Career and Postsecondary Development

Career and Postsecondary Preparation

Career and Postsecondary Preparation is a key responsibility of YouthBuild programs as they ready students to enter work and postsecondary placements. After students have developed an understanding of the labor market in their area, identified career options and career ladders that interest and are available to them, and developed individual career plans, which pinpoint their short term and long term goals, they begin targeted career preparation.

During this phase of Career and Postsecondary development, program staff leverage existing program partnerships to help students prepare for placement, and students cultivate the knowledge and skills necessary to find and keep jobs and navigate the postsecondary education system. In addition to continuing to develop key workplace competencies, students practice job-seeking and study skills and further develop their career and postsecondary education plans. Students complete portfolios that contain career-planning documents that outline the steps and timelines for achieving their career goals. These portfolios also include student résumés, cover letters, and recommendations. Students begin transitioning into career and postsecondary placements through job shadowing, internships, and postsecondary opportunities. They also participate in college bridge programming and complete internships with local employers.

Career and Postsecondary Outcomes:

- Students demonstrate the following job seeking skills: the ability to write a resume and cover letter, complete a job application, interview for a job, and find and pursue employment leads.
- Students develop their own career and post-secondary plans and understand the definition of short-term and long-term goals
- Students apply their own knowledge, skills, and understanding of their interests to choosing careers and post-secondary paths
- Students demonstrate acquisition of study skills and learning habits that promote educational achievements and performance
- Students identify strategies for improving educational achievements
- Students analyze educational achievements and create a plan for growth and improvement
- Students demonstrate acquisition of study skills and learning habits that promote educational achievements and performance
- Students acquire a vocational certification

Some suggested activities during this period are:

- Completion of Career Portfolio which should include:
- Resume
- Sample Cover Letters
- Sample Employment Email Inquiry
- Sample Thank You Note
- Completed job application
- Reference Letters

- Career Mentoring
- Internships
- Occupational or Work Readiness Certification (if possible)
- Development of workplace competencies
- Development of exercises that encourage the development of soft skills
- Dual credit opportunities during YB program year (apply to HS credits and PSE credits)
- Cohort groups of YB students participate in bridge programming classes
- Consistent focus on critical thinking pedagogy for instruction
- Formative assessment practices (including, but not limited to, college placement testing opportunities)

Resources:

Resume Writing

**Resume Writing**

**Resumes + Interviews, Career OneStop:** This section of the Career OneStop website offers links to useful tip sheets and an electronic resume tutorial.

**The Resume Guide, Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development:** Massachusetts Division of Employment & Training outlines tips (with sample resumes) for handling situations such as career changing, employment gaps, disabilities, homemakers returning to work, incarceration and self-employment work history.

**Resume Guide, Missouri Career Center:** University of Missouri guide for adults (not necessarily college graduates) preparing to write a resume for the first time.

**Teen Resume Writing Worksheet, Quintessential Careers:** Offers questions and guidelines to get young people started as they write their first resumes.

Cover Letters

**Cover Letters, Career OneStop:** The Career OneStop website provides templates, tips, and a useful cover letter resource guide.

**How to Write a Cover Letter, WikiHow:** A step-by-step guide, with tips and a video.

**Creating Your Cover Letter, MyFuture.com:** Includes readable tips for formatting and composing cover letters.

Informational Interviews

**Informational Interview Guidance, YouthBuild USA:** Activity and assignment handout includes Part 1: Preparing to meet employers for informational interview, Part 2: Obtain employer informational interview, and Part 3: Reflections from informational interview.
**Informational Interviewing: Self-Paced Tutorial**, YouthBuild USA: Guide for students seeking to do informational interviews.

**Informational Interviews, Career OneStop**: Tips for finding and conducting informational interviews, including sample questions.

**Interviws**

**Interviews, Career OneStop**: Includes a tips on preparing, a guide for what to expect, and a checklist with a list of what to bring.


**Interview First Impressions, Adventures in Education**: In addition to tips for making a first impression, this website also offers tips for following up, and for recovering from a bad interview.

“**100 Potential Interview Questions**,” Monster.com

**Additional Tools and Resources:**

YouthBuild Lake County Employs Networks and Coalitions to Yield Post-Program Placements, **YouthBuild Innovations: Issue 34** YouthBuild USA, 2010.

**YouthBuild Tips: Issue 4 - Establishing a Successful Internship Program** YouthBuild USA, 2010.

YouthBuild Columbus Charter School Builds Effective Partnership with a Postsecondary Institution, **YouthBuild Innovations: Issue 36**, YouthBuild USA, 2010.

**Critical Thinking Resource List** Krista Sabados, YouthBuild USA, 2010.

“**I Think Critically, Therefore I am**.” Laura Elder. *Times Higher Education.*

**Financial Aid and College Transition Terminology and Resources**