

Tailored for Success: Resume Creation Part 2

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Essential Question(s)

Why and how should I tailor my resume?

Summary

In this lesson, students explore what they have learned about creating resumes and then push further to identify critical strategies for tailoring resumes to apply to particular situations. Students will explore examples and non-examples of tailored resumes. Students will practice prioritizing information on a resume to suit a particular situation. Students will reflect on and identify their own transferable skills, which they will use to tailor their resumes.

Learning Goals

- Understand the significance of tailoring resumes for specific job applications.
- Identify key elements to modify and create a customized resume for a chosen job posting.

Attachments

- Examples Non-Examples Discussion Guide—Tailored for Success.docx
- Examples Non-Examples Discussion Guide—Tailored for Success.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Tailored for Success.pptx
- Resume Sorting Cards—Tailored for Success - Spanish.docx
- Resume Sorting Cards—Tailored for Success - Spanish.pdf
- Resume Sorting Cards—Tailored for Success.docx
- Resume Sorting Cards—Tailored for Success.pdf
- Resumes Example and Nonexample—Tailored for Success - Spanish.docx
- Resumes Example and Nonexample—Tailored for Success - Spanish.pdf
- Resumes Example and Nonexample—Tailored for Success.docx
- Resumes Example and Nonexample—Tailored for Success.pdf
- STAR Method Handout—Tailored for Success - Spanish.docx
- STAR Method Handout—Tailored for Success - Spanish.pdf
- STAR Method Handout—Tailored for Success.docx
- STAR Method Handout—Tailored for Success.pdf
- Transferable Skills T-Chart—Tailored for Success - Spanish.pdf
- Transferable Skills T-Chart—Tailored for Success.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Example-Nonexamples Discussion Guide (attached)
- Resumes Example and Nonexample (attached; one per elbow partners)
- Resume Sorting Cards (attached; one per group of 4-5)
- STAR Method Handout (attached, one per student)
- Transferable Skills T-Chart (attached; one per student)
- Chart paper (optional)
- Internet searching capability
- Access to printing
- Computer Word Processing

10 minutes

Engage

Start with **slide 3** and present the essential question for this lesson. Then, begin the lesson by engaging students in a discussion using the Examples and Non-examples strategy. Students will share their understanding of resumes and their experiences in job searching. Display **slide 4** for instructions on the activity. Have students write down an example and a non-example about each of the topics listed below:

- Formatting your resume
- Showing your work experience on a resume
- Conveying your strengths on a resume
- Tailoring your resume to a particular job

Go through the prompts on **slides 5-8**, one by one, asking volunteers to share an example or non-example they wrote down for each.

Teacher's Note: Discussion

Use the attached **Example/Non-example-Discussion Guide** to help prompt and respond to students, making sure to hit the most important points. It's okay if there aren't many ideas on the last bullet about tailoring resumes. We will learn more about that in this lesson.

Tell participants that you hope they will have some good examples and non-examples of how to tailor their resumes by the end of the lesson. Then, display the lesson objectives on **slide 9.**

10 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 10**. Hand out two **Resume Example and Non Example** (attached) and one example job posting to students. One resume will be completely generic, and one will be tailored entirely to the job. Ask students to work with an elbow partner, discuss which resume is more likely to get an interview, and write down a list of 3-5 reasons why. Have each partner group share one of the reasons why.

Then, working around the whole room, have each pair share one reason from their list at a time and write this reason on a large piece of chart paper, whiteboard, or other visible surface to the whole room. We will revisit this list later.

As pairs share their reasons, others should only share items they've written down that haven't already been shared. Stop when no one has anything new to add to the list of reasons.

Move to **slide 11**. Then, reveal that both resumes describe the same candidate. The first one was created following generic advice for a good resume; there's nothing *wrong* with it. The second one followed advice about tailoring a resume to a specific job posting.

Note skills and details that speak to specific things mentioned in the job posting and expand on how their experiences fit this situation.

20 minutes

Explain

Discuss with students the importance of carefully reading job postings to understand the specific skills, qualifications, and experiences required for the position. Point out the places on the tailored resume example that demonstrate each customization strategy listed below. You can also point to items students listed in the previous activity that look or sound a lot like these strategies:

- Identifying and incorporating keywords from the job posting.
- Aligning skills and experiences with the specific requirements of the job.
- Highlighting relevant achievements and measurable results.
- Adjusting the resume objective or summary to match the job.
- Adjust the hierarchy on the page to put the most relevant information for the job at the top.

Explain that we will work on all of these strategies, but the next activity will specifically focus on practicing putting the most relevant information at the top.

Display **slide 12** and hand out the attached **Resume Sorting Cards** to groups of 4-5 students. Tell students they will be given three different scenarios and sort the cards differently for each. Provide some time for them to look through and organize their cards before showing the scenarios.

Then, display **slide 13** to share the first scenario. Ask the student to arrange the pieces of the resume in the order of information that is most relevant to meeting the requirements requested by the scenario.

Move through **slides 14 and 15** for the additional rounds. In each round, groups should choose at least three pieces of information to leave out. Generally, the resume should not exceed two pages. In at least one of the scenarios, they will be asked not to exceed one page. The time needed for each round should be less as students become familiar with the options they have to work with.

After each round of sorting, have groups walk around the room to see how other groups sorted their resume. Ask volunteers to share the differences and similarities they noticed in how they sorted. Allow groups to give reasoning for why they made their choices, especially in cases where there is quite a lot of difference between the groups.

Discuss the choices that best meet that scenario and the reasoning for why they work well.

30 minutes

Extend

Move to **slide 16**, giving directions for transferable skills. Handout one attached **Transferable Skills T-Chart** per student and then have students read the information. They should highlight a skill they have from the list on the left-hand side and then write how they know they have that skill on the right-hand side. This might be a club, activity, or school project where they demonstrated that skill.

In pairs, students will select a transferable skill they have seen in their partner and describe how they have seen their partner demonstrate that skill.

Have students search for and find a job posting on a college student job board that aligns with their interests. This will help students to see the kinds of jobs that are available for college students, while in school. These job boards are often more approachable for students to sift through than something written to a much broader audience. Guidance is provided on **slide 17** for how to access the University of Oklahoma student job board.

Then, hand out the attached STAR Method **Handout** while displaying **slide 18** and have students fill in the handout describing a personal experience where they used transferable skills that would showcase their strength as a candidate for a job posting they found.

- **Step 1: Choose a Relevant Experience (Situation):**
  Encourage students to think about a specific experience from their school, extracurricular activities, or personal life. It could be a group project, a club leadership role, sports team participation, or a volunteer opportunity.
- **Step 2: Define Your Role and Task (Task):**
  Guide students to clearly define their role in the chosen experience and outline the specific tasks or responsibilities they undertook. Help them understand what skills were necessary to fulfill their role effectively.
- **Step 3: Outline Your Actions (Action):**
  Prompt students to describe their actions to complete the task or fulfill their role. Encourage them to think about the steps they personally took, the challenges they overcame, and how they contributed to the overall success of the project or activity.
- **Step 4: Reflect on the Outcome (Result):**
  Ask students to reflect on the outcomes or results of their actions. Did the project meet its goals? Were there positive impacts on the group or community? Encourage them to consider both tangible and intangible results.
- **Step 5: Identify Transferable Skills:**
  Guide students to identify and list the transferable skills they utilized during the experience. Help them recognize teamwork, communication, leadership, problem-solving, time management, and adaptability skills. Emphasize that these skills are valuable in the context of the specific experience and can be applied to various situations.

Then review two examples of how to use the STAR Method on **slides 19 and 20**.

30 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 21** and explain that students will customize their resumes to match the specific job posting requirements utilizing the insights they gained while completing the STAR activity.

- First, have students take notes of the specific job requirements, keywords, and skills mentioned.
- Then, they should consider transferable skills they have acquired to meet those requirements and incorporate them into their work history, descriptions of achievements, and other parts of their resume.
- Students should consider how they order the items on the resume so that the most relevant aspects are visible.

Provide time for students to customize their resume for the job listing.

Have students swap job postings and resumes with a partner. Their partners should look for the specific strategies we've discussed today:

- Identifying and incorporating keywords from the job posting.
- Aligning skills and experiences with the specific requirements of the job.
- Highlighting relevant achievements and measurable results.
- Adjusting the resume objective or summary to match the job.
- Adjust the hierarchy on the page to put the most relevant information for the job at the top.

Finally, move to **slide 22**, describing how partners will why-light where they see a strategy used and note any places where they see an opportunity for even more alignment to ensure that each of the strategies listed above is addressed.

Encourage students to discuss the feedback received and make improvements accordingly.

Research Rationale

By learning to tailor their resumes students will learn to recognize and showcase their emerging technical skills and deeper human skills, which are crucial for accessing work in their futures. Targeting high-need, high-opportunity youth is particularly important, as developing these skills not only enhances their employability but also supports their mental health by fostering a sense of security in their ability to provide for their own future (Solberg et al., 2021).

Resources

- Solberg, V. S. H., Park, C. M., & Marsay, G. (2021). Designing quality programs that promote hope, purpose and future readiness among high need, high risk youth: Recommendations for shifting perspective and practice. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 29(2), 183-204. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072720938646
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