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# The Business of Self-Promotion: Building Your Peer Educator Resume

Peer educators tend to be a humble group, which may be why they often have difficulty describing the many things they do for health education. If you are looking for a job, internship, or are near graduation, it is time to build and fine-tune a resumé that reflects your valuable experience. “But wait,” you might be saying, “I don’t have any experience!” In reality you have a lot of experience, and it is time to highlight your skills!

## #1 Look closer and make a list

Have you ever met with your fellow peer educators late into night in order to prepare for an upcoming event? Have you been given the task of seeing a project through from start to finish? Have you facilitated the work of many different team members in order to build a cohesive finished presentation? Chances are, you have done these things and more. These are called transferable skills, and they are what they sound like. The skills you have gained as a peer educator will transfer to “real life” situations in the working world. You may want to start a list of all the transferable skills and abilities you have showcased or utilized as a peer educator.

Look at the various projects you have helped with or led. How do those reflect some of the values that employers look for, such as communication skills, problem solving, multi-tasking, creative ingenuity, creating and following a budget, public speaking skills, and the ability to work with a team? Don’t forget to make note of the skills you have gained through trainings and conferences such as CPE training and General Assembly or Area Conferences.

## #2 Put it in action!

Once you have built a list of all the things you have learned and accomplished as a peer educator and leader, begin to brainstorm action verbs to describe them. You will want to create concise sentences that have

a lot of “punch” through the use of action words. Some words you may want to use include: created, coordinated, led, built, organized, facilitated, managed, recruited, or strengthened.

## More Career Seeker Tips:

- Pair up with a friend and practice interview questions.
- Talk to exhibitors at conferences—ask them what they like about their job.
- Set up informational interviews with companies/organizations.
- Ask if your school has a list of alumni mentors who are willing to offer career advice.
- Ask a career counselor about assessments that indicate your strengths, personality and/or interests.
- Do not get discouraged! Job seeking takes patience and believing in yourself.

## #3 Keep your address book handy

Since you will be newer to the job market than most people, strong references will be an important piece of your self-marketing. Employers will want to create a mental picture of your character and work ethic. Begin to ask various people who have known you over the past few years if they would be willing to be listed as a reference when you apply for jobs. You should create a list of these people with their most up-to-date contact information. They most likely will not receive a phone call unless an employer is seriously considering you for a position, but you will want the person to be ready just in case. You may want to ask your advisor, a professor, a student leader, or another employer to be your references.

## #4 Volunteer

Your dream job may not be available right after graduation but that is okay.

Often, it takes time to find something that fits you well. If you have your sights set on a particular organization or a related group, you may be able to volunteer with them. You will not receive a paycheck, but you will gain valuable experience while there, and when jobs become available, the organization will already know you. Volunteering also gives you a chance to figure out if the organization or field is the right fit for you. More than anything, volunteering is an excellent opportunity to network within a particular field, especially if you are entering the health or non-profit sector.

## #5 Join the club

Most jobs are not necessarily found through the classifieds. In many cases, the old saying “It’s who you know” still holds true. One of the best ways to network is to join professional organizations related to your particular field. Many of these groups have student rates, making the dues more reasonable. Attend events sponsored by the professional organizations and take the time to introduce yourself. Be sure to practice your 30-second “elevator speech” that describes your peer education group and/or your work related to various programs. This will also come in handy when attending career fairs.

## #6 Resources

Many campuses have a career services office or some type of career resource library. Though it is never too late to start your career planning, the earlier you begin, the better. Talk with a career counselor about your goals, and ask them to review your resumé. There are also countless books and online resources available on career searching. Take some time to explore the resources available. The work you put in now will help contribute to a fulfilling professional life down the road.