



Facilitator Guide

RESUME + COVER LETTER PEER EXERCISE

In this activity, students will provide peer feedback on resume and cover letters, with a special focus on using the correct keywords, making a clear brand statement, and tailoring documents to a specific opportunity.

IN ADVANCE OF THIS ACTIVITY:

- Share** the Career Center's career library resources (especially: Resume and Cover Letters section) in advance of this activity.
- Ask** your students to select an existing job or internship for this exercise and instruct them to write a cover letter and resume tailored for this opportunity.
- Direct** your students to bring a printed copy of the resume, cover letter, AND the job/internship description to class.

NOTE: This activity offers alternative instructions if students don't bring a specific internship/job description.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS:

- Ask** pairs to swap their materials and spend at least 10–15 minutes answering questions on the “Resume Peer Review” worksheet.
- Ask** the class to share their observations about keywords and brand statements with each other and then poll the larger group about their feedback.
- Distribute** the “Cover Letter” worksheet and allow 10–15 minutes for them to complete cover letter prompts.
- Ask** class to share their observations in pairs and then have a group discussion about what makes a successful cover letter.

RESUME PEER EXERCISE



Interviewer _____ *Interviewee* _____

1 The average resume is viewed for six seconds. With this in mind, start by skimming the content of the resume (for no more than 10 seconds) and fill out this sentence on behalf of the candidate:

My _____, _____ and _____
_____ *make me an excellent candidate for this role.*

2 93% of all applications go through an applicant tracking system that is looking for relevant keywords to filter out unqualified candidates, and only 30% of all resumes even get reviewed. Looking at the *job posting*, write down 6 to 8 keywords that you would expect to see in the resume. (If none is provided, list the keywords you would expect to find in the posting.)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3 Put a check mark (above) next to the keywords that you find *in the resume*.

4 What, if anything, makes this resume distinctive from other candidates that might apply for this role?

5 Quickly draft how you think this candidate would answer the following interview question:

“Tell us about what makes you qualified for this role?”

“What do you see as your strengths?”

6 Many applicants are moving from “chronological” resumes (that feature a general experience section that displays experiences in reverse chronological order) to a “functional” resume that groups experiences into specific skill-focused sections, like: “Marketing and Events Experience” or “Youth Development Experience.”

If this resume is “chronological,” what are the experience sections you might use in a functional version of this resume?

If this resume is “functional,” provide feedback on the groupings—as they relate or don’t relate to the job posting.

7 Using this rating system, give this resume a score. And explain your score.

5	Perfect match!	<i>Explanation:</i>
4	Good candidate	
3	Qualified	
2	Kind of a reach...	
1	Ummmm	

8 What is one thing this applicant could do to improve their resume?

COVER LETTER PEER EXERCISE



Interviewer _____

Interviewee _____

1 Why is this candidate interested in this role? At this employer? (answer both questions)

2 Returning to #2 (in the resume review section), circle the keywords that are featured in the cover letter.

3 In the cover letter, underline every hard skill and circle every soft skill identified.

4 If you were planning to interview this candidate, what question(s) would you ask?

5 Using this rating system, give this cover letter a score. And explain your score.

5 the cover letter provides deep evidence of a solid claim and articulates why this role is a match

4 the cover letter and resume align to make a similar claim about the candidate

3 the cover letter is a narrative version of the resume

2 the cover letter references the resume

1 the cover letter introduces the candidate

Explanation: