**Career Activity Curriculum Topic: Resumes**

**Career Activity: Starting a Resume**

**Activity Summary:** This activity will help students develop a vision for how to develop a strong resume that will be important to hold by the start of the senior year. Additionally, students will learn how to create a cover letter to accompany their resume.

**Estimated Time:** 30-55 minutes (Part 1: Starting a Resume; Part 2: Creating a Cover Letter)

**Learning Plan Activity:** 11th: Starting a Resume; 12th Grade: Creating a resume and cover letter **Additional Activities**: 9, 10

**Learning Outcomes**:  Students will learn what a solid resume and cover letter entails, build one, update it, and review it. Students will end with a vision as to what they can accomplish in high school to help create more opportunities for the best training and financial support for after high school. This will lead to the development of a topnotch resume upon entering the senior year.

**Materials Needed**:  PowerPoint, Handouts, Pen, Computer

**Academic Vocabulary**

* **University**: A school that offers courses leading to the following degrees.
  + **Bachelor’s Degree:** 4-Year Degree
    - Can focus more on the Arts (BA) or Sciences (BS)
    - Can take longer than 4 years to complete if the student takes less classes per semester
  + **Master’s Degree:** 2-3 years past a Bachelor’s Degree
  + **Doctorate:** 5-Year Degree (Typically)
    - Done usually after a Master’s Degree and highest degree that can be earned
      * Sometimes programs allow part of the Master’s Degree credits to count toward this degree shortening the length of time to get the degree
* **Community College**: A school that offers courses leading to a 2-Year **Associate's Degree**, and also typically holds 1-2 year certificate programs which usually includes trade programs.
  + Some students start at a community college then transfer to a University to complete a 4-Year Degree.
* **Apprenticeship:** Learning a trade or art under a skilled worker usually for pay (Example: Plumbing).
* **Trade School:** A school that teaches skilled trades (Example: Automotive, Cosmetology).
* **Rigor:** In regard to high school this term means a student challenges himself/herself in taking more classes than required and/or taking higher level courses (college level) such as Advanced Placement or Dual Credit Courses. It also may mean the student takes higher level courses in classes such as in the trades (Ex. Automotive, Cosmetology)

**Introduction**: Having a resume that lists your skills and experience is crucial to being successful in the future. Though you may feel like you don’t have much to put on a resume yet, going through the process of creating one will put you in the mindset of thinking about how to stand out from the crowd.

Think of your resume as the written expression of a social media account. On your Instagram, Snapchat, or YouTube Channel you show people what you’ve done, where you have been, your interests, and the things that make you unique. You put the best version of yourself on those platforms, for presentation to the world.

Resumes are not much different, though they pertain mostly to your professional accomplishments. A good resume shows a potential employer what you can do and why you are the best person to do that job by listing your skills and experience and accomplishments. Though you may feel like you don’t have much to put on a resume *yet,* going through the process of creating one will put you in the mindset of thinking about how to stand out from the crowd.

Today we are going to have you look at what you have accomplished since last year, what you are working on now, and also consider what you will do this year, so you will enter your senior year with a strong resume. Keep your resume from here on out on your path into adulthood. It will be easy to update it over the years as your life training and jobs shift with you on your career journey.

**Learning Activities/Procedures**

**Resume:**

* Letters of Recommendation: Producing a solid resume will give the best ammo to a letter writer to say the things they need to be able to say to get you what you want (scholarships, a job, admission to college, etc.).
* Scholarships: Lots of scholarships ask for a resume.
* University and Community Colleges: Even if a University/Community College does not require an actual resume, what it took to build it will pay off and be used on an application when applying to college. Great grades, leadership, extra-curricular, work and volunteer experiences will lead to being admitted and receiving scholarships.
* Jobs: Great resumes get you the interview, so you can sell yourself in person for a job
* Military: What recruiter would not want to jump at having you who has a solid resume? She/he will be excited to help you keep building it.
* Trade School: Trade schools will want to snatch you because of your great resume. Also because of your demonstrating a good use of your time in high school the school may be able to provide some scholarship opportunities to help you attend.

***Getting Ready to Create your Resume:*** If you do not have a resume started, use this template to help you get started. As you plan ahead, think of other ways you can add more to your resume in these areas in the future! *Give students a copy of the handout\_My Plan: Building a Solid Resume. Have students complete as much information as they can remember to help with entering the information in the Resume Builder Activity next.*

**Creating a Resume Activity**: (11th Grade - End at this slide) If *resumes and plans are saved in a career file, on a student computer, etc. have students pull them up.*

Follow this user-friendly Resume Builder app: <https://myfuture.com/career/resume-builder> and make sure to save a copy of this document on your Google Drive or another safe place you can access when you need it.

**Closing**: Remember a resume is a living document that is always changing and the need to plan ahead is important. In order to get where you want to go in a career don’t forget to look at your plan often and think about ways you can make yourself standout. The resume that catches the reader’s eye is the one that will get the prize on the other side.

**Part 2: 12th Grade**

**Career Activity: Creating a Cover Letter**

Introduction: [Use PowerPoint] Every time you send out a résumé, you'll need to have a great cover letter to send along with it. It's a good idea to customize your cover letter for each job you're applying for. The cover letter is another way of introducing yourself to a potential employer. What it says about you can be the difference between getting in the door and missing your chance.

***Creating a Cover Letter Activity***: *After students have updated their resume, have them start working on a draft cover letter that they can edit or personalize as needed. Have each student go to the* [*My Future Create your Cover Letter*](https://myfuture.com/career/creating-your-cover-letter) *website and open a new Google Doc/Microsoft Word/Paper. Give each student a copy of the handout\_ Sample Cover Letter for reference.*

**Composing the Cover Letter:** *Students should use their resume as they think about their talents, strengths, etc. Some parts will not be able to complete unless they have a specific audience they are writing to.*

* Paragraph 1: This is especially important if you've been referred by a mutual friend or acquaintance. If this is the case, don't start with "My friend John Peterson told me you have a job opening so I thought I would write." This will not "wow" anyone. Instead, show a little excitement and passion for the potential employment: "I was thrilled when my friend John Peterson told me there was an opening for an assistant photographer at your company." Follow this with a few key strengths you have that are pertinent to the position you're looking to obtain.
* Paragraph 2: Don't go overboard; pick the top three talents or characteristics that would make you stand out as a candidate. (your résumé is there to fill in the details). When writing this paragraph, think about how and why your specific skills, talents and accomplishments would be best for the role.
* Paragraph 3: Maybe you like their fast growth, know people who work there already or you've always used their products. Companies feel good if the candidate has some connection to them and has a good understanding of how the company works, even before he or she is hired.
* Paragraph 4: Suggest a time and a way for you to follow up. Always give the reader easy ways to contact you.

**Learning Activities/Procedures:**

**Discussion:** Use PowerPoint.

**Questions:**

* What is a resume?
* What would be on a great resume for applying for colleges, scholarships, the military, trade schools, or the jobs in your future?

**Evaluation:** Students will be able to complete the ‘Starting a Resume’ and/or the ‘Create a Resume and Cover Letter’ Learning Plan Activities.

**Adaptations:** An actual resume may be started at any grade level as a second part of the planning process handout to update yearly with it. Ideally the resume would be built upon every year starting with freshmen.

* This could be completed in a class or in a homeroom/advisory/mentoring period as well and a resume format (there are many examples online) could be provided and assigned as homework.
* It could be reviewed and updated annually along with the planning handout.

*Suggestions to mention to students*

* GPA Goal (What’s a transcript and why is it important?)
* AP/Honor/Dual Credit/CTE classes
* CTE certificates/exams/pathway goal
* Part-time/Full-time work
* Make connections with college reps
* Make connections with military reps
* Volunteer Work
* Researching Scholarships Early/ Earning Scholarships
* Join TRIO (If you have the TRIO Program at your school talk about the program)
* Extra-curricular activities
  + Sports, choir, band, orchestra, theater, ball-room dance, journalism, speech and debate, journalism, photography, art, church, etc.
* Complete CTE program/pathway (Ex. CNA: Certified Nursing Assistant)
* Honors/Awards/Certificate/Degree Goals (Ex. Honor Society, A.A. Degree by end of high school)

**Closing**: Save your initial cover letter and remember to do some research to be able to individualize each cover letter you create for each specific audience so you can stand out!