Make sure to very clearly address each objective
- Use this to fill in the gaps of the resume – don’t re-list your accomplishments
- Always follow the correct format – watch for details with correct spacing and a signature
- Make sure to have someone else review/edit your writing

Conclusion



Cover letters and resumes are always changing based on new skills you acquired and experiences you have had. Be sure to update your resume often and always tailor your resume to the opportunity you are applying for, whether it is a leadership position, a job, or a scholarship.

MY FIRST RESUME

NAME

4-H COUNTY

PHONE NUMBER



UTAH 4-H
COLLEGE
& CAREER
READINESS

PROJECT INVOLVEMENT

Station 1: Write down your 4-H projects, and how long you have worked on them.

Station 2:
Explain three 4-H Activities or Experiences and where they took place: Club, County, Region, or State.

ACTIVITIES & EXPERIENCES

Station 3: Try to think of when you accomplished a goal, when someone told you “good job”, or you won a competition.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Station 4:
Share a time that you were a good leader. It can be a big role, or a time that you made others excited about completing a project.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Station 5:
Write down some things that you have done to make your community a better place.

COMMUNITY SERVICE



UTAH 4-H & UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS RESUME DEVELOPMENT

ABILITIES

What are three of your best skills?

EXPERIENCE

Where did you learn or practice the skills you listed above, excluding during school?

EDUCATION

List your formal education accomplishments. When will you graduate? Did you receive any honors? Were you involved in any leadership experiences?

AWARDS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Did you accomplish a difficult goal? When has someone told you "good job"? Have you won any challenges/contests?

COMMUNITY SERVICE

What have you done to make your community a better place? Have you ever served as a volunteer? What were your responsibilities?

Top 10 Skills Employers Seek:

1. Verbally communicate with persons inside/outside the organization
2. Work in a team situation
3. Make decisions and solve problems
4. Plan, organize, and prioritize work
5. Obtain and process information
6. Analyze quantitative data
7. Technical knowledge related to the job
8. Proficiency with computer software programs
9. Create and/or edit written reports
10. Sell or influence others

Source: Job Outlook 2013, National Association of Colleges & Employers

[Name]

[Address | Email Address | Phone Number]

[Dates]

[Education Degree or Certificate]

[Location]

[Education Honors, Awards, or Notes]

[Education Honors, Awards, or Notes]

EXPERIENCE

[Dates]

[Description of Experience]

[Location]

[Skill aquired from above experience]

[Skill aquired from above experience]

[Dates]

[Description of Experience]

[Location]

[Skill aquired from above experience]

[Skill aquired from above experience]

AWARDS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

[Dates]

[Description of Award/Accomplishment]

[Location]

[Dates]

[Description of Award/Accomplishment]

[Location]

[Dates]

[Description of Award/Accomplishment]

[Location]

COMMUNITY SERVICE/VOLUNTEERISM

[Dates]

[Description of Community Service or Volunteer Role]

[Location]

[Dates]

[Description of Community Service or Volunteer Role]

[Location]