



Strategic Résumés
**Résumé Preparation
& Job Search Skills
E-Zine**

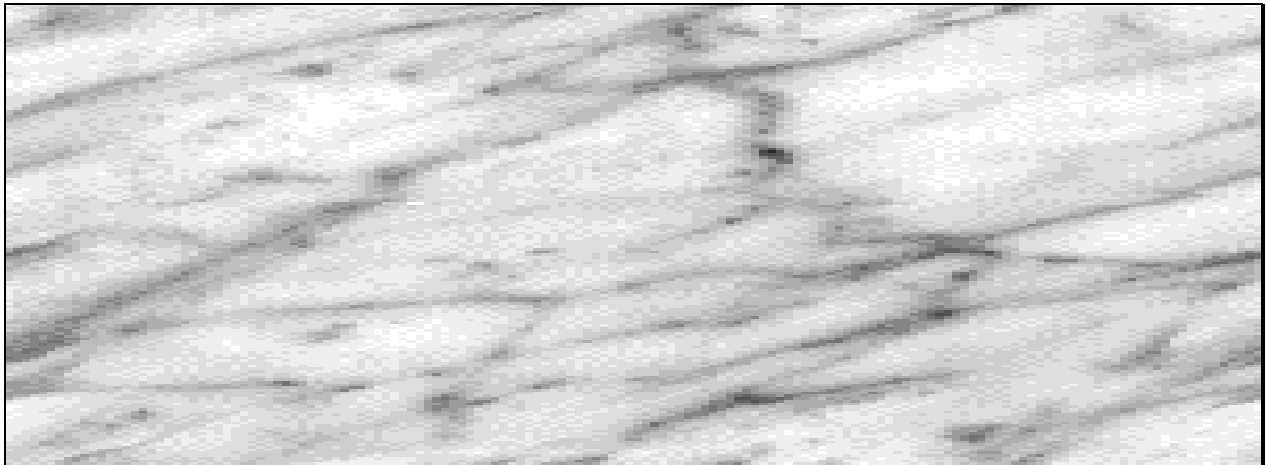


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Introduction

As a résumé and career document services provider, we see résumés and jobseekers every day. We have helped thousands of individuals to conduct their job search strategy, improve their résumés, and enhance their marketability. In this Strategic Résumés E-Zine, you will find tools to add to your arsenal... the latest in up-to-the-minute trends, breakthroughs, and state-of-the-art practices that are being used by job candidates nationwide to successfully conduct winning job searches. Just as the technology of 5-10 years ago is virtually obsolete, so too are the job search tactics of the past. The days of simply filling out an application, or submitting a sketchy, overly brief résumé, and waiting for the phone to ring are gone for good! Yet, we continue to see job search "experts" advising people to follow the same outdated and simplistic advice that was given decades ago.

In this workbook, we will explore a wide variety of issues surrounding the job search process, résumé preparation, interviewing, and getting the best return on your time and resources in landing a new job or promotion.

The author of this workbook is a Certified Résumé Writer (PRWRA) and human resource professional with over 25 years of direct experience in recruitment and hiring, career awareness workshop facilitation at the local, state, and federal levels, résumé writing and preparation, and personnel management.



Overcoming the Odds

Imagine that there are 100 job seekers with roughly the same basic credentials that you possess. At least 70% of them won't have a neatly formatted, concisely written résumé, so

you'll have only 30 other candidates to prevail over. 10% won't seriously network all of their friends and associates, and another 10% are not likely to follow

up after distributing their résumés. Now there are only 10 candidates left with your basic credentials looking for the same positions you are.

How many of those final 10 job seekers will get and use the names of the secretaries and assistants to the decision maker? How many will utilize polite persistence to keep checking back, week after week? And finally, how many will send thank you letters after interviews? When you approach your job search in this way, the odds of landing an interview and a significant job offer become significantly better.

The Modern History of Résumés



The résumé field has changed radically in the past four decades.

The following is a synopsis and timeline of some of those changes, along with added notes.

As recently as the 1960s, résumés were primarily utilized by executives, senior managers, engineers, and other professionals. Advertisements in the classified "Help Wanted" sections rarely requested résumés, and instead, generally required simply obtaining and filling out detailed applications.

Résumé preparation firms were virtually non-existent then, and these professionals (or more often, their secretaries) often typed out long, detailed accounts of both professional and personal accomplishments, duties, hobbies, physical data, health, and interests. Five-page and longer résumés were not uncommon, which eventually gave rise to the idea that résumés should be shortened whenever possible.

By the 1970s, résumés were beginning to be used by mid-level managers, outside sales professionals, and others. The first résumé preparation firms began to crop up, and the proliferation of résumés written by friends, relatives, and co-workers rose dramatically, as well. Although the length of these résumés shortened, usually from one to three pages, the quality of the résumés actually diminished, with résumés taking on a tarnished reputation for exaggerated or misleading information, and poorly worded résumés with typos and mistakes throughout were common.

By the mid-1980s and into the beginning of the 1990s, résumés had made a strong comeback in credibility, and the length of résumés decreased to an almost universally mandatory one-page length. Even higher level employees with exceptional credentials, accomplishments, and educational achievements were urged to "keep it to one page." By this time, résumés were becoming increasingly mandatory for a wider range of job vacancies.

Somewhere during the mid to late '90s, concurrently with the downsizing of most larger corporations, HR and personnel departments underwent drastic cuts in staffing. The days of accepting shortened, abbreviated résumés for most mid-level, professional, and senior positions, and filling in the gaps during "cattle-call" interviews, began to disappear.

Since the average job interview length is 45-90 minutes, allowing, at most, only 5-6 interviews per interviewer each day, hiring officers simply did not have the time to call in all of those candidates who were either marginally qualified or who did not sufficiently state their full qualifications. Résumé preparation firms and perceptive applicants then began to shift strategies quickly, opting for more detailed résumés of two to three pages in an easy-to-read, accomplishment-based format.

With the advent of Internet job posting, digitally scanned résumés, and emailing of résumés, the use of text or digital résumés emerged. While these digital résumés, with no visual formatting, are ideal for some purposes, a well-formatted, more visually-pleasing version is generally submitted for most uses.



The state-of-the-art résumés now used by most successful jobseekers since 2000 feature one to three-page résumés with numerically-specific job descriptions, detailed

accomplishments for each position, and creative formatting to highlight the most favorable information.

Why You Need a Résumé



The concept that perpetual job-hoppers account for most of the résumé activity is not based on currently available employment and demographic trends. On the contrary, it is becoming more and more prevalent and recommended that everyone have "*a current, updated copy*" of their résumé available at all times for a variety of business, promotional, employment, or other opportunities which may arise from time to time.

The current résumé scene reveals that a vast majority of professional, technical, administrative, sales, academic, medical, engineering, and even most blue collar and entry-level positions are now requiring a résumé prior to or in addition to a job application.



In addition, law schools, medical schools, graduate schools, alumni associations, volunteer programs, PR firms, award ceremonies, banks, small business loan applications, and a variety of non-traditional venues are also requiring résumés.

How to “Build” a Marketable Background



Simply writing or composing a résumé is the arduous process of documenting your years of experience and training into an attractive, easily readable, and hopefully motivational document that will inspire employers to offer you an interview. The real work, however, comes in the actual life experiences, training, and skills you are able to acquire that actually make up your résumé.

Throughout your education and career, you will be able, if you are resourceful and dedicated, to find many ways to “build” your résumé. The most often cited example is volunteer work. A young person who graduates from a medical program will be much more employable if he or she has also volunteered at a local hospital prior to graduation.

For students, internships, whether paid or volunteer, are often the deciding factor in determining which newly-graduated applicants will be hired. Volunteering to help a professor with a research project, keeping a list of papers written, maintaining a respectable GPA, joining and serving in school organizations, and other leadership activities are also immensely persuasive to personnel directors.

Even for non-students and seasoned career applicants, those who can show job-related volunteerism, additional training courses, community service, or other non-employment experience are generally given higher consideration. Examples include attending trade shows, seminars, or conferences, and volunteering at a business related to the field you are pursuing.

In fact, more and more teens are now beginning the process of “building” their résumés, and many high schools are now conducting career preparation and résumé development courses. In these courses, students are encouraged to begin the process of looking at a wide range of activities as helpful in building their résumés. Examples include youth jobs such as grass-cutting, child care, or caring for neighbors’ pets, joining clubs and youth church groups, community volunteerism, visiting museums, attending various events, and enrolling in special youth leadership programs.

When applying for or deciding to accept a particular job, the decision-making process should be guided by more than the salary, working conditions, benefits, or similar considerations. Since the average career now will likely consist of 10 or more jobs over a 40 year period, the primary consideration in taking or seeking a position, assuming it meets your basic salary requirements, should be what it will do for you developmentally.

The first consideration is, “How will it look on my résumé?” For example, if you really are looking for a corporate management position, accepting an interim position as manager of “Mike’s Lounge” may not be wise, despite the pay. You would be far better off accepting a lesser position, if you can afford it, with a company offering promotional opportunities. Within a year or two, you should be able, through volunteer activities within the company and elsewhere, to demonstrate your managerial abilities and become highly promotable.

For example, one corporate employee in a lower-paid position volunteered to help coordinate the company’s United Way campaign and was extremely successful in increasing donations. Her efforts paid off in being selected for the next management trainee slot, since she had demonstrated leadership, teamwork, and enthusiasm in a highly visible way.



Employers have demonstrated time and again that they want to hire and will give preference to “doers” and those with the extra energy and initiative to reach beyond the normal, expected, and predictable routes of education, experience, and training. Examples abound of individuals who have landed reporting jobs at newspapers through volunteerism, taking time to cover the Friday night football games on a volunteer basis, offering to serve as weekend unpaid helper in the editorial room, or any number of other ways of “opening the door.” Of course, a degree in Journalism is more frequently mandatory, but as we all know, even a degree in a particular specialty or field won’t guarantee a meaningful or developmental position in that field.

The Basic Types of Résumés



It is helpful to remember that there are four essential résumé types:

- **Chronological**
This is the most basic type of résumé composition, simply listing your employment

positions in chronological order, most recent first. This type of résumé is considered too simple to provide the leverage you will need in a competitive selection process.

- **Functional**

Functional résumés do not highlight the chronological nature of your career, but instead focus on broad areas of skill and competence. They are most often used by people with serious gaps in their employment history, or the need to stress capabilities as opposed to a stable job history. While functional résumés were popular in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s, they are considered too vague, evasive, and verbose by today’s HR departments, who are eager for specifics and thorough documentation of your job history.

- **Future Résumé**

Students and those with little actual job experience often require a “future” résumé which emphasizes their education, training, and internships.

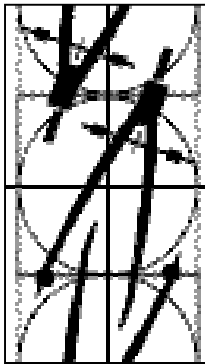
- **Combination / Accomplishment-Based**

This format is definitely the most effective for today’s professionals, and has become the accepted standard for Fortune 500 companies, as well as rapidly growing dot coms and high-tech firms. This is the type of résumé Strategic Résumés® writes for its customers. It combines the traditional chronological listings and job descriptions in combination with a no-fluff, detailed summary stating major qualifications, as well as a detailed documentation of specific accomplishments, assigned projects, numeric achievements, and any recognition received for each position.

Education, even if attained some years previously, is given more comprehensive treatment, as opposed to a simple statement of degree. Employees want to know if you are the cream of the crop; what you accomplished in college, however long ago, helps to paint that picture.

What is a Curriculum Vitae?

The term Curriculum Vitae is sometimes used interchangeably with the term résumé, but in common usage there are differences. To begin with, Europeans and individuals from other countries refer to résumés as Curriculum Vitae, or for short, CVs. The European and international approach to CVs is quite a bit different than in the U.S.



For example, since many of those countries do not have the same discrimination laws and other regulations that we have in the U.S., they tend to put in much more personal data, such as age, gender, physical characteristics, etc. Also, CVs in other countries are often much longer than

American résumés, with far more detail provided, included addresses of firms, names and telephone contact information for supervisors, and the like.

Also, CVs are used in the U.S., primarily for physicians, academicians, and performers. These CVs are also often longer than traditional two or three page résumés, but not with the type of detail supplied in European CVs.

Instead, CVs for doctors and professors in the U.S. will contain long lists of credentials, certifications, institutions, conferences, publications, and other pertinent accomplishments, with very little detail or explanation. Performers will, of course, provide lists of performances, venues, lead roles, and other credits. Actors, as opposed to most anyone else, can put their physical characteristics at the very top of their CV, as this is considered essential to their careers, and is not considered discriminatory.

Résumé Tips / What Works



- *Showing your accomplishments for each job description*
- *Your Pager and/or Cell Phone numbers included for quick contact*
- *Putting your e-mail, and/or web address on the résumé*
- *Two pages if you have at least three years experience*
- *Referring to your positive job evaluations*
- *Highlighting your special projects and assignments*
- *Numerically specific documentation, even if you need to estimate*
- *Using a summary of your qualifications*
- *Documenting seminars and workshops you've attended*

- *Powerful, attention-getting wording*
 - *Volunteer activities and memberships*
 - *Short, dynamic cover letters personalized for each job*
 - *Separate reference sheet and salary history when requested*
 - *Thank you letter immediately after your interview*
 - *Customizing your 'objective' for each position*
 - *Highlighting your computer and technical skills*
 - *Listing favorable details about your education*
 - *Creatively presenting entrepreneurial activities*
-

Résumé Pitfalls / What Doesn't Work

- *Poor quality computer printing or typewriting*
 - *Showing only your job descriptions without accomplishments*
 - *One-page, brief résumés for people with considerable experience*
 - *Using small font-size and abbreviated descriptions to fit into one page*
 - *Résumés without cover letters*
 - *Not sending a thank you letter immediately after your interview*
 - *Stating that you possess a degree with no added details*
 - *Listing hobbies, interests, and personal data*
 - *Repetitive wording and use of poor grammar*
 - *Typos, misspellings, and incorrect punctuation*
 - *Unexplained gaps in dates of employment*
 - *Placing references directly in the résumé*
 - *Company addresses, supervisor names, or phone numbers on résumé*
 - *Courier font, unusual fonts, 'fancy' formatting*
 - *Explanations of 'reasons for leaving' previous positions*
 - *Lying, exaggerating, or misrepresenting your credentials and accomplishments*
-



Length of Résumé / How Long or Short?

When most of us got out of school, we were told in no uncertain terms to ‘keep the résumé to one page’ at all costs. While that may have been the case in the ‘80s and ‘90s, brief résumés are simply no longer effective in today’s increasingly competitive job market.

Companies that once insisted on short résumés to be followed up by a “first-step” interview to get more information cannot now afford such a lengthy, time-consuming process. The days of going to a “cattle call” with dozens and dozens of candidates for only a couple of openings are gone.

Up-to-date career professionals know that the résumé has now taken the place of the initial interview, and only those with significant qualifications and strong résumés are even invited to interview. As a result, more, not less, information is now needed on the résumé, and the past insistence on short résumés has now given way to more the in-depth, two-page résumés for most mid-level and professional positions.

True, it does take an additional minute or so for an HR professional to review the second page of a résumé... but that extra minute is seen as far more helpful than scheduling a questionable candidate for a personal interview.

Applicants submitting résumés which don’t state detailed qualifications, specific accomplishments, skills, and abilities in an easy-to-read, professional format, are now being routinely passed over for consideration.

Honesty in Your Résumé

Every so often, one can read a news article about a particular person, usually a professional, who has been fired due to misrepresentation on their original application or résumé. Usually, this is in connection with some other impropriety or misconduct on the part of the person, and their past record becomes an object of attention.

Needless to say, dishonesty in a résumé is grounds for termination. For example, stating that you

possess a degree that you never completed, stating that you worked at a company you didn’t, stating that you worked there for a longer period of time, stating that you held a different title or level, stating that you belonged to organizations or associations you didn’t, or any other material misrepresentations of fact.



Exaggeration, although not advisable, is in a different category, but should also be avoided. Employers are not looking for unrealistic qualifications, but they are looking for honesty. After all, if you cannot be trusted to provide accurate information about

your past, how can you be trusted with their business, money, or customers?

There are no hard and fast guidelines as to the many gray areas that go into making a job-winning résumé, but a combination of honesty and assertiveness will work the best. Your résumé is in fact a marketing tool, not a dossier. You can consider that your résumé is similar in some ways to job ads, in which employers extol the virtues of working with their companies. They will likely tout the excellent benefits, great working conditions, competitive salary, etc., etc. Of course, they don’t tell you anything even slightly negative.



Gaps in Your Job History

In the past, résumés were written showing the exact months and years of each position. Currently, it is commonplace and standard to show only the years of employment. This change definitely works to your benefit for short periods of unemployment, which, if under a year, often do not even show on your résumé.

This is entirely understandable when you consider that today's job market is extremely volatile, and even the most loyal and best-intentioned employees find themselves out of work from time to time. Short gaps in job history are not the barriers that they were during the past.

Another technique which can be helpful when there are unavoidable gaps in your job history, is to utilize entrepreneurial positions to cover those periods. An example would be Jobseeker A who was laid off from his/her job in 1999. However, we discover that (s)he had a side business of tax preparation and bookkeeping which adequately shows activity from 1999 to present.

Filling Out Job Applications



Filling out job applications is definitely a chore. Some of the newer applications are less onerous, but many still require minute detail that tests your powers of recollection or ability to document.

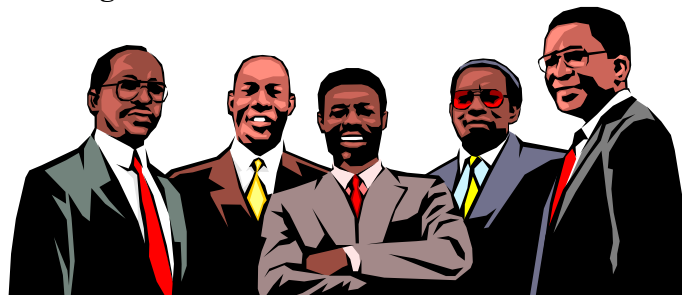
The first difference between résumés and job applications is that job applications invariably require you to fill in, not only the years, but the months of employment for each position. Recalling which month you started or left a job 12 years ago is often nearly impossible.

The best recommendation is to honestly guess or estimate. Unless you are applying to work for the FBI, it's not really a major deal (if it's the FBI, they will conduct a background investigation anyway). If you can remember that it was in the Fall, you may put down September or October, for example.

Some applications will request that you state the "reason for leaving" each job (never put this in your résumé!). It is generally advised to put a positive reason, when possible. For example, it may have been that you had a personality conflict with the manager. This is no crime, and it can occur quite commonly to executives, athletes, professionals, or anyone. The point is, however, that it sounds negative. It would be much better to state, "Left for better opportunity with greater challenges at another firm," which is likely to be true in any event.

Since applications are generally hand-lettered by you, as opposed to a computer-generated formatted résumé, it pays to write neatly and legibly, as messy writing will reflect poorly on your abilities. Where possible, keep a copy or ask for a copy (and offer to pay a reasonable copy fee) so that you can refer to the exact content you put in the application, and so that you will have a record to use for future applications.

Tooting Your Own Horn



Jobseekers often sell themselves short by being too restrictive on highlighting their accomplishments and experience. For some, it is simply a matter of not wanting to boast or brag.

While boasting is certainly unbecoming in many social situations, your résumé is the one exception. For example, while one jobseeker will not mention serving as Acting Manager because "it was only for 6 weeks," and "it really wasn't my job," another will declare that (s)he was Acting Director of Operations due to filling in for an occasional day as needed.

Your résumé is the one place prior to an interview offer that you get the opportunity to sell yourself. Employers want confident employees. They want employees with high self-esteem who value themselves and their work. If you don't sound positive about your accomplishments and abilities, don't expect someone else to.

Cookie Cutter Résumés & Templates



There are dozens of résumé templates and books filled with résumé samples on the market. These software templates can be very helpful and give you ideas, but most people who use them either end up disillusioned, or

realize that they create résumés that produce very little in the way of results.

Another problem with many of them is that they are incompatible with Microsoft Word, a very important factor when you consider how many résumés are e-mailed these days. Since your background and experiences are different from others, it is difficult to imagine a template that would make sense for everyone. Résumé templates often make their user's résumés look identical, which is exactly the opposite of what you want to make your résumé stand out.

Using Résumé Guides & Books

Most local bookstores have a large variety of résumé guides and career books, and a bookseller like Barnes & Noble will likely have a whole shelf filled with them. There are 2 primary problems with these books. First, they quite often disagree with each other. One book will emphatically state that a résumé should or should not include this or that, while another will state just the opposite.



Another problem with résumé guides and books is that, by the time they come into print, they can be out of date. The emergence of new trends and strategies in employment can occur

within 6 months to 2 years, while it often takes that same amount of time to get a book to press. When you read a book which says it was published in 1999 or 2000, you may be getting information that is already 2 to 3 years old.

However, as is the case with résumé templates, these books and guides can be helpful as one source of ideas, suggestions, and information.

Using Résumé Writing Services

There are basically 2 types of résumé services, the first being simply résumé typists who take your words and information and input it into a résumé style format. Some of these will change a word or two here or there, correct spelling, or add some simple wording as needed, but in general do little more than perform a secretarial service.



The other type is the full-service résumé writing firm which works not only from notes or written information provided by the client, but additionally conducts an interview to draw out important information. These writers then take the materials and interview notes, as well as data stored in their computer systems on each field, and develop a

truly creative résumé. When done correctly by highly qualified writers, this process can often result in the best possible document for a jobseeker.

For this reason, even among well-educated and highly literate professionals, many insist on using a full-service résumé service. This is likely due to the desire to delegate, a quality extremely important to managers and increasingly required in today's specialized world. It stands to reason that a résumé writer who composes only résumés day in and day out should be better at it than most anyone else, assuming of course, that (s)he is qualified and dedicated to begin with.

However, surveys of résumé writing services have shown that many do not deliver in terms of quality, creativity, customer service, or value, so it is very important to interview them carefully and request references.

Buzzwords, Nouns & Verbs

The rage for résumés in the '80s and mid-'90s was using "power words" or "buzzwords" in your résumé. Lists were provided urging you to use powerful words, usually verbs like *managed*, *directed*, *surpassed*, *achieved*, *improved*, *enhanced*, and the like. These are obviously positive and helpful words, and they do help to put the emphasis on actions and accomplishments, as opposed to simple descriptions of duties and responsibilities.

Then came the late '90s and the new millennium, with a growing emphasis on scannable and digitally-read résumés. It was learned that, when a manager, recruiter, or HR officer needed to find candidates with specific skills, they would conduct targeted database searches looking for the precise skills they required.

For example, a search for an HR specialist might look for *HRIS* or *labor cost control*, an IT position might search for *TCP/IP* or *C++* or *Java*, and a sales rep search might look for *territory* or *client relations*. The point is that all of those terms are nouns. So now, nouns are the latest fad in résumés. Of course, it would be virtually impossible to create a résumé without both verbs and nouns, but at least now you see the rationale behind the suggestions.

Résumé Formatting Tips

Résumé formatting should be neat, crisp, clean, and business-like, avoiding fancy frills, cute graphics, flowery fonts or flourishes, and confusing layouts. A basic typeface, such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Garamond is preferable. Courier typeface, while basic, is now seen as a bit old-fashioned. A size of 11 or 12-point font is recommended, with 10-point font used only when absolutely necessary, as it is somewhat small and harder to read.



Bullets, italics, lines, indenting, occasional use of bold typeface, and other normal formatting techniques are necessary to make the information in the

résumé stand out and easier to read. It is important to remember that HR staff usually do not read a résumé the way one reads an article. Normally, they scan

through it visually, focusing in on those areas they are most interested in or that jump out. Generally, the 2-page format is the most accepted for the majority of mid-level, professional, sales, medical, technical, or administrative positions. The full contact information (name, address, phone and cell numbers, and e-mail address) should be on the top of the first page. The second page does not require all of the contact information, but the name and an indication that it is page 2 are needed.

Normally, an objective is inserted just below the contact information, followed by a *Summary of Qualifications*.

The education section is generally placed toward the end of the résumé, unless the candidate is a recent graduate. A listing of seminars, training sessions, workshops, certificates, continuing education units, etc. can be in a separate section, or placed in a subsection under the education heading, a technique that is particularly helpful when the candidate has less than impressive educational credentials. Community activities, voluntarism, professional associations, etc. can be in a separate section. It is customary and appropriate to state "*References Available Upon Request*" at the end of the résumé.

Typos & Errors



The résumé you present to a prospective employer is a direct reflection upon you. Although mistakes can and do happen, and even though some surveys of HR

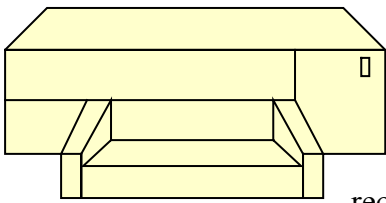
professionals show that one or two typos are not enough to result in a résumé being disregarded, you definitely want to prevent them at all costs.

When it comes to reviewing a document for errors or typos, it is well-established that the person who typed it is the least likely to catch the errors. It is always best to have a 'fresh pair of eyes' review the résumé for any mistakes. This also applies to professional typists or résumé writers, as well. Even though they may be good at what they do and very knowledgeable, it is your résumé and, in the final analysis, your responsibility to ensure that there are no mistakes.

It is also important to remember that spellchecking software is good, but not perfect. If your résumé or cover letter states that you will “purse” advanced training or whatever, when you meant “pursue” advanced training, the spellchecker will see both words as correct.

Printing Your Résumé

Your résumé, at some point, will probably need to be printed. Only a few people, usually high tech types, manage to exclusively submit their résumés electronically and never need to generate a printed copy.

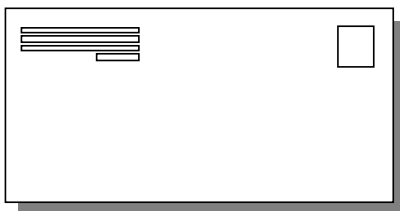


The margins should generally be no less than .4”-.5”, or whatever other setting your printer requires. Sticking to the

basic fonts discussed earlier will prevent font printing problems. If your printer is not of high quality or what is known as “letter quality,” you should put it on a disk and take it to a copy center and have it printed by laser printer. Then you will have a good master copy suitable for faxing or transferring to résumé stock paper.

The type of paper you will use to print your résumé should be résumé stock, which is slightly thicker than copy paper. Stick with light beige or light gray; both are acceptable corporate colors. Other colors are distracting and may be seen as unprofessional. White is usually discouraged because it blends in too easily with other paperwork on a manager’s desk and appears unimpressive.

Cover Letters



Like a powerful résumé and a good business suit, the cover letter is fast becoming indispensable in

the job search. Perhaps no other single question is heard so frequently by career professionals... “Do I need a cover letter?”

The answer is a resounding Yes! A cover letter is essentially a brief letter accompanying your résumé which asks prospective employers to take their valuable time to read your résumé.

Your cover letter should match your résumé in format. It should be neither too short (*one paragraph*) or too long (*most all of a page or more than a page*). Your cover letter should specify the date, the name, title, company, department, and address of the individual for whom it is intended.

- 1) **KEEP IT SIMPLE...** *Don’t get too wordy. Start by thanking the individual for taking the time to read your letter and review your résumé. Next, recap a few brief points about yourself. Remember, they can get more information from the résumé.*
- 2) **CLOSING THE COVER LETTER...** *Just as sales reps use the term ‘close’ to mean the final act of making a sale, you should use the last few lines of the cover letter to convince the employer to meet with you. State that you would like to arrange a meeting at a convenient time, and that you will follow up and contact the individual for a reply. And finally, perhaps as a P.S. at the bottom, try a testimonial or accomplishment from your previous employment, such as, “I received three consecutive awards for outstanding performance in my most recent position with Johnson & Associates.”*
- 3) **FOLLOW UP...** *A cover letter is often only as effective as the follow-up you conduct. Having taken the time to compose and send a personalized cover letter, you have every right to telephone and ask for some answer on your request for an appointment. While you may not land an interview in every case, you’ve set the stage to deserve a response.*

Most employers read the cover letter AFTER they have checked out the résumé. Once they’ve given your résumé a once-over, they then actually read it as they spot sections which interest them.

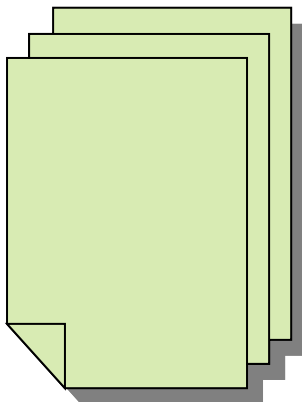
Keep in mind, the cover letter is essentially your way of thanking the reader for his/her time, stating your value to the prospective employer based upon your knowledge of the company’s needs, and setting the stage for following up to arrange an interview. Accomplish those goals, and you’ve covered it all!

After arranging the interview, particularly if it is several days or even weeks away, a very brief two line confirmation note or letter is a great idea. Thank the employer for granting the interview and state that you are looking forward to the meeting.

Last but not least, if your cover letter and confirmation letter are successful, the thank you letter after the interview is particularly helpful in boosting your stock. Incidentally, thank you letters are always more effective when you thank the interviewer for their interview style and include something personal (*in good taste*) gleaned from the interview.

Scannable Résumés

You may have heard recently that résumés should be in scannable format. The reason for this is that some major corporations, primarily large defense contractors and Fortune 500 companies, are utilizing computers to initially scan and sort résumés in a digital database.



Companies that use scanning software and programs for résumés (Résumix, etc.) take the hard paper copies, or in some cases, e-mailed résumé files, and scan them into their database for departmental hiring purposes. OCR, or Optical Character Recognition

software, deciphers the actual words in your résumé so that they are then available in a searchable database. A manager in the IT department could then enter the word “Java” into his/her search and bring up a list of all résumés in the database with that word. Of course, there could be some search results that come up with a candidate that worked at Joe’s Java Café, but most would probably refer to Java programming.

Needless to say, this type of database approach is far more efficient for very large corporations than typical manual filing and handling methods. However, at this point, those companies requesting or even using scannable résumés are in a distinct minority.

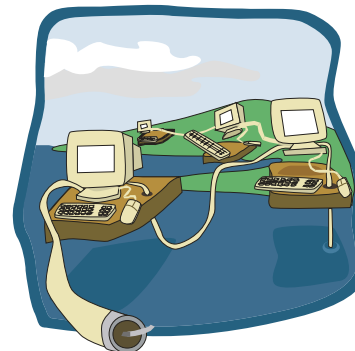
Good résumé scanning software can handle most résumés with modern formats, but just to be careful, and to make it easier for the computer to digest the information in your résumé, most companies that request scannable résumés will issue a list of guidelines to make the résumés ‘scannable-friendly’.

Most of the scannable guidelines are basically the same. Margins should be at least 1” all around, the font should be basic (usually Courier, Times, or Arial), the font size should be 12, there should not be any bullets, italics, underlining or other lines, no formatting techniques or indenting should be used, and there should be a proliferation of keywords (more on keywords, nouns, verbs, etc. later).

In short, scannable résumés are UGLY! While you should always submit one when requested (perhaps along with a normal résumé), you should never present it as your primary résumé. If the scannable résumé falls into the hands of a manager who is not aware of the situation, they may well think that it is simply an ugly, boring, or poorly-crafted résumé. It would be like reading a magazine or product label in plain text.

Internet-Résumé Posting

Each day, literally thousands more American individuals and companies put their web pages online, and many more get internet access. Research, entertainment, communication, purchasing, and data transfers are but a few of the forces attracting people to web.



One of the fastest growing facets of the Internet, however is the Internet job search. First, we all know we live in an increasingly mobile society; and to the Word Wide Web, distance is *no problem!*

Second, the cost of recruiting and advertising for qualified job candidates has risen astronomically. A three inch ad in a metropolitan newspaper's classified section can cost over \$700 for one week! Third, in a world requiring greater and greater technical skills and communication abilities, the web is seen by many employers as an ideal place to find motivated, qualified people who are 'with it' in terms of today's changing technology. Finally, job seekers love the prospect of placing a résumé on-line, as opposed to sending it to a 'roundfile' post office box.

However, placing your résumé on the web requires a bit more than simple motivation. Your résumé must be first translated into the file format for each specific site, or typed, pasted, or input into each job board.

In general, you don't want to put all of your eggs into the internet basket. The web is growing by leaps and bounds day by day, but it's not the only strategy for circulating your résumé. However, with the rapid growth of digital world and relative economy of on-line advertising, your career search will almost certainly include the Internet.

Using the Internet for Job Searching



One of the fastest growing facets of the Internet, however is Internet job search and recruitment. Why? The cost of recruiting and advertising for qualified job candidates has risen astronomically. A 3-inch ad in a metropolitan newspaper's classified section can run over \$700 for one week! Also, in a world requiring greater and greater technical skills and communication abilities, the web is seen by many employers as an ideal place to find motivated, qualified people who are 'with it' in terms of today's changing technology.

However, placing your résumé on the Internet requires a bit more than simple motivation. Your résumé must either be 'cut and pasted' into a new for each site you visit, be attached by Microsoft Word, or be translated into the digital language of the web, HTML. Fortunately, there are new résumé distribution and posting programs now available that can save many hours of work for a reasonable price.

What to Do When You are Laid Off

The ideal situation when being laid off (if there can be such a thing), would be to get several months' notice and a healthy severance check. However, in today's increasingly volatile economy, the ideal is becoming less and less common.



Regardless of the amount of notice you get or the size of any severance you receive, you will want to act fast! Time is money, and every day you don't work is, in effect, spending money you don't have.

Strange as it may sound, you may actually want to approach your current employer... that's right, the company that is laying you off (if they are downsizing as opposed to shutting down all operations), and find out whether they may be interested in rehiring you on a part-time or temporary contract basis (without benefits, of course). You'd be surprised at how many people have eased their transition during a layoff in this way.

A very helpful strategy is to try to get an evening position at a restaurant or large bookseller or any other night position, even if it is low pay. That allows you to be available during daytime business hours to search for and interview for positions more suitable to your career and salary expectations, while supplementing your income through the transition. You should definitely check with the Employment Security department of your state to determine how that will affect your unemployment benefits, if you have filed for them.

Job Search Tips & Self-Marketing

A wise person once said, "If you think you don't like getting up to go to work, try getting up to go look for work!" While that may be a bit of an exaggeration, we all know that looking for a job rates pretty low in the "Top 10 Fun Things To Do List."



Here are 10 steps you can take to make your search far easier and much more productive.

STEP 1) *Get a really top-notch RÉSUMÉ that effectively markets your skills and experience. Just as companies have PR departments, politicians have speechwriters, authors have ghostwriters, ad agencies have copywriters, and news anchors have producers, you might be surprised at the numbers of successful job seekers that are getting professional help with their résumés in today's increasingly competitive job market.*

STEP 2) *Create a really great COVER LETTER... (more on this later). If you graduated magna cum laude from Yale, you may not need a cover letter, but most people will.*

STEP 3) *GET ORGANIZED! Use a simple notebook and record every scrap of information about your job search. Any way you want to organize it is good, for example, by company, by date, by contact, or whatever. Organized people accomplish more!*

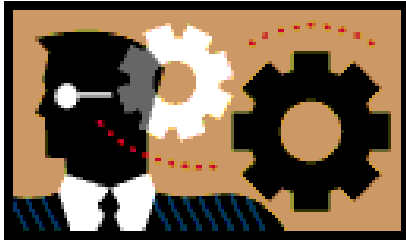
STEP 4) *Use the most important word you'll need to know... NETWORK! The classified ads, Internet job posting, job fairs, employment agencies, and the LAWWORKS.net posting service are all good places to start, but, by all means, ask your friends, your family, and practically everyone else you meet to keep an eye out for a job for you. It really helps!*

STEP 5) *HUMANIZE your job search! This is often the single most overlooked aspect of the job hunting process. Remember the names of everyone you contact. When you call or visit a prospective employer, get the names of secretaries and assistants, notice the pictures of their kids on their desks, ask how their day is going, and remember, they're important too!*

STEP 6) *Use POLITE PERSISTENCE and follow up! People who politely and courteously follow up on all of their contacts score points and greatly increase their chances. It is simply amazing how many job seekers end their contact with a prospective employer when told "we'll contact you in the future," or "we're not hiring at this moment," or "we'll keep your résumé on file," or "you can expect to hear from us." The fact is that many employers are simply too overwhelmed to review each and every*

candidate in a methodical manner and the squeaky wheel often gets the grease.





STEP 7) KEEP YOUR JOB OR GET A JOB! While you're looking for the career of your dreams, keep your present position or, if unemployed, take any reasonable position you can. Employers prefer to hire people who are already working. If you're a student, take an internship, even if it's not paid. If you're working a dead-end job, take a part-time or volunteer position in a field you're interested in.

STEP 8) RESEARCH your job market! Learn everything you can about the company and field you're interested in. Go to the library, surf the net, or better yet, contact someone on the 'inside' and ask for a few minutes to pick their brain. People love to give advice, and it just might help a bit with your networking.

STEP 9) DRESS FOR SUCCESS! People who dress sharply and appropriately get far better results than those who do not prioritize their appearance. Take a look around you at the next job fair and you will be amazed at how poorly many are dressed, often the same individuals who claim that, "job fairs don't really work." When dressing, it's best to be conservative.

STEP 10) CONFIDENCE is contagious. Enthusiasm and a cheerful attitude will almost certainly improve your prospects.



By following the 10 steps we've listed, you will have demonstrated the very characteristics that will make you a great employee for any organization.

Dress for Success



There are hundreds of books and articles urging jobseekers to dress for success, so there must be something to it. By the way, it also applies to situations in which you working toward a promotion, about to be laid off, or simply testing the water. Your co-workers, customers, and colleagues will all look more positively and favorably upon you if you maintain a crisp, well-dressed, and well-groomed appearance.



The standard rule for job interviews is to dress one level above the attire you would be required to wear if actually hired. You should utilize this rule flexibly and use common sense. Shoes should be shined and do not wear anything particularly striking that draws attention away from you, including excessive colognes or perfumes.

Student Job Search Tips before Graduation



- 1) **GRADES...** Yes, they are very important. Many college students 'party' for their first years only to wake up with a few semesters remaining to get their GPA up to a respectable level.
- 2) **INTERNSHIPS...** Actually, a recent survey of Personnel Directors showed internship experience to be just as important as grades. Your college placement office has long lists of companies offering summer internships, and during the year there are plenty of companies ready to take on college students in one capacity or another. Of course, the internships at well-known companies or those that pay well are highly competitive, but you should be able to win a position with your new résumé and the interview techniques you're now learning.
- 3) **PART-TIME JOBS...** Simply documenting that you've worked steadily while in college is a big plus to employers. The most favorable experience would be jobs at companies related to your intended field, but even a restaurant or retail position shows your responsibility.
- 4) **PROJECTS...** Try to sign up for classes with projects, research papers, or other opportunities to show creativity and professionalism. The notations "Conducted a detailed study on corporate behavior in the Apple Computer Company" or "Received a grade of 'A' for a major research paper on underserved market segments" are impressive on your résumé.

- 5) **ACTIVITIES...** Volunteer activities for Big Brothers / Big Sisters, holding an officer position in the Student Marketing Association, serving as dorm representative, significant fraternity / sorority activities, team sports, or participation in other activities may well help tip the balance in your favor for today's employers, who are looking for go-getters.

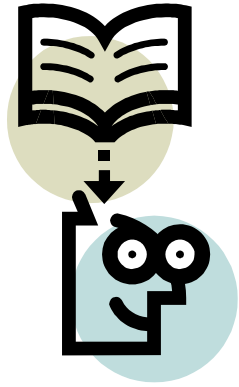
Student Job Search Tips after Graduation

- 1) **START EARLY...** Start your job search months before graduation. Follow as many of the previous five steps as possible while you're in school. Have your résumé completed, along with a good cover letter.
- 2) **ATTEND JOB FAIRS...** While you may or may not land a job at the school job fair, it's invaluable for preparing for the road ahead! You'll get great practice in the areas of interviewing, presenting your résumé, dressing effectively, networking, and learning more about the job market.
- 3) **GET A JOB...** If your dream job doesn't appear immediately, try to take a job which doesn't interfere with your job search and helps pay the bills. An evening restaurant or other position is perfect while you're looking. On the other hand, an entry-level day job in the type of company you're interested in is also a good bet.
- 4) **ASK FOR ADVICE...** Call professionals in the field you're interested in and explain that you are a recently-graduated student seeking advice. Try not to create the impression you are pressuring them for a position, just that you need guidance. People love to share their secrets and may even offer to refer you to a colleague.



Interviewing Techniques

Companies cannot any longer afford to waste time and expense interviewing those with questionable qualifications. The hints and tips we are presenting here, such as presenting a powerfully-written résumé, dressing well, being on time, and researching the company, are all vitally important in advertising the fact that you are the type of candidate they will likely be interested in hiring.

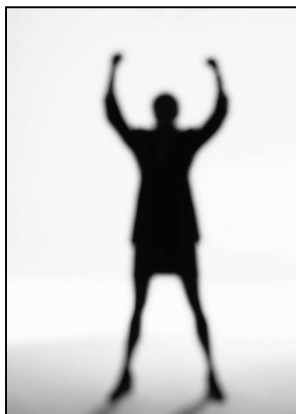


Also, you'll want to have ready various documents which could tip the scales in your favor, for example, a reference listing, a salary history (*only give if requested, they usually don't work in your favor*), samples of your work, projects, or portfolio (*if applicable*), letters of recommendation, your driving record (*if applicable*), college

transcripts (*if a recent grad*), and last, but not least, an extra copy or two of your résumé.

These documents may not be needed, but you'll be totally prepared if you have them. You'll also appear particularly organized when you make a notation in your appointment book of any details you were given by the interviewer.

Whether it's in your interview or your résumé, you want to be honest and refrain from any misrepresentations. Put your best foot forward, don't volunteer negative information, and above all, highlight what you can do for the company, not what the company can do for you!



Interview DOs

- ❑ *Arrive 15 minutes early for the interview, well-dressed, well-groomed, relaxed (if possible!), and prepared.*

- ❑ *Make cheerful small talk with secretaries and others (try to remember their names) to show you are interested in their work and their contributions to the company.*
- ❑ *Research the company in any way you can, the Internet, the library (ask the Business Reference Desk for suggestions), and by talking to employees or others.*
- ❑ *Look the interviewer(s) in the eye, thank him / her for the opportunity to present your qualifications, speak clearly, and maintain good posture.*
- ❑ *Be prepared to respond to questions with concrete examples of things you have done, projects you have completed, and improvements you have accomplished in past positions.*
- ❑ *Ask what specific plans the organization will have for the successful candidate for the immediate, near, and long term.*

Interview DON'Ts



- ❑ *Do not ramble or over-answer the questions, don't respond sarcastically or flippantly, and avoid humor in most cases, as it can be easily misinterpreted.*
- ❑ *Do not offer to research a matter you are not sure about. Simply acknowledge that it is a good question and give the best response you can.*
- ❑ *Do not refer to your job search or that you are exploring other opportunities and do not mention your salary requirements unless directly asked.*
- ❑ *Do not use any negative references about past jobs or positions. There is always a way to portray your past positively.*
- ❑ *Do not bring a briefcase full of information into the interview, unless specifically requested. It can always be supplied later.*

Sample Interview Questions & Answers



- 1) Q. *What are your short and long range goals?*
Tip *Be specific. For short range goals, be assumptive that you'll be hired and express a desire to rapidly learn new skills and quickly master your position. For long range goals, offer that you would like to help the company become more profitable, advance to higher positions, and help to motivate and train others.*
- 2) Q. *How would you describe yourself?*
Tip *Always refer to your record and how your superiors have described you, despite the exact wording of the question. Stress your dependability, achievement, and desire to get the job done, as opposed to vague or general pronouncements about your virtues. For example, you can begin your sentences like this, "In my current position as a _____, I assisted in a successful project to totally turn around the _____ department..." or "My manager stated on numerous occasions the she was impressed by my ability to..."*

- 3) Q. *Why did you choose this career or field?*
Tip *Emphasize the growth potential and challenges presented by the field. Show a bit of the knowledge you've gained from researching the subject. As always, it helps to be specific, "I believe that Financial Planning & Investments are fields which will continue to grow into the next century with the growing population of retirement-aged seniors."*
- 4) Q. *What are your strengths and weaknesses?*
Tip *Once again, use specifics from your past and state what your superiors and co-workers have to say about you. When it comes to weaknesses, NEVER volunteer negative information. Your weaknesses might be "I take too much personal responsibility at times for getting the job done when I should perhaps delegate to others..."*
- 5) Q. *Name your most important achievements?*
Tip *Be prepared. Memorize your most significant accomplishments and be ready to speak concisely and briefly about each one. Incidentally, if they aren't on your résumé, they should be! The more recent (past 1-4 years) the better. Emphasize that you are a team player, and that while you accomplished those items with a great deal of personal initiative, you also give credit to those you worked with or for, and that you functioned as an effective member of the team or organization.*
- 6) Q. *What motivates you?*
Tip *Satisfaction in a job well done, desiring to help customers, professional growth, and similar responses indicate that you will be an excellent employee.*
- 7) Q. *Why should we hire you?*
Tip *The answer is, because you will help the company grow, become more profitable, and increase responsiveness to customers and clients! Or, if it is a non-profit, because you can effectively advance the mission of the organization.*

- 8) Q. *How do you work under pressure?*
 Tip *Give some examples from your past, deadlines you have successfully met, projects with limited budgets you've completed, and the like. You could even say that since you prepare well ahead of time, working under pressure is much easier.*
- 9) Q. *Describe your performance in school?*
 Tip *If you had a 4.0 GPA and made the Dean's List every semester, by all means, highlight that. If your grades were so-so, or you didn't graduate, stress your positives. Examples include, "I worked full-time to fund 100% of my tuition," or "I was active in the Student Marketing Association" or "I participated in class projects studying current corporate practices."*
- 10) Q. *How have you dealt with major problems?*
 Tip *Make sure your example is job-related and that your approach was successful. "At my last job, we experienced severe staff reductions, so I completely reorganized our sales team (or database, or office procedures, or training manuals, etc), resulting in our best quarterly profits to date."*

Thank You Letters / Cards



One study showed that a candidate's chances of being selected for a second interview or for the position itself increases by up to 30% if the candidate sends a simple 'Thank You' letter or card to the interviewer with 48 hours of the interview.

The letter or card should be short, thanking the interviewer for his/her time in conducting the interview, for their interest, and for the style of interview, which "allowed me the opportunity to present my qualifications" or similar verbiage.

Ideally, it is good to mention something briefly about the actual interview, some small point that was addressed, or even something the interviewer mentioned, whether about a business or personal matter. For example, "I do hope that you had a good flight back to Chicago." Or, "I hope your daughter's soccer tournament turned out well." Or, "I was particularly pleased to hear that XYZ Company will be opening its new London offices this Spring." Or, "I was very excited to hear about all of the new XYZ products that are being unveiled for the Fall."

The standard suggestion has been to send a letter after the interview, which is fine. However, many candidates are now finding that they get an even better response with a simple Hallmark-type, simple Thank You card with their brief remarks inside. Apparently, the fact that a card comes in a non-business-style envelope, that it looks perhaps like an invitation, that it stands out from all of the business mail they receive every day, and that it shows a more personal touch than a formal letter, all combine to create a better result.

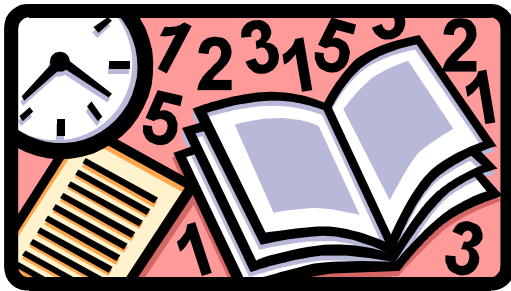
What All Employers Are Looking For

In today's downsized economy, employers no longer have the luxury of hiring an individual with uncertain abilities and attitude, assigning a 'babysitter' or mentor to hold their hand, and hoping that they will eventually prove able to excel in their position. The big fear is hiring a person who is hopelessly underqualified, cannot generate the necessary work, who really is only there 'for the paycheck' and wants to simply punch the timeclock.

What employers really want is someone who can hit the ground running, someone who will take extra initiative, someone who finds solutions instead of problems, someone who is enthusiastic and positive, and someone who will treat the business as if it were their own.

Your résumé, your interview, and everything that is presented to the prospective employer, should shout that you are essentially different from the other candidates in those respects. Simply listing duties and responsibilities only shows that you did what others did in order to simply keep the job.

Find out as much as you can about what the company does, what their problems have been, and what they are trying to accomplish; and direct your energies to convincing them that you are able to and want to do everything you can to help them to achieve their goals.



In addition, companies want people who are dependable, who show up on time, who don't call in sick with every sniffle, who work safely, and who realize that when they are absent, someone else must handle the responsibilities of the absent worker, or the company suffers.

The Résumé Objective

The résumé objective is designed to let the reader know the types of positions you may be willing to accept. In many cases, you will be submitting your résumé in direct response to an ad or other specific position, so, in a sense, the objective would seem to be superfluous. However, considering how many résumés companies receive, do not assume that everyone who handles it will be aware of the position to which you applied.

When writing an objective, you have to balance being too restrictive in the position you are seeking, and being too open-ended. If time and resources permit, you could ideally tailor each résumé objective to the specific position you are seeking. Even then however, there could be a situation in which your objective was for a certain position, and although that position is filled, another may be desirable.

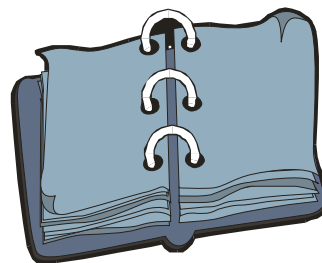
For some, the solution is to keep the position you are seeking somewhat open, but specifying the skills involved, for example, "Seeking a challenging position in which advanced accounting skills, experience in conducting audits, and extensive financial management training will be of value to a growing organization." This should allow you to be considered for a controller or other position in the event the CFO position is no longer available.

There was a trend toward the end of the 90s to dismiss objectives, stating that they were too vague to be useful, and that they were simply fluff. While that does seem to be true in some respects, there are other factors to consider before taking the giant step of eliminating the objective from your résumé.

First of all, a résumé without an objective somehow looks wrong, like something is missing. The résumé reviewer generally expects to see an objective, and if there is none, a void is created. Likewise, if a letter didn't end with "Sincerely," or another sign-off, it would look wrong despite the actual need for it.

Second, a survey of HR managers was conducted on this subject. Approximately one-half said that a résumé objective wasn't important. The clincher, however, is that the other half stated that, if a résumé didn't have an objective, they would likely disregard it. They said that their feeling was that if the applicant didn't take the time to indicate whether he or she wanted to be a janitor or CEO, they weren't going to research the matter to find out.

So, on balance, it is best to put an objective on your résumé and balance specificity and openness so as to direct the reader to the types of positions you are seeking, without eliminating yourself from consideration from other positions by being too specific.



The Résumé Summary of Qualifications

The most effective résumés, as discussed earlier, are the combination format résumés which include both a functional summary of skills and abilities and a detailed chronological listing of employment, complete with job descriptions, accomplishments, and special projects.



On the other hand, one-page entry-level résumés and CVs often do not require a summary of qualifications. In other résumés, the summary of qualifications may be eliminated due to lack of space,

particularly in cases where the résumé is already at two or three pages, and the résumé stands well without it.

However, if space permits, a summary of qualifications, usually one-half page or so, is an excellent addition to most résumés. It gives the reader a quick glance to size up your levels of expertise, experience, and skills.

The summary of qualifications generally appears on the first page after the objective, and is usually formatted in a bulleted list. Each bullet is composed of a statement showing the particular skills and level of expertise, with generalized examples. For example:

- ◆ *Human Resource experience includes recruitment, screening, hiring, interviewing, implementation of training programs, effective discipline, prevention of internal theft, coaching and motivation of staff, ensuring compliance with minority hiring regulations, safety and accident awareness, management development, and production of comprehensive employee rules and procedure manuals.*

Summaries should not include specific achievements or accomplishments, such as, “Increased sales by 34% during the 4th Quarter.” Specific

accomplishments belong with their respective position descriptions.

The Résumé Experience / Job History Section

Even though a candidate may have some low-level jobs, it is helpful to indicate on the résumé that they were valuable positions that provided important learning experiences, and that the applicant applied enthusiasm and a solid work ethic to each position.

If a job candidate doesn’t convey those points, the prospective employer will not think they were valuable. If the candidate uses skill in describing them, that enthusiasm will spill over to the reader of the résumé. You would be surprised how much of a difference this approach can make. It is often the case that an applicant with less experience or qualifications than another will get the interview simply by conveying enthusiasm and a desire to work hard.

For example, a server position at a restaurant could read, *“Served on the waitstaff of a casual dining restaurant establishment seating 45 guests, with responsibility for greeting and seating customers, memorizing daily specials, offering menu suggestions, coordinating with kitchen staff, and providing a high quality dining experience. Observed health and safety regulations, implemented restaurant policies, and consistently maintained clean dining and food prep areas. Received management compliments for increasing per check average, upselling appetizers, beverages, and desserts, volunteering to train new staff members, perfect attendance, and working longer shifts and days off when needed.”*



Other lower level positions, including clerical, blue collar, temporary jobs, and similar positions can be similarly depicted by describing the size or scope of the company, giving details of the job description, showing enthusiasm for your duties, and describing how the applicant did the job better than someone only interested in punching the time clock to get a paycheck.

The job descriptions on many résumés are often too limited and brief to be of help to a potential employer. Also, from a psychological standpoint, if an applicant doesn't appear to value previous positions by showcasing them appropriately, the reader will believe that they are not impressive. A good job description on a résumé contains a comprehensive rendition of the most important tasks performed, numeric specificity of various aspects of your job and company, special projects and events worked on, lists of major clients, the specialized equipment used, and achievement of goals and accomplishments.

The Résumé Education Section



Although a job candidate may have graduated from college many years ago, simply stating that he or she attended or graduated from a program often does not tell the prospective employer enough about the educational experience. Even if a few short blurbs were included as to GPA, etc., an extremely brief educational section does not have the psychological impact of the more developed education sections often used by successful candidates.

It is generally recommended to show the GPA, if above 3.0, to list the major and minor, if applicable, to show scholarships and awards, if any, to list the most relevant courses, to document any special projects or research papers, to highlight any clubs, sports teams, or extracurricular activities, and any similar areas that demonstrate the energy, commitment, and enthusiasm put into those important years. Employers correctly believe that those who did more than simply attend classes and take exams will be more likely to contribute as employees.

Miscellaneous Sections



Other résumé sections may include Computer Skills, Professional Affiliations, Certificates & Licensure, Professional Seminars & Workshops, Conferences Attended, Community Involvement, Publications & Articles, and many more.

Honors and awards received either on the job or during education have a far better impact when placed directly with the specific job or educational section, as opposed to placing them in their own separate section.

Personal & Professional References



The general rule on references is that they should be listed on a separate sheet, and only provided at the time of the interview, or earlier, if specifically requested.

This is the reason that most résumés end with, "References available upon request." It is believed that this practice came into existence as a backlash to the idea that candidates were getting interviews simply because of *who* they knew, as opposed to *what* they knew. Once the interview is granted based upon the qualifications in your résumé, references would then be acceptable as a follow-up step. Reference sheets should list the name, title, institution, address, phone, and e-mail (if possible). Employment and academic references are best, but even individuals who have stature in the community and can attest to your character are also helpful.