You Be the Boss

Knowing what skills a person needs to excel on the job is critical to succeeding when searching for a job and thriving in a position. This activity helps youth understand how employers advertise for positions and shows them what types of components make up a job description. Youth will get to look at actual job advertisements, and they will get to step into the shoes of an employer by creating their own job description for a position.

Youth Will Learn

*Workforce Skills:* Thinking skills, communication, teamwork, and leadership
*Success Indicators:* Youth will identify the components of a job description. Youth will be able to differentiate between required qualifications and desired qualifications.

What You Need:

*Time Involved:* 30-45 minutes
*Suggested Group Size:* Any
*Materials Needed:*
- Newspaper or online job announcements
- Index cards
- Pencils or pens
- Paper

*Facilitator Tips:*

Prior to the activity, search through newspaper classifieds and online job ads. Cut out job ads and paste them onto index cards. Look for ones that list qualifications with technical and workforce skills needed for the job. Cut enough to give each participant one or two cards. You can also divide this activity into two parts. Part I: The newspaper job advertisement activity. Part II: Writing the job descriptions.

The Activity

1. Have teens select one or two of the job advertisement cards (or papers printed from online). Tell them to look over the information and figure out what skills are needed to do the jobs on the cards they chose. Explain the difference between required and desired qualifications.
   - *Required qualifications* - are those that are necessary and mandatory for a person to have in order to apply. If a person does not meet the required qualifications, chance are they will not be considered for the position.
   - *Desired qualifications* - are those that are preferred but are optional. If an applicant does not have them, it does not mean they will not be considered. Having desired qualifications may mean the applicant has a better chance of being considered for a position.
2. Have the teens to look for the title of the position, required qualifications, desired qualifications, and a summary of the duties a person hired would perform.

3. Then have teens share what the job advertised is, the qualifications, duties, and what skills are needed to do the job. Are the skills needed technical skills or workforce skills?
   - Technical skills – skills that are specific to a job, such as welding, baking bread, etc.
   - Workforce skills – skills that apply to many jobs, such as interpersonal skills, problem solving, etc.

4. After all the teens have shared, split them up into groups of 4-5 individuals. Explain to them that their team is the hiring committee for a position. Tell each group what position they are hiring for such as: Camp Counselor, Junior Fairboard, CARTEENS, Teen Ambassador, or Junior Leader.

5. Explain that they are in charge of writing the job description for that position. The description should include the title of the position, a summary of duties, required qualifications, desired qualifications, and any other additional information they feel a possible candidate should know. Give them 10-20 minutes to complete this activity (depending on group size).

6. After they have completed writing the job description, have them share what they wrote with the group.
Talk It Over

**Share**
- What position did you have to create a job description for?
- What qualifications did you decide were needed?

**Process**
- How did you decide between the required qualifications and the desired ones?
- Did you find it difficult to come up with the qualifications a possible candidate would need to have?

**Generalize**
- What are some of the similarities between the job descriptions you created and the skills that you have?
- Why is it important to know what is required of you on the job?

**Apply**
- How can knowing what skills you have and your interests help you decide what types of jobs you might want to apply for in the future?
- Why do you think it might be important to look into the future and begin to think now about who you will be and what you may end up doing as far as a job is concerned?

“What we do matters to us. Work may not be the most important thing in our lives or the only thing. We may work because we must, but we still want to love, to feel pride in, to respect ourselves for what we do and to make a difference.”

-Sara Ann Friedman