

Final Narrative Report

1. Do you feel this grant has helped you provide better service to your customers?

X	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

Please explain:

The Seattle Public Library improved its service to job seekers through the implementations of this grant in three key ways:

- We were able to offer in-person and online formats for job seekers to come together, to ask questions, and to learn new ways of managing the evolving employment market. People who attended seminars in branches, or went online to Workplace 911, became part of a smaller community of people sharing ideas and benefiting from each other's questions.
- We were able to enhance the print and virtual collection for people seeking job search and job skills advice and information. Having more to offer, resulted in the Library's ability to meet real needs in real time for hundreds of patrons.
- Marketing this work through library blogs, media contacts, and community partners provided the Library with an approach to reaching out to patrons that can be replicated for other subject areas or program series. What we are learning is how to reach people where they already are, instead of making them come to the Library every time.

2. Summarize the project, the situation it was intended to address, and the objectives of the project.

The economic situation in Washington has not improved over the past 3 years. The Seattle Public Library wanted to expand its resources for job seekers by offering unique tools and approaches that would meet users in different environments, while also helping the Library learn how to respond to future topic

areas with more flexibility and innovation. There were three primary objectives developed:

- Working with contracted experts, create a new online resource that provided job seeking information, as well as opportunities for the community to engage with one another.
 - Offer in-person lectures and discussions for job seekers in order to bring people together who shared a common problem.
 - Enhance the print and online collection for job search and job skills topics.
3. Summarize the results of the project, including activities accomplished, and any problems or unexpected outcomes encountered.

The Library was able to accomplish all of the activities set out in the grant application. The results of the project were mostly positive for each goal, and there were some pleasant surprises. Highlights include:

Contracting with Bob Rosner and Brainfuse to create unique online content and a social networking environment (Workplace911.org) went very well. This part of the project took the longest to develop, and while we met our launch deadline, this aspect of the project is still a work in progress. We were quite satisfied with the array of content we could make available right away in June 2010. The monthly visits have been reasonable for a new site (almost 900 visits per month). But the level of actual participation by visitors in the site has been disappointing (only 55 blog posts over a 3-month period). Our assessment at this point is that the future success of developing an online community space will require better marketing from the Library; user research to learn what elements are working and what would make this environment more attractive. Other aspects of the project showed us that there is a desire and a need for community support around job seeking; we just haven't tapped the right online solution, yet.

The 6 job seeking seminars presented by Bob Rosner were very successful, and continue to be popular as a podcast download from the Library's web site. We averaged 25 people per presentation, and what was revealing at each seminar was the level of need or even despair that individuals were willing to share. Each audience was typically 50% people out of work and 50% people in jobs but looking to move to a new career or job opportunity. Bob's ability to address specific questions, encourage the other participants to share their suggestions, and the willingness of the participants to share their personal stories made for effective sessions. These conversations continued after the seminar concluded with some emailing Bob for further follow-up (something he invited them to do at each session). In one case, a small group of participants agreed to keep meeting and support each other in their job and career hunts. It was in these

ways that the Library surpassed its expectations in being a convener and community support for the job seeking audience.

Because the internal work associated with developing Workplace 911 online tool was less than anticipated, we were able to amend the original contract to add job seeking resources to the collection. For the past 3 years the Library has seen increased use of these parts of the collection. The additional money from the Renew Washington grant allowed the Library to purchase additional copies of many items, which resulted in fewer hold cues and easier access for the patrons.

4. Quantify, where possible, the results of the project, including how many people have directly used the new services and resources provided by the project.

- 2875 unique visits, 2052 unique visitors to the Workplace 911 site. While most visits were from within the United States, the site also saw international traffic from countries such as Great Britain, Canada, Russia, and China. (June through August 2010)
- 55 postings to the Workplace 911 site (June through August 2010)
- 143 attendees at 6 Workplace 911 seminars held in 3 branches and the Central Library.
- 3607 podcast downloads of the Workplace 911 seminars (June through August 2010)
- The Library purchased 453 copies of 30 titles to assist job seekers, distributed system-wide across 27 branches in Seattle, with multiple copies of each title being assigned to the Central Library. Topics covered included: job search skills, resume and cover letter writing, interview skills and preparation, career success strategies and several career specific job guides.

5. Did the project meet its stated objectives? Compare the project objectives to actual accomplishments.

The Library was able to meet the following 14 stated objectives in this project.

- Contract with Bob Rosner to provide needed services
- Develop schedule of public programs and podcasts
- Contract with video production service

- Produce twelve 90-second video clips: **In reality, we produced twelve 20 second spots. This change occurred as part of the evolution of the Workplace911 web site.**
- Define scope of work for online components
- Contract with firm to develop customized video and online blog
- Build blog infrastructure
- Develop schedule, workflow, guidelines and procedures for blogs: **We budgeted \$5,000 for internal web office costs. Actual personnel costs were \$4,632.61, leaving a balance of \$367.39.**
- Public program series with Bob Rosner—podcasts recorded
- Podcasts are made available online
- Coordination and monitoring of weekly video and blog posts
- Purchase print materials for Library collection: **We budgeted \$5,000 for this item, and spent \$4199.55. The \$800.45 deviation is a result of materials not arriving and being invoiced prior to September 30, 2010.**
- Project evaluation
- Final report submitted: **Total financial claim equals \$48,832.16.**