

CAREER

# INSIGHTS

FEHR & PEERS

## Insider Tips for Landing a Career in Transportation Engineering and Planning

Fehr & Peers understands the variety of experiences and paths available to those passionate about solving transportation problems and improving communities. This guide focuses on going beyond just the basics of resumes, cover letters, and interviews to provide you with helpful tips for highlighting your experience and interests as you break into the transportation industry.

# General Notes | Resume

## General Notes

All of your recruiting materials should work together and build on one another. Resumes are used to share your related experience and skills, and cover letters expand upon your career interests and your most relevant experience, highlighting why you think you are the right fit for the opportunity. In an interview, you then share specific examples that illustrate how your experience and interests align with the job opportunity.

Always research the company you are applying to and customize your materials to highlight how you align with the position. Seek to learn about the company and its business, mission, vision, and values. Think about how you relate to those aspects. What do you have in common? What is appealing to you or makes you excited to work there?

Always proofread your work and have someone else review and proofread it.

## Resume

### CONTENT & FORMAT

**Summary or Objective:** In this section, clearly and concisely describe your career goal and interest in transportation, especially if you do not have directly related experience.

**Education:** Listing your GPA is not required. If you list courses or other academic highlights, share the titles and the ones most related to the job.

**Experience:** This section may include school projects or extracurricular activities illustrating transportation-related experience. Any work experience is helpful to demonstrate skills that will be important in a professional work environment, such as time management and prioritization.

**Skills & Additional Information:** Include what you do in your own time to learn about transportation or build related skills.

**Contact Information:** Though it is not required to share your full address, you may share your city, state, phone number, and email address.

### Additional Notes

Keep your resume to no more than two pages. If you have done a lot of academic research, then this may be listed beyond two pages, but consider focusing on projects that are most relevant to the job.

Consider the readability and design of the document when deciding the font, font size, spacing, colors, chronological order, and any graphical elements.

As a good practice, create a master resume that includes all of your experience and skills, and then make a copy of this master to edit and tailor for each job you apply to.

# Cover Letter | Interviewing

## Cover Letter

### CONTENT & FORMAT

**Section 1:** Introduce yourself and what made you excited about this job; explain how you and your personal goals align with the company and this opportunity.

**Section 2:** Highlight how you qualify for the job by expanding on one or two key examples from your resume that gave you relevant experience or transferable skills for the job, such as your experience, academic projects, skills, or interests. The example(s) should be specific but concise.

**Section 3:** Provide a brief, one-sentence summary, and then express how you look forward to connecting with the company to learn more and share more about your qualifications in an interview.

### Additional Notes

Keep your cover letter to a maximum of one page.

A cover letter does not need to be addressed to a specific person; it can be addressed to the Hiring Manager.

You can make a note of any relocation plans or willingness to relocate, if you are not already local to the position.

The design of your cover letter should match your resume: be consistent with font, sizing, colors, and the overall design.

## Interviewing

### PREPARE & PRACTICE

Look up potential interview questions and practice with someone else.

Review your resume and experience to think about what examples you would share for different kinds of questions, such as teamwork, problem-solving, successes, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses.

If you do not have directly related experience, consider the experiences that illustrate related and transferrable skills and experience, as well as experiences demonstrating your ability to learn from your mistakes.

Prepare three to five questions you would like to ask. These questions may be related to what is important to you in your career or what you'd like to learn about the company, the company's work, and the position. You may not be able to ask all prepared questions, due to time constraints during the interview. Prioritize them in your order of importance.

Review your research of the company before the interview and be familiar with the responsibilities and qualifications of the position. Consider tailoring your questions to show that you have done your research on the company and the position.

### SHARING EXAMPLES

Keep your answers focused on the question asked and balance providing enough details with being concise and clear. It is okay to ask if the interviewer would like you to expand on anything you share. Think of STAR: your answers should specify the situation, task, action, and result.

Be mindful of avoiding tangents and allow time for other questions.

Remember that it is okay to ask for time to think about a question before answering or to ask to have a question repeated if you did not understand it.

Do not speak negatively of others in your examples (e.g., classmates, coworkers, professors, employers, etc.). Focus on your actions, not the actions of others.

# Information | Webinars

## VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

Always treat a virtual interview as you would an in-person interview.

Have a copy of your resume and cover letter to reference, along with your prepared questions.

Test the interview platform before your interview.

Consider your background, lighting, background noise, and internet connection in choosing a location that would be best for an interview.

If technical issues do occur, always stay calm and keep a positive, solutions-oriented attitude.

Follow up after the interview with an email message to thank your interviewers.

Watch the recorded Career Insights webinar, *Insider Tips for Landing a Career in Transportation Engineering and Planning*, and all other Career Insights webinars at <https://careerinsights.info/>.

