

Getting the Job - Your Cover Letter, Resume and Interview *Lesson Plan*

Concept:

Creating an effective cover letter and resume to secure a job interview - making sure you are the candidate of choice.

Student learning associated with this concept can support achievement of provincial learning outcomes:

NB 2, 3

NL 1, 4, 5, 11

NS 2, 4, 7, 10

PEI 2, 4, 5

Rationale:

Many students may not have a cover letter or resume or understand why these are essential to securing employment. They may not also be aware that these documents are ones that provide prospective employers with a first impression of them, their skills and potential with their company.

The cover letter can be considered a sales pitch - it expresses an interest in the position, a summary of what you can bring to the job, aligning experiences and skills with what has been advertised, and a request for a job interview. The resume showcases the applicant in greater detail, offering evidence to back up skills, experience and education or training. These documents lay the groundwork for getting the coveted interview.

The interview is where the candidate needs to shine; they need to present additional relevant detail on how they are not only the ideal candidate based on skills and qualifications but how they will be a good fit for the company.

In this lesson, students will learn how an effective targeted cover letter and resume can set them apart from other applicants. They will also develop strategies that can help them stand out in an interview.

Inquiry Based Question (s) Related to Student Learning:

How can you effectively prepare for a job interview?

How can you create a cover letter and resume that effectively targets an advertised job opportunity?

How can you demonstrate you are the best candidate for the position in an interview?

Teachers should register students for a myBlueprint account to support learning associated with this lesson.

Teachers can support student learning through the facilitation of the following lesson on cover letters, resumes and preparing for a job interview. It is important that students understand the impression they make with an employer through each of these can impact their entry into the labour market. This lesson may require 4-5 class periods.

- Explicit instruction will be required on each of the three components identified for this lesson. Teachers can deliver a prepared presentation and review exemplars with students as each component is introduced. Teachers may also wish to bring in a career advisor from a provincial employment centre to support delivery of this lesson.
 - Students will be introduced to the basics of a cover letter and the types of information that should be contained in a three paragraph, one page cover letter written by someone with limited work experience.
 - Students will be introduced to three types of resumes and what differentiates each based on education and work experience.
 - Students will be introduced to interviews, including different types of interviews and strategies they can use to effectively prepare for an interview.
- Following instruction on cover letters, students can create a cover letter targeting a specific job ad using an autobiography provided by the teacher. Students can use formats suggested in class by their teacher or guest speaker or access tools that can support them in the myBlueprint platform. Through explicit instruction, students were introduced to the basic format for writing a cover letter for someone at their level of education and work experience. Students can assess each other's cover letters using a co-constructed rubric to provide feedback and suggestions for revision.
- Following instruction on resumes, students can create a resume targeting a specific job ad using an autobiography provided by the teacher. Students can use formats suggested in class by their teacher or guest speaker or access tools that can support them in the myBlueprint platform. As part of explicit instruction, students were introduced to the basic format for writing a resume for someone at their level of education and work experience. Students can assess each other's resumes using a co-constructed rubric to provide feedback and suggestions for revision.

- As a class, students can brainstorm the types of questions that could be asked in a job interview. Students can rehearse job interview questions with a peer and engage in a mock interview based on the job ad and autobiography provided by the teacher.
- Following instruction on preparing for job interviews, students can create a checklist of strategies that can support them in preparing for an interview.
- Students will create a cover letter and resume that represents their career goals, interests, skills, experience education and training.

Suggestions for Evidence of Learning and Assessment:

- Students can upload their cover letters and resumes to their labour market/ career portfolio in their myBlueprint account for assessment.
- Students can engage in a mock panel interview based on the autobiography and job position provided by their teacher. Panelists can provide feedback to the students on the effectiveness of the interview.
- Students can upload their interview tips/ strategy guide to their myBlueprint labour market / career portfolio as evidence of their understanding of how to effectively prepare for a job interview.

Teachers can access resources to support delivery of this lesson in the Resources/ Teaching Strategy Folder.

This lesson presents an opportunity for teachers to collaborate in supporting student learning about the role of self-assessments in career planning. In addition to Career Education courses, teachers can consider how students are able to meet cross curricular learning outcomes in other courses such as English/ French Language Arts, Multimedia, Social Studies, Fine Arts etc. A cross curricular focus also supports a unified approach in addressing the “why” of what students are learning. Students can develop an awareness of how and why what they are learning connects to them, their community and their future.