



Knights of Columbus Council 9542

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Washington, DC 20064

In Service to One, In Service to All

As part of The Busch School curriculum for all business students here at CUA, you are required to complete a career development seminar each year. In this seminar they show business students all of the “best-practices” for getting a job and having a meaningful career. This can include bringing in CEO’s as guest-lecturers, teaching interview techniques, and, of course, putting together the perfect resume. I know I’ve already written a lecture comparing faith and resumes, but this *is* college, and resumes are probably *the* most important single piece of paper besides diplomas. So for those of you who aren’t in the Busch School or haven’t been taught how to write a competitive resume, I would like to share a few pearls of wisdom with you.

Hopefully, there are the obvious tips that everyone has heard of by now when putting together your resume: don’t lie, be consistent, and, obviously, include that you’re a Knight of Columbus because you never know when a Brother in the Order will be on the other side of the desk. For the purpose of this lecture, I want to focus on one specific tip, and that is how to effectively explain your previous work or volunteer experience. Let’s say, for example, you interned for a congressman on Capitol Hill. The normal, mediocre resume would describe this experience by writing bullet points such as, “Answered constituent phone calls; Assisted office staff with projects; Took notes at committee hearings and briefings.” In which case, an employer would read this resume and get a general sense of what the applicant *did* during this internship, but it doesn’t quite show what the applicant *took away* from the experience. The important part about describing your experiences is not explaining *what* you did, but *why* you did it. This shows that you understand how your work was meaningful and recognized the impact you made. So in the example of Capitol Hill internship, a better description would read something like, “Answered and recorded constituent phone calls so the Congressman could make an informed and balanced voting decision; Assisted office staff with projects so that they could present all necessary information to the Congressman during meetings; Took notes at committee hearings and briefings so that legislative staff could

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consume as much information as possible regarding key issues.” Just adding the “why” to the experiences on your own resumes will make a huge difference, and will definitely set you apart from your competition.

In order to effectively highlight the importance of your work, though, you have to actively seek meaning and purpose in your tasks, just as we are called to actively seek Christ in all things. When we eventually die and are brought before God to be judged, it will not be enough to say “I followed all of your commands, Lord, prayed every night, went to Church every Sunday, gave up chocolate every year during Lent, and did all of these good deeds because you told me to.” What good is it, then, if we just do these things for the sake of themselves. We would not be called to live out this Faith if there were not a reason behind it all. We may not know every reason right away, or see God’s purpose behind all of His actions, yet they do exist. If we really want to be able to say we lived the Faith--and lived it *well*, then it’s important to be able to say *why* we followed each command and did all of our good deeds. Even further, it will be better to say “I don’t know why you did x, y, or z, Lord, but I trusted in your plan because I knew you had great things in store for me,” rather than saying “I never understood why you let x, y, or z happen to me, Lord, and as a result I lived in anger and contempt for a very long time.”

So I’ll leave you all with this passage from Gospel according to Matthew, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.” (*Matthew 7:7-8*)

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