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The Career Portfolio: The Résumé, Cover Letter, and Elevator Pitch

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which of the following statements is true of a knowledge-based economy?
 - a) It depends on high skill levels.
 - b) It depends on knowledge and information.
 - c) It relies on the exchange of intellectual capital.
 - d) All of the above
2. What is the purpose of a cover letter?
 - a) To summarize a candidate's résumé
 - b) To show the recruiter that the candidate has put a lot of effort into the job application process
 - c) To demonstrate the candidate's fit with the job, organization, and industry
 - d) To serve as a substitute for the résumé
3. Which of the following Education sections of a résumé is the most effective?
 - a)

Education

| | |
|--|----------------|
| University of Saskatchewan, Edwards School of Business | Candidate 2018 |
| Bachelor of Business Administration, Marketing | |
| Marketing GPA: 3.5/4, CGPA: 3.2 | |
| Dean's honors list | |
| Dr. Ogilvy's Communications Award | April 2015 |

b)

Education

| | |
|--|----------------|
| University of Saskatchewan, Edwards School of Business | Candidate 2018 |
|--|----------------|

I am a marketing major with a marketing GPA of 3.5, and a CGPA of 3.4. I am currently on the Dean's honors list, and last year I received Dr. Ogilvy's Communication Award.

c)

Education

University of Saskatchewan, Edwards School of Business
Enrolled in the Bachelor of Business Administration program
Have a GPA of 3.5 in marketing and a CGPA of 3.2
Am on the Dean's honors list
Received Dr. Ogilvy's communication award

Candidate 2018

April 2015

d)

Education

I am currently enrolled in the Business Administration Program at Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan, where I am expecting to graduate in 2018. I'm majoring in marketing; my marketing GPA is 3.5 and my CGPA is 3.2. I am on the Dean's honors list, and in 2015 I received Dr. Ogilvy's communication award.

4. Rachel, a first-year student at the John Molson School of Business, wants to apply for a Corporate Communication internship at Dior's head office in New York. Rachel has never completed a job application and is not sure how to start the job application process. What would you advise her to start with?
 - a) Write a chronological résumé, including any summer or part-time jobs that she has held.
 - b) Evaluate her skills, and research the position, organization, and industry.
 - c) Fill out an online résumé template.
 - d) Ask a friend to write the résumé for her.
5. Which of the following work experience sections best describes Brian's PR summer internship responsibilities?
 - a) Assist in customer service
Complete accurate time sheets
Participate in creative brainstorming
 - b) Customer service experience
Time sheet completion
Participating in creative brainstorming
 - c) Customer service
Time sheet completion
Brainstorming participation
 - d) I participated in brainstorming, successfully serviced clients, and helped with the completion of time sheets.
6. Your friend, Alma, who is taking a Business Communications class, advises you to prepare an elevator pitch before you go to the campus job fair. What is an elevator pitch?
 - a) A personal statement that briefly introduces you and the value you bring to a specific organization
 - b) A brief summary of your résumé
 - c) A generic statement that describes your capabilities

- d) A generic statement that describes your achievements
7. What does a successful elevator pitch describe?
 - a) All of your current and past jobs
 - b) Who you are, what you can do, what value you bring to an organization, and how you can be contacted
 - c) All of your transferable skills
 - d) All of your professional experience
 8. What is the purpose of an elevator pitch?
 - a) To land you a job offer
 - b) To educate you about a company you are interested in working for
 - c) To provide you with an opportunity to practice for an interview
 - d) To generate interest and encourage further contact
 9. Cole was the captain of his school's football team, volunteered at the local food bank every winter, and held various summer jobs on his family's farm. Which type of résumé should Cole use to apply for a marketing internship?
 - a) Infographic résumé
 - b) Functional résumé
 - c) Chronological résumé
 - d) A combination résumé
 10. What is parallelism?
 - a) The use of similar grammatical structures to express similar ideas
 - b) A formatting technique in which the headings of a résumé are vertically aligned
 - c) A format used for cover letters
 - d) A writing style in which information is presented in parallel tables
 11. How many pages should finance résumés be limited to?
 - a) Three
 - b) One
 - c) Two
 - d) Four
 12. What is the alignment of cover letters written in block format?
 - a) All elements are aligned to the right
 - b) All elements are aligned to the left
 - c) All elements are fully justified
 - d) All elements are aligned either to the right or the left, or centered; it depends on the writer's preference
 13. Which of the following closing paragraphs is the most effective for a cover letter?
 - a) I look forward to further discussing with you how I may contribute to your company's marketing department. To arrange an interview, you can contact me at +130644567 or by email at John@gmail.com.

- b) I believe I will be an excellent addition to your team. To arrange an interview you can contact me at +130644567 or by email at John@gmail.com.
 - c) I hope you believe my qualifications meet the job requirements. If I am the right candidate for the job, please contact me at +130644567 or by email at John@gmail.com.
 - d) Below you can find my contact information. Thank you for your time.
14. For whom is a functional résumé *not* the most effective?
- a) Job seekers who have limited formal work experience
 - b) Job seekers who are looking for a career change
 - c) Job seekers who have a long, steady work history in the field they are applying to
 - d) Job seekers who have gaps in their career histories
15. In your textbook, what does the acronym SCOPE stand for?
- a) Script, Content, Opportunity, Purpose, and Element
 - b) Share, Communicate, Organize, Propose, and Edit
 - c) Sketch, Clarify, Order, Project, and Edit
 - d) Strategy, Content, Outcome, Presentation, and Ethics
16. How does identifying your transferable skills help you craft your résumé?
- a) It helps you focus your résumé on your needs and career goals.
 - b) It helps you identify your strengths but does not help you with crafting your résumé.
 - c) It ensures that you don't forget to include any of your skills on your résumé.
 - d) It helps you focus your résumé on the employer's needs and on job requirements.
17. What does a chronological résumé focus on?
- a) The candidate's employment history and formal education
 - b) The candidate's fit with the culture of the organization
 - c) The skills and competencies the candidate brings to the organization
 - d) The candidate's volunteer and extra-curricular activities
18. What does a functional résumé focus on?
- a) The candidate's employment history
 - b) The candidate's formal education
 - c) The skills and competencies the candidate brings to the organization
 - d) Explaining a candidate's goals
19. Which of the following headings should you include in any résumé, regardless of the type of résumé you have chosen?
- a) Work and Volunteer Experience, Education, References
 - b) Education, Work and Volunteer Experience, Name and Contact Information
 - c) Work and Volunteer Experience, Career Objective, Interests
 - d) Work and Volunteer Experience, Education, Career Objective
20. What do you do in the closing paragraph of your cover letter?
- a) Call for action.
 - b) Recap all your skills.

- c) Ask for a job offer.
- d) Thank the reader for the time he or she took to read your application.

True or False Questions

1. All résumés should have a Career Objective section.
2. The function of a cover letter is to summarize your résumé.
3. You should pad your résumé to grab the employer's attention.
4. In block letter formats, paragraphs are separated by a 1.5 line space.
5. A résumé is a one size fits all, while a cover letter has to be tailored for every job application.
6. Recruiters always read résumés thoroughly.
7. The purpose of an elevator pitch is to encourage further contact and perhaps land you an interview.
8. An effective cover letter links your qualifications to the job and shows your fit with the organization and the industry.
9. The reader of your résumé will focus on your choice of verbs because verbs describe your actions and tell your story.
10. Effective résumés use parallel structures to express similar ideas.

Short Answer Questions

1. Why are communication skills critical for success in knowledge-based economies?
2. Describe the job search process.
3. Which job seekers are functional résumés most suited for? Why?
4. What is the function of a cover letter?
5. Kyla, your roommate, is writing a cover letter for a Public Relations position at APPFORMS. Knowing that you are taking a Business Communications class, Kyla asks for your advice on what to include in the opening paragraph of the cover letter. Briefly explain to Kyla the function of an opening paragraph.
6. Which job seekers are chronological résumés best suited for? Why?
7. What is the difference between a solicited job application letter and an unsolicited one?

8. Sven, a first-year student at your university is writing his first résumé and wants your advice on whether to include a Career Objective section or not. Drawing on your knowledge from the textbook, what advice would you give Sven? Why?
9. You are preparing an elevator pitch for your first networking event. Based on what you have learned, what does an effective elevator pitch communicate about you?
10. Samar, a fourth-year university student, suggests that you use parallelism to list the job responsibilities on your résumé. What is parallelism?

Answer key

Multiple Choice Questions

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. d (p. 2) | 11. b (p. 22) |
| 2. c (pp. 13–14) | 12. b (p. 13) |
| 3. a (pp. 7–12) | 13. a (p. 15) |
| 4. c (pp. 10–13) | 14. c (p. 13) |
| 5. a (p. 12) | 15. d (p. 29) |
| 6. a (p. 26) | 16. d (pp. 10–12) |
| 7. b (p. 26) | 17. a (p. 13) |
| 8. d (pp. 26–29) | 18. c (p. 13) |
| 9. b (p. 13) | 19. b (pp. 6–7) |
| 10. a (pp. 33–35) | 20. a (p. 15) |

True or False Questions

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. F (p. 6) | 6. F (p. 27) |
| 2. F (pp. 13–14) | 7. T (pp. 25–29) |
| 3. F (pp. 3–12) | 8. T (p. 14) |
| 4. F (p. 13) | 9. T (p. 31) |
| 5. F (pp. 13–23) | 10. T (p. 34) |

Short Answer Questions

1. Communications skills are critical for success in knowledge-based economies because these economies depend on the exchange of intellectual capital to differentiate themselves, create competitive advantages, and grow. Effective communication empowers knowledge-based industries to create, disseminate, and share knowledge. (p. 2)
2. The job search process is a simultaneous process that involves identifying one's strengths, weaknesses, values, goals, and passions; researching market trends, competencies employers are looking for, and industries and organizations of particular interest to the job seeker; and connecting with employers through formal and informal networking and by responding to job advertisements. (Chapter 1)
3. Functional résumés focus on the transferable skills a candidate bring to a job; hence these resumes are particularly important for job seekers who have limited formal work experience in the field they want to work in. (p. 13)
4. The function of a cover letter is to show a candidate's fit with and knowledge of the job position, industry, and organizational culture. (p. 14)
5. The function of an opening paragraph in a cover letter is to apply for the job, grab the reader's attention, and project the organization of the following paragraphs. (p. 14)
6. Chronological résumés focus on a candidate's formal education and work history; so, it is most suitable for candidates with proven, steady work histories in the field they want to work in. (p. 13)

7. In a solicited job application letter you are responding to a job advertisement, while in an unsolicited cover letter you are applying for a position at an organization that has not advertised any jobs that match your qualifications. (p. 14)
8. I will advise Sven not to write a Career Objective statement, because good objective statements are hard to write and the statement could end up repeating the information in the cover letter or limiting his opportunities within the organization. (p. 6)
9. An effective elevator pitch demonstrates my interest in the organization, highlights the qualifications that make me a valuable employee, and sets me apart from other candidates. (pp. 25–29)
10. Parallelism is the use of similar grammatical structures to express similar ideas. (p. 34)