

YALI4YOUTH

Youth Professional Development Community Activity Toolkit

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#YALI4Youth



U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE



NETWORK

YALI4YOUTH

Introduction

Professional skills are crucial for all young people to develop, no matter their age, their field, or the stage of their career. So what can you do as a young professional to help youth in your community build these skills?

This YALI4Youth Toolkit will assist you in planning a community activity focused on youth professional development. In the following sections, you will find four sample activities. Read through all the instructions for each activity before choosing one, so you have a good idea of what is expected of you.

You should choose only one community activity at a time, but feel free to complete other activities after your first is completed! No matter which activity you choose, remember that it's up to you to serve as a positive, professional mentor for the youth in your community.

Additional Resource

The YALI Network Online Course, "[Developing, Mentoring and Supporting Youth Leadership](#)" provides strategies on how to mentor, guide, and provide professional skills training to youth. Be sure to complete the course before planning your YALI4Youth community activity.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

For each community activity, keep these tips in mind:

- **Practice and prepare.** Before hosting your event, make sure to practice, practice, practice! You'll want to appear calm and confident when leading, so give yourself plenty of time to prepare and become comfortable with the materials.
- **Advertise your event.** Whether it's via social media, email, or word of mouth, you'll have to find a way to communicate when and where your event is happening.
- **Go virtual.** If you don't have the ability or desire to hold your activity in person, adapt your event to a virtual format! You can host any of the suggested activities that follow using a video-conferencing platform.
- **Don't charge for your event.** Please remember that you should never charge a fee for any YALI Network event, especially when it comes to youth events.
- **Have fun!** You've worked hard to put your activity together and you're helping the next generation grow into strong leaders. Enjoy your time together!

ACTIVITY ONE: PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is a fundamental skill to have not just as a professional, but as an individual. Public speaking can take many different forms, and it is important to always tailor your content and message to the specific audience and purpose. Encourage youth to grow their public speaking skills with this activity.

Suggested Audience:

We recommend inviting a minimum of two people, but ideally five to ten participants would work for this activity.

Needed Materials:

- Print copies of Page 5 of the [“Public Speaking Advice and Checklist”](#) Worksheet to distribute to each participant. If you don’t have access to a printer, you can project the worksheet onto a screen if you’re meeting in person or share your screen with participants if you’re meeting virtually.
- Pencils and paper for each participant. (Can be provided by you or a required material for participants to bring themselves).

Introduction (5 Minutes)

- Take a few minutes to introduce yourself. Briefly share why you chose to organize this activity and why public speaking is important.
- Provide participants with a brief overview of the activity ahead.

Icebreaker (5 Minutes)

- Have participants gather in a circle and, taking turns, introduce themselves by sharing their names and the first thing that comes to mind when they think of public speaking.

Activity (3 Minutes Per Presentation, 10 Minutes Per Feedback):

- Before arriving, have all the participants prepare a three-minute speech or presentation on a topic of their choosing. To make things more fun, you can set a theme or central question for all of the presentations. (Ex: What is your favorite food and why?)
- Remember: If your participants don't have access to technology or other supplies to prepare their presentation – this is okay! None of that is needed to deliver a great speech.
- Once everyone is together, have each individual present, one at a time.
- At the end of each presentation, have every participant fill out Page 5 of the "[Public Speaking Advice and Checklist](#)" Worksheet. The individual who just presented will fill it out as a self-assessment, while the other participants will use it to provide feedback on the presentation.
- After everyone has completed the sheet, ask participants to share feedback with the group. Make sure the presenter also has time to share his or her thoughts on how they presented.

Wrap-Up (10 Minutes)

Give participants a few minutes to review and reflect on the feedback they received on their presentation and heard on other presentations. Come together and discuss these questions:

- What new idea did you learn today about effective public speaking?
- How can you apply what you learned today in everyday settings? In professional settings?

Additional Resource:

Are you looking for more resources to develop public speaking? Watch Lesson Three of the YALI Network Online Course "[Strategies for Personal Growth and Development.](#)"

ACTIVITY TWO: NETWORKING

Networking is a great way to build connections with like-minded professionals. Networking can provide you with new opportunities, advance your job searches, grow your self-confidence, and improve your improvisational and creative intellect.

Suggested Audience:

To be truly effective, we recommend having at least 10 participants. All of the participants should be of professional, working age, but do not have to have an established professional career. Give yourself plenty of time to plan and invite a diverse group of participants.

Activity:

- Consult the [“Guide to Hosting a Networking Event”](#) Worksheet for a checklist on how to prepare and facilitate a networking event.
- At the end of the network event, ask youth participants to share what they learned about networking from the event.

Additional Resource:

Are you looking for more resources on networking? Watch Lesson Two of the YALI Network Online Course [“Strategies for Personal Growth and Development.”](#)

ACTIVITY THREE: JOB INTERVIEWS

Job interviews can be stressful or intimidating, if the applicant isn't prepared or comfortable. Practicing how to perform in a job interview can help a young person become more confident and more likely to receive a job offer from the interview.

Suggested Audience:

You'll need at least two participants for this activity, but can also facilitate this activity with a larger group of people. However, we recommend an even number of participants, no greater than 14, to make things easier.

Needed Materials:

- Print out copies of the [“Good Questions to Ask During An Interview”](#) Worksheet to distribute to each participant. If you don't have access to a printer, you can project the worksheet onto a screen if you're meeting in person or share your screen with participants if you're meeting virtually.

Introduction (5 Minutes)

- Take a few minutes to introduce yourself. Briefly share why you chose to organize this activity and why interview skills are important.
- Provide participants with a brief overview of the activity ahead.

Icebreaker (5 Minutes)

- Have participants gather in a circle and, taking turns, introduce themselves by sharing their names and either: an upcoming interview they're preparing for, or a past interview they've had.

“C.A.R. Method” Explanation

- Take 15 minutes to explain the “C.A.R. Method” to the participants.
- This method is a technique used for answering interview questions in an effective way. When you answer an interview question, take a few seconds to consider this:

- Context: Describe a situation and setting from a past position or your past experience that will clearly demonstrate your skills to the interviewer. Be careful not to spend too much time providing the context. Your goal is to provide just enough context to understand the situation and then to focus more on your actions and the final result.
- Action: Emphasize the specific actions that you took within that context. Don't just make vague statements – use specific examples, statistics, anecdotes to reinforce your point.
- Result: Detail the results of the actions that you took. Use quotes, figures, statistics, feedback from a manager, anything that supports your assertion.

Activity (5 Minutes Per Interview = 10 Minutes Per Pair. Plus 10 Minutes of Discussion)

- Break participants up into pairs of two, making sure that each participant has access to the Worksheet. If you're meeting virtually, send pairs into breakout rooms on your video-conference platform. If breakout rooms aren't available, just have two individuals complete the interviews at a time in front of the group.
- Provide a sample job that participants will be interviewing for. In pairs, have one participant act as the interviewer and the other as the interviewee. The interviewer should ask open-ended questions. The interviewee should attempt to answer the interview questions using the C.A.R. Method.
- Toward the end of the interview, the interviewees should also try to incorporate questions from the Worksheet. Once five minutes elapse, have the participants switch roles.
- If you're meeting in person, be sure to walk around the room to monitor how each set of interviews is going. If you're meeting in virtual breakout rooms, visit the different rooms briefly.
- Once both participants have presented, have them discuss how each interview went. How well did each person answer the questions using the C.A.R. Method? How was each person's body language? Would you hire the person for the job? Why or why not?

Wrap-Up (10 Minutes)

Give participants a few minutes to review and reflect on the feedback they received during their interviews. Come together and discuss these questions:

- What is one thing you learned about an effective interview? What is one thing you can improve on or apply to your next job interview?

ACTIVITY FOUR: INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

An informational interview is a meeting that an individual requests to speak to someone who can help develop a professional network. It is a way to gain insight to a career path you want to achieve and gain information about a specific area of interest.

Suggested Audience:

This event works best with you mentoring one other person. Ideally, this activity is most beneficial for individuals who are unsure about their career or career path.

Needed Materials:

- The participant should review the [“How to Have a Successful Informational Interview” Worksheet](#).

Before the Activity:

- Before meeting formally, either in person or virtually, ask the participant to brainstorm about what a “dream” job or career looks like.
- From that brainstorm, have the participant research and list people who have that desired job or career.
- The participant should contact these individuals to ask for an informational interview and review the worksheet before the interview.

Activity:

- Once you meet with your participant, start by asking them how their informational interview went. Who was it with? What did the participant learn? How does the participant feel after the interview?
- Based on what the participant learned from the informational interview, create a road map for that ideal career together. How can the participant reach that end career goal or job? To create this map, have participants define the skills they need to learn, the experience they need to have, or any additional resources, time, or goals involved in the process. Make sure this career roadmap includes small, actionable steps along the way.
- Explain to the participant that this process will take time, but will help the goal of advancing a dream career!

CONCLUSION

Congratulations on organizing a community activity focused on youth professional development! Remember that after your activity concludes, you can follow up with these participants or hold other activities with more youth. Visit yali.state.gov/youth for more resources on youth professional development.