

2009 Renew Washington Grants

Final Narrative Report Cover Sheet

Date September 29, 2010 Contract #G-4303 Grant #09-TC-017

Library Puyallup Public Library

Title of Grant Real Resumes

Amount Awarded \$9,848

Grant Period

Start Date November 3, 2009 Through August 13, 2010

Reporting Period

Start Date June 30, 2010 Through August 13, 2010

Submitted by Beth Swartzbaugh

Signatures Certifying the Final Report

We certify that all of the information contain herein is correct to the best of our knowledge. We certify that 10 of 10 objectives of this grant have been achieved. We certify this report includes an analysis of each objective of this grant and an evaluation of the impact this grant has made on our services. We certify \$5,538 has been claimed and \$ 4,521 of the amount originally awarded was not used and the reasons are explained in this report.

Signatory _____ Date _____

Fiscal Agent _____ Date _____

Signatory: Defined as the person who would sign the grant contract and whose signature will be a representation that the legal entity submitting this report has authority to enter into the grant contract; and that the signatory has the authority to sign the grant contract on behalf off the legal entity.

Fiscal Agent: Defined as an individual authorized by the Grantee's governing body to obligate it to the financial liabilities and accountable to the Grantees governing body for the integrity of the official accounting system and the financial statements that the system provides.

Submit this form and the Final Narrative Report to:

Anne Yarbrough
Grants Program
Washington State Library
Post Office Box 42460
Olympia, WA 98504-2460

Final Narrative Report

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

	Strongly agree
	Agree
x	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

Please explain:

The objective of our Real Resumes project was to offer resume classes to job seekers with a goal of having class attendees succeed in finishing the class with a professional, well crafted resume for a more effective job search.

Our program realized only mixed success since we did not reach the numbers of participants we had projected. Additionally, many of those who did attend the classes were not able to successfully finish their resumes by the time the class ended. We did have some success stories and received positive feedback from most of the students who completed the class. In follow up telephone interviews, most students did have a positive experience and felt that they had gained valuable information for a more successful job search. Additionally the upgrade in our computer lab with equipment purchased through the grant has allowed us to increase the numbers of students we can serve in our other computer classes. We have experienced an increase in the number of students in our Basic Computer, Basic Word and Introduction to Excel classes as a result of this project.

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

In 2008-2009, the Puyallup Public Library experienced a significant increase in people needing job skills assistance because of the downturn in the economy. In response, the library increased its basic computer skills classes and added a resume creation program called Resume Maker to its online offerings. The Library did not have an adequate computer lab for effective instruction due to lack of equipment, specifically, an overhead projection system. This teaching environment limited our class sizes and impacted our instructional quality. We did not have the capacity to address the needs of job seekers who were asking us for help.

The objectives of the Real Resumes grant project was to present a set of classes to job hunters who needed assistance creating a quality resume for an effective job search. The project called for additional equipment for upgrade of our computer lab, purchase of flash drives for participants to save completed resumes for future use, and use of qualified instructors and human resource professionals for instruction.

3. Summarize the results of the project, including activities accomplished, and any problems or unexpected outcomes encountered.
 - The Puyallup Public Library upgraded the computer lab with installation of a retractable screen and projection system.
 - The library successfully reconfigured the computer lab so that it could accommodate 12 students in a class. (previously limited to 8 students)
 - The Library developed a Real Resumes tutorial for teaching use of the Resume Maker software. Materials included class handouts, instructor guide, and a power point program for providing basic instruction on resume creation.
 - The Library successfully trained staff and instructors on use of computer lab equipment and the Real Resumes program. We contracted with 3 instructors, 2 of whom had previous, direct experience teaching job skills related classes through Pierce Works.(Pierce County supported program)
 - We promoted the Real Resumes program and started registration for offering classes three times per month. Classes were designed to be 2- session classes. Initially we were not able to fill the classes or reach our registration goals. We were forced to cancel one of the classes in the first month of registration. Despite the fact that we were following up registration with confirmation/reminder calls 3 days prior to the initial session of each class, we experienced a high level of day of class cancellations and no-shows. A typical experience was having 10 to 12 people confirmed for the class and ending up with 7 to 8 students actually making the first class. We initiated a wait list in response to this problem but then we found students would waitlist on one class and sign-up for another so the Waitlist solution was not a good solution.
 - Class evaluation forms were collected at the end of every class although our instructors were not as attentive to this as we had hoped. After first couple sets of classes we had enough feedback indicating that we needed an additional class session because students were not able to complete their resumes. After gaining this student feedback and discussing the situation with our instructors we changed the Real Resumes class from a two session class to a three session class. In order to accommodate our arrangements with our instructors we lowered the number of classes to a goal of 2 –three session classes in place of our original goal of 3- 2 session classes. This revision would still allow us to meet our goal of 6 class sessions a month but impacted the numbers of students who could register.

Although this revision did result in more completed resumes we still had many students who had not completed a resume at the end of 3 sessions. We also started to experience more dropout after the second class. Telephone interviews indicated those who dropped out fell into two main categories: 1.) A large percentage of students felt that they just didn't have the computer or keyboarding skills to stay up with the class and 2.) On the other end of the scale there were a number of students who felt they had gained what they needed from the classes to finish their resumes on their own. We were also surprised to hear that a small number of students thought that by attending Real Resumes that their resume would be produced for them rather than having to create it themselves.
 - After a reevaluation of the class with our instructors, we stayed with the 3 session format through the end of July. Despite efforts to increase publicity through distribution of Real Resumes flyers we still had trouble filling our classes.

Additionally we could never resolve the main problem—people not completing resumes. The instructors felt that the major stumbling blocks for most students were:

a. Lack of basic computer and keyboarding skills was the primary problem. We tried to put some basic prerequisites on the classes but that did not resolve the problem.

b. Difficulty using the Resume Maker software which was not user friendly for students with limited computer experience.

c. Motivation- Instructors felt that some students just did not have the energy (they indicated that they experienced the same problems through the County program) to gather the personal information needed and we think in many cases this lack of motivation was the result of being out of work for a long time in this tough job market. In other words this small percentage of students had “lost hope.”

- Finally our last goal was to have students who had completed resumes through our Real Resumes classes have one-on-one meetings with an HR professional for a resume review. We anticipated high demand for this in our project but found that very few took us up on this offer. We were mystified by this until we found out that the instructors were offering to take a look at the student’s resumes if they wanted to e-mail them. Essentially the instructors themselves had fulfilled what most of the students had wanted. We also received some feedback during our telephone interviews that some students were concerned about privacy issues in sharing their resumes with a “volunteer.” We only had about 7 people take us up on the offer of the one on one reviews and appointments were scheduled for July and August. Unfortunately our Human resources professional cancelled on us due to emergency surgery. She just returned to us on September 5th and we will complete our commitments to those students who wanted the reviews.

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.

Total Classes Completed: 10 (4 additional classes offered but cancelled due to lack of registration

Total number of students completing classes: 87

Average class size: 8.7 per class

We essentially reached only 40% of our projected goal of 216 students.

One of the results of this program is that we have experienced an increase in students taking our basic computer skills class and Basic Word class. We do not have an exact count but we know that a number of students who were unsuccessful with Real Resumes registered and successfully completed these classes. We also had a number of students take the Real Resumes class twice. We did not double count those students in the total above. Another additional benefit was that we covered other online resources available at the library and a number of students registered for library cards.

Out of the 87 students who finished the classes, we received 34 completed class evaluation forms. Out of those responses, 15 ranked the class “Excellent” on the question asking how they would rank the class and its value. The remaining respondents ranked the class “Above Average”. (Question asked students to rate Real Resumes class: Choices: Excellent, Above Average, Average, Below Average,

Poor) We were pleased with this response. We also received both negative and positive comments about the Resume Maker software we were using for the instruction. A large percentage of those who submitted evaluations included positive comments about our instructors in their forms along with thanks to the Puyallup Library for giving the classes and receiving the grant.

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

In terms of Implementation items in the Statement of Work, we accomplished 100% of items on the grant proposal.

In terms of the Real Resumes project objectives we did achieve 100% of project objectives, although we did not achieve the numbers or student success rates we had hoped for. We had hoped to have a positive impact on 216 students and we only reached 40% of that goal.

Objectives met:

- a) We upgraded our computer lab resulting in increased capacity and a more effective instructional setting.
- b) We hired professional instructors and trained staff to offer instruction in Resume creation
- c) We developed class tutorials and instructional materials for the Resume classes
- d) We conducted Resume classes for job seekers although we did experience the registration levels we had hoped for.
- e) We offered follow-up for review of resumes by human resources professionals
- f) We distributed thumb drives to those who completed the classes.
- g) We performed after class evaluations and followed up with a brief telephone interview to evaluate how we could improve the Resume classes and better serve our customers
- h) Through our other computer classes we offered alternatives to those students who could not complete the Real Resume class due to lack of basic computer or keyboarding skills.

Grant Funds Awarded and not claimed:

All of our original projections were based on having our classes fully registered with 12 students to a class. We did not anticipate the dropout and lack of registration problems that we experienced. Additionally, due to a budget cutback of \$125,000 received by the Library in February, 2010 our reconfiguration of the computer lab was delayed by 2 months, limiting class size to 8 students. Our project design and Grant request was based on 216 people taking and completing our Real Resumes courses, February-July. We did not achieve that registration and our student cancellation and drop-out rate was very high. Our adjustment to a 3 session course in place of a 2 session course also affected the number of students although it did give us better satisfaction comments from students who completed the course.

Finally a major portion of our claim, was in categories under Contracts with Others and Equipment under \$5,000. Under Contracts with others we had planned for high electrical costs for installation of the retractable screen or LCD monitor. We discovered that the wall where we wanted to mount the screen had already been wired for the addition of a screen in the original building plans. Wiring for installation

of a projection system was also substantially in place. Once this was discovered the screen projection system was the best option and we did not expend monies for casework and install of a large LCD screen. All of these factors substantially lowered our grant reimbursement claims in these categories. Under Salaries and Wages our claims were reduced due to class cancellations and adjustment from a 2 class session course to a three class session course. Under Other funding, the Library had to delay addition of new tables and chairs for the lab to 2011 due to budget cuts by the City of Puyallup. The State Library was made aware of this problem in February, 2010. The library did purchase a dedicated laptop for the computer lab and paid for reconfiguration of lab to increase class size capability from 8 students per class to 12. The Library did complete training of instructors and staff on the Resume Maker software and lab projection system. The Library printed over 600-2 color promotional flyers at a cost of \$300 for distribution to various information points during the course of the grant.