



SCHOLARS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

PROFESSIONAL TRACK

Session 2: Job Search Strategies

Welcome to session 2 which is to be covered in weeks 3 and 4. This session focuses on helping your mentee develop job search skills by assisting them in writing and revising their resumes and cover letters.

Recap the previous session and review progress on tasks you assigned your mentee.

1. Activity 1: Resume Writing

Review your mentee's resume and offer constructive suggestions for improvement. Provide tips on enhancing their resume, and ask them to send you a revised copy after incorporating your recommendations.

Here are a few tips that you can use when reviewing a mentee's resume.

Resume Writing Tips

1. **Tailor your resume** - Customize your resume for each job application by highlighting relevant experiences and skills.
2. **Use a professional format** - Choose a clean, professional layout with clear headings and consistent formatting.
3. **Highlight achievements** - Focus on your accomplishments rather than just listing job duties. Use quantifiable results whenever possible.
4. **Strong summary statement** - Start with a compelling summary statement that succinctly presents your qualifications and career goals.
5. **Use action verbs** - Begin bullet points with action verbs such as "managed," "developed," "led," or "achieved" to convey impact.
6. **Keep it concise** - Limit your resume to one or two pages, ensuring every word adds value.
7. **Proofread** - Check for spelling, grammar, and formatting errors. A polished resume demonstrates attention to detail.
8. **Include relevant keywords** - Incorporate industry-specific keywords to pass through Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) and attract the attention of recruiters.
9. **Showcase skills** - Include a skills section that highlights both technical and soft skills relevant to the job.
10. **Professional contact information** - Ensure your contact details are up-to-date and include a professional email address and LinkedIn profile.



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Resource

Look for sample resumes relevant to mentee's field to use during the meeting

Suggested Resume Template Structure

A resume should contain at least the following sections. Depending on the mentee's field, use your judgment and experience to decide what is necessary.

Resume Template Structure

Section	Description
Contact Information	Name, phone number, email address, LinkedIn profile.
Objective	Brief statement about career goals and relevance to the job.
Experience	List of relevant work experience, including job title, company, and key achievements.
Education	Details of academic background, including degree, institution, and graduation date.
Skills	List of relevant skills, both technical and soft skills.

Use of AI by Recruiters

Understanding AI in Recruitment

Share the following key points with your mentees to help them understand the role of AI in modern recruitment processes. Encourage them to apply these insights to optimize their resumes and online profiles, ensuring they effectively navigate ATS and other AI-driven tools. Emphasize the importance of combining these strategies with traditional job search methods for the best results.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) - Many companies use ATS to filter resumes before they reach a human recruiter. These systems scan for keywords and phrases that match the job description.

Keyword optimization - To pass through ATS, ensure your resume includes relevant keywords from the job description. This means tailoring each resume for the specific job application.

Formatting matters - Simple, clean resume formats work best with ATS. Avoid complex layouts, graphics, and excessive use of tables that might confuse the system.



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Consistent terminology - Use consistent job titles and industry terminology that align with the job listing. This helps ATS recognize your qualifications more accurately.

Profile screening - AI tools also screen online profiles. Make sure your LinkedIn profile and other professional online presences are updated and reflect the same information as your resume.

Speed and efficiency - AI allows recruiters to process applications quickly. This means it's crucial to apply promptly and ensure your resume makes a strong first impression.

Bias and fairness - While AI can help reduce human bias, it's not perfect. Be aware that systems can still have biases based on the data they were trained on. Ensure your resume and applications are as inclusive and unbiased as possible.

Continuous learning - AI in recruitment is constantly evolving. Stay informed about new trends and tools that companies might be using to improve your job search strategy.

Personal touch - Despite AI's role, human connections remain vital. Networking, informational interviews, and personal referrals can significantly enhance your chances of securing a job.

Encourage mentees to combine these insights with traditional job search strategies for a comprehensive approach to landing their first job.

2. Activity 2: Cover Letter

Review your mentee's cover letter and offer constructive suggestions for improvement. Provide tips on enhancing their cover letter, and ask them to send you a revised copy after incorporating your recommendations.

Here are a few tips that you can use when reviewing a mentee's resume.

Tips for Writing a Good Cover Letter

Encourage your mentees to apply these tips to create compelling cover letters that stand out to potential employers.

1. **Personalize your letter** - Address the hiring manager by name if possible. This shows you've done your research and adds a personal touch.
2. **Engaging opening** - Start with a strong, engaging opening that captures the reader's attention and clearly states your interest in the position.
3. **Showcase your fit** - Highlight how your skills, experiences, and accomplishments align with the job requirements. Be specific about how you can contribute to the company.
4. **Use keywords** - Include relevant keywords from the job description. This can help your cover letter pass through Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS).



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5. **Tell a story** - Use anecdotes or examples to demonstrate your qualifications and achievements. This makes your cover letter more engaging and memorable.
6. **Highlight achievements** - Focus on your achievements rather than just listing duties. Use quantifiable results to show your impact, such as "increased sales by 20%" or "managed a team of 10."
7. **Professional tone** - Maintain a professional yet friendly tone. Avoid overly formal language but remain respectful and courteous.
8. **Keep it concise** - Be concise and to the point. Ideally, your cover letter should be no longer than one page.
9. **Strong closing** - End with a strong closing statement that reiterates your enthusiasm for the role and your desire for an interview. Politely thank the reader for their time.
10. **Proofread** - Carefully proofread your cover letter for spelling and grammar errors. Consider asking a mentor or friend to review it as well.

Suggested Cover Letter Template structure

A cover letter should contain at least the following sections. Depending on the mentee's field, use your judgment and experience to decide what is necessary.

Section	Description
Salutation	Address to the hiring manager if possible.
Introduction	Introduce yourself and state the position you are applying for.
Body	Highlight your relevant experiences and skills, and explain why you are a good fit for the role.
Closing	Thank the hiring manager for their time and express your enthusiasm for the opportunity.

Tasks for Mentees to Complete Before Next Meeting

1. **Update resume and cover letter**
 - Use the tips and templates provided to update your resume and cover letter.
 - Tailor them to at least two specific job applications.
 - Send them to your mentor for review
2. **Apply for jobs**
 - Apply to the 5 companies they had identified in the previous session using the updated cover letters and resumes from this session.



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Preparation for Session 3

Focus Area: Networking on LinkedIn

Prepare to discuss networking, with a specific focus on LinkedIn. Your goal is to help your mentees improve or create their LinkedIn profiles.

Preparation

- Mentees should create their LinkedIn profiles, if they don't already have one.
- Share your LinkedIn profile with mentees, highlighting the key areas they should focus on improving or creating before your next meeting.

Feedback Form

Please fill out the feedback forms at the end of your meeting. Share the mentee feedback form with your mentee to fill out as well. Your input helps us improve the program, and we appreciate your assistance.

Mentor feedback form - <https://airtable.com/app9D3AZKrWuuIryo/shrEc8sDgexbc9Wt>

Mentee feedback form - <https://airtable.com/app9D3AZKrWuuIryo/shrH0VAQT8he1C3kx>