Levels of Effectiveness of Communication Skills Used by College Students

During The Job Search Process

by

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ABSTRACT

One historic mission of higher education has been to produce good citizens. To ensure that students develop into productive citizens, institutions of higher education aim to assist students in exploring their career interests and finding jobs upon graduation.

Employers have reported that college students conducting job search processes do not possess the skills they seek in applicants. Specifically, employers have mentioned the lack of written and oral communication skills among applicants.

It would seem that there is a clear distinction between the communication skills that employers seek and the communication skills that students offer. Employers believe that students lack the basic skills of speaking and listening. They also believe the writing skills of applicants are insufficient.

This study was designed to gain a better understanding of the level of effectiveness of the communication skills used by college students during a job search process. Specifically this study will look at written communication skills. The sample will include 120 students involved in a job search process during the spring, 2000 academic term. Data will consist of cover letters and resumes that students use when conducting a job search. Results will be analyzed by rating the data on issues like grammar, language and spelling, and clarity. Results will be analyzed for all
participants. Analysis will also be conducted to explore differences by race, gender, and academic college (Arts and Sciences, Engineering, and Business).

The results of this study provided some interesting information about the written communication skills used by students during their job search. Overall, students demonstrated that they have a good understanding of how to present Aesthetically pleasing Cover Letters and Resumes that appropriately address the components in these documents. Results also showed that women have stronger written communication skills than men. Majority students proved to be more adept than minority students at composing Cover Letters and Resumes. Finally, results showed that students from the College of Business have stronger written communication skills than students from the College of Engineering.
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