

Use the Job Posting as a Guide

Applicants write the strongest resumes when they clearly understand their skills and what the employer is looking for, because they write directly about their ability to meet the needs of the job. Using the job posting as a guide will help you to understand the position requirements so you can tailor your resume to specifically address those needs.

PRINT OUT EACH JOB POSTING

- Start by printing out a copy of the job posting so you can mark it up and make notes.
- Use the information in the job posting to drive your content. Targeted resumes that speak directly to the business language and requirements included in the posting are the most successful.

HIGHLIGHT KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

- Employers take care in crafting their job postings, choosing certain words and phrases to explain the specifics of the position.
- Make note of job titles, duties, responsibilities, skills, educational and training requirements, location, personal qualities, and any other key words that stand out.
- Mark up the job posting in whatever way works best for you – use a pen to circle words or consider using multi-coloured highlighters to colour-code different areas of emphasis.

IDENTIFY AREAS OF ESSENTIAL FIT AND/OR GAPS

- Go through the areas you have highlighted and brainstorm examples of times when you have demonstrated the skills.
- Assess how to write and format your resume to best highlight your effectiveness in essential duties, skills, and qualities required for the job.
- Consider gaps in your skill or experience as OPPORTUNITIES to develop and plan for further skill training, volunteering, and mentoring. Areas where you are less experienced should be addressed and developed over time with planning and persistence. This will increase your exposure and experience in these areas so you are more qualified the next time a similar job arises.

WRITE TO INCLUDE THESE KEY POINTS, WORDS, AND PHRASES

- Target your documents specifically to the job posting in order to communicate to the employers how you will meet the qualifications they seek.
- Using the employers' preferred business language and key words/phrases helps the employer to connect you with the job. This will increase your chances of being identified as a fit for the position and being selected for an interview.
- DO NOT simply 'parrot' the job posting back to the employer. Copying sections of the job posting and pasting them into your resume is not authentic or genuine. Instead, strategically use key words and phrases from the posting and use concrete examples to explain HOW you demonstrate these skills/qualities/requirements, etc.