

Career Launch Portfolio Project

Research a career, build application materials, and present a realistic launch plan

STUDENT PROJECT PACKET | Grades 9-12

Project Information	Details
Project Length	5 class periods + optional homework
Primary CFM Area	Career Management - CM.3
Project Topic	Job Search & Application
Final Score	100 points

Project Challenge

Students select a realistic career target, analyze qualifications and labor-market expectations, build a professional resume and tailored cover letter, prepare interview evidence, and present a 90-day career launch plan.

What You Will Produce

- Career target research brief with education/training, skills, salary range, outlook, and three credible sources.
- Gap analysis comparing current strengths to target-career expectations.
- One-page professional resume tailored to the selected pathway.
- One-page targeted cover letter responding to a realistic posting.
- Interview preparation sheet with six STAR evidence stories and five thoughtful employer questions.
- 90-day Career Launch Plan with measurable weekly actions.
- 3-5 minute final presentation and reflection.

Project Rules

- Use realistic evidence and clearly state every assumption. Never invent sources, prices, salaries, or survey results.
- Show calculations and label inputs.
- Keep drafts and evidence because you may be asked to defend your reasoning.
- Digital tools may support formatting and calculation, but your final reasoning must be your own.
- Professional quality, source information, and proofreading are part of the grade.

Project Roadmap

Day 1 - Career Target & Evidence

Collect credible information and explain why each source is useful.

Day 2 - Qualification Gap Analysis

Compare current evidence with employer expectations and identify measurable next steps.

Day 3 - Resume & Cover Letter

Draft targeted materials using action verbs, evidence, and language from a real posting.

Day 4 - Interview Readiness

Build six STAR stories and complete a structured peer interview.

Day 5 - Launch Plan & Presentation

Create a 90-day plan, present the portfolio, and defend the most important next action.

Part 1 - Career Target Research Brief

Research Item	Your Evidence / Findings
Career title & pathway	
Entry-level responsibilities	
Required education/training	
Preferred skills/certifications	
Typical salary range	
Employment outlook	
Three credible sources	

Why is this career a realistic target for you? Use at least two pieces of evidence.

Part 2 - Qualification Gap Analysis

Employer Expectation	Evidence I Already Have	Gap	Specific Next Step
Education/training			
Technical skill			
Communication			
Experience			
Professional habit			

Part 3 - Resume Evidence Bank

Experience / Activity	Action Verb	What You Did	Result / Evidence	Possible Resume Bullet

Part 4 - Cover Letter Planning

Requirement from posting	My matching evidence	Sentence I can use

Part 5 - STAR Interview Story Bank

Competency	Situation / Task	Action	Result	What I Learned
Teamwork				
Leadership				
Problem solving				
Responsibility				
Communication				
Learning from a mistake				

Part 6 - 90-Day Career Launch Plan

Week / Deadline	Action	Evidence of Completion	Why It Matters
Weeks 1-2			
Weeks 3-4			
Month 2			
Month 3			

Final Reflection: Which one action in your 90-day plan will most improve your employability, and why?

100-Point Project Rubric

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Developing	Beginning	Points
Career research & source quality	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	15
Gap analysis & career reasoning	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	15
Resume quality & targeting	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	20
Cover letter quality & targeting	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	15
Interview preparation	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	15
90-day launch plan	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	10
Presentation & reflection	Complete, accurate, insightful, and professionally presented.	Complete and accurate with minor gaps.	Partially complete or contains several errors.	Missing, inaccurate, or lacks required evidence.	10

Submission Checklist

- ☐ Career target research brief with education/training, skills, salary range, outlook, and three credible sources.
- ☐ Gap analysis comparing current strengths to target-career expectations.
- ☐ One-page professional resume tailored to the selected pathway.
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- ☐ Interview preparation sheet with six STAR evidence stories and five thoughtful employer questions.
- ☐ 90-day Career Launch Plan with measurable weekly actions.
- ☐ 3-5 minute final presentation and reflection.

Student name / signature / date
