

Indiana State University Hulman Memorial Student Union

A Report of the Measures of Student Behavior after Attending a Professional Skills Development Workshop

Background

The Hulman Memorial Union employs students on an annual basis, and in seeking to facilitate growth, learning, and development, a program was designed to assist student employees to better understand how skills they acquired in their employment can be highly transferable to the broad world of employment after graduation. To that end, the program "Self-Reflection and Skills Development as Precursors to Entering the World of Work" was designed, in collaboration with the ISU Career Center.

In the program's planning, the developers asked themselves "what an ideal HMSU student employee and an ISU graduate should know and be able to demonstrate" as a result of their student employment experience. More specifically, the developers sought to identify and measure specific behavioral outcomes, including;

- Strength and weakness identification,
- Development of a long-term career plan,
- Transferable skills identification,
- Resume and cover letter development and expansion.

Method

Drawing upon the domain of Self-awareness, as defined by the University Learning Outcomes Assessment (Barratt & Frederick, 2006), it was determined that student's able to effectively engage in active self-reflection could provide accurate self-assessment as a trigger for growth. Self-awareness entails having a balanced view of one's own personality and from that, develop a refined ability to meaningfully interact with others.

The program is fully within the University's mission, specifically, to provide "educational environments to foster holistic growth and development," as well as the Union's vision to "create a dynamic and innovative environment that encourages and promotes student learning." To that end, the developers sought to construct a program of self-reflective training for all student employees of the Union. In addition to meeting the goals outlined by the University and Union, a second goal of the program was to repeat the resume-building exercise each year students remained employed at the Union.

A total of 21 student employees participated in at least some portion of the program during the spring semester of 2007, including building managers, information center attendants, and parking attendants. A pre and post-test format was used to measure baseline levels and growth over the semester-long project. In addition to student self-report, a direct measure of growth was employed by the seminar instructor through the "grading and critique" of the participants' resumes, which served as a collection of information against which overall growth and development could be measured in behavioral terms.

Results

The following scoring rubric was employed throughout the program to measure participants' growth.

	1- Beginning Phase	2 - Developing Phase	3 - Accomplished Phase	4 - Exemplary Phase
Identified Strengths and Weaknesses	I have never identified my strengths and weaknesses	I have developed a list of my strengths and weaknesses	I have met with a Career Center counselor and developed an action plan to address my weaknesses and better align my strengths with my major/career	I have selected the most relevant academic coursework, extracurricular activities, and employment opportunities based on my strengths and weaknesses
Career Plan	I have never written a career plan	I have researched different career options for my intended major. For example, I have looked at relevant sites on the Career Center Homepage	I have developed a comprehensive career plan through graduation which takes into account my out of class activities (i.e. employment, volunteer, or leadership roles)	I have a comprehensive career plan and regularly review it to determine if I am still on track or need to make adjustments
Transferable Skills	I have not identified a list of transferable skills acquired through my educational and out of class activities	I can describe the transferable skills I have acquired through my education and out of class activities to others	At regular intervals, I have compiled a list of new transferable skills I have acquired and consequently developed a plan to remedy those that are missing as warranted by my intended major	I have applied my list of transferable skills in the review of several relevant job positions for purposes of identifying those of which I am the most qualified
Resume and Cover Letter	I do not have a written resume/cover letter	I have done a resume/cover letter only as a class assignment	I have had my resume reviewed by the Career Center or other departmental staff	I have modified my resume/cover letter based on advice from the Career Center or relevant staff and update it regularly

Results

Pre-test Scores based on rubric

Criterion	Pre-test Mean (n=21)	Post-test Mean (n=20)
Strengths and Weaknesses	2.6	3.0

Career Plan	2.2	2.5
Transferable Skills	2.2	2.6
Resume/Cover Letter	2.5	2.5

RUBRIC (comparison)

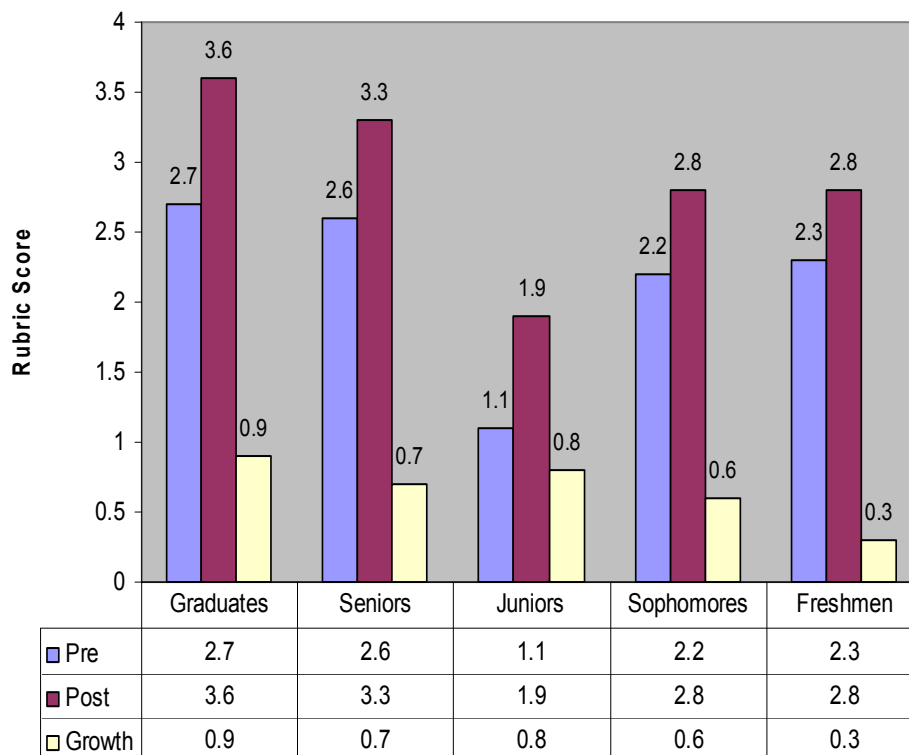
Growth comparison between the pre and post tests using 17 rubrics (those that attended both sessions and completed the homework)

AVERAGE SCORES:

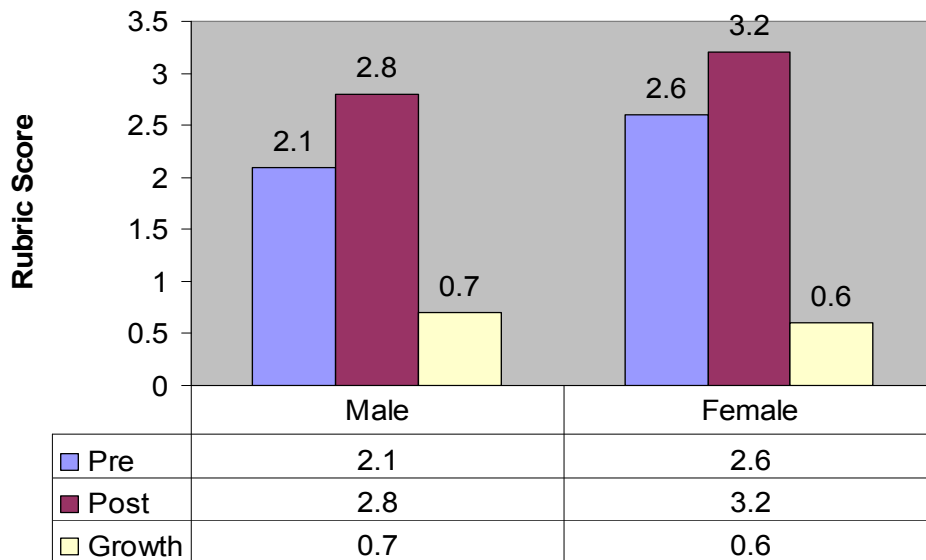
1) Total (17)

Pre: 2.3	Post: 3.0	GROWTH: +0.7
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2) Breakdown by Class Status:

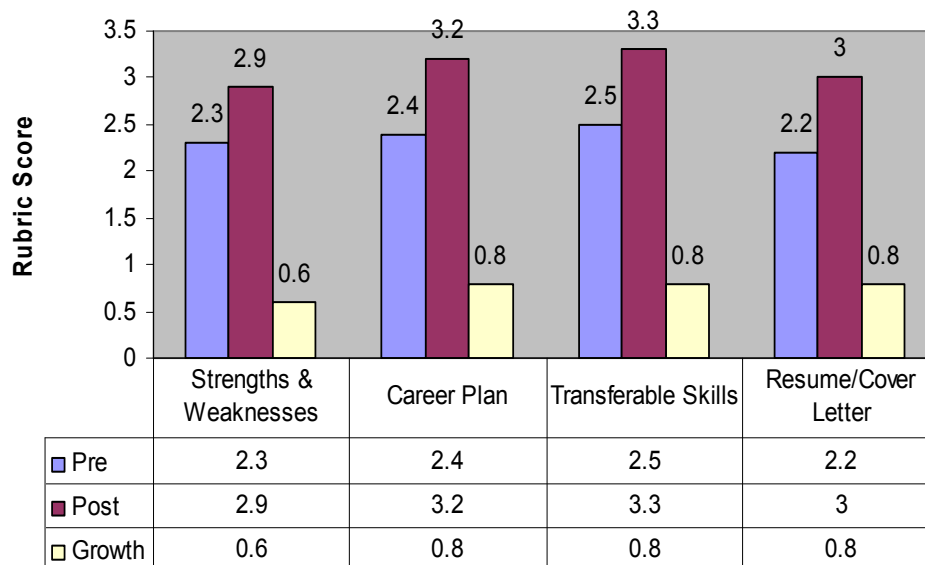


3. Breakdown by Gender:



4.

Breakdown by Criteria



5.

Breakdown by Resume Revision Review
(Comparison of 8 original resumes with counselor review after all revisions were done)

