

## Polish Your Resume

### The **BIG** Idea

- How can my resume show that I am well qualified for the job?

## AGENDA

- I. Warm Up (5 minutes)
- II. Resume Refresher (5 minutes)
- III. Hitting Your Target (10 minutes)
- IV. Revising Your Resume (20 minutes)
- V. Wrap Up: Sharing and Revising Resumes (5 minutes)

## MATERIALS

### STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 55, Skills Identification
- Student Handbook page 56, Chris's Resume
- Student Handbook page 57, Parts of a Resume
- Student Handbook page 58, Accomplishment Statement Chart
- Student Handbook page 59, Chris's Interests, Skills, and Activities
- Student Handbook page 60, Resume Action Words
- Student Handbook page 61, Resume Proofreading Checklist
- Student Handbook page 62, Blank Resume Template

### FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, Chris's Revised Resume

- Overhead projector
- Laptop and LCD projector
- Chart paper and markers

## OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Review the parts of a resume and the purpose of each part.
- Identify job-related skills useful to a potential employer and translate the skills into accomplishment statements.
- Revise or create a resume.

## OVERVIEW .....

In this lesson, students update their resumes to emphasize skills relevant to jobs to which they are applying or are interested. To do this, they first identify skills needed by their potential employers. Then they identify personal experiences that illustrate skills they possess, creating accomplishment statements for each. Finally, students revise their resumes to both update information (e.g., GPA, new activities, etc) and add relevant skills.

## PREPARATION .....

- Review the Camp Madison website ([www.madisonsquare.org](http://www.madisonsquare.org)), then Programs, then Camp Madison. Prepare to project the website in the classroom.
- See the Roads to Success website ([www.roadstosuccess.org/materials/templates](http://www.roadstosuccess.org/materials/templates)) for an electronic version of **Portfolio page 7, Blank Resume Template**.
- List the day's BIG IDEA and activities on the board.
- Write the day's vocabulary word and definition on the board.
- Make the following handouts into overhead transparencies or copy onto chart paper:
  - **Student Handbook page 56, Chris's Resume**
  - **Student Handbook page 58, Accomplishment Statement Chart**
  - **Facilitator Resource 1, Chris's Revised Resume**

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION .....

With so many candidates to choose from, most employers make a decision about a potential employee's qualifications within 10 seconds of reviewing his or her resume. Upon a deeper, 30-second review of a resume, hiring managers reject all but the top candidates.\* These statistics make clear the need to help students develop strong resumes that highlight their relevant qualifications.

\*[http://ww1.educationplanner.com/builder/vcl/index.php?page\\_name=resumes/importance.php](http://ww1.educationplanner.com/builder/vcl/index.php?page_name=resumes/importance.php)

## VOCABULARY .....

**Resume:** a summary of your career experience and education that describes your skills and experiences so an employer can see, at a glance, how you can contribute to the workplace.

## IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS .....

For the **Warm Up**, students who have not yet identified or researched a potential employer, have them list three skills for someone applying for the counselor job at Camp Madison.

For **Activity IV, Revising Your Resume**, students who did not create a resume last year should use this time to create their resumes. Have them use **Student Handbook page 62, Blank Resume Template**, along with **Student Handbook page 57, Parts of a Resume**. An electronic resume template is available on the Roads to Success website (<http://www.roadstosuccess.org/materials/templates>).

## ACTIVITY STEPS .....

### I. Warm Up (5 minutes)

1. [As students enter, ask them to complete **Student Handbook page 55, Skills Identification**. Give them three minutes to complete the activity.]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Today, we're going to talk about resumes, and how to revise (or create) one that highlights the skills important for the job for which you're applying. First, we'll quickly review what a resume is and its different sections. Then we'll work on creating accomplishment statements highlighting job-related skills.

### II. Resume Refresher (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** The company research you conducted over the past few weeks should have given you an idea of what is required of an employee at that company. Now you need to show the employer that you're the right person for the job! You have six chances to do this, but most of the time, you have to make a good case for yourself in steps 1 and 2 before you get a chance at the others. [Ask students for the steps in the process, and put their suggestions on the board. Arrive at a list that looks like this:
  - Resume
  - Cover letter
  - Interview
  - Reference
  - Thank-you Note
  - On the job, once you've got it!]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** This week, we'll talk about your resume. Remember a resume is a summary of your experiences and education. But it's much more than a simple list. It's also a way to show an employer what makes you well qualified for the job at hand. Today you will identify skills that your potential employer cares most about and create accomplishment statements that describe these skills. Next week, we'll talk about your cover letter and how you can use it to convey additional information important to your employer.
3. [Project **Student Handbook page 56, Chris's Resume** on the overhead.]

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** For the last few weeks, we've been following the story of Chris, a teenager interested in working as a counselor at Camp Madison, a suburban

day camp for city kids. Chris has set up an interview and the director has asked for his resume. Let's review Chris's resume together as a reminder of what belongs in one.

4. [Review what goes into each part of a resume by pointing to that section on the overhead projector as you read each of the section descriptions from **Student Handbook page 57, Parts of a Resume**, or by asking students to describe what goes where.]

### III. Hitting Your Target (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Most employers make a decision about a candidate's qualifications within just 10 seconds of reviewing a resume! Like many places of employment, Camp Madison may receive hundreds of resumes for a limited number of counselor jobs. If Chris wants the camp director to take him seriously, he needs to include skills most important to working at Camp Madison—experience that shows why he is a good fit for the job.
2. [Keep Chris's resume projected on the overhead and direct students' attention to it again.]

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Chris's resume is in the correct format and it is well written. He has no grammar or punctuation mistakes. He has included all the sections and his experiences and grades show he is a hard worker. However, there is nothing in his resume that shows why Chris would make a great camp counselor. How can he find out what Camp Madison cares most about in a counselor? [Give students a chance to respond.]

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Job ads list skills you need for a job, which make it helpful to decide what you need to highlight on your resume. However, Chris found out about the job through networking and a cold call, so there is no specific job description to review. Chris's research will help him figure out what experiences are most important to include. Let's review what we know about the camp.

3. [Project the Camp Madison Web site (<http://www.madisonsquare.org>), then "Programs," then "Camp Madison" using your laptop and LCD projector. Guide students to infer the kinds of skills, experiences, and characteristics that would be important for a counselor at Camp Madison. To prompt them, ask the following questions and jot their responses on chart paper.
  - How old are the campers? [NOTE: This is not listed on the site, and must be inferred from the photos.]
  - Where are the campers from?
  - What kinds of activities does the camp offer?

4. [Now project **Student Handbook page 58, Accomplishment Statement Chart** on the overhead.]

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Using what you know about Camp Madison, and other youth activities and clubs, what skills or experiences might the director be looking for in a counselor? [List at least three skills in the left-hand column. Responses might include good with kids, comfortable in nature, good at sports.] Which, if any, of these skills are evident on Chris's resume? Which does he need to consider including?

5. [Have students open to **Student Handbook page 59, Chris's Interests, Skills, and Activities.**]

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** This is a list of activities, experiences, hobbies, etc. that Chris did not put in his resume. Chris believed that because these aren't "jobs," but rather activities he enjoys in his free time, they do not belong on his resume. Which might he consider including as evidence of skills needed at Camp Madison? [Allow students to respond.]

[Write the identified items next to the corresponding skill in the middle column of the Achievement Statement Chart.]

6. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now let's figure out how to describe these skills on Chris's resume. We'll begin each description with an action word. What action word might describe his Bronx After-School Basketball experience? What did he do there?

What action words might apply to his camping experience with Big Brothers/Big Sisters?

[The completed chart may look like this:]

Skills the Employer Needs or Wants	Evidence of Skills	Active Accomplishment Statement
Good with kids	Bronx After-School Basketball, winter of 2008, 2009	Coached middle-school boys in shooting, dribbling, passing, and teamwork
Comfortable in nature	Big Brothers/Big Sisters Wilderness camps, fall weekends, grade 6-8	Hiked, camped, cooked, and cleaned up
Good at sports	[Note: already addressed in PE grades and “hiking and sports” under hobbies]	

7. [Display **Facilitator Resource 1, Chris’s Revised Resume**, on the overhead projector. Ask students to note the following:
- Chris has added his Bronx After-School Basketball Experience under “Experience.”
  - He’s added his Red Cross First Aid Certification under “Education.”
  - He’s chosen not to add his Big Brothers/Big Sisters camping experience, which he’ll include in his cover letter next week. (This could have been included under “Hobbies and Interests,” if desired.)

#### IV. Revise Your Resume (20 minutes)

1. [Have students return to the three skills they listed during the Warm Up activity. Instruct them to add these skills to the left-hand column of the **Student Handbook page 58, Accomplishment Statement Chart**. In the middle column, have them list an activity that provides evidence of that skill. Finally, have students use the right-hand column to create an accomplishment statement for each skill. Remind them to include action verbs, using **Student Handbook page 60, Resume Action Words** for reference.]
2. [If students created resumes last year, have them use the next 20 minutes to update their resume, incorporating the new accomplishment statements they just created. Remind students to update their resumes as well, including new GPAs (if B or above), new jobs or other experiences, and new hobbies or interests. For students who did not create a resume last year, see **IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS** and have them write their resumes from scratch on **Student Handbook page 62, Blank Resume Template**, or using the electronic template found on the Roads to Success website.]

3. [Circulate and help students as needed with their resumes.]

## V. Wrap Up: Sharing and Revising Resumes (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** No matter how great and relevant your experiences and accomplishments, if you have a spelling or grammatical error on your resume, that may be enough to make an employer lose interest in you. It is a great idea to have someone else (or several people whom you trust) review your resume for mistakes you may have missed. Swap resumes with a partner and use **Student Handbook page 61, Resume Proofreading Checklist** to proofread the resume. Then, return the resume and checklist to your classmate.

[NOTE: Students will need to use out-of-class time to revise their resumes.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Next week, we'll talk about your second chance to impress your future employer: your cover letter.



Chris Jones  
3024 Third Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10455  
(718) 555-1212 \* cjones@example.com

PROFILE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Athletic high school senior</li><li>• Fluent in English and Spanish</li><li>• Dependable and mature</li></ul>
EDUCATION	<p><b>Truman High School</b>, Bronx, NY <i>Expected graduation date:</i> 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GPA: 3.6</li><li>• Received A's in PE and science classes</li></ul> <p><b>Red Cross First Aid Certification</b>, 2009</p>
EXPERIENCE	<p><b>Food Town, Bronx, NY</b>, 2008-Present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promoted from grocery bagger to cashier</li></ul> <p><b>Bronx After-School Basketball, Winter 2007, 2008</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coached middle-school boys in shooting, dribbling, passing and teamwork</li></ul>
HOBBIES & INTERESTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enjoy all sports, hiking, and math puzzles</li></ul>

## Skills Identification

Think about a company you researched during the last few weeks, and the job that interests you. List three skills needed to do this job.

1.

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2.

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3.

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Choose one of the skills above and describe an activity or experience that demonstrates you have what it takes to handle this particular aspect of the job. (For example, if you were applying for a job in a day care center that included preparing healthy snacks, you'd want to mention babysitting experience that included this task.)

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HOBBIES & INTERESTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enjoy all sports, hiking, and math puzzles</li></ul>

## Parts of a Resume

### **Contact Information**

Start with a heading that includes the following:

Name (first and last):

Address (street, city, state, zip code):

Phone (include area code):

E-mail address (if checked daily):

[NOTE: Make sure e-mail address is appropriate (e.g. johnsmith@gmail.com).]

### **Profile (also known as a Summary)**

Two to four bulleted statements highlighting your skills that entice the employer to read the rest of the resume. Qualify your statements - show don't tell!

### **Education**

List all education, training, and certifications. List degree(s) awarded, school(s) attended, and dates of attendance or year of graduation/completion. List your education by dates attended, starting with your most recent first. Include your grade point average if it is a B or better.

Special achievements, activities, or honors may be included here or in a separate section, titled "Interests & Awards."

### **Experience**

List employer name, city, state; your dates of employment; and your job title. This may include both paid and volunteer work experiences. Follow this information with a concise description of your responsibilities in each job, using short phrases that begin with action verbs. List each work experience separately, by date, with your most recent job first.

### **Hobbies & Interests (could also be titled Interests & Awards)**

List interests and activities that demonstrate job-related skills, such as teamwork, leadership, organization, etc. You may include personal accomplishments (e.g., raising money for a charity), and any honors, awards or formal recognitions of outstanding achievements.

## Accomplishment Statement Chart

1. Identify skills the employer needs.
2. Then add evidence of this skill – places you worked and activities you participated in.
3. Finally compose one or more active accomplishment statements for each skill you can demonstrate.

Skills the Employer Needs or Wants	Evidence of Skills	Active Accomplishment Statement

## Chris's Interests, Skills, and Activities

- Volunteered for after-school basketball program working with middle-school students, Bronx After-School Basketball, winter 2007 and 2008
- Proficient in MS Word and Excel
- Designed Web site for school's Spanish Club
- First aid certification
- Attended annual wilderness weekends with Big Brothers, Big Sisters, grades 6 - 8
- Elected to National Honor Society junior year
- Organized a classroom food drive in grade 8
- Can beat all my cousins at Guitar Hero

## Resume Action Words

Show employers what you can do by choosing action words that call attention to your accomplishments. See examples below. (For online lists of more verbs that will get you noticed, type “resume action words” into your search engine.)

Communication/ People Skills	Creative Skills	Management/ Leadership Skills	Helping Skills	Organizational Skills
Collaborated	Combined	Assigned	Aided	Arranged
Communicated	Created	Coordinated	Arranged	Categorized
Developed	Developed	Decided	Assisted	Distributed
Edited	Drew	Improved	Contributed	Organized
Incorporated	Illustrated	Led	Cooperated	Recorded
Proposed	Planned	Managed	Encouraged	Responded
Suggested	Revised	Organized	Helped	Updated
Synthesized	Shaped	Oversaw	Motivated	
		Recommended	Supported	
		Reviewed		
		Supervised		

## Resume Proofreading Checklist

Directions: Proofread your partner's resume for each of the areas listed below.

### Spelling

- All words are spelled correctly  
(It's recommended that student use spell-check when creating the resume.)

### Punctuation & Capitalization

- Sentences end with punctuation mark
- Commas between city and state
- Commas between items in a list
- Apostrophes used for contractions and to show possession
- Sentences begin with a capital letter
- Proper nouns are capitalized (example: company names, cities, street names)

### Grammar & Usage

- Job and activity descriptions start with action verbs
- Verb tenses are correct: present tense for current jobs and activities, past tense for past jobs and activities
- Date forms are consistent (5/07/08 or May 7, 2008)

### Format

- Spacing and margins are the same throughout
- Resume is one page
- Traditional font (Arial or Times New Roman), and same font throughout the resume
- Personal contact information appears at the top
- Profile Summary appears at the top, just below contact information

### Other

- It's recommended that student have a parent or other adult proofread the completed resume.



## Blank Resume Template

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PROFILE	
EDUCATION	
EXPERIENCE	
HOBBIES & INTERESTS	

