

Resume Writing Workshop Facilitator Guide

Instructor Notes

OVERVIEW

Participants will leave the workshop with:

- A.) An outline for a professional resume; or
- B.) A revised professional resume.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will learn the purpose of a resume.
2. Participants will learn why a resume is important in their job search.
3. Participants will learn about chronological and combination resumes and select the appropriate type for their specific needs.
4. Participants will learn what to include in a resume by identifying their strengths, skills and accomplishments.
5. Participants will learn how to use resume action verbs.
6. Participants will learn how to avoid common resume mistakes.
7. Participants will learn how to format and design their resume.
8. Participants will learn how to maximize their resume based on individual needs and circumstances.
9. Participants will learn how to make accomplishment statements to include in their resume.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Participants will correctly describe what a resume is and the benefits of having a well written resume for their job search.

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2. Participants will correctly select the appropriate type of resume for their specific needs.
3. Participants will identify their strengths, skills, and accomplishments for their resume.
4. Participants will demonstrate how to use resume action verbs.
5. Participants will describe how to maximize their resume based on their individual needs and circumstances.
6. Participants will correctly craft accomplishment statements to include in their resume.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Projector/Screen
- ▶ PowerPoint Presentation
- ▶ Pens/blank paper
- ▶ White board/Flip chart if needed/markers
- ▶ Handouts:

#1 - Resume Trivia	#5 - Structuring your PAR Statements
#1A - Resume Trivia Answer Key	#6 - How to Write Action-Benefit Statements
#2 - My Personal Skills Assessment	#7 - Resume Writing Tips
#3 - Outline for a Combination Resume	#8 - Action Verbs To Use When Writing Your Resume
#4 - Some Common Job Search Challenges	#9 - Why Scannable Resumes are a Thing of the Past

PREPARATION

Facilitator Guide - Read Guide, familiarize yourself with content and flow of activities and decide on schedule. Make note of optional activities you may want to include.

Participant Handouts - Review handout content and update as necessary. Photocopy all handouts in advance.

Guest Speakers/Team Training- Plan session segments if applicable.

Measurement/Evaluation Criteria - Workshop Evaluation Form

Research Materials -Books, videos, websites & additional materials as needed.



ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED MEDIA

YouTube Video -

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0OchMDj_sY&feature=related

Podcast- Writing a Perfect Resume

<http://www.mmimarketing.com/podcast/tips-on-writing-a-successful-resume>

Twitter- @ResumeBear

ACTIVITIES

1. Introduction (Slide 1)

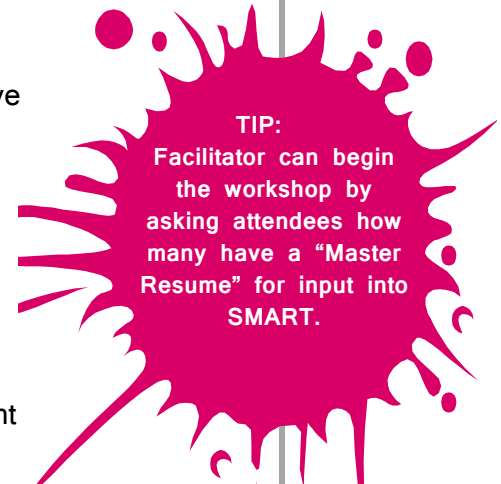
Facilitator can begin with an introduction of self and give an overview of workshop. Facilitator can give each participant a packet of the handouts (or distribute each handout during each activity).

2. Purpose of a Resume (Slide 2)

Facilitator can say: Your resume is your most important job search tool. It is meant to leave a lasting impression on a prospective employer. It must be able to highlight your achievements in a compelling and concise manner. In most cases, having the best resume often gets you hired.

3. Objective of a Resume (Slide 3)

Facilitator can say: “The overall objective of a resume is to provide you with the opportunity to interview for a job. Employers are looking for people who will both fit into the culture of their company and



bring value to their organization. You should think of your resume as an advertisement, and you are the product for sale.”

4. What is a Resume? (Slide 4)



Facilitator can ask participants to take out **(Handout #1) - Resume Trivia** and say: This trivia worksheet is for you to get an idea of your knowledge of a resume and to understand how a well written resume is your best chance to get your foot in the door for an interview.

(Facilitator can assign a set amount of time to answer questions).

When participants are finished with trivia worksheet, the facilitator can either ask for volunteers to answer each question or have an open discussion going over the correct answers for each question with participants (answers are provided for facilitator to discuss with participants, **(Handout #1A)**).

5. Basic Resume Format - Dos & Don'ts (Slide 5)



Facilitator can say: “Keeping the layout of your resume clean and easy to read is essential. If possible, use high quality ivory or white paper and stick with one standard font, using bold and italics only if necessary.”

Begin with your name, address, e-mail and phone number(s) to make it easy for a potential employer to contact you. Do not give personal information such as Social Security number, age, height, weight, etc.

Targeted for the Job (Slide 6)



Facilitator can say: “Your resume should be constructed for the job you are applying for (the targeted job). We will be going into more detail on this. If possible, keep your resume to one page, and don't

exceed two pages. A short, concise representation of your work history, experience and education is most likely to be read.”

6. What Skills Do I have to Offer? (Slide 7)



Facilitator can say: “We’ve all been asked that old interview question: Why should I hire you? Knowing the answer to this question is vital to succeeding with writing your resume and your job search.”

Once you know what employers are looking for, you now have to know your skills and what you have to offer them. By understanding your skills and knowing how to write the value of your skills, you can write a resume that highlights how your skills fit the position you are applying for. For example:


- Look for common themes running through your career (are you the person who always comes in to clean up a mess? Or maybe you’re the person who always sees a better way to do things.)
- Ask co-workers or former managers how they would describe you.
- Look back over old performance reviews or reference letters and look for common themes.



NOTE: Facilitator can let participants know there is a Skills Identification Workshop that would be beneficial to attend if skills are not known.

ACTIVITY

Facilitator can ask participants to take out **(Handout #2) - My Personal Skills Assessment** sheet and briefly discuss the importance of understanding what skills and strengths they possess. Ask participants to put a check next to the skills they possess and ask them to think about how they can demonstrate these.

A large, vibrant pink splatter graphic with irregular, jagged edges and several smaller dots of varying sizes scattered around it.

Facilitator can let participants know there is a Skills Identification Workshop that would be beneficial to attend if skills are not known.

Ask them to keep this sheet available to reference during the workshop.



If time is a concern, the facilitator can make reference to the worksheet and encourage customers to complete the worksheet at home in order to develop or refine their resume.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

If time permits, facilitator can go over marketable and transferable skills with participants using the handouts from the transferable skills workshop.



7. Individualizing your Resume - What is the Best Resume Format for You (Combination, Chronological or Functional)? (Slide 8)



Facilitator can say: “It may be difficult for some job seekers to effectively sell their skills sets in a way to showcase their value for the job they are applying for. In an effort to do this effectively, it is essential that you choose your resume format wisely. It is also important that your resume be individualized for the job you are seeking. Your goal is to find a suitable layout that will help you highlight your strengths and hide or disguise your shortcomings or other resume blemishes.”

What is Captured in the First 10-15 Lines of Your Resume? (Slide 9) AND, because a resume is a MARKETING document, your format must help you to present your best self on paper. A busy reader wants to see what you are offering in the first 10-15 lines. Like a newspaper, employers and hiring managers will look above the fold. If what they see interests them, they'll continue reading. Your resume should capture their attention so they spend the additional time to see what else you have to offer.

8. Choosing the Right Resume Format (Slide 10)



Facilitator can say: “In resume formatting, keep it clean and simple. In today's competitive job market, it's important that you help employers see the benefits of hiring you over someone else. A clean, simple resume stating your value is the first step. Make sure it is formatted so potential employers can identify it, open it, read it, search it and immediately comprehend its main point -- that hiring you is a winning proposition.”

The best resume formats are a targeted or tailored resume. A **targeted** resume addresses an employer's specific needs. This type of format focuses your resume towards the specific career objective or job posting. Targeting should take place in the first 15 lines of your resume. A **tailored** resume shows the reader what a good "fit" you are for the posted position. These resumes will be effective in any job market. They are always the best resume formats.

Let's go over the different resume format options - the advantages and disadvantages of using them and which one is the best for you to use that will showcase your skills, strengths and experience in the most effective manner. Remember, you want to be able to SELL to the employer that you are the best fit for that targeted job.

Combination

Chronological

Functional

9. The Combination Resume (Slide 11)



Facilitator can say: “Using a combination resume combines the best features of the traditional *chronological* (where the dates are in reverse order) and *Functional* (where skills are listed up front) resumes.”



Facilitator can ask participants to take out **(Handout #3)-Outline for a Combination Resume** and review with customers.

Works for Everyone (Slide 12)

Let's take a look at why a Combination Resume works for entry level candidates as well as for senior executives who have 20 years experience who need a stronger and better resume:

- a. For this type of resume, there is an important 15-line section at the top for writing an employer-oriented Job Objective and a summary or profile or qualifications statement.
- b. This type of resume enables you to present what you can do as well as a summary of what you have done in the top half of page one. Managers and executives will also be able to include two to three columns listing their areas of experience or expertise.

10. The Chronological Resume (Slide 13)



Facilitator can say: "The Chronological Resume lists employment dates in reverse order and is popular but very "basic". It does not allow someone with 5-20 years' experience to do justice to his or her skills, strengths, and accomplishments because this format is limited to the facts of your work experience and education. Much of what an employer needs to know - your selling points -- will be MISSING!"

Where will you write about your abilities?

Where will you offer your value?

How will you sell yourself?

Chronological Resume tips:

If you choose to write a chronological resume, it is best to follow these tips:

- Include only the most important information about each position.

- Be specific rather than general in your descriptions, using concise and vivid language.
- Quantify the impact of your actions in your previous positions by including facts, figures, and numbers. For example: How many accounts did you work on? How many employees did you supervise?
- Be sure to include a list of key contributions you presented or achievements you made to your past positions.
- Find key words and terminology in the job posting and use them in your resume.
- Don't use unnecessary text. Have someone read your resume and help you to cut out extra unnecessary words.

11. The Functional Resume (Slide 14)

A Functional Resume: Focuses on your skills and experience. Does not include chronological time, and is used most often by people with work gaps or people who are changing careers.



Facilitator can say: “Avoid Functional Resumes - If you list your skills, abilities and achievements without matching them up with job titles and dates, employers will not be interested in going any further. Most employers prefer a Chronological or Combination resume with dates and job descriptions. Many employers distrust a Functional resume because they know it is used by those with something to hide or disguise. It makes them suspicious.”

Some employers are looking at your career growth. They cannot see how you've grown professionally if you use a Functional resume because there are no dates associated with the various positions you've held during your career.

12. One Size Does Not Fit All (Slide 15)



Facilitator can say: “Taking the time to choose the best resume format (or sections of different formats) to create your resume is extremely important because there may be many factors to take into account, including the length of your resume, your accomplishments, as well as possible shortcomings or potential negatives or "red flag" items.”



Facilitator can ask participants to take out **(Handout #4)** - **Some Common Job Search Challenges** and say here is a list of some common job search challenges (you are not alone) and how you can address them when creating a resume.

13. Common Resume Components (Slide 16)



Facilitator can say: “Most resumes have components or section headers. In this part of the workshop, we’ll go over the most common resume sections and what you can cover in each section. While there are basic section headings in every resume, the choice of wording and additional headings should be based on the categories of content that will best target your resume. Try not to copy the section headings from sample resumes and don’t forget to provide a heading for information unique to you. Let’s look at what a section heading is.”

Section Headings (Slide 17) A section heading is one or two words that accurately represents the category of content to be placed beneath the selected section. The purpose of a section heading is to provide a section of the resume that quickly and easily directs the potential employer (or a scanner) to the content/information about that job candidate.

A section heading should be represented by the size and style fonts, formatting, sequencing, and style that reflect the importance of the

heading and direct the potential employer to the appropriate section. Section headings should be consistent in formatting within the resume. Let's go into some detail about specific section headings to give you a better idea of what we are talking about.

14. Objective (Slide 18)

What's Your Resume Objective?

The first step to creating a high-impact resume is determining what you're trying to accomplish. With a clearly defined career objective, you can write a resume that conveys the experience, skills and training that will best serve your overall professional aspirations.

Hiring managers are busy people who can't afford to waste time trying to figure out what your career goals are. They won't take the time to do this; they'll just move on to the next resume.

How do I Write a Resume Objective?

If you are writing a Resume Objective keep in mind that *it* is not about you. It's about the hiring manager(s) who is probably under pressure to fill a job opening with an individual who is a good fit for the job. Because your resume objective is the first thing the hiring manager will read, he/she will be using that opportunity to quickly size you up. Are you professional? Have you done your homework? Do you have a defined and realistic goal or are you just looking for a job right now? Ideally, they want to find a candidate who'll make them look good to their superiors.

Research the position you are applying for, the company and the field you want to go into.. Understanding that it's not about you can help you to put your research into words. Instead of "*Seeking a position with advancement opportunities to senior management,*" which is self-serving and all about "me," your resume objective should focus on the needs of the company. For example: "*Entry-level position in Finance which could fully utilize a technical expertise in database*

design and a strong drive to maximize corporate profitability in a competitive global marketplace."

A well-written objective statement that catches the eye of the hiring manager and shows you did your homework puts you in a good light. You have shown yourself to be professional, focused, knowledgeable, and dedicated to what matters.

Tips for Writing Your Own Objective Statement:

- Focus on the employer. Stay away from resume objectives that state your working preferences, such as "seeking a team-oriented environment that fosters professional development."
- Be specific. Steer clear from statements that say nothing substantial about your career goal (e.g., "seeking a challenging position with potential for growth and advancement").
- Keep it clear and concise. The best resume objectives contain a desired job title or target. Hiring managers often sort through hundreds to thousands of resumes to fill one job opening. Make it easy on them by keeping your objective short and to the point.
- If you have more than one career goal, create a different resume for each objective.

The Objective Section should delineate a specific occupational title. If the desired industry or sector matches the desired job title, it can be included- for example: Seeking a Certified Public Accountant position in banking. If the desired occupational title is consistent among jobs and industries, an occupational title may be formatted in the center, in bold, beneath the contact section. For example: **Special Education Teacher, K-6**. An actual objective section heading would not be needed in this case.

There may also be situations in writing a combination resume in which the cover letter and summary/accomplishments sections are enough and an objective statement would not be needed. You will need to determine whether or not an objective statement is needed

depending on what section headings you use to market your skills in your targeted resume.

15. Writing a Resume Objective (Slide 19)



Do You Need an Objective Section?

Facilitator can say: “While it's important for your resume to include a clear career goal, you don't have to convey it through an Objective section. The majority of job seekers may incorporate their career goals into a Qualifications Summary instead.”

When Is a Formal Objective Required?

Career Changers and Entry-Level workers should consider incorporating their objectives into their resumes, because their goals may not be clearly defined by their work history alone. If you're targeting a particular position, add a formal objective statement and reference the job opening. The hiring manager will see you took time to customize your resume and that the opportunity is important to you.

Resume Objective Examples

For Career Changers: Accomplished administrator seeking to leverage extensive background in personnel management, recruitment, employee relations and benefits administration in an entry-level human resources position. Extremely motivated for career change goal and eager to contribute to a company's HR division.

Entry-Level Workers: Dedicated CIS graduate pursuing a help-desk position.

When Targeting a Specific Position: Elementary teacher for ABC School District.

16. Professional Summary (Slide 20)

The purpose of the Professional Summary is to summarize your experience and highlight dimensions of your background that the reader may otherwise miss or discount. This is where you pull together a high-level summary of your experience, talents, and personal strengths from the different positions you've held.

Resume readers look for specific work and industry experience and positions you've held to try and weave together a story about you. They use your resume to decide whether to call you for an interview. Your resume and "Professional Summary" should provide targeted and compelling reasons for them to call you.

The Professional Summary is positioned at or near the beginning of your resume. Unlike an Objective, which needs to be one or two sentences, a Professional Summary should be several sentences in length.

To write your Professional Summary- Select the words for your summary heading section that best represents the main points about your career that would immediately attract a potential employer. This section should be formatted in the upper area of the resume. If you include specific outcomes, especially numerical ones, an accomplishments section should be added.

17. Work Experience (Slide 21)

This is the section of your resume where you highlight your skills and accomplishments related to relevant positions you have held in the past or you currently hold. When you are marketing your various skills and abilities there are a number of resume norms you need to consider. There are ways to market your skills and hiring managers expect to see accomplishment statements and action verbs in a resume. Work experience is one of the most meaningful sections of your resume. This section must show that you actually did what you said that you did. In this section, describe what you did when you

had a specific job title- emphasizing your skills and achievements. Be sure to mention how your skills made a difference.

For each entry give the job title, name and location of the organization, dates of employment and a brief description of your accomplishments. You can use accomplishment statements to help detail your skills and accomplishments.

18. Optional Activity - Use Accomplishment Statements (Slide 22)

Advanced Activity: In the professional work experience of your resume you will want to craft statements that reflect your knowledge, skills, tasks and accomplishments for each position you have held. One way to do so is to use the PAR or A+B=R structure. PAR stands for Problem, Action & Result and A+B=R stands for Action + Benefit = Result. These are both sometimes called accomplishment statements. These type of statements demonstrate your ability or qualifications and validate your experience and ability in solving particular problems or addressing challenges. These statements ultimately help the hiring manager see how your contributions can benefit their organization.

For example:

Resolved employee grievances by introducing dispute resolution process, lowering grievance rates by 50% in the first year.

Reduced overall purchasing costs by 10% in 2001 by implementing product locator, and cost comparison software programs.

Recruited, screened and hired 20 technical and sales positions for start-up company. Successfully organized team in 3 months, exceeding expectations and allowing company to launch new product line 6 months earlier than expected.



Facilitator should get work experience resume statements from attendees and demonstrate the PAR or A+B=R model and how basic

statements can be transformed into resume accomplishment statements. Facilitator can use the two optional activity handouts (**Handout # 5)- Structuring your PAR Statements** and (**Handout #6)-How to Write Action-Benefit Statements** as well.

19. Education Section (Slide 23)

This is the section of your resume where you highlight your education and training. Be sure to include relevant coursework if you feel that your degree may not appear directly related to the position. If you are a recent graduate with little to no work experience, highlighting your relevant coursework may also be beneficial.

20. Skills Section (Slide 24)

A skills section should include specific and accurate words that match the skills sought by the potential employer. You should only list the skills that you can actually perform. Avoid listing every skill you have - especially if the skill is not relevant to the targeted employer or position.

You can break up the skills section with sub-headings to organize the types of skills and make it easier for the potential employer to make effective candidate selections. For example, Technology, Management and Interpersonal can be skill subheadings. Skills listed in this section should enhance but not duplicate the job duties that are described by action words/phrases within the job duties written in the Experience Section.

Words such as knowledge of, assisted, dealt with, worked with and handled should be avoided in both the Skills and Experience type sections. While many people recommend the skills section be placed at the bottom of a resume, if written and formatted well, the Skills Section can be placed in the upper portion of the resume, beneath the summary section.

The location of the skills section will vary depending on your desire to highlight your skills over work experience or vice versa. Regardless of the location of the Skills Section on your resume, a well written Skills Section includes keywords sought by potential employers.

21. Resume Writing Tips (Slide 25)



Facilitator can say: "Once you have chosen a format, and have an assessment of your skills for that targeted job, there are some essential rules you should follow when you are about to prepare your resume."



Facilitator can ask participants to take out **(Handout #7)-Resume Writing Tips** and go over each rule with participants:

- Your achievements should be listed as part of your resume. Use the "so what" rule. For every statement of achievement, prove why this achievement was valuable and/or what the benefit was.

- Never ever allow for typos and make sure it is written clearly and concisely. Ask someone to read your resume to check for spelling errors and to make sure it is written clearly and makes sense.



- As stated earlier, you can start with a well written Summary or Objective statement to get noticed.

- When using numbers: Use K: for thousands (\$600K) Use M: for millions (\$300M). Write out numbers that are less than 10: Managed five people, responsible for 10 states.

- Write your resume as if you are reporting about your achievements and experiences. Do not use the word I - if



possible, use action words. For example: ask participants to take out **(Handout #8) -Action Verbs for Resume Writing** and have participants look over the words and give examples of how to write an achievement and experience using a word.

- List dates carefully - preferably by month and year. List all experiences in reverse chronological order. Except for your education (which is normally put at the front of your resume when a recent graduate). It will move to the end after you have had several years of professional experience.

- Do not put any personal information in your resume. This is not necessary.

- Do not use fancy paper, or language (unless it important for your position), abbreviations, pictures, personal data (married, children, sex, age, health).

- Try not to leave any gaps in your experience and professional background, even if you were unemployed in the industry or profession you are seeking. Don't forget to include "life skills" and abilities learned through volunteer work, hobbies, and involvement in teams or organizations. If you do have gaps, be ready to explain what you did during an interview.

22. Gaps in Your Resume (Slide 26)

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY



Facilitator can say: "If you find you have gaps in your resume due to incarceration, do not mention being an inmate employee on your resume. You can list your employer as New York State, the Department worked in (for example, the Carpentry Dept.) or the company that holds the prison contract."

You can list the marketable trades and jobs you held. Use this information to the fullest extent by using a **Combination Style Resume** where you can focus on your skills and qualifications. This will allow you to highlight the positive and focus on your strengths while reducing the emphasis on employment gaps.

Promote the Federal Bonding available through the NYS Department of Labor to potential employers. The Bonding Program issues a Fidelity bond - an insurance policy that protects the employer in case of any loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty. The bond is free to employers for six months. Bonds are typically issues for \$5,000 but may be authorized for as much as \$25,000. To contact your local bonding coordinator for additional information, refer to the following link: <http://www.labor.ny.gov/businessservices/services/fbp.shtm>

23. The Importance of Keeping Your Resume Updated (Slide 27)



Facilitator can say: “It is very important to keep your resume up-to-date. When searching for a job, you never know when you might need a resume at the last minute so regularly keep it updated with significant achievements like newly acquired training or trade, recently achieved certifications, and other similar accomplishments instead of trying to remember critical information days, months, or even years after the fact. This is especially true of smaller but equally important achievements that may fade in memory as time passes.”

24. Keeping it Current (Slide 28)



Facilitator can say: “Even if you don't edit your resume regularly, you should try to keep good updated records of what you've been doing. You may want to keep your information organized and keep track of important information such as”:

a. Your Accomplishments

Listing your accomplishments and demonstrating your ability and skill can set you apart (if they are phrased the right way).

b. Licenses, Degrees, Awards, and Certificates

List only those which are most relevant to your career field.

Include titles, dates, locations, and the sponsors of any training you completed to receive certificates or licensure. An employer only wants to see what's relevant to the position you're applying for.

c. Conferences and Additional Education

Conferences can be important especially if you were able to earn continuing education credits or you were able to receive a unique skill by attending or just by the sheer power of networking that happens with attending a variety of conferences. (There's something to be said about who you know.) Don't forget to make note of any trainings you may have conducted with others as a result of attending conferences. These are all notable accomplishments that highlight certain skill sets, such as leadership and public speaking abilities.

d. High-quality Skills

Technical skills should be included in your list. These skills can include knowing how to put together an effective spreadsheet in Excel or being a whiz in the use of software that you used at a specific job. Other, non-computer-related skills, such as operating a cash register, or using equipment such as fax and copy machines can make a difference in getting a job, particularly if you're just entering the job market.

25. Electronic Resume (Slide 29)



Facilitator can say: "Most companies want an electronic version of your resume because they are easier to read, easier to organize and easier to scan for keywords. They are also much easier for

you to edit, forward and upload to job search databases and social networking sites like SMART, LinkedIn and Facebook - these give your resume increased visibility. Remember that you will still need an elegant paper resume to hand out at interviews.”

If you are submitting your resume electronically, we suggest that you do not include the accent above the e's. Résum  is a French word, and is written with accents, but when submitting electronically, the accent may appear as a box or foreign symbol when opened on a different computer. It is not necessary to include the accents on a paper copy either.

Electronic Resumes:

Include your last name and the position you are applying for in the subject line so employers can easily pick out your email. Don't use all caps or words like "amazing" or "Read now" because these words could trigger spam filters. Avoid excess formatting on electronic versions and keep your e-mail address professional.

Below are a few example of a BAD email addresses:

ImAPartyGirl@email.com


JennysMom@email.com

2Hot2Handle@email.com

Example of a GOOD email address:

MaryDoe@email.com

M.Martin@email.com



Facilitator can have participants look at **(Handout #9) - Why Scannable Resumes are a Thing of the Past** and discuss this with participants.

20. End of Workshop (Slide 30)



Facilitator can say: “If you're having difficulty with listing your skills or what your accomplishments are, you may want to consider meeting with one of the employment counselors in the one-stop center. The counselor can help you identify your strengths and accomplishments. You may find that you've accomplished far more than you give yourself credit for!”

A Few Additional Activities:



- 1) **Smart Resume Builder-** If you have access to a computer lab, you can use the SMART Resume builder to make resumes with customers to upload to the system.
- 2) **JobZone-** If you can, set up JobZone accounts with customers and get them acquainted with all that JobZone has to offer.
- 3) **Infographic Resume-** You can show examples of infographic resumes. mashable.com/2011/10/15/infographic has examples of creative infographic resumes. These are great for those in graphic design and the marketing field.