



**Annual Assessment Report Template**  
Academic Year: 2014-2015

**Date of Report Submission:** June 23, 2015

**Name of Department:** Office of Student Involvement

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**I. Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to discover the professional development that takes place for student leaders and employees within the Office of Student Involvement (OSI). This is a continuation of our 2013-2014 assessment project that focused on the holistic professional development of members of the DePaul Activities Board (DAB). In an effort to create a common leadership curriculum for all student leaders and employees, we wanted to look deeper at the organic professional development for a wider range of students. To do so, we assessed our sample population on their self-reported proficiencies in two domains; interview readiness and post-graduate readiness.

The methodology consisted of a participant sample of 54 student leaders/employees. Each participant was issued a pre-assessment survey in September 2014 and a post assessment survey in May 2015. They also participated in quarterly workshops, personal reflections and individual coaching sessions with advisors/supervisors throughout the academic year.

Findings indicated that participants increased their self-confidence in both areas; interview readiness (creation of a resume, cover letter, etc.) as well as post-graduate readiness (identifying transferable skills). However, students are lacking clarity when it comes to connecting those skills directly to post-graduate opportunities.

Implications of these findings indicate that student leaders/employees have increased confidence in relation to their post graduate goals. After two years of assessing self-rated proficiency, we want to develop a consistent development curriculum that encompasses confidence and proven mastery over these set skills.

**II. Learning Outcome Assessed**

Our primary learning outcome for this project was “*Students who are employed or hold a leadership position in the Office of Student Involvement will be able to articulate specific skills they have gained in their position and how that translates to their career goals.*”

**III. Introduction & Context**

As a department, individual staff professionals provide career and professional development opportunities with the student populations they serve. Our goal is to provide

meaningful experiences so students gain important skills to prepare them for their future goals. Even though individual advisors and supervisors provide professional development, we sought to understand what a wider range of students were gaining. As a result, how can we thread our work together, as a department, so any student (whether leader or employee) receives the same holistic development.

One of our departmental outcomes is “students who participate in Student Involvement programs and activities will be able to apply communication, critical thinking, and professional skills. This outcome has a direct tie to the divisional outcome of intellectual skills and practical competence which rolls into the university outcomes of “Intellectual and Creative Skill” and “Preparation for Career and Beyond”.

This study also has direct connections to Vision2018 specifically Objective 1a (focus the entire community on student learning and success) and 4b (build a vibrant university community).

**Objective 1a: Focus the entire community on student learning and success.**

As professionals, we know that learning does not operate solely within the confines of the classroom. As we look at the impact OSI has on the student experience, we want to provide one that is rich and meaningful for the students we mentor. Any touch point with our office can make the difference in feeling a sense of community and belonging. As we continue to enhance our supervisory and advisory models, our dedicated focus on the student experience only strengthens our offerings and support.

**Objective 4b: Build a vibrant university community**

College students do not operate in a vacuum, or traverse campus in a compartmentalized fashion. They do not consciously realize when they are in the curricular vs. co-curricular realm, or when they are walking out of “academic affairs country” and into “student affairs country”. As a result, we want to provide students with skills that make them successful students and healthy individuals regardless of where they find themselves.

Our secondary learning outcome was also Students who are employed or hold a leadership position in the Office of Student Involvement will demonstrate knowledge on how to prepare for a job interview. Our main learning outcome was focused on transferrable skill acquisition and integration, however, a key component of that integration is the ability to communicate to future employers through resumes, cover letters, interviews, networking, etc.

To support our assessment project, we conducted an in-depth literature review. Our 2013-2014 study uncovered the deep impact that curricular and co-curricular experiences have on a student’s retention and post-graduate trajectory. Development of leadership skills, and in turn employability, is critical to student success and remains a key college outcome (Dugan & Komives, 2007). We are challenged to provide students with skills, competencies and proficiencies needed to compete in the global marketplace. Co-curricular involvement whether employment, leadership, community service, or other activities provides students with a greater platform for success (Astin, 1993; Stevenson &

Clegg, 2011). However, the way in which leadership development is administered can vary greatly. Our 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 studies investigated student's self-efficacy as it relates to their professional and leadership competencies. Prior to any development activity, it is imperative to assess student's base level of confidence in their skills. Dugan and Komives (2010) state that leadership educators must pay close attention to student's assessment of their own self-efficacy due to its high impact on leadership development. For instance, students with inflated self-efficacy may distance themselves from educational opportunities they feel are not worth their attention. Conversely, students with significantly deflated self-efficacy may not even pursue certain activities for fear they will fail. As a result, student affairs professionals need to keep a keen eye on students to prevent disengagement from activities that are perceived above or below their capabilities.

In addition to gauging self-efficacy, students need to be able to integrate and apply skills employers are seeking. These include teamwork, collaboration, reliability, communication, among others (Engelkeymeyer, 2012). However, it is not enough to just have these skills. Students need to be able to clearly communicate their value in terms of skills, abilities and attitudes to potential employers. It is not enough to train students on content knowledge or role-specific functions. Rather, it is important for abilities such as critical thinking, effective communication, leadership, teamwork, personal accountability and ethics to appear across the curriculum.

#### **IV. Data Collection & Methodology**

Participants in this study were executive leaders in Student Government Association (SGA), Interfraternity Council (IFC), Multicultural Greek Council (MGC), PanHellenic Council (PHC), DePaul Activities Board (DAB), DemonTHON, as well as our student employees (Front Desk Assistants, Finance Assistant, Creative Assistants, and Involvement Ambassadors). We only included student leaders and employees who had a direct supervisor/advisor that was a full-time staff member within our department. While OSI supports many different student organizations and leaders, our focus was on the common professional development themes amongst our targeted mentees.

We administered a pre-assessment survey in September 2014 to our original sample of 54 student leaders and employees. 35 students completed this survey. We also administered a post-assessment survey in May 2015, and 21 members of the original 54 sample completed this survey. Our final assessment tool was the Transferrable Skills Reflection Worksheet which 18 members of the original sample completed. Please see appendices I-III for all assessment tools.

The Student Involvement assessment team analyzed the data after the initial survey (September 2014) to identify emerging themes and to address any specific needs throughout the year. Based on this data, we catered our remaining winter and spring workshops to reflect what areas students felt they needed to improve on. The 2013-2014 study uncovered that students were looking for more development in areas of professional competencies (Domain I). Specifically, using LinkedIn was an area students wanted to improve upon last year. As we discovered, it was also a tool students wanted to

improve upon this year. We tailored our workshops to reflect data from the 2013-2014 project as well as the data we collected in 2014-2015.

Our assessment was based primarily on self-reported confidence levels with skills related to interview readiness (Domain I) and post-graduate readiness (Domain II). As a result, all students who indicated their confidence level was “Pretty Confident” and “Extremely Confident” were categorized as “Acceptable Performance”.

We informed all participants of the goals and structure of this assessment project via an initial introduction email as well as an announcement at each of the quarterly events. Participation in this project was optional. We did have information such as name, email, and position on our internal report documents. All digital documents are kept secure on our W drive folder, and hard copies are kept in a locked file cabinet. All identifying information on digital and hardcopies has been blocked out and will be destroyed at the completion of this project.

## V. **Data & Results**

We began our assessment project with 54 individuals in our sample. This sample was increased significantly from our 2013-2014 project of 12 student leaders. From that sample, 35 completed the Pre Assessment Survey, 21 completed the Post Assessment Survey, and 18 completed the Transferrable Skills Reflection Worksheet. Our final response rate was 33%. Our final participant demographics were 4 male, and 14 female. 13 participants were student leaders, 4 were student employees, and 1 was both a leader and employee.

### **Overall Pre and Post Assessment Comparative Results**

<b>Pre Test</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Domain I: Interview Readiness	3.86
Domain II: Post Graduate Readiness	4.08

<b>Post Test</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Domain I: Interview Readiness	4.12
Domain II: Post Graduate Readiness	4.30

#### Self-reported on a scale of 1-5

1= extremely poor confidence

3= fair confidence

5= extremely confident

*\*Please see appendix IV& V for corresponding graphs and charts.*

When asked “How will you use your leadership experience to find a job?” students responded

*“What I have really learned this past year is all the skills we are developing as student leaders will be extremely beneficial to any career path. Being professional, communicating effectively, and*

*working as a team is a big aspect of any career and those are skills I feel much more confident about due to my leadership position.”*

*“I like to think of my leadership experience as a ‘practice job’. We’re dealing with very similar situations to what we would experience in basically any post-college position and are learning very important skills that would allow us to be successful.”*

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Number of Students Assessed</b>	<b>Number of Students with Acceptable or Better Performance</b>
Students who are employed or hold a leadership position in the Office of Student Involvement will be able to articulate specific skills they have gained in their position and how that translates to their career goals.	35	18

## **VI. Discussion & Interpretation of Results**

### Key Quantitative Findings

- Domain I had the largest overall increase by 6%, however the margin is slight as Domain II increased by 5.3%
- The top three individual skills participants felt they improved were use of LinkedIn (+17%), problem solving (+10.5%), and resume writing (+9.9%)
- The three individual skills participants felt the least amount of improvement were event planning (-1.9%), networking (-1.3%), and event management (+0.7%)
- In Domain I (Interview Readiness), participants felt they improved the most in relation to their resume (52%) LinkedIn profile (33%) and professionalism (29%)
- In Domain II (Post-graduate Readiness), participants felt they improved the most in relation to public speaking (52%), problem solving (43%) and time management (43%).

### Key Qualitative Findings

- The top three transferrable skills participants identified in their current position(s) were communication, budget management and project management.
- Overall, student leaders and employees were able to articulate specific skills they learned in their position. However, many students had difficulty clearly articulating how those skills connect to their post-graduation goals.
- Participants identified communication as one of the major transferrable skills they learned in their position(s). In Domain I, students reported the lowest levels of self-confidence in areas that involved communication (cover letter writing, networking, professionalism, etc.), but higher levels of confidence in communication-related skills in Domain II (public speaking, engaging an audience, etc.).

In the 2013-2014 study, participants indicated a desire to learn more about LinkedIn and improve their profile. As a result, we dedicated an entire workshop to LinkedIn for the 2014-2015 study. Overall, we were surprised to see that students still ranked LinkedIn lower than the other areas in Domain I. Although college students are assumed to have proficiency in all areas of social media, it is clear we need to dedicate consistent and purposeful attention to helping students learn how to leverage this networking platform. Overall students were less confident in relation to Domain I (Interview Readiness) than they were Domain II (Post Graduate Readiness). It is clear students are learning key transferrable skills (time management, reliability, public speaking, etc.). However, they need more coaching on how they can connect that to their future goals. Our primary learning outcome was for students to be able to identify transferable skills and articulate their relevance for future opportunities. They can pinpoint key transferrable skills; however they still need advising on how exactly those skills “transfer” to their future work.

Career readiness does not just happen within the Career Center. As higher education professionals, career coaching and advising is imperative across the curricular and co-curricular spheres. In our programming work with students, we spend time and energy training them to perform their job responsibilities and checking in on progress. It is clear that students need not only training and encouragement, but they need their advisor/supervisor to close the loop and help them identify context and application for their skills and accomplishments.

Our 2014-2015 study did encounter challenges and barriers. One main challenge of our project was that we focused primarily on self-reported confidence levels. While confidence in skills is an important factor, it is beneficial to pair that data with common rubrics specifically evaluating these skills and whether their proficiency matches their confidence. In future applications, we hope to pair students perceptions with advisor/supervisor assessment of their proficiency. Our sample size was considerably larger than our pilot study, and participation was optional. As a result, it was difficult to get students to participate in workshops and assessment tools. For future reference, we hope to build in greater advisor/supervisor involvement and incentives for participants.

## **VII. Recommendations and Plans for Action**

Results will be shared with supervisors/advisors during summer 2015 and with participants during the 2015-2016 academic year. As our department incorporates leadership into our program offerings, we hope to create a common curriculum for all OSI student leaders and employees. The 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 studies will provide a greater context for what this curriculum might look like. We hope to create this curriculum during the 2015-2016 academic year and formally execute it in 2016-2017. In the meantime, we will look closer at each specific skill area and develop targeted activities to encourage continued development in post graduate readiness and enhance development in interview readiness.

The scope of responsibilities amongst the student leaders and employees within OSI are varied. We have students who focus on advocacy, customer service, budget management,

design and more. It can be difficult to determine an absolute common curriculum that will suit all their needs. The career communication strategy for a graphic designer differs greatly from that of an accountant. As a result, each individual advisor/supervisor will have to cater the curriculum to suit their student's needs. We hope to work together and develop these individual branches with full departmental feedback and support.

In addition, many of the student leaders and employees who were a part of this study have graduated. While there are some common themes that can apply to our current students, it is important to also ask our new leaders and employees their perceived abilities in these areas and what they want to work on.

### **Appendix I: Pre Assessment Survey**

#### Leadership Development Assessment

This survey is to better understand the desired areas of growth for student leaders within the Office of Student Involvement. Please answer the following questions and note that each individual's answers will only be accessible by ones supervisor.

Full name:

Please mark all of the following that you are a part of: Check all that apply.

- DemonTHON
- DePaul Activities Board
- Fraternity/Sorority Life
- OSI Ambassadors
- OSI Marketing Team
- OSI Student Assistants
- Student Government Association

1. Position(s) title: If you are in more than one organization, please be specific.
2. Rank your skills in relation to your current position(s) in the Office of Student Involvement:

	Extremely poor	Not good	Fair	Pretty high	Extremely high	N/A
My organizational skills	<input type="radio"/>					
My verbal communication skills	<input type="radio"/>					
My marketing skills	<input type="radio"/>					
My knowledge of social media outlets	<input type="radio"/>					
My level of creativity	<input type="radio"/>					
My level of self confidence	<input type="radio"/>					
My overall attitude	<input type="radio"/>					

3. Please rank your confidence in the following professional competencies:

	Not at all confident	Somewhat confident	Fair	Pretty confident	Extremely confident
My ability to use LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>				
My ability to create a resume	<input type="radio"/>				
My ability to create a cover letter	<input type="radio"/>				
My ability to work with staff professionals	<input type="radio"/>				
My ability to work with other professionals	<input type="radio"/>				
My networking skills	<input type="radio"/>				
My interviewing skills	<input type="radio"/>				
My email professionalism	<input type="radio"/>				
My overall level of professionalism	<input type="radio"/>				



My teamwork skills	<input type="radio"/>					
My customer service skills	<input type="radio"/>					
My event management skills	<input type="radio"/>					
My event planning skills	<input type="radio"/>					

What other skills areas would you like to improve upon?

Mark all of the following items that you would like to improve on: Please check at least five.

- My organizational skills
- My verbal communication skills
- My marketing skills
- My knowledge of social media outlets
- My level of creativity
- My level of self confidence
- My overall attitude
- My ability to use LinkedIn
- My ability to create a resume
- My ability to create a cover letter
- My ability to work with staff professionals
- My ability to work with other professionals
- My networking skills
- My interviewing skills
- My email professionalism
- My overall professionalism
- My ability to speak in front of an audience
- My ability to delegate tasks
- My ability to inspire others
- My ability to engage a room of people
- My ability to problem solve
- My ability to go above and beyond
- My ability to take constructive criticism
- My ability to give constructive criticism
- My ability to collaborate with others
- My time management skills (not procrastinate)
- My level of reliability
- My ability to be a role model to others
- My ability to run an effective meeting
- My ability to take initiative
- My teamwork skills
- My customer service skills
- My event management skills
- My event planning skills

- Given the areas that you would like to improve on, please rank your top five:

What I want to improve on the most:

Second most:

Third most:

Fourth most:

Fifth most:

- What skills are you currently using in your leadership position(s) that will help you with your career goals? Please explain.
- How much will the skills being gained in your leadership position help you with your career goals?

	Extremely not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Neutral	It will help	Extremely helpful
Please rank your answer:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- How will you use your leadership experience to find a job? Please explain.

## **Appendix II: Post Assessment Survey**

### **Leadership Development Assessment**

This survey is to better understand the desired areas of growth for student leaders within the Office of Student Involvement. Please answer the following questions and note that each individual's answers will only be accessible by ones supervisor.

1. Full name:

2. Position(s) title: If you are in more than one organization, please be specific.

3. Rank your skills in relation to your current position(s) in the Office of Student Involvement:

	Extremely poor	Not good	Fair	Pretty high	Extremely high	N/A
My organizational skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My verbal communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My marketing skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My knowledge of social media outlets	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My level of creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My level of self confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My overall attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>					

4. Please rank your confidence in the following professional competencies:

	Not at all confident	Somewhat confident	Fair	Pretty confident	Extremely confident
My ability to use LinkedIn	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My ability to create a resume	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My ability to create a cover letter	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My ability to work with staff professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My ability to work with other professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My networking skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My interviewing skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My email professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My overall level of professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/>				



My teamwork skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My customer service skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My event management skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My event planning skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					

6. Mark all of the following items that you feel you've improved upon the most throughout the 2014-2015 academic year in your leadership position: Please check at least five if possible.

- My organizational skills
- My verbal communication skills
- My marketing skills
- My knowledge of social media outlets
- My level of creativity
- My level of self confidence
- My overall attitude
- My ability to use LinkedIn
- My ability to create a resume
- My ability to create a cover letter
- My ability to work with staff professionals
- My ability to work with other professionals
- My networking skills
- My interviewing skills
- My email professionalism
- My overall professionalism
- My ability to speak in front of an audience
- My ability to delegate tasks
- My ability to inspire others
- My ability to engage a room of people
- My ability to problem solve
- My ability to go above and beyond
- My ability to take constructive criticism
- My ability to give constructive criticism
- My ability to collaborate with others
- My time management skills (not procrastinate)
- My level of reliability
- My ability to be a role model to others
- My ability to run an effective meeting
- My ability to take initiative
- My teamwork skills
- My customer service skills
- My event management skills
- My event planning skills

7. Given the areas that you feel you've improved upon, please rank your top five:

What I've improved on the most:

Second most:

Third most:

Fourth most:

Fifth most:

8. Please mark all of the following that you are a part of: Check all that apply.

- DemonTHON
- DePaul Activities Board
- Fraternity/Sorority Life
- OSI Ambassadors
- OSI Marketing Team
- OSI Student Assistants
- Student Government Association

9. What skills are you currently using in your leadership position(s) that will help you with your career goals? Please explain.

10. How helpful will the skills that you gained in your leadership position be in a future job?

	Extremely not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Neutral	It will help	Extremely helpful
Please rank your answer:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

11. Did you attend the Fall OSI Leaders event on Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>? During this meeting, we spent time meeting other student leaders in OSI and discussed various skills that are needed in one's leadership position/how to be a successful leader.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

12. Did you attend the Winter OSI Leaders event on Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>? During this meeting, we did peer resume reviews and discussed dos and don'ts of how to create a successful resume and LinkedIn profile.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

13. Did you attend the Spring OSI Leaders event on Friday, April 17th? During this meeting, we had Ed Childs, Assistant Director of the Career Center, come and speak about transferrable skills and how to articulate your skills onto your resume.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

### **Appendix III: Transferrable Skills Reflection Assignment**

Being involved in clubs/organizations provides students the opportunity to develop various transferrable skills. These are developed through a student's involvement and later applied to one's career aspirations. In reflecting on the leadership position(s) you have held through the Office of Student Involvement this year (OSI Marketing Team, OSI Ambassadors, OSI Front Desk, SGA, DAB, SAF-B, DemonTHON, and Fraternity/Sorority Life) please complete the following form. Think of the top five transferrable skills that will be useful in your future success that you have gained or strengthen through this role. These skills should correlate with a specific post-graduate goal.

**Full name:**

**Leadership position(s) held:**

**Post-graduate goal(s):** *Please be as specific as possible. Is there a certain company you hope to work for? A specific job you hope to have? Graduate school aspirations?*

**Skill #1:**

**I have demonstrated this skill in the following ways:**

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**How this skill applies to my post-graduate goal(s):**

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**Skill #2:**

**I have demonstrated this skill in the following ways:**

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**How this skill applies to my post-graduate goal(s):**

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**Skill #3:**

**I have demonstrated this skill in the following ways:**

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**How this skill applies to my post-graduate goal(s):**

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**Skill #4:**

**I have demonstrated this skill in the following ways:**

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**How this skill applies to my post-graduate goal(s):**

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**Skill #5:**

**I have demonstrated this skill in the following ways:**

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How this skill applies to my post-graduate goal(s):

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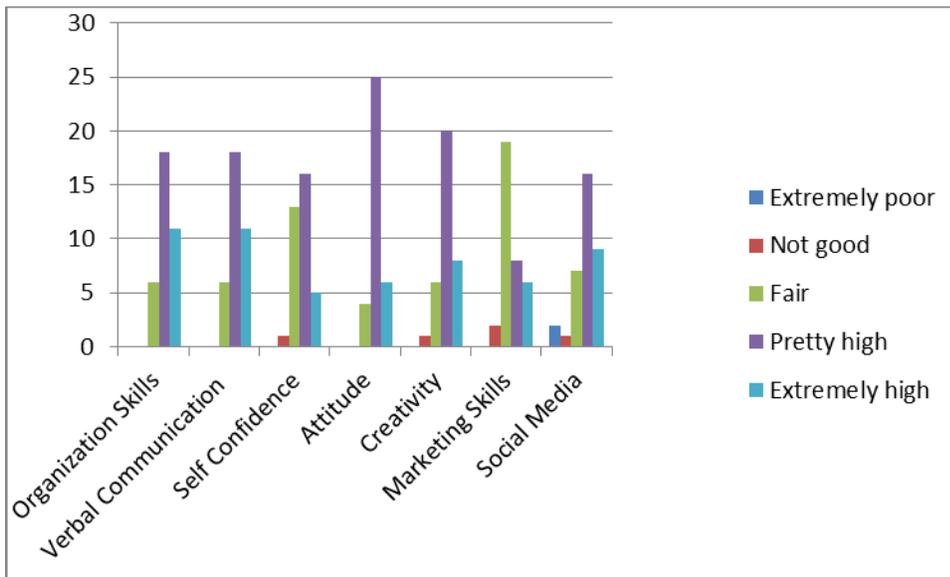


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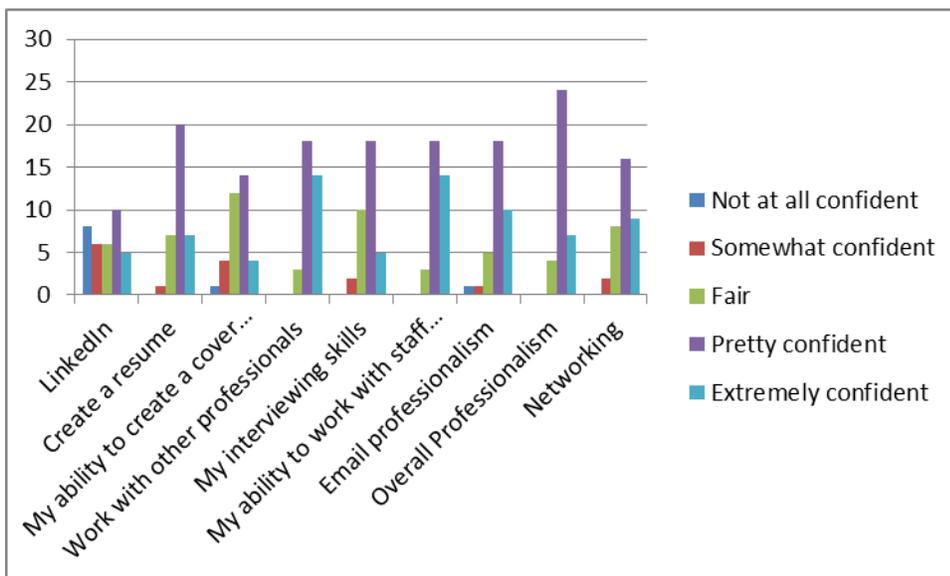


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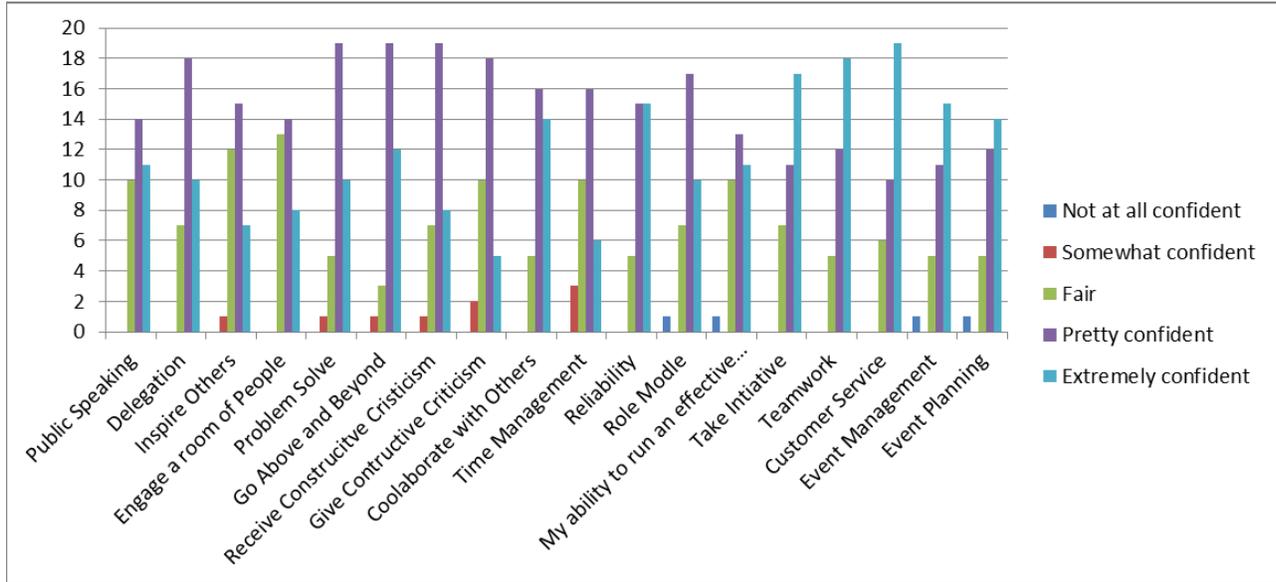
### Appendix IV: Post Assessment Survey Graphs



Graph 1: Skills ranked in regards to their current position in OSI.



Graph 2: Self-confidence in skills related to professional competency and interview readiness



Graph 3: Self-confidence in skills related to leadership development and post-graduate readiness

### Appendix V: Pre and Post Assessment Comparative Results

#### I. Domain I Pre/Post Assessment Comparisons

Pre Test	Mean
Ability to use LinkedIn	2.94
Ability to create a resume	3.94
Ability to create a cover letter	3.46
Ability to work with other professionals	4.31
Interviewing skills	3.74
Ability to work with staff professionals	4.31
Email professionalism	4.00
Overall level of professionalism	4.09
Networking skills	3.91
Post Test	Mean
Ability to use LinkedIn	3.43
Ability to create a resume	4.33
Ability to create a cover letter	3.76
Ability to work with other professionals	4.57
Interviewing skills	3.95
Ability to work with staff professionals	4.62
Email professionalism	4.33
Overall level of professionalism	4.24
Networking skills	3.86

Self-reported on a scale of 1-5

1= extremely poor confidence

3= fair confidence

5= extremely confident

## II. Domain II Pre/Post Assessment Comparisons

<b>Pre Test</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Ability to speak in public	4.03
Ability to delegate	4.09
Ability to inspire others	3.80
Ability to engage a room of people	3.86
Ability to problem solve	4.09
Ability to go above and beyond	4.20
Ability to take constructive criticism	3.97
Ability to give constructive criticism	3.74
Ability to collaborate	4.26
Time management	3.71
Reliability	4.29
Ability to role model for others	4.00
Ability to run an effective meeting	3.94
Ability to take initiative	4.29
Teamwork	4.37
Customer Service	4.37
Event Management	4.22
Event Planning	4.19

<b>Post Test</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Ability to speak in public	4.19
Ability to delegate	4.38
Ability to inspire others	4.05
Ability to engage a room of people	4.19
Ability to problem solve	4.52
Ability to go above and beyond	4.52
Ability to take constructive criticism	4.24
Ability to give constructive criticism	4.05
Ability to collaborate	4.43
Time management	3.86
Reliability	4.43
Ability to role model for others	4.19
Ability to run an effective meeting	4.20
Ability to take initiative	4.48
Teamwork	4.57
Customer Service	4.67
Event Management	4.25
Event Planning	4.11

Self-reported on a scale of 1-5

1= extremely poor confidence

3= fair confidence

5= extremely confident