



Seeing Through Employer's Eyes: Resume Game and Revision Activity

The Bonner Community Engagement Curriculum

BWBRS Description: *Bonner Curriculum workshop helps participants improve their resumes through an interactive activity designed to generate critical thinking and feedback.*

Overview:

The resume is one of the most important documents any person can prepare when seeking a job. However, understanding what is effective on a resume is somewhat difficult, especially when attempting to guess what an employer is looking for. The purpose of this session is to intentionally look through the nonprofit employer's eyes, considering what nonprofit organizations often look for when they hire. By viewing their own experience and skills from a different perspective, this workshop helps participants to sharpen their experience, education, and skill sets.

You may want to have copies of the Resume Writing Guide or other sample resumes from your Career Services office or online on hand.

Category:

Career and Professional Skills

Level:

Moderate to advanced

Recommended

Bonner Sequence: This training is recommended for Bonner students during the junior and senior years, ideally in conjunction with efforts to create

a resume. It supports a focus on preparing for career paths and exploring vocation.



**great for
juniors
and
seniors**

Learning Outcomes:

- To introduce participants to factors that nonprofit employers often look for in resumes
- To practice resume building skills through interactive activities
- To gain exposure to common hiring practices

Materials:

- Flipchart paper and markers
- Copies of attached handouts

How to Prepare:

Review and become familiar with the entire workshop. Have all materials (including handouts) ready to use.

You may want to collect some sample resumes.

If you need additional support on facilitation, review facilitation workshops in the Civic Engagement Curriculum.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

This 60 minute outline has the following parts:

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|--|---------------------------|
| 1) Introduction and Icebreaker | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 2) Resume Game Instructions | suggested time 5 minutes |
| 3) Resume Speed Writing and Hiring Committee | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 4) Resume Presentation and Discussion | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 5) Closing | suggested time 5 minutes |

Part 1) Introduction and Icebreaker

Suggested time: 10 minutes

To begin the workshop, introduce yourself, your role and your relationship to the group and/or workshop. It is best if participants have already drafted a resume and have it.

Then, explain that you want each person to spend the next minute reflecting on past or present volunteer experiences, internships or placements.

If they have their resume, they should review it to see if the listing fully identifies skills and abilities learned from this experience, as well as achievements. Provide a few examples, noting that skills can include anything from painting a wall, to learning to draft fundraising letters, to planning events, to even developing management skills, to canvassing a neighborhood.

Let participants reflect to themselves for a few moments.

Then, instruct each participant to find a partner, introduce themselves (including name, school, year, and possible career goals). Have them take turns describing the skills from their internships, volunteer experiences or placements. Give the group 2-3 minutes for this exercise.

If time (or the group is small), have a few participant volunteers share examples.

After the exercise, explain to the group the purpose of the workshop:

The purpose of this session is to consider what nonprofits and organizations look for when they hire by considering the position and viewpoint of the employer. We hope this will support you to consider your own experience, education, and skill sets in a more objective, rigorous context.

Part 2) Resume Game Instructions

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Begin this activity by dividing participants into groups of 3 to 5 people.

Then introduce a role play: explain that you are hiring one group to work with you on Idealist's campus programs, designed to reach out to college students with an interest in nonprofit careers. Point out that you are hiring the entire group to do the job. (*Also feel free to customize this scenario to your situation, inventing another job that may be more appropriate that you want to offer to the groups.*)

Now choose one group to act as the hiring committee. Explain to them that they will receive their instructions while the other groups are working.

Then explain that within each group are a wide array of talents, skills, knowledge and experiences. Each group's job will be to compile the most relevant skills from each member to create a group resume to be reviewed by the hiring committee.

Next, show the flipchart paper with relevant resume headers. Point out that these are the types of things each group should include in their resume:

- Educational Experience
- Professional Skills
- Volunteer and Leadership Experiences
- Internships
- Major Accomplishments
- Awards
- Publications
- Hobbies, talents, travel

Have each group choose a recorder to write the group resume. Don't worry about the actual format of the resume. Also have each group select a presenter to share the resume with the entire group.

Pass out a piece of flipchart paper, markers, and the handout *Campus Organizer Job Description* to each group. Explain that they will have only 15 minutes to complete the resume and the presenters will only have 45 seconds to share the group's resume with the hiring committee. That presentation actually serves as your group's cover letter. It is your chance to explain why your group should get the job. (Note to the group: *An employer will spend about 30 seconds on a resume and 30 seconds on a cover letter*).

Part 3) Resume Speed Writing and Hiring Committee Instructions

Suggested time: 20 minutes

While the other groups are creating their resume, work with the hiring committee to explain that their responsibility during this period is to think about the criteria in which they will evaluate the group resumes. Distribute the Hiring Criteria handout to the group and briefly explain each criterion.

After this explanation, point out that each group will be presenting their resumes to both yourself and the committee as well and that after each 45 second presentation,

they will be allowed to ask one question, time permitting (*sample questions are listed on the Hiring Criteria handout.*)

Finally, explain that once each group has presented, they will have 5 minutes to deliberate privately on which group will get the job. Be sure to note that they will have to defend their decision.

Hiring Criteria Handout Content

Each group will be presenting their “resume” and your job is to recommend which group should get the job. You are free to ask one question of each group if you choose.

Here are some guidelines to help you make your decision:

1. Does the group have experience with nonprofit organizations?

- *Not necessarily employment, but volunteer experience and internships.*

Sample Interview Question: What nonprofit organization do you admire most and why?

2. Does the group demonstrate a commitment to a particular cause or organization?

- *Lots of one-time volunteer projects are less impressive*
- *Do they have experience with the issue(s) on which the organization focuses?*
- *Have their responsibilities increased over time?*

Sample Interview Question: Why did you choose to get involved with these particular organizations?

3. Did they tailor their presentation and resume to fit the job being offered?

- *Is there a balance between skills and experience? Do they have the right skills for the job (event planning experience, public speaking, etc.)? Do they have the right experience for the job?*
- *Certain skills are generally valued by all organizations: speaking multiple languages, fundraising experience, publicity and event planning experience. Does the group have any of these specific skills?*

Sample Interview Question: Why do you want this particular job?

4. Leadership Experience

- *Leadership does not have to mean starting a new organization. Does the group*

demonstrate an ability to get the job done and make things happen?

Sample Interview Question: Can you discuss challenges you have faced as a leader?

Part 4) Resume Presentation and Discussion

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Now reconvene all the groups in preparation for the presentation. Have each group spend 45 seconds presenting their resume (on paper or flip chart paper) to you and the hiring committee. *(Make sure to remind the hiring committee to take notes based on the Hiring Criteria. Also be sure to give the hiring committee a chance ask a question of the presenter.)* Allow time for each group to present.

Once all presentations have finished, advise the hiring committee to leave the workshop area and decide which group should get the job. Remind them that they should base their decision on the criteria and be ready to defend their decision. Give them 5 minutes to do this.

While the hiring committee is deciding, conduct a brief discussion with the group based on the following questions *(also feel free to develop your own)*. You can also allow the group to vote about who should get the job:

- What was difficult about developing a group resume?
- Were you surprised about any of your group member's experiences and skills?
- Do you think that your personal resume would be strong enough for the campus organizer job?
- What do you think were the strongest areas of your group resume? The weakest?

After 5 minutes, invite the hiring committee back into the workshop. Have them announce which group gets the job and why they felt the chosen group's resume was more appropriate for the job than the others.

Part 5) Closing

Suggested time: 5 minutes

To close the workshop, briefly discuss the following points, emphasizing what nonprofit employers value in a resume. At the end of the workshop, pass out *What Nonprofits Look for When They Hire*.

- *Experience with nonprofit organizations - not necessarily employment, but volunteering and internships*
- *Demonstrated commitment to an organization or an issue - quality of work matters more than doing lots of scattered volunteer work*
- *Sometimes more about skill set than commitment to an issue (for example, event planners)*
- *Leadership experience - not about starting an organization, but can you make things happen*
- *Speaking more than one language is often helpful, though more so in a direct service or international perspective than in the campus organizer position*
- *Experience working with diverse people/communities/constituencies*

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BONUS TIP: ***Personal connections matter***

- For better or worse, who you know is important.
- Nonprofits tend to hire from their past and present volunteers and interns. This is especially true for smaller organizations.
- Spend more time cultivating your network than sending out cold resumes and cover letters. Keep in touch with your volunteer and internship coordinators!