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The program guide is intended as a rough outline for the topic and can be adapted as you see fit to meet the needs of your program, students/clients, or situation. The guide also includes copy-permissible activities as a supplement to instruction. **Please note that color handouts are copyright protected and duplication in any form is strictly prohibited.** See our website [www.dreamcatchercurriculum.com](http://www.dreamcatchercurriculum.com) for additional info, updates and new curriculum topics.

➤ **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:** This workshop requires minimal prep, however, it is strongly recommended that you read and review the program guide along with the handout before meeting with students.

## **RESUME BLUEPRINT OBJECTIVE & INCLUDED TOPICS:**

To provide college students with relevant information about resumes, cover letters, and interviewing; *Creating a Strong Resume, Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills, Resume Dos and Don'ts, Filler Words to Avoid, Engineer a Better Resume, Build the Perfect Cover Letter, Mechanics of the Interview*

## **BEFORE THE WORKSHOP/SESSION:**

This workshop would be great for any level of college-level students/clients, but would be most effective for juniors and seniors and those about to start applying for jobs following college. You can schedule this session any time of year. Encourage students/clients to do some job searching before coming to the workshop/advising session. This session can be held in conjunction with a career fair at your institution, a mock interview workshop, or a peer resume review meeting. Consider inviting a professional from the career center on your campus or a career advisor to speak about searching for jobs, entry level expectations, and professional growth.

## **STEP ONE TIME: 10-15 MINUTES**

Inform participants that the workshop or session will be addressing resumes, cover letters, and interviewing. **Ask for a show of hands of those who have created a resume.** Next, **ask for a show of hands if their resumes are current and up-to-date.** Lastly, **ask for a show of hands of students who have had their resumes reviewed by a peer, professor, or career center advisor.** Congratulate those who raised their hands all three times and encourage those who did not to start updating their resumes. Distribute the *Resume Blueprint* handout and begin with the section titled *Creating a Strong Resume*. Review the components of an effective resume: formatting, summary, experience, and editing. If time permits, conduct research of resume images online to discover templates and formats that work for their intended career fields.

Discuss the *Powerful Action Verb* section, being sure to point out the verbs in **bold**, as these are the skills most sought by employers. Review *Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills*. Ensure students understand that hard skills are skills gained by education and life experience, such as language(s) used, degrees and certificates, technology skills, and research results. Soft skills are interpersonal skills such as communication, maintaining relationships, and time management. Discuss the *Dos and Don'ts* section as well as the *Resumes By the Numbers* section. Finish up with the *Filler Words to Avoid* section; **ask what types of wording or phrases can be used instead of the filler words**, soliciting answers as time allows.

## **STEP TWO TIME: 15 MINUTES**

Turn to the inside of the handout and discuss the section titled *Engineer a Better Resume*. Inform participants that **their resume is a personal marketing tool to get noticed by hiring managers and recruiters.** It should reflect their personalities and experiences. Resumes should be saved as a PDF so that fonts and formatting are not affected; the PDF title should be the applicant's full name and the position to which they are applying. Review each section of the resume and its explanation. Pay extra attention to the following sections:

**Professional Summary/Profile:** This section is used instead of an "Objective" section. It gives a clear description of an applicant's background and they can offer an employer. **Professional Experience:** List any relevant experience with the company or organization name, dates worked, position title, and duties/role. **References:** This section should be listed on a separate page, but for this example it was listed with the resume, and include current contact information.

Ask students if there are any sections that would be applicable to them that are missing on this resume. Other resume sections can include: volunteer experience, published papers and articles, co-curricular activities, research, conference presentations, internships, and leadership experience. Mention that the example resume belongs to someone with 15 years of experience and is an example of a one-page resume. As experience accrues, resumes may become longer than one page.

# COLLEGE-LEVEL RESUME BLUEPRINT Program Guide



## **STEP THREE** TIME: 15-20 MINUTES

Next, move to the section titled *Build the Perfect Cover Letter*. Ask if anyone has experience with writing cover letters and solicit answers as time allows. Discuss **the importance of referring to and using the job description as a tool to write cover letters**. Students should familiarize themselves with the company/organization for which the job was listed, as well as identify the recruiter to which letters should be addressed.

**If time allows:** Provide multiple and different job descriptions for participants to review. Ask that they highlight the most important portions of the job descriptions that should be addressed in a cover letter.

**The cover letter should be approached as though writing an essay or paper, by writing an introduction, body, and conclusion.** To explore writing the "introduction" section, discuss the *Start Strong* section and review the questions that should be answered within the cover letter. Use the job description examples you provided as guide for this section. Move to the *Highlight How You Fit the Position Requirements* section. Students should select a few themes or major requirements from the job description as a guide for writing. If they don't feel like a perfect fit for the job, encourage them provide similar experiences or talents (that are close to the requirements), transferable skills, and knowledge gained that would be applicable to the position. They should use each theme or major requirement as a paragraph in the cover letter as the "body" sections. Next, discuss the *Finish Strong* section. Here, students should write a synopsis of their qualifications and emphasize their enthusiasm for the position. This section should leave a lasting impression with the reader.

**Final points to make on cover letters:** Use a "letterhead" format for the top section of the cover letter that includes (in this order): full legal name, address, phone number, and appropriate email address. Each cover letter should be tailored and specific to the particular position. Cover letters should not heavily repeat the resume, but rather display soft skills and explain qualifications listed on the resume. Monitor the progress of applications by tracking the status on the online platform to which the resume was submitted or by contacting the hiring manager. Applicants should wait a few weeks to follow up and then only do so once during the application process.

## **STEP FOUR AND ASSESSMENT** TIME: 15-20 MINUTES

Move to the back of the handout to cover *Mechanics of the Interview*. Mention to students that, if selected for an interview, they'll need to bring a copy or two of their resume and a notepad and pen to take notes. They should arrive about 10 minutes early to the scheduled time, but not much earlier than 10 minutes as it could inconvenience the hiring committee. Encourage them to ask questions about the location and parking/transportation (or any other questions) when contacted for an interview.

Review the *What to Wear* section, emphasizing the importance of dressing appropriately for the position while being true to individuality, rather than trying to convey something that might not come naturally. Mention any resources available for assistance with business dress clothing or mock interviewing.

Discuss *Interview Questions and How to Answer*. Encourage students to practice being interviewed by another person so that they can get used to answering questions on the spot and answer confidently. Review the common questions and the suggested responses. Lastly, review the *Questions You Should Ask Your Interviewer* section. Explain that prior to the interview, questions should be prepared to ask the interviewer; it is expected that interviewees have thoughtful questions, which can be part of the evaluation.

Distribute the assessment included in this guide to students and collect when complete.

**DreamCatcher Extra:** Distribute the *Quick Job Search Guide* to assist in job hunting. Note that this is not a comprehensive guide, but a good start to the job search process.

**If time allows:** Hold mock interview sessions. Ask students to come prepared for an interview, including business attire, copies of their resumes, and a list of questions about a mock position. They can also interview each other and provide feedback for their peers. Review handshaking best practices: right-handed shakes upon greeting and departing (unless right hand is impaired; in this case, follow the body language and lead of that individual), handshakes are done standing (by those able-bodied), two to three pumps during the handshake with a firm grasp (don't squeeze too hard or not hard enough), and make eye contact throughout with a pleasant or neutral expression.

## **OTHER DISCUSSION POINTS:**

Review the purpose of a resume. It is a snapshot of who applicants are, and while it is a collection of accomplishments, it is also a tool to be used to propel them into future professional roles. Applicants should not use personal pronouns in writing resumes (I, me, my). Discuss questions that should NOT be answered in an interview, such as personal questions relating to marital status, gender, ethnicity, health, and religious or political affiliations. Encourage a visit the Career Center on campus to schedule and participate in a resume review and/or a mock interview.

# Quick Job Search Guide:

Don't be mistaken--looking for a job is a full-time job. It's not a task to juggle between scrolling social media, napping, and hanging out with friends. If you're serious about landing a good job, you need to dedicate hours each day to the search. The good news is that the following sites have consolidated much of the information you need:

## LinkedIn

The first place to start is LinkedIn. It's not a traditional job-search site, but it is the most valuable when properly used. There are a handful of "must-dos" when creating a profile. Consider the following:

**Photo:** typically a professional headshot

**Profile Headline:** the type of job/field for which you're searching

**Relevant Experience:** a listing of your previous jobs/internships

Begin leveraging the power of LinkedIn to find job opportunities. Click "Jobs" at the top of your homepage and then type a keyword, title, or company into the search box. Filter by industry, location, and numerous other metrics.

## Indeed

Indeed is one of the single largest sources of job postings online. Indeed is a job aggregator, meaning it draws postings from company websites, other job listing sites, jobs posted in niche industry websites, jobs posted in online classifieds, and other places.

Enter a keyword, title, or company name that you're targeting, specify the location, and click the "Find Jobs" button. Browse listings or further filter the results. Change the geographical footprint, salary range, job type, and even choose whether you want to see results from employers or recruiters, or both.

Upload your resume to the website, allowing employers and recruiters to find you. When they access Indeed, they search for potential hires based on skillsets, location, and career goals.

## CareerBuilder

While the search functionality is basically the same as other sites, CareerBuilder sets itself apart with a "Recommendations" feature. This feature recommends jobs based on past searches, keywords in your resume, and details about jobs you've applied for in the past. The more you search and apply, the more accurate the results.

## ZipRecruiter

ZipRecruiter is a leading online employment marketplace used by over 1.8 million employers. Powered by AI-driven smart-matching technology, this company actively connects millions of businesses of all sizes and individual job seekers through innovative mobile, web, and email services, as well as partners with the best job boards on the web.

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# Resume Blueprint Assessment

Name one powerful action verb most sought out by employers:

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Define the difference between hard skills and soft skills in your own words:

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Name one general rule of interviewing and why it's important:

**RULE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANCE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Rank this workshop's effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the most effective, 1 is the least effective).

**1      2      3      4      5**



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