Class activity: Resumes

The short cover message

Years 10 to 12 | About 45 minutes | https://schools.careercalling.com.au/activities/cover-message/

Students write a short, polite message to go with an application or a work experience request, and learn what makes one stand out.

Learning intentions

- Know the parts of a short cover message
- Match a message to a specific job or placement
- Write in a polite, clear tone

You will need

- A sample job or work experience advertisement
- The worksheet with the message plan

Lesson steps

Time	Step	What to do
5 min	**Why it matters**	Explain that a cover message is often the first thing an employer reads, and that a short, specific one works better than a long general one.
10 min	**Pull it apart**	Read the sample advertisement together and underline what the employer is looking for.
20 min	**Write it**	Students write four short paragraphs: who you are and what you are applying for, why this place, one or two matching skills with an example, and a polite close.
10 min	**Read aloud**	Volunteers read their messages aloud. The class gives one compliment and one suggestion.

Adapting it

Provide a fill-in-the-gaps template for students who need it. Strong writers can write two versions for two different employers.

Going further

Students use their message to request a work experience placement, with help from the careers adviser.

Student worksheet

The short cover message

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

What I am applying for

Why this workplace interests me

A matching skill and my example

A second matching skill and my example

My polite closing sentence

Student worksheet

Sample advertisement (a made-up example)

- Casual cafe assistant, weekends. We are a busy local cafe looking for a friendly person to take orders, serve customers and help keep the cafe clean.
- You will: greet customers, take orders accurately, clear and wipe tables, and work as part of a small team.
- We are looking for: good communication, reliability, a willingness to learn and the ability to stay calm when it is busy. No experience needed: training is provided.
- To apply: send a short message telling us about yourself and why you would like to work with us, with your resume attached.