

Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies  
Internationally Educated Professionals Bridging Program



# Professional Communication in a Canadian Context

Presenting Yourself:  
Resumes and Cover Letters



redefine THE POSSIBLE.





# Objectives

- To understand what resumes communicate
- To review key elements of effective resumes
- To establish a strategic approach to resumes
- To recognize the importance of cover letters
- To discuss interview etiquette



# What resumes communicate

- Resumes communicate
  - How interested you are
    - Do you understand our business?
  - How qualified you are
    - Do you have relevant education and experience?
  - How effective you are
    - What results have you achieved?
  - How professional you are
    - Do you present a polished, accurate, focused image?
  - How suitable you are
    - Will you contribute value to our company?



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- Objective
  - Show familiarity with the position and the employer
  - Indicate what you can contribute
- Example:

To contribute my considerable expertise in actuarial accounting and my 15 years of experience in risk management to the position of Global Insurance Manager at Provincial Insurance Inc.



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- Profile
  - Highlight special qualifications or accomplishments that are relevant to this position
  - Tailor your message to your audience
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the skills related to this position



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- Profile - Software Engineering Manager
  - Exceptional background in software design, embedded systems and electronics
  - Expert in real-time control systems, hardware/software integration and testing
  - Over 10 years of experience managing software and electronics projects from conception through commissioning
  - Valued for delivering results on time and on budget in challenging environments with demanding schedules



# Objective/Profile Activity

- Chose an ad from *The Globe & Mail* Careers section
- Research the company if possible
- Write an Objective and Profile for that position



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- Professional Achievements
  - Describe key accomplishments in your career
  - Focus on outcomes, not duties
  - Quantify deliverables whenever possible
  - Choose items that are relevant to target position
  - Use strong verbs and active structures



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- Employment
  - List positions held
  - Focus on responsibilities, accomplishments and outcomes
  - Demonstrate contributions and development



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- Education
  - Be brief but clear
  - List awards and accomplishments
- Professional associations/Volunteer work
  - Give full names and positions/activities
- Awards or Interests
  - List accomplishments
  - Focus on relevant items



# Key Elements of Effective Resumes

- References
  - Be sure the individual is willing
  - Follow instructions carefully
  - Provide relevant information

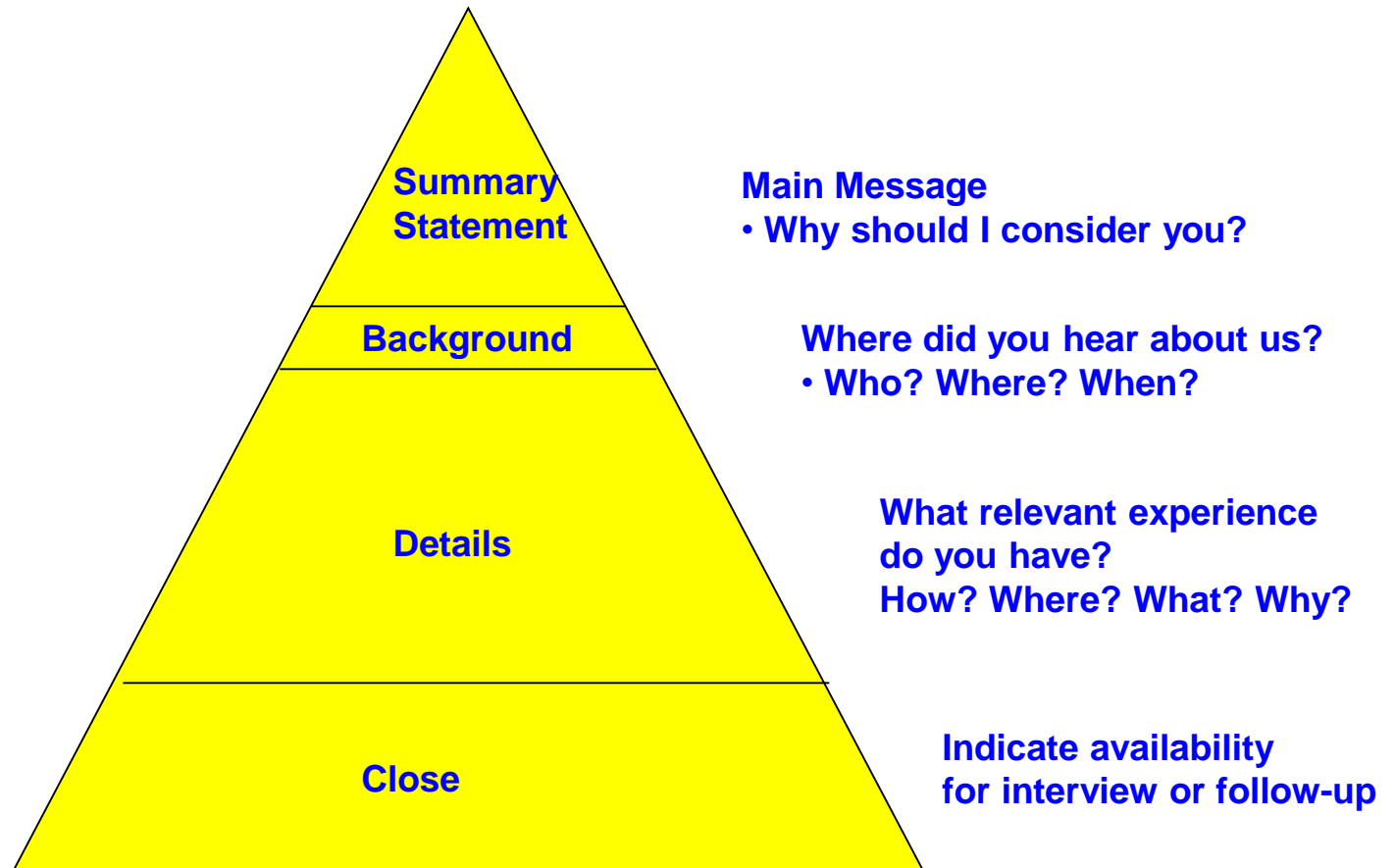


# The Cover Letter

- The cover letter allows an employer a picture of
  - Who you are
  - How you communicate
  - Whether you understand this position
  - What you can contribute to the company



# The Writer's Pyramid





# The Cover Letter

Through my 12 years of experience as a Human Resource Manager in the service industry, I have developed the advanced level of the organizational, interpersonal and communication skills needed for the position of Director of Personnel at Posh Hotels Inc.



# The Interview

- The purpose of the interview is
  - For you to learn more about the position
  - For the employer to learn more about your skills, abilities and style
  - For you to demonstrate that you understand and value the company
  - For you to demonstrate that you have the qualities the company is looking for



# What employers value

- Clear communication
- Active listening
- Openness to new ideas
- Flexibility
- Emotional resilience
- Self-confidence
- Perceptiveness
- Cultural awareness
- Rapport
- Influence



# The Interview

- Prepare by learning about the company and its culture
- Consider possible questions and their answers
- Practice with a friend or coach
- Listen actively to the interviewer
- Know what you want to ask
- Send a thank-you letter or e-mail
- Respond to offers in writing



# Conclusions

- Customize every application
- Research companies thoroughly
- Focus on contribution
- Consider every application an opportunity
- Prepare for interviews carefully