# **Resume and Cover Letter Activity Facilitator Guide**

This activity has participants play the role of the Hiring Manager for the duration of the session. They will be given a job description and any number of fake student applications to review. Each fake student application has a few things wrong with it and this can be adjusted by the facilitator to meet what is common and contextual for their group of participants. Students will spend roughly 5-10 minutes reviewing them individually and then come together as a group to discuss for another 15+ minutes. Their goal is to pick 1 successful candidate to proceed to interview. The facilitator is there to help point out flaws of the fake student applications and provoke conversations – with the end goal for students to self-identify similar mistakes they might have made on their own applications in the past.

## This guide is broken down into 3 parts

1. Preparation (~60 minutes)
   1. Quick-and-easy option
   2. Do-it-yourself option
2. Facilitation (~30 minutes)
3. Appendix

## Activity Preparation

### **A) The “quick-and-easy” guide**

1. Download the template job description and 3 fake student applications from our shared drive.
2. Familiarize yourself with the job description
   * Our example is Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist found from the ECO Canada Job Board on July 31, 2023
   * Geared towards new-grads
3. Familiarize yourself with the first fake student application – Sanaa Singh
   * Notice:
     + Weak formatting
     + The email is unprofessional
     + Informal writing style
     + Doesn’t expand on bullet points too much.
4. Familiarize yourself with the next fake student application – Peter Nguyen
   * Notice:
     + Really long cover letter
     + 2-column format on resume eats up lots of space
     + Personal branding and use of colour
     + Mentions “references upon request”
     + Also doesn’t expand too much on bullet points or has a lack of them like under “Cashier” or “Lawnmower”
5. Familiarize yourself with the first last student application – Jensen Smith
   * Notice:
     + Personal branding in header
     + Organization on the cover letter
     + Cover letter addresses someone specifically
     + LinkedIn is on their applications
     + 2-pages for cover letter (bad)
     + Detail on bullet points
     + Consistent formatting
     + Dean’s list doesn’t match when they were in school
6. Print them all off for the participants attending

### **B) The longer “do-it-yourself” guide**

1. Find a job related to the theme or audience.
   * In our first time running this, we had partnered with ECO Canada for an event and I found a job tailored towards new grads (which fit our student audience) from their website
2. [Optional] Learn and familiarize yourself with ChatGPT (or other generative AI)
   * In the appendix there is an example of step 3, and its encouraged you try using both the prompts (what you enter into the program) we provided and try your own.
3. Use ChatGPT (or other generative AI) to generate 3 student applications.
   * This will take care of the generative part and can produce as many templates as you need in seconds. It’s not perfect and we will mitigate its shortcomings later. For now, you’ll save time on generating the content and invest your time into fine-tuning it for the student audience.
   * Prompts to use (roughly in order) – Enter these into ChatGPT:
     + From now on I want you to pretend you are an expert in human resources and a hiring manager for eco-friendly and green company. Acknowledge Yes or No.
     + Here is a job description for a role. Please read it: [Copy and paste the Job Description here]
     + Could you give me a [high]-quality [female] [3rd-year] [Civil Engineering] post-secondary university student resume and cover letter example please?
       - Define the quality = High, Average, Low
       - Add demographic information female, academic program name, year in the program.
       - Examples:
         * Could you give me a high-quality female 3rd-year Civil Engineering post-secondary University student resume and cover letter example please?
         * Could you give me an average-quality male 2nd-year Environmental Studies post-secondary University student resume and cover letter example please?
       - If needed, ask it to adjust:
         * Can the cover letter on the last example ramble on with lots of detail but still fits on a single page?
         * Can you add more student projects to the last example?
4. Take the ChatGPT answers and put them into resume and cover letter templates of your choosing.
   * You can find templates on Google Docs or Microsoft Office that people frequently use.
     + Try to find a good one, a bad, and one that is stylized for variety.
5. Fine-tune the content for each resume and cover letter.
   * Think of the story for each student, one might be unprofessional / novice, another might be a talented and experienced international student, another might be an average new grad, etc.
   * Add those details into the resume and cover letter that was generated.
     + If you’re working with a large body of students you might want to neutralize the post-secondary names, I just used the names of Galaxies instead of actual Institutions to avoid it seeming like “this school is better than that school”
   * Proofread the resume and cover letters to remove information that doesn’t quite make sense (generative AI isn’t perfect) and to ensure things like names and locations are proper. The goal is to make it as authentic and realistic as possible.
   * Add some deliberate errors into the resume
     + “References Available upon Request”
     + “iLikeCats@gmail.com”
     + Formatting Errors
   * Document the “errors” or problems so you can point them out to the students on the day of.
6. Once you’re happy with the cover letters and resumes
   * Save the job description
   * Save each of the cover letters and resumes
   * Print them all off for the participants attending

## Activity Facilitation

### **Steps**

1. Inform the students of the process
2. Get them into groups of up to 5 or 6 students
3. Hand out the job description and applications
4. Let students independently review it for 5 minutes (a time crunch is okay – so students get the importance of being concise, organized, and making a strong first impression).
5. Then they will discuss the good and bad for each of the applicants for 20 minutes with the goal of picking one successful candidate
   1. Go around and ask questions or prompt inquiries into specific flaws of the resumes or cover letters like “what do you think of the formatting on that resume?”
6. After this is done spend 5 minutes with everyone together and going around which group picked which candidate and why.
7. Then ask them to reflect on one change they might make on their resumes after they saw these ones today.

## Appendix

### **Further experimentation with prompts can include:**

* Can you please write an example of a poor-quality post-secondary university student cover letter?
* Can you please write a good or high-quality post-secondary university student cover letter?
* Can the cover letter on the last example ramble on with lots of detail but still fit on a single page?
* Can you please give me an example of a poor-quality resume post-secondary university student for this role?
* Can you please give me an example of a high-quality post-secondary university student resume for this role?
* Can you generate the resume and profile of a female 3rd-year Civil Engineering Student with work experience examples?
* Can you generate the resume and profile of a female 3rd-year Civil Engineering Student with work experience examples?

### **Example using ChatGPT to produce generated resumes and cover letters:**

**You**

From now on I want you to pretend you are an expert in human resources and a hiring manager for eco-friendly and green company. Acknowledge Yes or No.

**ChatGPT**

Yes.

**You**

Here is a job description for a role. Please read it: Summary Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position available at Clear-Site Solutions. Responsibilities Conduct risk assessments and data analysis to identify contaminants of potential concern and associated human and ecological health risks. Develop and implement risk mitigation strategies and solutions. Collaborate with cross-functional teams to gather and analyze data for risk assessment purposes. Prepare reports and presentations to communicate findings and recommendations. Stay updated with industry trends and best practices related to risk assessment and data analysis. Assist senior risk assessors and data scientists in various projects and tasks Strong analytical skills with the ability to interpret and analyze complex data sets. Solid understanding of risk assessment methodologies and statistical analysis techniques. Proficient in data visualization tools and willingness to learn new skills. Excellent problem-solving and critical thinking- Strong communication skills, both written and verbal. Detail-oriented with the ability to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines. Competencies Awareness of various programming languages such as VBA, Python or R. Knowledge of Microsoft program suite (excel, word, PowerBi) Familiarity with database management systems and data manipulation with proficiency in excel General understanding of regulatory standards in BC, AB and SK. Ability to work independently as well as part of a team (work-from-home opportunity) Strong attention to detail and accuracy. Education Bachelor's degree in a relevant field such as biology, statistics, mathematics, or computer science Awareness of, and willingness to apply for professional designation. Experience Previous experience in risk assessment, data analysis, or a related field in ESG services is preferred but not required. Job Type Full-time position. Schedule Monday to Friday, standard office hours. Expected Start Date Immediate. Languages English. Work Environment Office Job. Clear-Site Solutions Overview Clear-Site Solutions is a leading and data analysis company located in Calgary, Alberta. We specialize in providing comprehensive solutions to help organizations identify and mitigate potential risks. Our team of experts utilizes advanced data analysis techniques to deliver actionable insights and recommendations in a cutting edge format. At Clear-Site Solutions, we conceptualize, innovate and deliver. We are an equal opportunity employer (EOE) with a commitment to diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our business.

**ChatGPT**

Acknowledged. Please let me know how I can assist you further with this job description.

**You**

Could you give me a high-quality female 3rd-year Civil Engineering post-secondary University student resume and cover letter example please?

**ChatGPT**

Certainly! Below is an example of a resume and cover letter for a fictional third-year female Civil Engineering student applying for the Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions.

**Resume:**

[Your Name] [Your Address] [City, State, ZIP Code] [Your Email Address] [Your Phone Number] [LinkedIn Profile, if applicable]

**Objective:** Motivated and detail-oriented third-year Civil Engineering student with a passion for environmental sustainability seeking a Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions to apply analytical skills and contribute to risk assessment and data analysis in an eco-friendly and green company.

**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering [University Name], [City, State] Expected Graduation Date: [Month, Year]

**Relevant Courses:**

* Environmental Engineering
* Statistics for Engineers
* Data Analysis and Visualization
* Programming in Python
* Risk Assessment in Civil Engineering

**Skills:**

* Risk assessment methodologies
* Statistical analysis techniques
* Data visualization tools (PowerBi)
* Programming languages: Python, VBA
* Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word)
* Database management systems
* Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
* Excellent written and verbal communication skills
* Detail-oriented and able to prioritize tasks

**Experience:** *Intern, Environmental Engineering* [Company Name], [City, State] [Dates]

* Assisted in conducting environmental impact assessments.
* Collected and analyzed data to identify potential risks.
* Contributed to the development of risk mitigation strategies.

**Projects:** *Wastewater Treatment Plant Design Project* [University Name], [Date]

* Collaborated with a team to design a sustainable wastewater treatment plant.
* Applied risk assessment principles to evaluate potential environmental impacts.

**Certifications:**

* [Any relevant certifications or training]

**Professional Memberships:**

* Member, [University Name] Civil Engineering Society

**Cover Letter:**

[Your Name] [Your Address] [City, State, ZIP Code] [Your Email Address] [Your Phone Number] [Today’s Date]

[Employer's Name] [Company Name] [Company Address] [City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear [Employer's Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions, as advertised. As a third-year Civil Engineering student at [University Name], I have developed a strong foundation in environmental engineering and data analysis, making me well-equipped to contribute to your team.

In my coursework, I have gained hands-on experience in risk assessment methodologies, statistical analysis techniques, and data visualization tools such as PowerBi. My internship at [Company Name] allowed me to apply these skills in a practical setting, where I contributed to environmental impact assessments and the development of risk mitigation strategies.

One of my notable projects involved collaborating with a team to design a sustainable wastewater treatment plant, where I applied risk assessment principles to evaluate potential environmental impacts. This experience, coupled with my proficiency in programming languages like Python and VBA, aligns with the requirements of the Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist role at Clear-Site Solutions.

I am impressed by Clear-Site Solutions' commitment to environmental sustainability and innovative data analysis. I am eager to bring my analytical skills, attention to detail, and passion for eco-friendly solutions to your team. I am confident that my academic background, practical experience, and enthusiasm for contributing to meaningful projects make me a strong fit for this position.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how my skills and experiences align with Clear-Site Solutions' objectives in more detail.

Sincerely, [Your Full Name]

**You**

Could you give me an average-quality male 2nd-year Environmental Studies post-secondary University student resume and cover letter example please?

**ChatGPT**

Certainly! Below is an example of an average-quality resume and cover letter for a fictional second-year male Environmental Studies student applying for the Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions.

**Resume:**

[Your Name] [Your Address] [City, State, ZIP Code] [Your Email Address] [Your Phone Number] [LinkedIn Profile, if applicable]

**Objective:** Motivated second-year Environmental Studies student seeking a Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions to gain practical experience in environmental risk assessment and contribute to a green and eco-friendly company.

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies [University Name], [City, State] Expected Graduation Date: [Month, Year]

**Relevant Courses:**

* Introduction to Environmental Science
* Environmental Policy and Regulation
* Data Analysis for Environmental Studies
* Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
* Environmental Impact Assessment

**Skills:**

* Basic understanding of risk assessment methodologies
* Data analysis and interpretation
* Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
* Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word)
* Strong communication skills
* Ability to work collaboratively in a team
* Attention to detail and time management

**Experience:** *Volunteer, Local Environmental Conservation Group* [City, State] [Dates]

* Assisted in data collection and analysis for local environmental projects.
* Participated in community outreach initiatives to raise awareness about environmental issues.

**Projects:** *Environmental Impact Assessment Project* [University Name], [Date]

* Conducted a basic environmental impact assessment for a local community project.
* Analyzed data and presented findings to the class.

**Certifications:**

* [Any relevant certifications or training]

**Professional Memberships:**

* Member, [University Name] Environmental Studies Club

**Cover Letter:**

[Your Name] [Your Address] [City, State, ZIP Code] [Your Email Address] [Your Phone Number] [Today’s Date]

[Employer's Name] [Company Name] [Company Address] [City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear [Employer's Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions, as advertised. As a second-year Environmental Studies student at [University Name], I am eager to apply my passion for environmental sustainability and data analysis in a practical setting.

In my coursework, I have gained a foundational understanding of environmental science, policy, and data analysis. I am currently enrolled in courses such as Data Analysis for Environmental Studies and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which have equipped me with skills relevant to the position at Clear-Site Solutions.

My volunteer experience with a local environmental conservation group allowed me to contribute to data collection and analysis for community projects. This hands-on experience, coupled with my coursework, has given me a basic understanding of risk assessment methodologies and the importance of data-driven decision-making.

I am particularly drawn to Clear-Site Solutions' commitment to providing comprehensive solutions for identifying and mitigating potential risks. I believe my skills in data analysis, GIS, and my passion for environmental issues align with the objectives of your team.

Thank you for considering my application. I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to Clear-Site Solutions' mission and gain valuable experience in the field of environmental risk assessment.

Sincerely, [Your Full Name]

**You**

Can the cover letter on the last example ramble on with lots of detail but still fits on a single page?

**ChatGPT**

Certainly! It's important to balance detail with conciseness in a cover letter to ensure it remains engaging and easy to read. Below is a revised version with more detail while still fitting on a single page:

[Your Name] [Your Address] [City, State, ZIP Code] [Your Email Address] [Your Phone Number] [Today’s Date]

[Employer's Name] [Company Name] [Company Address] [City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear [Employer's Name],

I am writing to express my deep enthusiasm for the Junior Risk-Assessor and Data Scientist position at Clear-Site Solutions. As a second-year Environmental Studies student at [University Name], I am eager to bring my passion for environmental sustainability and my growing expertise in data analysis to contribute to your team.

Throughout my coursework, including in-depth studies such as Data Analysis for Environmental Studies and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), I have developed a robust foundation in handling environmental data. These courses, coupled with hands-on projects, have sharpened my skills in interpreting data sets and utilizing GIS tools to visualize spatial information.

My commitment to environmental causes extends beyond the classroom. As a volunteer with a local environmental conservation group, I actively participated in data collection and analysis for community projects. This experience strengthened my understanding of the importance of accurate data in environmental decision-making. Additionally, my involvement in community outreach initiatives allowed me to effectively communicate complex environmental issues to diverse audiences.

I am particularly drawn to Clear-Site Solutions' dedication to comprehensive risk mitigation and environmental impact assessment. The prospect of applying my skills in data analysis and GIS to contribute to such meaningful projects aligns perfectly with my academic pursuits and personal interests.

In my Environmental Impact Assessment project at [University Name], I conducted a thorough analysis, evaluating the potential environmental impacts of a local community project. This involved not only crunching numbers but also presenting my findings to a diverse audience, enhancing my communication skills and ability to convey technical information clearly.

I am confident that my blend of academic coursework, hands-on experience, and genuine passion for environmental sustainability makes me a valuable candidate for this role. I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to Clear-Site Solutions' mission and to further develop my skills in risk assessment and data analysis.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of discussing how my background aligns with your team’s objectives.

Sincerely, [Your Full Name]