



Module: Creating a Job Search Toolkit

This module provides youth with disabilities the skills and resources to effectively search for job opportunities and create resumes, cover letters, and reference lists. It covers where to find job openings, strategies to assess if a job is a good fit, and how to craft tailored application materials.

About CanWork BC

CanWork BC aims to make it easier for youth with disabilities ages to 15 to 30 years old to find and keep employment. There are a series of tools and resources for youth, employers, service providers, educators, and caregivers.

CanAssist at the University of Victoria, with the support of the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, wrote the Provincial Employment Strategy for Youth with Disabilities (ESYD). This strategy informed the tools and resources.

The Youth Tool

The CanWork BC youth tool is available as an interactive online platform at portal.canworkbc.ca and through PDF workbooks such as this one. There are five dimensions of content available.

For the full PDF workbook content and accompanying facilitator guides, as well as other CanWork BC tools and resources, go to canworkbc.ca.

Introduction

This module has three sections to help you get started on your job search journey. You'll explore:

- Identifying where to find job postings and choosing the right ones for you.
- Building a strong resume and listing professional references.
- Writing a cover letter for your job applications.

Each section will take around 15-30 minutes to complete, and you're welcome to take breaks in between.

Each section has activities that connect employment essentials to your own life to make sure this is useful for you. Be prepared to think about and record your answers in whatever way works best. That could be writing your answers in this workbook or using a different format that works for you like voice recording or typing in a notes app.

At the end of the module, you'll have the chance to put what you've learned into practice with reflection questions. Let's get started!

Section 1: Finding Job Opportunities

Finding the right job creates exciting opportunities. With the right strategies, you can discover roles that match your skills and interests. Knowing where to find job postings is an important step in the process.

In this section, we'll cover:

- Identifying where to find job postings and opportunities online and in person.
- Reviewing job postings to see if they fit your skills, experiences, and work goals.

By the end of this section, you will have a better understanding of the value of looking for job postings in multiple places and tips on seeing if job postings are a good fit for you.

Engage and Explore

Searching for Job Opportunities

Are you ready to begin your job search but are unsure where to start?

Whether you're looking for your first job or a new opportunity, there are several ways to find job openings. Let's explore some ways you can search for job opportunities:

- **Online job boards**

Online job boards are one of the easiest and fastest ways to find job openings. You can search for jobs based on location, industry, or job type. Commonly used online job boards include:

- Government of Canada Job Bank: jobbank.gc.ca/findajob
- Indeed: indeed.com
- LinkedIn: linkedin.com
- Glassdoor: glassdoor.ca/index

If you're interested in freelance or contract work, there are also platforms designed to connect freelancers with clients, including:

- Upwork: upwork.com
- Fiverr: fiverr.com
- Freelancer: freelancer.com

- **Networking**

Networking is a powerful way to find job opportunities by connecting with people who may know about openings or can introduce you to employers. It can help you discover hidden opportunities that are not posted online. Here are some networking tips:

- **Job fairs:** These are great opportunities for employers and job seekers to connect. You can explore available positions, submit your resume, and even participate in on-the-spot interviews, so be sure to come prepared! These events are often held both online and in person.

- **Talking to friends and family:** Letting people in your life know that you're looking for a job can be very helpful. They may know about job openings or be able to connect you to someone who can help.
- **Networking online:** Use platforms or industry-specific forums to connect with other professionals who could help you find a job. For example:
 - LinkedIn: [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com)
 - Meetup: [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)

- **Employment service centres**

Employment service centres provide valuable help to find a job, such as resume writing, job search workshops, and interview preparation. Here's how you can find them:

- **Search online:** Type “employment services near me” or “career centers in [your area]” into a search engine to find local centres.
- **Check local government websites:** Visit your city or province website to find services listed under “Employment” or “Career Services.”
- **Ask at libraries or community centres:** Many libraries or community centres offer job search support. Ask if they have any career workshops or resources.
- **Visit your school's career centre:** If you're a student or graduate, your school's career services can help with job search resources.

- **Get recommendations:** Ask friends, family, or mentors if they know about any helpful employment centres in your area.

Job Search Tip

Using different search methods to find a job can improve your chances of finding a posting that interests you. Some jobs may only be listed in specific places.

To increase your success, consider networking, attending job fairs, reaching out to employment service centres, and exploring different online job boards.

Question: Have you used any of these methods to search for jobs before? Which ones would be most helpful for you?

Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you.

Evaluating Job Postings

Once you find job postings, it's important to review them carefully to see if they are a good fit for you in terms of the work you would be doing. You'll also want to ensure that the schedule and salary work for you. Check out the sample job posting below and read about the different parts underneath it to understand *what* they are and *why* they are important.

1	Position Title: Marketing Coordinator Location: Vancouver, BC Expected Start Date: ASAP Job Type: Full-Time
2	Company Overview: At [Company Name], we are committed to creating a positive work environment that encourages creativity and supports professional growth.
3	Job Description: We're seeking a Marketing Coordinator to support our team by developing strategies, coordinating campaigns, and managing our social media.
4	Responsibilities: Support the marketing team in daily activities. Assist in creating marketing materials and presentations.
5	Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in Marketing, Communications, or a related field. 1-2 years of experience in marketing or a similar role. What We Offer: Competitive salary and performance bonuses. Opportunities for professional development and training.
6	How to Apply: If you are excited about this opportunity and meet the qualifications, please submit your resume and a cover letter detailing your relevant experience and interest in the role to [email address].

1. Location

Think about the job location and whether you can commute easily. Are you open to relocating for a job or do you need to look for work in a specific location? Does the location fit into your lifestyle and needs?

2. Company overview

Check the company's values to see if they align with yours. This can help you decide if you'd like working there.

3. Job description

Look at the job description to make sure you understand the opportunity and how it aligns with your experiences and goals. This section will help you determine if you want to apply.

4. Responsibilities

Think about if the daily tasks match your skills and interests. Will you enjoy the work you'll be doing in this role? Will the experience help you reach your work-related goals?

5. Qualifications

Make sure you check if you meet the educational and experience requirements. This is a good way to see if the job is aligned to what you want to be doing. It's okay if you don't meet every qualification because many employers value transferable skills.

6. How to apply

Pay attention to application instructions and be sure to follow the instructions example. This shows your attention to detail, and it can help you decide how to format your application.

For example, if the employer asks you to write the subject line of your email in a specific order, be sure to follow that exactly, and be sure to check if you need to apply in person or online.

Make it Personal

Job Search Scenarios

Now that you've explored job search websites, networking opportunities, and how to evaluate job postings, let's put this knowledge into action and connect these ideas to your own experiences.

Reflect on the Scenarios

In this activity, you will explore three different scenarios about what to do before applying for jobs. Read the scenario and think about what you would do. Then write down what you think would happen, based on the actions you think you would take.

Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you. If you need help check out the example answers at the end of the section.

Scenario 1

You see a job posting which interests you, but you're worried you don't have all the required skills. You're excited about the opportunity but unsure if you should apply.

Question: What would you do?

Question: What do you think would happen?

Scenario 2

At a networking event, you meet someone from a company you like, knowing that connections can help you learn about job openings and the company culture.

Question: What would you do?

Question: What do you think would happen?

Scenario 3

You visit an employment service center for help with your job search, looking for guidance and resources to improve your chances of getting a job. How would you approach this visit?

Question: What would you do?

Question: What do you think would happen?

Job Search Scenarios Example Answers

Scenario 1

- **What you could do:** Look closely at the job description and list your skills that match the job. If you're missing a few, consider how you can highlight your other strengths or express your willingness to learn.
- **What might happen:** By understanding your strengths and being honest about your skills, you'll feel more confident applying for the job.

Scenario 2

- **What you could do:** After the event, send them a friendly email thanking them for the chat and asking if they'd be willing to share more about their experiences at the company.
- **What might happen:** This follow-up shows your interest and helps you build a professional relationship, which may lead to future job opportunities.

Scenario 3

- **What you could do:** Take advantage of the services offered, like resume reviews, mock interviews, and job search workshops. Be open to feedback and ask questions about the job market.

- **What might happen:** Using these resources will help you better understand how to present yourself and improve your job search strategy.

Section 2: Writing a Resume

A strong resume is important for getting a job interview. It highlights your skills, experiences, and achievements, making it easier for employers to see what you can offer.

In this section, we'll cover:

- Highlighting your skills, sharing your experiences, and clearly presenting your achievements.
- Creating a reference list.

By the end of this section, you will have a better understanding of how to highlight your skills and experiences in your resume. Having a clear and organized resume increases your chances of making a good first impression on potential employers.

Engage and Explore

Resume Sections

When crafting your **resume**, there's no one right way to order it. The key is to lead with the most relevant sections that fit the job you're applying for. Check out the sample resume below and check out the different parts. Read about the parts below to understand what they are and why they are important.

1

Address | Mail | Website

2

A practical Chemical Engineer with Significant Experience in Process Designs, I have worked with some organizations, ensuring a grounded approach to my profession.

3

- Effective Time Management
- Creative Problem-Solving
- Active Listening
- Efficiency Under Pressure
- Critical Thinking
- Talented Customer Services

4

Policy Manager Lexramax Inc	Oct 2020 - present
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- Review policies as regards Industry Improvement
- Create a functional and technical application of set policies

5

MAsc Process Engineering | Dandilton Oct 2017 - Sept 2018

- Studied Process planning, coordination, and efficiency

6

- Google Analytics Certification
- Project Leader Certification

7

- Most Innovative Employee of the Year, LexraMax (2020)
- Overall Best Employee of the Year, CrystaPointe (2019)

1. Contact information

This section shows information on how to reach you, making it easier for an employer to follow up with you. You can include your first and last name, phone number, email address, and LinkedIn profile (optional).

- **Tip:** Keep this section clear and easy to read at the top of your resume.

2. Professional summary

This section is an opportunity to highlight your key strengths in two to three short sentences.

- **Tip:** Customize this section for each job application and be specific with examples.
- *Example: Instead of saying hardworking professional, say something like, “Project manager with five years of experience leading cross-functional teams and reducing costs by 15%” or “Customer service representative with a year of experience handling customer inquiries.”*

3. Key skills

This section is where you will highlight your most relevant skills in bullet points or a short list.

- **Tip:** Tailor this section to the job posting. If applying for a tech role, focus on software or technical skills.
- *Example: Proficient in Adobe Photoshop, Excel, and project management tools.*

4. Work experience

This section is where you highlight past work experiences that are relevant to the job you are applying for. You should include job title, company name, location, and dates of employment.

- **Tip:** Use bullet points to describe your achievements, not just duties. Start each point with action words like led, increased, or developed. Include numbers when possible.
- *Example: “Increased sales by 20% in six months by leading a new outreach strategy” or “Supported volunteer communications by contributing to contact list updates.”*

5. Education

This section is where you highlight your highest level of education, including the school's name and your graduation date. You can also list relevant certifications or courses.

- **Tip:** If your education is directly related to the job, put this section closer to the top.
- *Example: For a marketing job, you might list: "Bachelor of Science in Marketing, ABC University, 2021."*

6. Certifications and volunteer work

This section is optional but valuable if relevant to the job. It's also an opportunity to share some information about things you are passionate about.

- **Tip:** Certifications can show your qualifications beyond work experience. Volunteer work can demonstrate transferable skills.
- *Example: "Certified Project Management Professional (PMP), 2023" or "Food Safe Certification, 2023."*

7. Awards and achievements

This section is for any relevant awards or honours. It's a great opportunity to celebrate your achievements.

- **Tip:** Include only those that are meaningful to the position you're applying for.
- *Example: Employee of the Month, January 2023.*

Resume Types

Your resume is a key tool in your job search. It's a document that shows your skills, experiences, training, and achievements related to a job posting. It helps employers decide if you are the right fit for the job they are offering. It should be clear, well-organized, and customized to the job you're applying for.

There are different resume types, and the right format depends on your experience and the sector you are applying for a job in. Choosing the best one helps highlight your strengths. Below, you'll find examples of each type. Remember, your resume doesn't have to look exactly like these examples; it should show your personal style and fit the job you're aiming for.

- **Chronological resume**

This is the most common format. It lists your work history from your most recent job to earlier ones. This format is best if you have steady experience in the same field and want to show your career growth.

- **Best for:** Jobs where recent experience matters, like similar roles in the same industry.

- **Functional resume**

This format focuses more on your skills than your job history. It groups your experience by skills, like leadership or communication, instead of listing jobs in order. This format is useful if you're changing careers, have gaps in your work history, or want to emphasize specific skills.

- **Best for:** People changing careers or those with gaps in their work experience.
- **Combination resume**
This format blends both chronological and functional formats. It highlights your key skills first and then lists your work history in reverse order. This format lets you highlight your skills while clearly showing your job experience.
 - **Best for:** People with strong skills and a solid work history who want to highlight both.

References

A reference is someone who can speak about your skills and work experience to support your job application.

You don't need to include references directly on your resume. You also don't have to say, "References available upon request." If an employer needs them, they will ask.

If you're asked to provide references, here's what to do:

- **Choose the right people**
Select people who know your work well and can speak positively about your skills. This could be former employers, coworkers, or teachers.
- **Ask for permission**
Always ask your references for their permission before listing them. This shows respect and gives them a heads-up in case they're contacted.

- **Provide full details**

If you're asked to provide references, include their full name, title, organization, and up to date contact information (phone number and email). Including a sentence about your connection to the reference can also be helpful, such as if they were a coworker or a manager you reported to.

Resume Writing Tips

- **Resume length**

If you have fewer years of experience, aim for a one-page resume. For more experience or multiple relevant roles, a two-page resume is acceptable. Keep only the most valuable and relevant information to avoid overcrowding.

- **Action words**

Use strong action verbs such as "designed," "implemented," and "achieved" to highlight your impact.

- **Numbers matter**

Whenever possible, quantify your accomplishments to make them stand out.

Make it Personal

Resume Reflection

Now that you're familiar with different types of resumes and key tips, let's start crafting your own! Follow these steps to create a strong resume:

1. Gather your information

Begin by writing down all your experiences, education, volunteer work, certifications, and skills on a piece of paper or in a Word document. Think about what you've done in each area and how it relates to the job you want. To help you remember, refer to the reflective questions at the end of this page.

2. Find a job posting

Look for a job posting that interests you. Choose one that you can see yourself applying for and that aligns with your skills and experiences.

3. Create your resume

Choose the type of resume that fits your experiences best, whether it's chronological, functional, or a combination. Make sure to choose the experiences and skills that are in line with the job posting you selected.

As a suggestion, try using a Microsoft Word template. Simply open Word, click on "New," and search for "Resume" in the

template gallery. Pick a template with a clean design and keep the text short and clear.

4. Get feedback

After you've completed your resume, share it with family members, friends, or employment service providers. Ask for their feedback on how it looks and what you can improve. They might offer helpful tips that can make your resume even stronger.

Also, make sure to proofread your resume for grammar mistakes and typos before submitting it for a job application.

5. Revise your resume

After receiving feedback, take some time to make any necessary changes to your resume. This is your chance to polish it and make sure it presents you in the best way.

To remember helpful information for your resume, consider the following questions. Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you.

Question: What experiences or skills do I want to highlight that relate to the job I'm applying for?

Question: How can I make my resume clear and easy to read for potential employers?

Question: What feedback did I receive, and how can I use it to improve my resume?

Question: What key achievements or accomplishments can I include to highlight my strengths?

Section 3: Creating a Cover Letter

Creating a strong cover letter is important because it helps employers see more than just your resume. It gives them a sense of who you are, what you've achieved, and how you can be a great fit for the role. Think of it as the first impression of you to the person reviewing your job application. It's an important tool to help you get invited to a job interview.

In this section, we'll cover:

- Writing a personalized cover letter for different job postings.
- Highlighting your skills and experiences.
- Highlighting your achievements and personal qualities.

By the end of this section, you will have a better understanding of how to show potential employers how your skills match their needs. You will also have a sense of how to highlight your personality and enthusiasm for the job professionally and clearly.

Engage and Explore

Creating a Cover Letter

Now that you know why a cover letter is important, let's look at its different parts. A good cover letter can help you stand out from other applicants by showing your personality and excitement for the job.

Check out the sample cover letter below to understand *what* the different parts are and *why* they are important. This will help you create a cover letter that highlights your skills and experiences effectively!

	<p style="text-align: right;">[Your Name] [City, State, Zip] [Your Email] [Your Phone Number]</p> <p>[Date]</p> <hr/>
1	<p>[Company's Name] [Job Title]</p> <p>Dear [Employer's Name]</p>
2	<p>I am excited to apply for the [Job Title] position at [Company's Name] as advertised on [Where You Found the Job Posting]. I believe my skills and experiences make me a great fit for this role.</p>
3	<p>In my previous position at [Previous Company], I successfully [mention a relevant achievement or responsibility]. This experience helped me develop [related skills], which I believe will be valuable for the [Job Title] role.</p>
4	<p>I am particularly drawn to this position because [mention something specific about the company or role that interests you]. I am confident that my [skills or personal qualities] will contribute to the success of your team.</p>
5	<p>Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to [Company's Name]. Please feel free to contact me at [Your Phone Number] or [Your Email].</p>
6	<p>Sincerely, [Your Name]</p>

1. Greeting

Use a general greeting like "Dear Hiring Manager" when you can't find a specific name. However, personalizing your greeting is always better when possible. You can often find the appropriate name in the job posting or by looking on a company or organization's website.

2. Opening paragraph

Include the job title and where you found the job posting. Mention why you are interested in this role to show your enthusiasm for the role. Be specific and concise.

3. Experience section

Highlight one or two key achievements or responsibility relevant to the job. Use action verbs (e.g., achieved, developed) to describe what you did and quantify results when possible (e.g., increased sales by 20%).

4. Skills section

Identify and emphasize relevant skills that relate to the job. Mention any relevant personal qualities that demonstrate your fit for the company culture. Match your skills with those listed in the job description. This shows you meet the requirements.

5. Additional topics section

Research the company's values, mission, or recent projects. Mention something specific about the company or position that attracts you and how your values match the company

culture. Consider including your long-term career goals and how they align with the company's mission.

6. Closing paragraph and signature

Thank the employer for considering your application and express your eagerness for a follow-up. Show your enthusiasm and willingness to discuss how you can contribute.

Use a professional closing. If you're submitting electronically, simply type "Sincerely" followed by your full name. If you're printing the letter, leave space for your handwritten signature.

Key Factors to Consider

As you start writing your cover letter, keep these key factors in mind to make sure it effectively highlights your qualifications and leaves a positive impression:

- **Personalization**

Address the letter to a specific person whenever possible. This shows you've done your research and are genuinely interested in the position.

- **Organized and clear**

Structure your cover letter with clear sections, including an introduction, body, and conclusion. Keep it brief – aim for one page – while ensuring your main points are easy to follow.

- **Professional tone**

Use a professional tone throughout your letter. Avoid slang and overly casual language to maintain a sense of professionalism.

- **Enthusiasm**

Show your enthusiasm for the position and the company. Employers appreciate candidates who are excited about the opportunity.

- **Relevant skills and experiences**

Focus on the skills and experiences that are most relevant to the job you're applying for. This shows how well you match the role.

- **Proofread**

Always check for spelling and grammar mistakes before sending your letter. A clean, error-free letter makes a good impression.

Make it Personal

Cover Letter Reflection

Having learned the tips on how to write a cover letter and what each section means, it's time to create your own!

Follow these steps to write a strong cover letter:

1. **Gather your information**

To help you look for job postings, start by thinking about your skills, experiences, and achievements that relate to the kind of job you want. You can do this before you start looking for job postings to inform your search, or after you have found a job posting that interests you. Write them down to help you remember what to include.

2. **Choose a job posting**

Find a job posting that interests you. Choose one that matches your skills and experiences, so you can write a cover letter that highlights your strengths for that specific role.

3. **Write your cover letter**

You can use a cover letter template from Microsoft Word as a guide to organize your thoughts. In your cover letter, introduce yourself and share why you're excited about the job. Highlight your skills and experiences that match what the employer is looking for, keeping it clear and focused while avoiding unnecessary details.

Tip: To find a template in Word, open the program, click on "New," and search for "cover letter" in the template search bar. Often, you can find matching cover letter and resume templates, so your application looks coordinated.

4. **Ask for feedback**

Once you finish writing your cover letter, share it with family, friends, or career advisors. Ask them for their thoughts on

how it looks and if it clearly shows your qualifications.

Also, make sure to proofread your cover letter for grammar mistakes and typos before submitting it for a job application with your resume.

5. **Make revisions**

After getting feedback, take some time to update your cover letter. This is your chance to make it even better and ensure it truly represents you.

To remember helpful information for your cover letter, consider the following questions. Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you.

Question: What experiences or skills do I want to highlight that relate to the job I'm applying for?

Question: How can I make my resume clear and easy to read for potential employers?

Question: What feedback did I receive, and how can I use it to improve my resume?

Question: What key achievements or accomplishments can I include to highlight my strengths?

Reflect and Connect

Great work! We've covered a lot in this module including:

- Find job opportunities online and through networking.
- Create a resume that highlights your skills, experiences, and achievements.
- Write a cover letter that shows why you're a good fit for a job.

Take a moment to think about the questions below and how they relate to your experiences. Write your answers below or in a notes app or another digital format that works for you. Think of this as a reflective journal for yourself, which you can refer to later.

Happy reflecting!

Where can you go to find job openings? Which way works best for you?



What have you learned about evaluating job postings that you can use next time you search for a job?

How do you plan to grow your professional network to help find job opportunities?

What resources or people can you use to help you write your resume?

What are some personal examples you could in your cover letter to show how your skills and experiences match the job you're applying for?

Keep Going

There is so much more to learn! Access the full CanWork BC content and learn more about the program at **canworkbc.ca**.

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