

CAREER SERVICES

ABSTRACT

Gauging the Effectiveness of Instruction

Overview: Career Services assessed the training effectiveness of Career Counselors in teaching students the importance of targeting their resumes and how to write a professional targeted resume.

Methods: Students seeking resume assistance we asked to complete a pre-assessment (*Student Resume Questionnaire*) with true and false statements to determine their knowledge of resume writing. Counselors then instructed students on techniques and importance of targeting their resumes. Upon completion, the counselors critiqued the students' resumes and completed a post assessment of their skill level using the same instrument. Third party observation from faculty also indicated that presentations were successful in communicating the objectives of this learning outcome.

Results: As demonstrated by their written resume, the 95% of students were able not only to write a professional targeted resume, but many had also uploaded several different versions in our online job posting program. This verified that the counselors were successful in assisting students with targeted resumes.

Conclusions: The staff will continue to stress targeted resumes and have decided to adopt a new goal for the 2006-2007 learning outcome by asking students to "take their careers to the next level" in other job seeking skills.

CAREER SERVICES ASSESSMENT

Action Strategy

To redesign student trainings to be more learning centered and interactive.

Learning Outcome

Students will write effective targeted resumes during the training.

Methodology

Assessment Forms Created:

- *Student Resume Questionnaire*: determined 7 criteria for a professional resume
- *Resume Assistance Feedback*
- *Third Party Learning Outcome Observation*
- *Resume Presentation Worksheet*

Individual Assistance

- Student Data Collection Procedure
 - **Pre-test:** Every student who requested resume assistance was asked to complete the *Student Resume Questionnaire* before receiving help from counselor.
 - Staff contacted students for final copies of their resumes or downloaded them from *Connections* and offered students additional assistance.
- Counselor Evaluation: Following the pre-test, the counselor instructed students on how to write a targeted and professional resume. **Post-test:** Afterwards, the counselor evaluated whether the student demonstrated learning by reviewing their final resume and scoring the results using the criteria on the *Student Resume Questionnaire*.

Classroom Presentations

- Presentations were re-designed in summer/fall 2005 to be more learning-centered and interactive.
- Faculty members were asked to complete a *Third Party Learning Outcome Observation*. If faculty member was not present, the counselor completed the observation form.

- Students completed the *Resume Presentation Worksheet* to assist in writing a targeted resume.

Population Served

Students and Graduates seeking assistance in writing resumes individually or during classroom presentations.

Measurement Methods

1. *Student Resume Questionnaire*
2. *Resume Assistance Feedback Form (Student)*
3. *Third Party Learning Outcome Observation*
4. *Resume Presentation Worksheet*

Outcomes/Analysis

Individual Assistance: Compilation and Analysis Methodology

- An adequate sample size of completers (those submitting revised resumes) was collected in order to provide reliable results.
- Information was entered into database by the Administrative Assistant on a weekly basis and discussed at bi-weekly staff meetings. Action steps and forms were revised as a result of these discussions.
- Narrative data was entered into a summary document. The counselors met to discuss the analysis of the data and identify trends.

Statistical Data

Student Resume Questionnaire Results

Sample Size	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Percentage with 100% correct answers
78	7	7	84.6
		6	10.3
		5	2.56
		4	2.56
		3	0
		2	0
		1	0

Analysis

Both pre- and post-tests were collected with a sample size of 78.

Data gathered from the post-tests:

- 84.6% of the sample size demonstrated proficiency in all seven criteria for writing a professional resume
- 10.3% mastered 6 out of 7 criteria
- 5% mastered 4-5 of the criteria

Conclusion: 95% of students who completed this assessment successfully wrote a professional targeted resume after receiving assistance from a career counselor.

Resume Assistance Feedback Form Results

Compilation

- Counselors compiled data by asking students a series of questions in order to provide feedback on the student's experience after receiving assistance writing their resume.
- This *Resume Assistance Feedback* form was added about a quarter of the way into the process as a result of staff meetings. If results indicated students were not able to write a targeted resume, this data could possibly provide insights as to reasons allowing us to make informed decisions. It also provided us with information about which resources most impacted resume writing.
- Sample size: N=49
- A total of 6 questions were asked and counselors compiled the data.

Analysis

Question #1 (What was most helpful in learning how to write a resume?)

Student found these tools to be most helpful:

- Counselor's individual instruction.
- Tips provided by staff on using WinWay resume software program.
- Counselor's suggestions for fine-tuning wording.
- Counselor's suggestions for including and targeting their objective.
- Counselor's suggestions on what type of resume format was most appropriate for their needs.
- List of action verbs and how to use them.
- Customized features of WinWay resume software.
- Counselor overall critique of resume (also specific assistance with grammar)
- Counselor's suggestions to maximize effectiveness of resumes.
- Counselor's advice on tailoring their resume to a particular career goal that highlights their skills.

Question #2 (Which of the following resources in Career Services did you use in writing your resume?)

Number of Responses	Resources Used to Write Resume	Percentage
118	Appointment with Counselor/Drop in assistance	45.8%
	WinWay Program	26.3%
	<i>Career Guide</i>	18.6%
	Videos	5.9%
	Books	3.4%

Results:

- The majority of students indicated they used appointments with counselors and drop-in assistance with staff members.
- A resume software program (WinWay) was cited as the second most used resource.
- The *Career Guide* was also beneficial and students told us they appreciated receiving a complimentary copy to keep as a reference guide.
- Other hard copies such as videos and books ranked lowest; however, counselors frequently used library and video resources during teaching on an individual basis.

Question #3 (Of all the resources that you used (from question #2), which one(s) were the most useful?)

Number of Responses	Most Useful	Percentage
42	Appointment with a Counselor	38.1%
	Ability to receive assistance on a drop-in basis	26.2%
	Resume Software	23.8%
	Career Guide	7.1%
	Videos	4.8%
	Library Books	0

Results:

This data correlates with the data in question #2. The same rankings apply to resources that are both useful and used.

Question #4 (How much time did you spend meeting on-on-one with a counselor?)

Results:

When we totaled all the time spent with staff, the average time spent with a counselor was one hour. Some students returned multiple times. Drop-in time periods typically took longer than the student expected.

How much time did you spend meeting one-on-one with a counselor?	
15 minutes or less	8
30 minutes or less	15
1 hour	18
2 hours	8
3 hours	2

Question #5 (What could we have done differently to assist you with the resume writing process?)

Results:

The majority of students in narrative feedback indicated they would not change any of the processes or services offered for writing their resume. Only a few students suggested even more one-on-one help.

Question #6 (Other comments)

Additional comments supported our previous findings in the study. Students have become more aware of our services, and are using these services regularly. With the help of the interns, we were able to provide more students with individual assistance in writing professional resumes.

Summary of Results for Individual Assistance:

- Students used a variety of learning resources to meet their different learning styles.
- Career Services offered several resources, but students preferred the one-on-one staff interaction most often with computer assisted software as a second resource.
- Students were pleased with the resources and assistance provided by Career Services as indicated by no suggestions for improvements or changes.
- It requires about 1 hour to counsel a student on writing a professional resume.
- Counselors have observed that more students are uploading several versions of their resume on Connections as a result of counselor instruction on the importance of targeting their resumes to specific job announcements.

Presentations: Compilation and Analysis Methodology

**Statistical Data: *Third Party Learning Outcome Observation*
Counselor Feedback N=10**

Questions	Scale of Learning				
	Very Much	Quite a Bit	Some	Very Little	Did Not Observe
The career counselor utilized appropriate learning centered activities and facilitation techniques.	9	1			
The career counselor encouraged student participation in the learning process.	9	1			
Students understand how to target their resume to a specific position.	6	4			
Students learned basic categories of a resume and understand which ones to use for their resume.	7	3			

Faculty Feedback N=8

Questions	Scale of Learning				
	Very Much	Quite a Bit	Some	Very Little	Did Not Observe
The career counselor utilized appropriate learning centered activities and facilitation techniques.	7	1			
The career counselor encouraged student participation in the learning process.	6	2			
Students understand how to target their resume to a specific position.	7	1			
Students learned basic categories of a resume and understand which ones to use for their resume.	7	1			

Analysis

Results: The above charts confirm that Career Services’ re-designed presentations accomplished the intended outcome of teaching students how to write a professional targeted resume.

Narrative comments are included in the Attachment Section of this report for validation.

Decisions

Individual Assistance:

Career Counselors successfully taught students how to write a professional targeted resume and no major changes are required for instructional processes.

Maintain adequate staff levels including part time assistance during peak times since most students cited individual meetings with counselors as most useful. Note: Two graduate interns assisted during drop-in times to help with resumes during spring 2006. These interns are not included in permanent staffing and loss of interns will affect our ability to provide one-on-one assistance at this present level.

Change the layout of the office and/or create marketing to accommodate and increase use of videos and books on a self service level.

Need to promote additional resources such as software, videos and the *Career Guide* to compensate for loss of graduate interns.

Develop a customized training video for resume writing software.

Need to relocate the Central Campus Career Center to permit to re-design the floor plan in CH122 to allow for counselor assistance at the computers. Tight configuration prevents usage of all computers during busy periods when staff is assisting students.

Multi-campus should have computers close to the counselor's office to allow for counselor assistance.

Since students found an appointment with a counselor most helpful, we will try to encourage more appointments in the future. A suggestion was to market a "mini-appointment" for 15 minutes to get the resume writing process started.

Staff will inform students that it takes an average of 1 hour to complete a resume.

Presentations:

Review interactive resume presentation activity to accommodate class time constraints.

Learning Outcome Process:

When creating assessments, use Planning and Research to produce scannable forms to collect data more efficiently.

Clearly define the desired data results beforehand to accurately word questions and design forms.

Attachments

Student Resume Questionnaire

Resume Assistance Feedback

Third Party Learning Outcome Observation

Resume Presentation Worksheet

Narrative comments from Counselors and Faculty on the *Third Party Learning Outcome Observation*

Attachment

Resume Presentation

Learning Outcomes Third Party Observation Comments

Summary of Counselors' Feedback

14 workshops utilized the *Resume Presentation Worksheet* activity. The following are counselors' feedback for each presentation.

1. The majority (12/18) demonstrated understanding of the concept of writing a targeted objective. They also seemed to understand how to choose categories that highlight their qualifications and target the job they are applying for.
2. Based on completed objectives, the students definitely understand how to write a targeted objective. They also seemed to understand how to choose categories that highlight their qualifications in relation to the job.
3. Objectives were not completed by students, but most seemed to choose categories that would highlight their skills in relation to the job they want. Some students seemed to think they needed to include all of the categories listed in their resume and numbered all of the options.
4. All students demonstrated the ability to write a targeted objective and select appropriate categories for their resume.
5. Judging from the attached responses and interaction during facilitation, students have a good understanding of how to target the resume and objective.
6. This presentation was for an evening technical writing course. Based on the students' resume presentation worksheet, most used some strategy in selecting which categories to include. However, some students placed contact information in the middle or bottom of their format. Later students came to CS for critiques as part of their assignments, and most had a good

grasp of resume writing. Student evaluations were strong, and most students said they learned how to write a resume when answering question “What did you learn from this presentation?”

7. I used magazines as an analogy/ice breaker to illustrate the importance of targeting your resume. According to the resume category activity most students understood the importance of customizing the order of chosen categories on the resume. A few students seemed to think they needed to include all the categories. So maybe, the instructions should be rewritten for the activity. On evaluations, students indicated they would write/rewrite their resumes as next steps.
8. This presentation was a big success. Students asked high level questions concerning how to target their resume. They actively participated and asked questions.
9. I think the students really grasped the concept of targeting their resume. They responded correctly to questions that I asked during the presentation and asked further questions related to the topic.
10. I distributed the fake resumes with mistakes, and students did a good job of identifying errors. On student evaluations, they seemed to learn a lot, and many indicated they would schedule an appointment with a career counselor.
11. I began my presentations with the fake resumes with mistakes, and this quickly engaged students in the material. This was a small group of nine and each student seemed to ask at least one question or make a comment during the presentation. I think this indicates the level of engagement in the material, and the “fake resumes with errors” that the students corrected show the students did some higher level processing of the material.
12. This class of 11 students visited CS. I started with a discussion of the “fake” resume with mistakes, and then talked about resume examples from the Career guide. Next the students used the computers and WinWay to demonstrate what they learned during the presentation. I observed the students writing targeted objectives and customizing their resumes with appropriate styles and section headers. Some students completed resumes, while others left with at least a beginning of a resume. Based upon what I observed, the students had a good understanding of resume writing.
13. Judging from the attached comments in student memos, the students felt the information was useful. Many students came in later in the week to

have me review their resumes. Overall, they had a good understanding of resume writing strategies.

14. This was a very small class, so we were able to engage in a lot of dialogue during the presentation. Based on our conversation I think the students can easily recognize the difference between a targeted resume and one that is not. At first they struggled to write a targeted objective on their own, but after going over it again they seemed to have an increased understanding. I also worked with these students individually on their resumes in the CS office later in the week and both students wrote targeted objectives and resumes.

Summary of Faculty Feedback

“ Great Job” - Bonnie Faulkner, Horticulture

“Great introduction for these services from our Career Center. Presentation was professional and interesting. I think the students benefited from the activity and will repeat it again in another class for this course.” - Liz Harris, Horticulture

“ I haven’t received their assignments yet but Connie emphasized targeting , identifying key words, and examining the job ad for those key words. Her verbal exercise in identifying skills desired worked well.” - Liz Rogers, English

“Well done! Informative, creative, and interactive. Connie has a genuine energy and enthusiasm that comes across in her presentation.” - Kirk Knott, Counseling/ACA

“Melissa was prepared and did an excellent job” - Glenda McAlexander, Health Sciences/Dental Hygiene

“Thank you fro a highly informative presentation! In addition to presenting types, important components, and do’s and don’ts of resumes, questions from the class were fielded well. The only thing more I might ask for are more participatory exercises, but otherwise a wonderful presentation!”

- Walter Squire, English

“VERY clear and helpful. Thanks again!” - Beth Leysieffer, English