



Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan:

Sector: Job Search

Occupation: Generic

Theme: Resume Writing

Occupational Task: Write a resume using the chronological format

Describe Essential Skills (ES) developed during the learning activities:

Document Use: Use a standard format for chronological resumes. (E3)

Writing: Write a personal resume using a chronological format. (ES 3)

Reading: Read and respond to the resume of another learner. (ES 3)

Oral Communication: Make and receive suggestions for changes to resume with a partner. (ES 2)

Working with Others: Work with a partner to review and edit each other's resumes. (ES 2)

Computer Use: Input personal information in a chronological resume format. (ES 3)

Continuous Learning: Learn an alternate format for developing a resume and use one of the versions to apply for a job. (ES 3)

Indicate the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) competencies developed during the learning activities:

Speaking: Indicate problems and solutions. Propose/recommend that certain changes be made in a familiar area. (Canadian Language Benchmarks. [CLB] 8)

Listening: Identify stated and unstated meaning in suggestions and recommendations. Evaluate the validity of a suggestion or proposed solution. (CLB 7/8)

Reading: Identify correctly, specific factual details/inferred meaning. Follow a set of written instructions on 10-13-step procedure related to simple technical task. (CLB 7/8)

Writing: Write an effective personal resume. (CLB 8)

Language and culture focus for the learning activities:

Grammar

- Questions to clarify and further develop content for a resume. (Information questions will be the most frequently used; however, yes/no questions, negative questions and tag questions could also be used.) For example, *What type of company did you work for? Who did you report to, how often, and what was the information? What computer programs did you use? How many people did you supervise? Did you finish university in your country? Could you use another verb that is more specific?*



Vocabulary

- Profession specific terminology, i.e., Autocad, Accpac, Simply Accounting, accounts payable, mainframe, C+, SAP, contracts, inventory, purchasing, merchandise
- Action verbs and keywords (see resources for lists)
- Writing skill identification statements. For example, *All of the action verbs should be in the past tense, unless you are still working. It is not necessary in a resume to use articles. There are a lot of pronouns in this statement but I am not sure to what they refer. Personal pronouns are not used in resumes. It is important to be careful of word order. Etc.*
- Clarification expressions and making suggestions opening gambits (see attachment)
- Expressions related to feelings. For example, *I felt uncomfortable. It made me feel awful. I didn't like being spoken to like that. I don't like feedback. It is not nice. I felt stupid. I don't like being wrong but it's good to know your mistakes etc.*

Culture

- Suggestions are ideas given usually in response to a request and are given very politely, e.g. choice of words, tone of voice, body language etc. The intent of the speaker is that the person can choose to act on the suggestion or not.
- Resumes are required to apply for any job even though an application form may be asked for as well.
- Information on the resume is expected to be accurate and able to be documented.

Suggested teacher resources and classroom materials:

1. Azar, Betty Schramper, *Understanding and Using English Grammar, Third Edition* (White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 1999) pages A8-A16. (This unit is on the five types of questions.)

2. Enelow, Wendy S. *Resumes Winners from the Pros* (Manassas Park, VA: Impact Publications, 1998)

(Text provides sample resumes. Choose those that are most representative of the class in terms of previous experience and careers, and future ones. Each learner can create his or her own resume, based on the generic example, which addresses his or her particular situation. Good for ideas re: wording, vocabulary, headings and accomplishment statements.)

3. Enelow, Wendy S. and Kursmark, Louise M. *Cover Letter Magic* (Indianapolis, IN: JIST Publishing, Inc. 2004) pages 370-388.

(Lists of keywords and action verbs which are important for resumes as well as cover letters.)

4. Parker, Yana. *The Resume Catalog: 200 Damn Good Examples* (Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, 1996) pages 10, 19, 36, 80, 92, 218, 250, 262. (Reverse chronological resumes).

5. Pollock, Carroll Washington. *Communicate What You Mean* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents, 1982) Pages 177-179. (A brief review of how to make suggestions using modal auxiliaries to express thoughts and/or feelings precisely.)



6. Teacher prepared scripts for role-plays on giving and receiving feedback (suggestions), and two scenarios forgiving and receiving suggestions(see attachment).

Estimated time for the learning activities: **3 hours** divided into 2 lessons

In the first lesson the chronological resume format is presented to the learners. Learners write the first draft of their resume. The second lesson practices giving and receiving feedback using pair conferencing and editing of each other's resume.

Learner Profile:

All learners are Foreign Trained Professionals from a variety of fields. Learners are at CLB 7/8 preparing to start a job search. They are aware of the need for a resume that articulates their background and experience. They have prior knowledge of skill identification and accomplishment statements. e. g. " Prepared confidential correspondence, reports and documents for the Board of Directors' monthly financial meeting." *instead of*, "Wrote confidential letters, and reports."

In a previous lesson, learners completed resume worksheets detailing positions, duties, and skills.

Learning Objectives:

1. Write a chronological resume that details personal information, experience and skills accurately.
2. Use accomplishment statements to express skills and experiences within a prescribed format.
3. Give and receive verbal feedback (suggestions) in an appropriate and constructive manner related to a written resume.
4. Use peer feedback to revise resume.

Learning activities:

Lesson 1 (90 minutes)

- Hand out envelopes in which a chronological resume has been cut into pieces, to groups of three. Each group receives a different resume to stimulate thought and discussion i.e. on headings, different positions and descriptors.
- Ask the groups to organize the pieces into an appropriate resume format.
- Have the groups put their finished resume on a flipchart.(20 min)

- In large group discussion, have each group present their finished resume.
- After a group has presented, the teacher shows the original resume on an overhead for further discussion of the salient points of a chronological resume.
- Start a list of characteristics of a chronological resume on a flipchart.
- Develop a list of the features of a chronological resume. The list should include: the



position of the headings, the choice of headings, the position of dates, when to include a summary and what to include in it, how the summary relates to the job descriptors, the number of descriptors under each job should be the same (visual balance), the descriptors should be "accomplishment statements", the font size and type should be visually pleasing - balance of bold and italic for eye breaks - it can be read in 3 seconds and the main points that the writer wants the reader to pay attention to stand out from the rest of the text. (45 min)

- Each learner writes a chronological resume using his/her own previously developed resume worksheet as a reference, and uses the checklist developed in class. Teacher provides assistance to make sure that they are on the right track. The learners will complete their resumes for homework. (25 min)

Lesson 2

- The teacher will demonstrate two different role-plays. The first script is one in which partner A criticizes Partner B's work inappropriately. The second script provides an example of constructive feedback.
- In large group, the learners discuss what happened in the two role-plays: how they felt about what was said, and how it was said, what their reactions were, any physical reaction etc.
- Direct the learners' attention to the response which provided positive and low inference feedback.
- Elicit ideas for appropriate ways in which suggestions could be made and effective responses given.
- List learners' answers on the board.
- Complete the lists using the attached file if necessary, or provide it as a learner reference tool. (30min)

List of suggested openers:

I would suggest that...

It seems that there are...

What do you think...?

I am not sure of what you want to say.....

How would it sound if you said.....

Etcetera

List of suggested responses:

I am not sure I understand.....

Can you give me an example....

You are right it would sound better.....

Thanks for seeing that spelling mistake...

Etcetera

- In pairs, have learners practice giving and receiving positive and negative feedback
 - Give each pair two prepared scripts to take turns in the different roles.
 - If desired give a script with missing parts to role-play filling in the missing information for additional practice.
 - Pairs are given two situations to practice giving feedback and responding to it using some of the suggested gambits. The pairs use both positive and negative feedback in each situation.
 - The pairs debrief feelings about giving and receiving the feedback/criticism.
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- In a large group discuss their feelings and reactions and remind them to be kind and constructive in the next task. (30 min)
 - In pairs, have the learners conference and review each other's first draft of a resume focusing on complete accomplishment statements, appropriate wording and phraseology, complete descriptors for each position, accurate information and the reverse chronological format.
 - Learners ask questions, make suggestions and respond in an appropriate manner as discussed in class. The learners complete the rewrite for homework. (30 min)

Additional and/or extension learning activities:

- Following the pair conferencing, the learners rewrite and again conference with their partner. The editing focus on the second draft will be to review the suggested changes from the first peer review and to look at grammar, punctuation, spelling, dates, confirm that everything has been included and that the information is accurate, the phone number and address are correct and the overall effect is professional.
- The learners input their resume on the computer paying attention to additions and changes as well as setup and formatting as discussed.
- Using the developed resumes and resume worksheet, the learners analyze their employment skills and create a functional resume. N.B. For some professions, such as Engineering and Health Care, employers seem to be asking for reverse chronological resumes only.

Evaluation:

- The learner submits a final draft of a resume in chronological format. The instructor evaluates it, for dates in reverse chronological order and appropriate accomplishment statements. In addition, points will be given for incorporation of peer feedback, as appropriate, correct spelling, punctuation and accuracy of information.
- Instructor conducts informal evaluations, during the role-plays, of learners giving and receiving feedback.

Task Writer:

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ATTACHMENTS

CLARIFICATION EXPRESSIONS

- Would you mind repeating that?
- I'm sorry; I didn't catch that last part.
- Sorry, I don't follow you.
- I'm not sure I'm following you.
- I'm afraid I didn't get that.
- Run that by me one more time. I'm not sure what that word means.
- I'm not sure what you mean.
- Pardon me?
- What was that?
- What was that again?
- You lost me there.
- I didn't get the part about...
- Can you tell me what you mean by _____?
- Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you said...
- Let me see if I understand what you are saying...
- If I hear you correctly, you are telling me that....

SAMPLE SCRIPTS

First Role-play

This conversation takes place at the employee's desk during work hours.

Speaker A: You are a co-worker and have been asked to have a look at a colleagues' resume who is applying for an internal posting. You are concerned with the spelling mistakes.

Speaker B: You are the employee who is applying for an internal posting in another department.

Speaker A: Hi, Betty, I have just read your resume. You have made so many spelling mistakes that it looks like you wrote it in a hurry. It's terrible!

Speaker B: Really! Yeah, I was in a bit of a rush. It's that bad?

Speaker A: Yeah, they will never hire you if you can't spell.



Second Role-play

This conversation takes place at the employee's work station.

Speaker A: As a favour, you have reviewed a friend's resume who wants to change careers. You need to speak to him/her about the grammar and spelling errors.

Speaker B: You have written a resume and have asked a friend and co-worker to edit it.

Speaker A: I have just finished reading your resume. There are a lot of grammar and spelling errors in it. Do you have some time to discuss it? I'm happy to help you make the corrections.

Speaker B: That would be great if you can show me my mistakes.

Speaker A: The first suggestion I have is to use spell check or a good dictionary. It's very important not to have any spelling errors. But, let's look at the grammar too and in particular the verb tenses.

Speaker B: Thank you.

PAIR PRACTICE SCRIPT EXAMPLES

Speaker A: I just gave my resume to Charlie to edit and I am really worried; he is such a detailed person. But, I didn't know who else to ask.

Speaker B: I understand your concern. May _____?

Speaker A: Sure.

Speaker A: I have just read the first draft of your resume. You seem to understand what we are supposed to do, but you have just listed your duties under work experience and it is really boring. _____

Speaker B: OK, I understand now that I should get a resume book and find out how to write an accomplishment statement to prove what I have done.



Speaker A: Will you please have a look at my outline of my chronological resume to make sure it's OK.

Speaker B: No problem. (Reads the resume) There are a couple of things. I notice that there's a gap in your dates, _____.

Speaker A: I don't know how to use this computer to write a resume. Will you help me?

Speaker B: It's unfamiliar to me as well, why _____.

Speaker A: That's a good idea. I will ask the IT person.

(Each script could have three choices of "suggestion gambits (expressions)" or give a handout with six choices of "suggestion gambits". With a more advanced class let the learners use the expressions that they developed in class discussion.)

This activity could be done in large group first and then practiced in pairs.

MAKING SUGGESTIONS ROLE-PLAYS

Situation Examples

You are in the Human Resources department for ABC Company Inc. and an internal position has just been posted. You have a person in mind who you feel would be excellent for the job. He has handed in his resume it is not only boring but he has left out some important job specific training information. It does not relate to the position and says very little about his technical skills. Schedule an appointment with him to talk about his resume and to make some suggestions that might help.



Your friend has written a resume for a job that she really wants and has asked you to edit it. This is a difficult position because she thinks that she knows everything about resume writing and is probably not expecting any comments. You really want to help but are not sure how to tell her that her resume is not visually pleasing. It is very difficult to read because the font size is too small, the font style is not the same, and the headings are far too big. Also, her choice of action verbs could be more specific, interesting and descriptive. You want to suggest that she use resume paper and a more appropriate format. This is going to be difficult. Talk to your friend and offer some suggestions.