

Leveraging your Exchange Year

How to express your Rotary year to employers, college recruiters, & others

Your Rotary year may have been the most influential year you have experienced, but apart from some good stories and memories, where does this get you? This handout will demonstrate how your year can influence others to achieve your goals.

Common themes:

Surface-level benefits of your exchange year

Learned new language

Developed biculturalism

Lived with new family

Travel experience

Digging deeper:

Reframed common themes

Fearless learner

Proven independence

Adaptable to challenging environments

Demonstrated commitment to diversity

Getting personal:

Giving your exchange year interview answer

Tell me about a time you...

Faced adversity

Solved a problem

Demonstrated confidence

Failed

Made a difference

Changed someone's mind

Showed initiative

Proved you're capable

Going broad:

Your exchange year was more than a year-long vacation. You were also:

An ambassador

A student

A son/daughter

A teacher

A change maker

A success

Resume: A one-page document that introduces you, highlights your skills and abilities, and features your greatest accomplishments and achievements.

- Make each resume specific to the job
- Emphasize particular skills, experiences, and characteristics listed in the job posting
- Use bold, underlining, and italics to organize, but don't get carried away
- Feel free to expand margins beyond the Microsoft Word standard
- Proofread, proofread, proofread
- Don't use wacky fonts
- Don't use Microsoft Word templates

Cover letter: An accompaniment to a resume that interprets the dense resume and gives your application a "human touch." Provides an opportunity for you to further express why you are the right candidate for the job.

- Use a business letter format
- Sell yourself without sounding cocky
- Grab the reader's attention right away
- Emphasize particular skills, experiences, and characteristics listed in the job posting
- Watch spelling and grammar

Action words: Every phrase should begin with an action word.

Action word + details + outcome/result

Attained	Convinced
Enhanced	Developed
Established	Resolved
Expanded	Diagnosed
Improved	Invented
Increased	Solved
Initiated	Overhauled
Instituted	Adapted
Motivated	Designed
Pioneered	Engineered
Reorganized	Learned
Strengthened	Instructed

Example: Developed substantial relationship with Austrian students and faculty despite linguistic and cultural barriers.