

DO'S & DON'TS

OF

Writing A Winning Resume

*"Why have I sent out so many resumes,
but still got no interview?"*

**This book helps you refine your resume
and land job interviews!**

- ❖ **Show Your Confidence**
- ❖ **Watch Your Attitude**
- ❖ **Don't Try too Hard**
- ❖ **No Dumb Mistakes**

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INTRODUCTION

Who Should Read This Book

If you have never written a resume before, do not read this book. This book is not to teach you how to write your first resume from scratch. You should go to library and look for a book titled “*How to Write a Resume*”. Once you have written your first resume and want to turn it into a winner, then come back and read this book.

This book is for those of you, busy job hunters who have sent out many copies of resume but haven’t got job interviews. The purpose of this book is to help you refine your resume and land job interviews.

How This Book Is Organized

Busy job hunters don’t want to waste a second reading what they already know. This book is a brief handbook, concise and right to the point just as a winning resume should be. I’m not going to teach you the facts, but to remind you of the facts, assuming that you understand them and need no further education on them.

- ❖ **Chapter 1 “Understanding The Resume”** tells the fundamental steps of writing a resume.
- ❖ **Chapter 2 – 7** covers the common mistakes job seekers make on their resumes, as well as advice on how you should avoid these mistakes.
- ❖ **Chapter 8 “The Right Resume Strategies”** reminds you of the wrong strategies and the right strategies of writing a winning resume.
- ❖ **Chapter 9 – 14** helps you refine your resume wording and structure and turn your resume into a winner.
- ❖ **Chapter 15 “Write A Perfect Cover Letter”** assists you to hurdle over the pitfalls of preparing a cover letter.
- ❖ **Chapter 16 “Do's and Don'ts”** is a summarized list you should check as you prepare a winning resume.

Chapter 1. Understanding the Resume

You probably have sent out many copies of your resume. You may wonder: “Why have I sent out so many resumes, but still got no interview?” Well, the reason is simple: your resume is no good! You need to fix it, polish it, and turn it into a winner.

Now you already have a resume in hand. This book is not to teach you how to write a resume from scratch. It helps you find the “bugs” in your resume, correct them, and turn your resume into a winner. To start, let’s consider these facts:

- ❖ A resume is not just a biographical work history. It is a highly effective marketing tool. Contrary to popular belief, resumes aren't like plastic widgets, in that they are all the same. Suppose ABC company is looking to hire an IT manager. A hundred accomplished IT professionals eagerly apply for the position. Submitting a generic resume or one similar to those of other applicants, is not going to help put you on top. Your resume needs to be custom-made and tailored for the job—just like you.
- ❖ The average amount of time an employer spends reviewing a resume, even when screening resumes for Chief Executive Officer, is only 20 seconds. Does this surprise you? Admit it, the personnel manager at WorldNet would rather browse Computer World, not your resume. Your resume must make a strong impression in a short amount of time. It needs to be an effective, easily read product brochure, the “product” being your experience, achievements, and abilities. Remember: out of 100 resumes, less than 10 percent will get a job interview.
- ❖ The goal of your resume is to get you an interview, not to be a chronology of your work history. To achieve this in today's competitive job market, it needs to be strong, clear, and focused. It should motivate employers to want to meet you and discuss employment possibilities, not be a file for future reference or meat for the paper shredder.

❖ Finally, your resume is an integral part of your total presentation. Think of it as “you” on paper. Even after the interviewing process, it continues on the job, arguing your case. In the final decision making process, employers review and evaluate all candidates. Your resume will be your last and most powerful advocate.

So how do you go about writing this interview winner? See if you have followed the following five general steps when you were writing your resume.

Step One

First, determine the kind of position you want – your “Job Objective”. Be realistic, but don't censor yourself by thinking you don't qualify for what you really want. When you decide on the kind of position you're looking for, you can focus your resume to reach that goal. This is called “targeting your resume.” For example, don't write “a position in finance” or “human relations” or “marketing”. Be as clear as possible. If not sure, ask yourself, “What do I want to do?” Then, “Where do I want to do it, and at what level of responsibility?”

For example, you might decide on a “position as editorial assistant in book publishing” or an “entry-level position in financial analysis with a major financial institution.” Don't skip this step. Without a clear objective, your resume lacks focus, and your writing will have no direction. Remember that people who take the longest time to find a job are often the ones who insist on telling everything they ever did, or mentioning every skill they'd like to use, hoping the employer will figure out what they want and where to put them. With this tactic, the usual place their resume lands is not the hiring manager's desk but the paper shredder.

Step Two

Once you know the position you want, identify the skills, personality traits, training, education and experience needed for that objective. These will be your selling points, or areas of emphasis. For example, does the position require excellent communication skills, or instead demand analytical or organizational abilities? Determine exactly what skills or

abilities are needed for the job you want, listing several of the skills required. This is what the employer will be looking for.

After you know what the employer wants, show how your accomplishments, training, skills and experience fit. Ask, “How did I use those same skills in the past?” List the strongest abilities, training, and accomplishments that make you a good candidate for the position. Next, write a summary of qualifications by highlighting relevant experience, training, and credentials, mentioning a few significant accomplishments, and one or two outstanding skills or abilities. If you don't write a summary, your best stuff will be buried in your resume, waiting for the employer to find it. The purpose of a summary is to show up front that you are qualified and that you are especially talented in areas that matter to the employer.

Step Three

After you write a summary, you can develop your work history. The important thing to remember is that when listing past experience, don't write boring, generic job descriptions. Although many will tell you to use “action” verbs, don't get carried away with “supervised the stock room,” “calculated figures for budget,” and “took meeting minutes for vice-president,” ad infinitum. How does that make you stand out from the crowd? Instead, describe the benefits or results of your activities and how you achieved them. For instance, did you increase efficiency or organization, help save money, solve a pressing problem, or increase company revenues? An example might be, “Saved employer thirty-three percent by conscientious and meticulous quality management.” Be sure to focus on what you enjoyed, and what gave you a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. Remember, the employer isn't interested in job descriptions. He or she wants to know how hiring you will benefit the organization.

Step Four

You are nearly finished! All that remains is to list your pertinent education and training, including any related study in your field, and any special skills or proficiencies that make you a desirable candidate. Don't list skills or proficiencies you dislike, or that

are unrelated to the job you seek. You don't want to spend a lot of time typing or adding figures, do you, just because you're fast?

As you add the final touches, try not to aim for developing one perfect resume, with a one-size-fits-all philosophy. In other words, don't send the same resume to several different employers, with only your cover letter changed (or only the employer's name and address.) Be careful to target each resume for each position applied for. With this specific objective in mind, you can cite accomplishments, key words, skills and personality traits that mirror its requirements.

Step Five

Before you print out your resume or send it out, carefully proofread it and ask somebody else to check it for you. Try to find out all the errors and places for improvement.

This book lists Do's and Don'ts that cover all of the common mistakes job seekers make on their resumes and cover letters, as well as advice on how you should correct those mistakes. The list is in no particular order, since making these mistakes will have a similar negative result when read by an employer. Remember, if you're not willing to take the extra step needed to ensure that you personally are making every effort possible to showcase yourself and your qualifications in the best possible way, why should an employer hire you?

Chapter 2. Avoid Carelessness Mistakes



Typographical, Spelling & Grammar Errors

One of the terrible mistakes you can make in a resume is a carelessness mistake. If you refuse to take the time necessary to proofread your resume, why should an employer assume you'd take the time needed to do your job properly if hired? Having such mistakes on your resume demonstrates carelessness and a lack of attention to detail. That's not the message you want to send to employers.

Among the carelessness mistakes, typographical, spelling and grammar mistakes are the worst ones. If you have sent out so many resumes but have not been invited for an interview, the first thing you should do is to check out your resume for such mistakes.

You do –

Proofread your resume carefully, and ask someone else to proofread it for typographical, spelling and grammar mistakes.

You don't –

Refuse to take the time necessary to proofread your resume thoroughly.



Spelling of Recipient's Name

Using the correct spelling of the recipient's name along with the company's name is important. It's also critical to confirm the recipient's gender, so you can address the envelope and cover letter correctly. Accidentally spelling someone's name incorrectly is insulting to the recipient and totally unprofessional. The slightest spelling error could result in your resume package getting thrown out, even if you're a qualified candidate.

You do –

Check the spelling of the recipient's name and the company's name.

You don't –

Misspell the recipient's name and the company's name.

Chapter 3. Give Your Resume a Nice Look



Visual Appearance

The visual appearance of your traditional printed resume is as important as its content. Your resume is a potential employer's first view of you. You want to make sure to reveal yourself in the best manner possible. Avoid paper that is cheap, loud or outrageous.

You do –

Make sure your resume looks clean, polished, and balanced.

You don't –

Use cheap paper and fold your resume.



Paper Color

You are in such a hurry to find a new job that you think printing the resume on green or orange paper will get you noticed fast. You'll get noticed -- and then dropped in the circular file!

Employers hate parchment paper and pretentious brochure -- folded resume "presentations." They think they're phony, and toss them right out. Another reason not to use colored-paper is that the results will be murky if it gets photocopied.

You do –

Use plain white or ivory, in a quality appropriate for your job objective.

You don't –

Use colored paper unless there's a very good reason for it, like, you're a modern artist.



Black ink is the most popular and most traditional color. If you choose to print your resume using alternate color ink, make sure your selection is professional looking. Brown or burgundy are good alternatives. If you'll be faxing your resume to employers, your paper and ink color selections should be white paper with black ink. If your resume is difficult to read, people won't read it.

You do –

Make sure the text of your resume is easily readable both to human eyes and to computer scanners.

You don't –

Use ink in wild colors and multiple colors.



Refrain from overusing bold text, underlining, italic typestyle or mixing font sizes, which makes your resume confusing to read and look at. Instead, use the same fonts and typestyle. Choose one easy-to-read, 12-point font such as Times New Roman. A good resume is one that's easy to read and pleasing to the eyes.

You do –

Choose one easy-to-read, 12-point font such as Times New Roman.

You don't –

Overuse bold, underlining, italic typestyle and mixed font sizes.



Do not squeeze text to one side or one corner, leaving lots of blank space to the left or right of bulleted lists. Avoid MS-Word resume template that uses tables inefficiently. Check the following example:

White Space

Education

University of Houston -- Houston, Texas (1999-present)

Major: English (Technical Writing; GPA 3.9)

Minor: Web Design (Minor GPA: 3.7)

Blair High School -- San Antonio, Texas (1994-1999)

Senior GPA: 3.7

SAT: 1200

Work Experience

Sales. Churchill's Radio Shack; Houston, Texas

(Summer, 1999)

Sold merchandise, deposited receipts, opened and closed a small business. Often worked alone, but also trained and supervised part-time employees. Set new sales records 8 of the 12 weeks I worked there.

Asst. Groundskeeper. Memorial Hospital; Houston, Texas (1995-1998)

Performed general grounds-keeping chores, including mowing,

weeding, and pruning on a regular schedule. Started at \$5.50/hr; steadily received raises to \$7.00/hr.

The content of the above sample resume is excellent; yet the presentation (featuring huge empty blocks beneath "Education" and "Work Experience") makes the page look awkward. If this author starts to run out of room on the page, he or she may be tempted

to reduce the type size; but because of the big open spaces, this text already looks cramped. The revised version (below) makes better use of white space.

Education

University of Houston -- Houston, Texas (1999-present)

Major: English (Technical Writing; GPA 3.9)

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Performed general grounds-keeping chores, including mowing, weeding, and pruning on a regular schedule. Started at \$5.50/hr; steadily received raises to \$7.00/hr.

You do –

Makes better use of white space.

You don't –

Leave lots of blank space and squeeze text to one side or one corner.



Sending out photocopies of your resume is highly unprofessional. Instead, use a laser printer to generate copies from a computer, or have it professionally typeset and printed.

Photocopies

You do –

Use a laser printer to generate copies from a computer, or have it professionally typeset and printed.

You don't –

Send out photocopies of your resume.



If mailing your resume to a potential employer, use a large envelope to avoid stapling your resume to a cover letter. One of the reasons why this is important is that staples make it difficult for a company to scan your resume into applicant tracking software. If your resume doesn't scan properly, your chances of being considered for a position diminish dramatically.

Staple

Resume

You do –

Mail your resume and cover letter in a large envelope.

You don't –

Staple your resume to a cover letter.



Charts &

Graphs

The use of charts, graphs and other graphic elements do not belong within a resume. While these visual aids can be used during a job interview, they're simply not appropriate for use in a job search situation unless you're hoping to land a job such as an artist.

You do –

Use a conservative format for your resume.

You don't –

Use charts, graphs and other graphic elements in your resume.



Photographs

Do not add a photo of yourself to your resume. In most cases, adding a photo of yourself is a mistake. It's risky in the sense that a reader might not "like your looks" for whatever reason.

Unless, if some unique aspect of yourself is best communicated with a photograph, and if you believe the photograph clearly gives you an edge, it is then acceptable. In that case, make sure the print quality must be excellent. One creative resume idea was built around a head-to-foot photograph of an applicant with captions surrounding the photograph, such as "*Eyes that see the future with vision*" or "*Sleeves that are rolled up, ready for hard work.*"

You do –

Describe yourself by your words.

You don't –

Describe yourself by your photo.

Chapter 4. No Dumb Mistakes



Email Address

Be sure the email address you are listing on your resume is professional.

JohnSmith@hotmail.com is OK. *JohnSmith@aol.com* is better. You definitely do not want an employer to try to contact you at *JohnSmith@beer.com*.

JohnSmith@chickmail.com makes thing even worse.

You do –

Use an email address that looks professional.

You don't –

Use an email address that looks unprofessional.



Contact Info

If an employer can't easily reach you to invite you for an interview or offer you a job, chances are they'll select another applicant, even if you're totally qualified. An employer should not have to spend more than a few seconds to figure out how to contact you. Make sure they can reach you easily by listing a phone number that's connected to an answering machine or has a 24-hour answering service.

You do –

Make sure an employer can reach you easily.

You don't –

Make an employer figure out how to contact you.



Current Work Number

If you are looking for new employment while still employed and want to keep your job search a secret, do not list your current work phone number or e-mail address at work on your resume. It's very easy for your current employer to discover that you're looking for new employment if you start receiving calls or e-mail from other potential employers while at work.

You do –

Keep your job search a secret while still employed.

You don't –

List your current work phone number or e-mail address at work.



Top of Resume

When you send out your resume, nobody needs you to tell him what it is. Of course it's a resume. What else could it be? So, do not make the dumb mistake by beginning with the word "Resume" nicely centered at the top of your resume.

You do –

Begin your resume with your name and contact info.

You don't –

Put the word "Resume" at the top of your resume.



Format & Method of Delivery

It's easy to get blindsided by this one: you've carefully prepared your resume the old fashioned way, you sent it to the company in question addressed correctly, and you never heard from them. One possible explanation? The job ad called for a scannable resume, but you didn't comply.

Always check to see if format is specified. There are scannable resumes, resumes to email, plain text resumes to paste into online forms, and yes, still traditional format resumes to fax, send snail mail or hand deliver. Submit your application to the employer in the format they have asked for.

You do –

Check if resume format is specified in the job ad.

You don't –

Submit your resume in a wrong format.



Deadline

The deadline on the job ad is the deadline. Not only is it unlikely that an employer will look at a late application, even if they do, its very lateness is a significant strike against it. An added caution these days goes to the submission of resumes and cover letters by email. Technology is not flawless. Confirm that your resume and cover letter have been received in advance of the deadline.

You do –

Confirm that your resume has been received in advance of the deadline.

You don't –

Miss the deadline.

Chapter 5. Watch Your Attitude



Generic Resume

Blasting a generic resume to every job opening you find is a bad attitude problem. You need to customize your resume for each job or you will miss your opportunity to show an employer exactly how you can help the company. Take the additional time and it will pay off.

You do –

Customize your resume for each job opening.

You don't –

Just blast a generic resume to every job opening you find.



Address to an Individual

To ensure that the resume you submit to a potential employer actually gets read, be sure to address it to a specific person within a company. Make sure the person's full name is spelled correctly and that you use their job title both on the envelope and in your cover letter. The chances of your resume getting read are greatly reduced if you send it blindly.

You do –

Try to send a resume addressed to an individual.

You don't –

Address the resume to “Dear Sir” or “To Whom It May Concern”.



**Handwrite
on
Envelope**

It is unprofessional handwriting note on back of envelope indicating address and phone number on resume has changed. This tells the employer you're too lazy to make necessary changes on your resume.

You do –

Make necessary changes on your resume.

You don't –

Handwrite the changes on back of envelope.



**Resume
on
Disk**

Do not send your resume on a computer disk with a cover letter instructing the recipient how to access it. If you do so, you're wasting the hiring manager's time. And it's a bad idea to waste a hiring manager's time.

You do –

Send your resume by mail.

You don't –

Send your resume on a computer disk.

Chapter 6. Don't Try too Hard



Handwrite Resume

Handwrite the resume thinking this is the ultimate "personal touch" to reaching the employer. Wrong! If you do so, you're wasting employer's time because handwriting is more difficult to read than typing. And handwriting doesn't look professional at all.

You do –

Use a laser printer to generate resumes from a computer, or have them professionally typeset and printed.

You don't –

Handwrite the resume.



Humor

Your resume is not the place to demonstrate your sense of humor. Do not try to be cute, clever, or funny when preparing your resume. Here are a few examples of humor gone bad:

- × You have seen the rest, now meet the best.
- × You will only need to keep this resume and can use the rest to heat your house.
- × Let's meet so I can astound you with my experience.
- × Also know as Mr. Right, Mr. Perfect-for-this-job, or Mr. Productive.
- × I'm enclosing a few bucks to guarantee my interview.

You do –

Show your serious attitude in your resume.

You don't –

Demonstrate your sense of humor in your resume.

Chapter 7. The Right Resume Format



Undergrad Format

If you are writing your resume in the same style that you've used since college graduation, you'll lose. The old curriculum vitae, or block style, format with "Objective" and "Education" listed on top are not appropriate for anyone with more than three years of professional work experience. Much more effective is a 3- to 5-line overview of your unique professional strengths.

You do –

Update your resume frequently.

You don't –

Use a resume in undergrad format.



Choose Resume Format

Some people who write their own resumes don't realize that the other formats exist and don't know which one to choose for their individual situation. Do you know there are three separate formats of resumes? There are chronological, functional, and combination formats. Each one is suited for certain employment histories or employment goals. Most people use a chronological, the most traditional format, but possibly one of the other formats would better suit their needs. For example, if you have a few gaps in your employment history, consider using a functional resume.

You do –

Choose the resume format that serves you best.

You don't –

Choose the resume format that exposes your weakness.



Boundaries

When designing your resume, stay within appropriate boundaries of your profession and industry. For example, the VP for a mining company should have a traditional-looking resume. A graphic designer for a greeting-card company should have a more creative layout that shows off his aesthetic tastes.

You do –

Design your resume in the style matching your profession.

You don't –

Cross the boundaries of your profession.



"Resume Wizard"

The popular word-processing programs all have templates or wizards that do the resume layout automatically. There are several reasons not to use them including, but not limited to: cookie-cutter appearance (the same look as every other person's resume created with the same template), lack of flexibility for individual needs, out-of-date formats, and lack of flexibility in editing/layout changes. You may actually find it more difficult to use a template than to just write/layout a resume from scratch since every person's backgrounds, skills, and goals are different and should be handled uniquely.

You do –

Design your resume in word-processing programs such as MS Word.

You don't –

Use resume designing templates or wizards.



Scannable Resumes

For those applying to computer related positions, high-tech companies or other large corporations, realize that your resume may be scanned into a computer database. In these cases, you should use a scannable resume. For a scannable resume, you should:

- ✓ Use one of the standard serif or sans serif typefaces, such as Courier, Times, Helvetica, Arial, Optima, Palatino, Univers. Avoid using decorative fonts.
- ✓ Use a normal type size, usually in the range of 11 to 14 points.
- ✓ Maximum number of characters per line is 65 (partly dependent on type size).
- ✓ Avoid any kinds of graphic or shading.
- ✓ Keep formatting simple. Use all caps for major headings, but avoid bolding, italicizing, and underlining.
- ✓ Do not use bullets or lines.
- ✓ Left justify text.
- ✓ Include key skills and certifications, using industry standard to identify each.
- ✓ Use industry or job-specific keywords that employers might use to find candidates for the job you are seeking.
- ✓ While action verbs are still important, you need to add key phrases and nouns that could be used as search terms by your potential employer. Examples of phrases include "under budget," "surpassed goals," and "successfully developed." Examples of nouns include "HTML programming," "results oriented," "professional selling," "account manager," "marketing research," "strategic planning," and "certified public accountant (CPA)."

- ✓ After your objective, you might consider adding a "summary of accomplishments" section that focuses on results you achieved in your field rather than specific duties and responsibilities. A "Key Skills" section is also an option. The idea behind this section is to allow you to use more of the words, phrases, and jargon that resumes may be searched with by the potential employer.
- ✓ Use common abbreviations (such as BS for a bachelor of science degree) and maximize use of industry jargon (such as CAD for computer-assisted design), but when in doubt, it is best to **both** use abbreviations and write it out.
- ✓ If your resume is more than one page, place your name at the top of each additional page.
- ✓ Print your resume on a high quality laser printer or inkjet. Do not use a dot matrix or low quality printer.
- ✓ Use only white or a very pale color paper -- in standard letter size (8 1/2 x 11).
- ✓ Always send original copies.
- ✓ Try to mail or deliver your resume in a flat envelope or by fax. Do not staple multiple page resumes.

Companies use document-scanning technology to quickly and efficiently match job openings with qualified job seekers. Searches are done using keywords and phrases that describe the skills and education required for the position, thus when writing a scannable resume it is extremely important to use terms and familiar industry acronyms (jargon) that describe your skills and experience.

Often a scannable resume may contain more keywords than a printed resume because additional alternate words are included. For example, if a job candidate were seeking a position as a secretary, keywords would include “secretary,” “administrative assistant” “executive assistant” and so on.

You don’t have to keep your scannable resume within one page. You can go with two or more pages as long as you have two or more pages' worth of information.

The following is a sample electronic resume. Compare it with a traditional resume and notice the format and the keywords used.

Malan Bloomfield

889 Ken Street, Dallas, TX 77211
(720) 987-6543
malanb@hotmail.com

OBJECTIVE

Senior Information Technology Manager

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATION

Information System Professional with demonstrated management, leadership and communication skills, seeks position that will utilize my background in management, engineering, systems integration, system design, development, and implementation.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE

- Information Systems
- System Integration
- Cost Reduction
- System Requirements
- Life Cycle Management
- Marketing

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND EXPERTISE

Information Systems Management

- Program Manager of the Airborne Warning and Control System

Increased the productivity of software development and maintenance activities. The process entailed the establishment of a well-defined requirements baseline for software development and maintenance. The new baseline set realistic schedules and budgets for the development efforts, and the open communication of the goals and objectives for the development of the next software baseline. The productivity for software development and upgrades of software maintenance improved by 300% over a 12-month period.

- Manager of System Software Development

Designed and managed the development of a real-time system to ascertain the safety of missile flight over the US and Europe. The system established a probability model for the safety of European over-flight. Through this modeling effort parameters that contributed to missile safe flight and probabilities of impact were ascertained. The system processed both radar and telemetry signals and used them to track missile flight and thereby provided near-real-time information to end user's decision. The software was a determining factor for allowing the advancement of the US space program and has allowed the Apollo space vehicles to be safely flown over Europe and other populated areas.

System Requirements

- Senior Consultant for Martin Marietta

Developed the telecommunication and computer requirements for a large facility's complex. Successfully negotiated, documented and communicated the customers' telecommunications requirements. This resulted in wholehearted acceptance and approval of proposed requirements. This single factor allowed the customer to start project development, by supporting contractors, three months early.

- Manager of Data Base Administration

Developed the requirements and procurement specifications for a computer systems upgrade at the White House Communications Agency in The Old Executive Office Building. Expedited the procurement and installation of systems at the White House Communications Agency in The Old Executive Office Building. Initial operation was realized six months ahead of schedule.

System Integration

- Independent Consultant

Developed a software system for Wal-Mart that integrated layered geographic maps with overlaid ICONS. This system provided information to facilitate decisions, support inventory control, distribution, and transportation. This allowed global data access interfaces to information contained in many databases located in heterogeneous hardware and software network environments.

- Manager of Data Base Administration

Supervised the conversion of and redesigned the existing data files to “Total Data Base Managed System” files for the Defense Communication Agency. Enhanced the data integrity, continuity, and consistency of the Defense Communication Agency’s six world-side distributed information systems.

Life Cycle Management

- Manager of Integrated Logistic Support for General Electric

Designed and managed the developed software systems that predicted maintenance actions needed for operational equipment. The system processed the signals from these sensors to determine the anticipated failure of the parts under measurement. Failure thresholds were established for all components under measurement. Before these thresholds were exceeded the parts critical to operation were replaced during preventive maintenance. This resulted in: a reduction of redundant equipment of 30%; a 25% reduction of the spare part inventory; and a 60% reduction in warehousing cost for spare parts inventory.

Cost Reduction

- Senior Consultant for Martin Marietta

Directed the transition hardware and software systems to the United Kingdom. Successfully transitioned hardware and software valued at \$8M. Achieved a 10% reduction in cost associated with the packaging and shipment of the products. Systems were operational in the United Kingdom 4 months ahead of schedule.

Marketing

- Senior Information Systems Engineer

Led the efforts to develop technical volumes for 15 proposals for new business acquisition. Over a two-year period, developed 10 winning proposals out of the 15 proposals submitted. These winning proposals generated in excess of \$750M in new business.

CAREER HISTORY

T&K INFORMATION, San Antonio, TX Senior Consultant	12/1997 – Present
BBS ASSOCIATES, Houston, TX Independent Consultant	11/1994 – 12/1997
GENERAL ELECTRIC AEROSPACE GROUP, Austin, TX Senior Information Systems Engineer Proposal Development, Systems Analysis & Design	10/1985 – 11/1994
Manager, Test and Verification Engineering Initial Systems, Checkout, Test and Verification	

Manager, Integrated Logistic Support Engineering
Systems Integration, training, system reliability and maintainability, operational readiness

US AIR FORCE 3/1964 – 10/1985

- Program Manager, Control System, Kelly AFB, TX 1/1981 – 10/1985
- Manager, Data Base Administration, Defense Communication Agency, Austin, TX 5/1978 – 10/1985
- Plans & Programs Officer, Allied Air Force Europe, Wuestadebm, German 6/1972 – 5/1978
- Manager, Information Systems Development, Foreign Technology Division, Houston, TX 7/1969 – 6/1972

Other US Air Force assignments can be discussed during the interview.

EDUCATION

MS Operations Research, University of San Antonio, TX (1966)

BS Mathematics, Minor in Physics, University of Houston (1962)

Specialty Courses:

- GE Experienced Managers Course, GE Management Development Institute, Houston, TX (1985)
- Program Manager Certification, Department of Defense Computer Institute, Washington DC (1980)

COMPUTER EXPERIENCE

Design Technologies:

CASE Tools, Object-Oriented Design & Programming, Rapid prototyping

LAN/WAN:

Novel, Pathworks, TCP/IP, Token Rings, FDDI, Routers

Computer Platforms:

IBM, Digital, Hewlett Packard, Sun Micro Systems, Apple

Operating Systems:

MVS/TSO, VM/CICS, VAX/VMS, UNIX, MS-DOS, Windows, OS2, Mac OS

Programming Languages:

“C++”, VB, COBOL, FORTRAN, JOVIAL, PL1, IBM APL, X-Windows

Data Base Management Systems:

Oracle, SQL Server, IDMS, M204, DB2, Ingres, Sybase, Rbae, Foxpro, Alpha4, dBase

You do –

Use familiar industry keywords to describe your skills and experience in your scannable resume.

You don't –

Use a regular resume for database scanning.



ASCII

Resumes

If you plan on sending your resume to an employer via the Internet or email, more and more companies require that you post your resume in an ASCII format. This will allow the employer to view your resume regardless of the word program you used to create it. When sending your resume in ASCII format, you need to format it differently than you would for paper. The key points include:

- ✓ Set margins so that the area you are typing within is no more than 6.5 inches (for a standard 8 ½" x 11" page setup that would mean 1" margins on both the left and right).
- ✓ Use carriage returns or hard breaks to guarantee consistency and easier reading. If your text all runs together, nothing will catch the reader's eye.
- ✓ Use a 12 point fixed pitch font style such as courier (fixed pitch means that all the characters, including spaces, use the exact same amount of space on the page).
- ✓ Highlight areas of your resume by using capitalization and special characters such as asterisks, hyphens, and lines.
- ✓ To fancy up your resume, use asterisks (*), o's (O), plus signs (+), etc. in place of bullets that can convert to question marks or other odd characters on the receiver's end.

- ✓ Remember that formatting that you do in word-processing, such as bold and italics, will often be lost through email. Create your electronic resume in a text editor such as Notepad and make sure it is easy to identify the key points of your resume.
- ✓ Use a descriptive subject line, such as “*Job #123, Network Administrator, Certified MCSE, Available Immediately.*”
- ✓ You can opt to create a website for your resume and just add a link in the e-mail to your website. Some tips:
 - If you choose to create a website with the intention of placing your resume there for potential employer’s access, be sure that you do not add any personal information on your website that you would not necessarily want the employer to use in the evaluation process (i.e. Gruesome graphics, etc.).
 - Creating a website allows you to imbed links to former employers’ websites or to the sites of organizations you have been involved with and can be a very impressive way to communicate more information than would be possible given the restrictions of a single page resume format.

You do –

Follow the above 8 rules for designing and handling an ASCII resume.

You don’t –

Send a regular resume via the Internet or email.

Chapter 8. The Right Resume Strategies



Top

Qualifications

The traditional resume format of listing an objective statement followed by education, experience, achievements and additional information doesn't work best for everyone. Instead, lead with your strong points as they relate to the job you're applying for. In another word, the key points that the potential employer is looking should be at the beginning of your resume, not buried in the middle or at the end of your resume. If you don't have experience in the industry, begin your resume with your skill set and your education. On the other hand, if your experience is your strong point, lead with it.

John's work experience is not very impressive for a Web Programmer / Web Development position. The following is an example of how he converted a traditional resume into a customized resume.

Example of the traditional resume:

John W. Sanchez

12456 123 NE, Seattle, WA98125
(206) 398-65443 JohnSanchez@yahoo.com

EXPERIENCE

Internet Marketing Manager, AAA Corporation, 5/1999 – 11/2002

- IT project management of the day-to-day maintenance of the corporate website.
- Contributed to a full site release for www.aaa-corporation.com from design concepts to launch, coordinating recommendations between marketing research firm and IS department.
- Developed a standardized Web traffic report using Accrue HitList and MS Excel, generating reports on a weekly basis to measure site traffic and the success of e-mail marketing campaigns and partner launches.
- Organized and compiled a monthly email marketing campaign that enabled AAA Corporation to effectively communicate with affiliates, and to promote the launch of new showcases.
- Spearheaded the promotion of www.aaa-corporation.com via search engine optimization strategies to increase company name recognition and site traffic.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- Expertise in Webmaster skills such as HTML, XML, JavaScript, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and Illustrator, as well as extensive experience in QA testing and research.
- 2+ years experience with website development, Internet and e-mail marketing, and strategies to increase website traffic.
- Strong technical writing background, interpersonal and project management skills, with ability to adept to new technologies and application proficiently.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: HTML, XML, JavaScript

Design Applications: Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia Dreamweaver, Macromedia Flash, Macromedia Fireworks, Adobe Illustrator, MS FrontPage, Corel Photo-Draw and Photo-Paint

Operating Systems: Windows 98/NT/2000, Mac OS 8 and OS 9

Applications: Microsoft Office 97/2000, Adobe Acrobat Writer, Corel WordPerfect, FTP

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Mass Communication, University of San Antonio, TX, 1995

CERTIFICATIONS

CIW master Site Designer

Example of the customized resume.

John W. Sanchez

12456 123 NE, Seattle, WA98125

(206) 398-65443 JohnSanchez@yahoo.com

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- Expertise in Webmaster skills such as HTML, XML, JavaScript, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and Illustrator, as well as extensive experience in QA testing and research.
- 2+ years experience with website development, Internet and e-mail marketing, and strategies to increase website traffic.
- Strong technical writing background, interpersonal and project management skills, with ability to adapt to new technologies and application proficiently.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: HTML, XML, JavaScript

Design Applications: Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia Dreamweaver, Macromedia Flash, Macromedia Fireworks, Adobe Illustrator, MS FrontPage, Corel Photo-Draw and Photo-Paint

Operating Systems: Windows 98/NT/2000, Mac OS 8 and OS 9

Applications: Microsoft Office 97/2000, Adobe Acrobat Writer, Corel WordPerfect, FTP

CERTIFICATIONS

CIW master Site Designer

EXPERIENCE

Internet Marketing Manager, AAA Corporation, 5/1999 – 11/2002

- IT project management of the day-to-day maintenance of the corporate website.
- Contributed to a full site release for www.aaa-corporation.com from design concepts to launch, coordinating recommendations between marketing research firm and IS department.
- Developed a standardized Web traffic report using Accrue HitList and MS Excel, generating reports on a weekly basis to measure site traffic and the success of e-mail marketing campaigns and partner launches.
- Organized and compiled a monthly email marketing campaign that enabled AAA Corporation to effectively communicate with affiliates, and to promote the launch of new showcases.
- Spearheaded the promotion of www.aaa-corporation.com via search engine optimization strategies to increase company name recognition and site traffic.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Mass Communication, University of San Antonio, TX, 1995

Compare the above two versions of resume. You can see how John customizes his resume by just re-arranging the sections so as to better showcases his qualifications for the Web Programmer / Web Developer position.

You do –

Lead with your strong points as they relate to the job you're applying for.

You don't –

Bury your top qualifications.



Job Titles

If your job title doesn't accurately depict what you actually did, get creative. If you have multiple job roles, do not represent them all through your title, such as Computer Technologist/Helpdesk/Telecommunications. Think of a more powerful title rather than listing all the three. Find a single job title you can use to project a stronger image.

You do –

Use a single powerful job title.

You don't –

List multiple weak job titles.



Achievements

Write about your achievements instead of job duties on your resume because achievement statements are the most powerful way to say "I'm good at what I do!" Even if your resume is chronological, you should make it an achievement-oriented resume rather than a job-description resume.

By writing an achievement resume, you'll turn a stereotypical document into a winning sales piece. An achievement resume can also trigger some good conversation about your strengths during the interview.

Make sure your achievements are stated appropriately for the position you're applying for. Use action verbs at or near the beginning of your achievement statements. If there are numbers involved, put the numbers at the beginning of your achievement statements to draw attention, such as "300% increase in..." Prioritize bulleted points with each section so the statement with the most impact comes first. In a functional resume, make sure to include the information on where an achievement took place.

You do –

Write about your achievements.

You don't –

Write about your job duties.



Numbers, dollars, and percentages stand out in the body of a resume. Use #'s, \$'s and %'s. Compare the following:

#'s,

\$'s

and

%'s

- × Managed a department of ten with a budget of one million dollars.
- ✓ Managed a department of 10 with a budget of \$1,000,000.

- × Increased sales by twenty-five percent in a territory of fifteen states.
- ✓ Increased sales by 25% in a 15-state territory.

You do –

Say “Managed a department of 10 with a budget of \$1,000,000.”

You don't –

Say “Managed a department of ten with a budget of one million dollars.”



Lost

Accomplishment

If you're an accomplished professional, make sure your most important accomplishments aren't lost in your resume. Highlight those accomplishments to make sure that someone glancing at your resume for ten to fifteen seconds won't miss them.

You do –

Highlight your most important accomplishments.

You don't –

Lose your most important accomplishments.



Unimpressive Achievements

While you want to list specific accomplishments you've achieved while on the job in each position you've held, avoid including information that's unimpressive, unimportant or that won't be of direct interest to a potential employer.

For example, if you're applying for a position in a mining company, it won't help at all to mention your accomplishments as an insurance agent. Instead, you should focus on the skills, accomplishments and personality traits you know the employer is looking for.

If you are applying for management position, do not highlight all of your project experience. Instead, focus on your management skills. On the contrary, if you are applying for a technician position, you should emphasize your project experience.

You do –

Focus on the skills and accomplishments the employer is looking for.

You don't –

List skills and accomplishments that are unimportant.



Mismatched with Job Description

Do not write about what you do not want to do again, no matter how good you are at them. If your resume generates job interviews for work you're not interested in, then you have created a wrong resume. For example, you do not want to be a supervisor for your next job, but in your resume you talk a lot about your experience of supervising a team. You need to choose what to put in and leave out of your resume.

You do –

Write about what you want to do.

You don't –

Write about what you do not want to do.



Summary of Qualifications

The Summary of Qualifications is one of the most important sections on a career changer's resume because it becomes a bridge between the job seeker's past and future. The Summary of Qualifications summarizes your qualifications for your next job – your future; it doesn't summarize your past. Prioritize the statements so that the strongest one comes first. Do not include overused phrases such “Hardworking” or “Excellent communication skills.” If your resume can't grab employers' attention, you should check if your summary of qualifications is weak.

You do –

Write a strong Summary of Qualifications.

You don't –

Ignore the importance of the Summary of Qualifications.



Older Jobs

You provide more detail and depth in the job descriptions of older jobs than your present job. The employer [who](#) feels your career peaked and is declining will interview other candidates.

You do –

Focus on your present job.

You don't –

Focus on your older jobs.



Overqualified

If you're looking for a job for which you might appear overqualified, leave the heavyweight qualifications off of your resume. Suppose you're looking for a data entry position. If you list a lot of DBA experience, you are guaranteed not to be hired because you look too expensive for the data entry position. Remember, your resume is not a confession; you are not obligated to disclose all.

You do –

Taylor your resume to fit the job opening.

You don't –

Submit an overqualified resume.



Stagnant

Work History

Longevity at an organization is something to **feel** proud of. But if you've spent many years **in** one spot, you might look stagnant in the eyes of a new employer. You should highlight that you developed new skills, increased your industry knowledge, and took on more responsibility, even though your job title remained the same throughout your many years of dedication to the company.

Use the chronological format. Your loyalty will ring clear in the Work History section, and the subheadings that categorize your achievements will demonstrate growth.

You do –

Highlight your new skills, knowledge and responsibilities if you have spent many years in one spot.

You don't –

Make your work history look stagnant.



Employer's Needs & Your Needs

Employers only hire employees when they have problems to solve. Your resume must quickly answer the one question that's on every employer's mind: "What can you do for me?" Statements like "Seeking a position where I can utilize my skills in an atmosphere with potential for career advancement..." completely alienate your potential employer who read the resume because he/she has his/her own problems. He/she could care less about your career aspirations or desire to make more money. So, you should tell the employer how you can add value to his/her operations, or contribute to efficiency.

Do not make your resume an obituary. An obituary is a history of what was, not what you can do for the company.

Focus on what the company wants: productivity, profitability, sales, cash flow, cost savings, and clients, etc. For example, write "100% compliance with project specifications through empowering a team of 12 programmers to..." instead of "Supervised a team of 12 programmer for a project."

You do –

Think what the employer needs.

You don't –

Think what you need.



Unrelated Employers

If you are making dramatic career changes, de-emphasize the names of your previous employers. As hiring managers sift through the pile of potential candidates, don't leave it up to them to have to make the connection between how your previous work experience relates to the job you are applying for.

If a potential employer sees the name of an employer that is clearly in a different industry, they are likely to have preconceived notions of what your responsibilities were. To avoid this dilemma, you use a functional, rather than a chronological, format that will allow you to present work history as the last part of your resume. There, list employer names and employment dates only. You might abbreviate the name of the company or parent organization.

You do –

De-emphasize your previous employers if you are making dramatic career changes.

You don't –

List many unrelated employers in your resume.



Transition from Military

Private employers without military experience often have a hard time transferring military skills to the private sector. Unfamiliar with leadership and technology skills acquired in a military environment, they don't understand the similarities in the use of technology, project management, and leadership. This is unfortunate, because military

candidates often possess a highly developed set of skills that land themselves well in a corporate environment.

The following is Peter Taoh's resume. See how Peter transfers his military skills to the private sector:

Peter Taoh

987 Westwood Dr., Houston, TX 77219
(710) 345-6789 petertaoh@aol.com

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- Decorated Gull War veteran with more than 18 years experience in leadership and information technology.
- **Major skill areas:** Management, network development and administration, training, and a belief in strong computer security policies.
- **Certifications:** Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer + Internet (MCSE + I), Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (2000), Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT), Certified Cisco Network Administrator (CCNA), Certified Cisco Design Administrator (CCDA), Certified Novell Administrator, A +
- B.S. in Liberal Arts, graduate of the Master Analyst Course and a governmental TS/TCI security clearance.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- Administered several Windows NT 4.0, Novell NetWare, and Unix LANs supporting 40 remote sites. Also supported Cisco routers and switches, FDDI concentrators and Gigabit Ethernet server connections with 100 Mbs to the desktop.
- Annual budget exceeded 2 million dollars.
- Established Unix-backed network for Warrior system in Saudi Arabia, dealing with numerous logistical and environmental problems.
- Led the Y2K project, including modifying and testing more than 1,000 computer systems and backbone structural systems.
- Consultant for New Horizons for several Maryland-based firms.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

- Served as a team project leader in six different national-level exercises.
- Required to administer the affairs of up to 50 individuals.
- Headed project team responsible for the creation (from the ground up) of seven of projected timelines.

- Received “Exceeds Course Standards” in both the Primary Leadership Development Courses (PLDC) and the Basic Non Commissioned Officers Course (BNCOC), two military leadership and management courses.
- As a district manager in the Hartmarx Corporation, responsible for the hiring of personnel, as well as the management of resources and finances.

TRAINING

- Worked as a Microsoft Certified Trainer for New Horizons, Houston College in Texas and San Antonio College in Texas. Trained more than 600 IT professionals within a three-year period.
- Honored as a senior instructor for the Advanced Individual Training Course at Kelly Air Force Base for dedicating over 2,000 instructional hours in an Instructional Student Development (ISD) arena. Primary training and development revolved around the All Source Analyst System (ASAS), the primary tactical Unix-based system used by the military.
- Awarded the Army Commendation Medal for the creation of numerous training scenarios, including a Gulf War-like scenario, directed by the Secretary of Defense.
- Selected ahead of peers to train more than 100 senior-level executives of the Saudi Ministry of Defense in collection management techniques, traffic analysis, and computer manipulation.

COMPUTER SECURITY

- First soldier selected to be a part of the U.S. Army’s Computer Exploitation Unit.
- Worked with several Tiger teams in support of strengthening computer net security.
- Developed numerous Standard Operational Procedures documents detailing computer security measures, computer virus isolation and prevention techniques, and password protection criteria.

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army	6/1987 – present
MCT for Windows 2000, Houston College, Houston, TX	4/2000 – present
MCT for Windows NT 4.0, San Antonio College, San Antonio, TX	4/1997 – 6/1999
Consultant and MCT, New Horizons, Austin, TX	8/1997 – 9/1998
District Manager for Hartmarx Corp., Dallas TX	10/1984 – 2/1987

The above resume is a good example of how military experience is transferred into experience that will be deemed valuable by the shirts and ties of the corporate world.

You do –

Transfer military skills to the private sector.

You don't –

Use military skills for corporate world.



Attach Resume to Email

Submitting resumes electronically can ensure that your resume is reviewed promptly and also demonstrates your facility in utilizing computer technology. However, increasing number of employers are automatically deleting all incoming e-mail with attachments as a security measure to protect their computer systems from the danger of viruses. Therefore, if you have been asked to submit your resume electronically, do not send it as an attachment unless you are specifically required to send it as an attachment. Set up an ASCII (plain text) formatted resume and copy/paste it into your email message.

You do –

Set up an ASCII formatted resume.

You don't –

Send your resume as an email attachment.



Stretch the Truth

One of the bad mistakes you can make as a job applicant is lying on your resume. Almost all employers check resumes and references before offering someone a job. If an employer discovers that you weren't 100% honest, the chances that he'll offer you the job are **minimum**. There are multiple ways to handle gaps in your resume as well as negative information in your employment history. Lying, however, should never be considered.

You do –

Be 100% honest.

You don't –

Lie on your resume.



Be Different

If the hiring manager is going to receive 500 resumes and you probably will never emerge from the deep stack if you strictly rely on your background and experience. **You** have nothing to lose and much to gain by daring to be different. Draw upon your creativity to design a resume package that is so unique it will at least get you noticed. If you can get the attention of the hiring manager, you may have an opportunity to sell yourself in ways that even the best resume couldn't match. To spur your creativity, here are a few examples:

- ✓ Create a resume that is completely different, such as a pop-up resume or a brochure.
- ✓ Include art or slogans on the envelope such as *“Resume of an excellent candidate trapped in here; please release and review!”*
- ✓ Use desktop publishing along with drawing or clip art to create a fun art graphics and put them on all your material.
- ✓ Add a “creative page” to your resume and cover letter to demonstrate your creativity.

You do –

Try to be creative.

You don't –

Over-do your creativity.



Delivery

If you have already contacted an employer who is interested and if the job is important to you, don't just drop your resume in mail. Consider delivering it by hand or by courier services.

Mondays are busy days, and Fridays are termination days; try to arrive on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays.

If you send your resume to a hiring manager, send a duplicate to the human resource department. Note this effort in your cover letter to the hiring manager, which means that not only is the human resource specialist not treated disrespectfully, but the hiring manager gets to keep your resume as a constant reminder of you instead of having to send it “down to the HR.”

You do –

Consider Delivery Questions.

You don't –

Drop resume in mail and forget about it.



Job seekers who fail to follow up after sending out their resume stop short of their goals. Always telephone within a few days, making certain that your resume arrived. Ask whether your resume was received and what happened to it. Was your resume scanned into a database? Were you a match for an open position? Was your resume passed on to a hiring manager?

Once your resume is in the database, don't bother calling back the human resource department – you'll automatically be considered for all open job positions.

If your resume was passed on to a department hiring manager and you can pry loose the manager's name, try calling that manager early in the morning or late in the day. Try to call two weeks later and then once every six weeks. Also try to send interesting short letters, faxes, or emails with additional facts about your qualifications, or ideas to solve a problem you know the company is facing, or just to express your continuing interest in working for the company. If you are applying for a sales job, demonstrate your persistence by calling every ten days until you're told you'll be arrested if you call again.

You do –

Follow up on your resume.

You don't –

Wait without doing anything after sending out resume.

Chapter 9. Show Your Confidence



Lack of Formal Education

If a job posting requires a particular degree that you don't have, don't just give up. One way to compensate for the lack of a degree is through certifications and significant on-the-job experience.

By emphasizing your experience in a qualification section at the beginning of your resume, you can draw the hiring manager in with your skills and knowledge and divert him from the educational section. You can then downplay the educational section. The result of all this is that, upon reading the resume, the reader may not even notice that you don't have a college degree.

See the following for a before and after look at how the resume is done. Notice that Brent only has a few years of networking experience, so the best thing to do is to highlight the acquired skills by bulleting the profile information, combining hardware and software experience to make it appear more substantial, eliminating the details of the retail experience, and summarizing college credit hours.

Lack of formal education example:

Brent Chapman

121-9220 Fraser Ave., Austin, TX 77221
(610) 221-3333 Brentchpman@yahoo.com

Summary

A results-oriented individual with the specialized training and dedication to successfully adapt to the ever-changing field of Information Technology. Skilled in assessing requirements, determining priorities, analyzing course of action, and making adjustments for peak efficiency to help reduce network downtime. Command strong interpersonal communication skills both verbally and written. Interface easily with all levels of management, co-workers, and clientele.

Hardware/Operating Systems

IBM PCs and compatibles, tape backup systems, Win 2000/NT, 9x, 3.1, MS DOS.

Software

MS Exchange Server, MS Internet Information Server, Veritas Backup Exec, MS Office 2000/97.

Work Experience

ComputerLog Software Inc., Houston, TX 11/2000 – Present
Consultant/In-House Tech Support

Provide on-site Microsoft Network Development Solutions to clientele and in-house technical support to clientele and on-site consultants. Interface with in-house MS Exchange Servers, MS Internet Information Server, Veritas Backup Exec Server, and Windows NT Server.

AA Network Security Inc., San Antonio, TX 9/1999 – 10/2000
Network Administrator

Built small Windows NT network with remote dial-up capabilities. Maintained user accounts and network connectivity. Performed troubleshooting on hardware and software problems. Maintained Windows 9x workstations.

HEB Supermarket Ltd., Austin, TX 6/1994 – 9/1999
Grocery Clerk/Produce Clerk

Operated cash register, stocked shelves. Maintained inventory records and ordered products. Trained new employees on store and company policies and procedures. Handled customer service inquiries.

Education and Professional Certifications

InfoTech Commercial Systems San Antonio, TX
MCSE (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer) 2000
MCP + Internet (Microsoft Certified Professional) 1999, 2000

Incarnate Word College San Antonio, TX
Courses taken in psychology, stress management, and information technology. No degree acquired at this time.

Downplaying the education section:

Brent Chapman

121-9220 Fraser Ave., Austin, TX 77221
(610) 221-3333 Brentchpman@yahoo.com

Summary of Qualifications

- Results-oriented individual with the specialized training and dedication to successfully adapt to the ever-changing field of Information Technology.

- Skilled in assessing requirements, determining priorities, analyzing course of action, and making adjustments for peak efficiency to help reduce network downtime.
- Commands strong interpersonal communication skills.
- Interfaces easily with all levels of management, co-workers, and clientele.

Technical Skills

- Windows 2000/NT, Windows 95/98
- MS Exchange Server, MS Internet Information Server, Veritas Backup Exec, MS Office 2000/97

Work Experience

Network Administrator, ComputerLog Software Inc., Houston, TX 11/2000 – Present

- Provide on-site Microsoft Network Development Solutions to clientele.
- Provide in-house technical support.
- Administer MS Exchange Servers, MS Internet Information Servers, Veritas Backup Exec server, and Windows NT Server.

Network Administrator, AA Network Security Inc., San Antonio, TX 9/1999 – 10/2000

- Built Windows NT network with remote dial-up capabilities.
- Maintained user accounts and network connectivity.
- Performed troubleshooting on hardware and software problems.
- Maintained Windows 9x workstations.

HEB Supermarket Ltd., Austin, TX

6/1994 – 9/1999

Education and Professional Certifications

- MCSE (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer)
2000
- MCP + Internet (Microsoft Certified Professional)
1999, 2000

Incarnate Word College, San Antonio, TX

1998 – 2000

60 credit hours in IT and general education studies

You do –

Emphasize your experience if you don't have the required degree.

You don't –

Give up because of lack of a degree.



Negativity

Job-hunting is a tough process. Don't make it any harder on yourself by giving an employer reasons not to hire you.

If you have dramatic gaps in your employment history, consider a functional resume. If you don't have a particular skill, don't mention that in your resume. If you are unsure that you are qualified for a position but have decided to take the plunge and apply, leave your doubts at the door. Make sure your covering letter speaks confidently, so that the employer will want to know more by reading your resume.

You do –

Speak confidently.

You don't –

Show negativity.

Chapter 10. Eliminate Ambiguity



Objective

The objective you list on your resume should closely match the job you're applying for. Usually you can find the exact job title or description the company uses to describe the position available with the ad or listing.

Using a vague job objective such as “Seeking a challenging position in a mining company” is worthless. As a matter of fact, it conveys to the employer that you don't know what you're looking for, and you don't want to take a few extra minutes to customize your resume before submitting it. Instead, write something powerful about yourself, highlighting your strong points and key qualifications while making the objective statement closely match the job you're applying for.

You do –

Make the objective statement closely match the job you're applying for.

You don't –

Use a vague job objective.



Target

One of the biggest reasons why a qualified candidate often gets passed over for a job is because his/her resume wasn't targeted to the position they were applying for.

A resume can either be too broad or not specifically targeted to a job. If after reading your resume someone can't immediately conclude that you're a qualified candidate for the specific job you're applying for, then your resume isn't serving its purpose and should be re-written. Ideally, you want to specifically target your resume for each job you apply for. This means using the same job titles and descriptive words and phrases used by the employer to describe the job opening in the job posting.

When you applying for several job positions, make sure the contents of your resume target the specific needs and concerns of each employer. If necessary, modify the entire resume so it caters to the needs of a specific employer. Don't just modify the Objective section of your resume before sending it out to different employers.

Creating a targeted resume involves a bigger time commitment and a better understanding of a company's needs, but this is one of the best ways to capture the attention of a potential employer. A well-targeted resume is much likely to get the employer's attention.

The following is a sample resume tailored to the specific job ad. Notice that even when the candidate doesn't have all the required skills, as many matches as possible are made between the resume and the ad text.

Posting for an IT manager position:

IT Manager

- Responsible for planning, administering, and reviewing the acquisition, development, maintenance, and use of local computer and telecommunications systems within the Dallas offices.
- Responsible for the overall scheduling, controlling, and directing of resources, people, funding, and facilities for IT projects. These projects may involve major modifications to existing systems or the implementation of discrete new IT facilities, systems, or subsystems.
- Reports to the Senior Director of Administration.
- Consult with personnel across all organizational levels to determine current and future IT needs and to identify areas for improvement.
- Analyze the information needs of the company and develop technological solutions to satisfy those needs.
- Prepare and direct IT policy and plan strategy regarding security aspects of IT systems and overall IT growth.

- Oversee planning and implementation of all systems with company's overall IT framework. This include interface with the on-site US SAP team.
- Direct activities to select and install technology as approved by management.
- Establish priorities for systems development, maintenance, and operations.
- Provide advice to senior managers regarding IT-related issues.
- Prepare guidelines and evaluate IT systems against given standards and performance criteria.
- Provide day-to-day product or system support to users via the helpdesk.

REQUIRED SKILLS

- MCSE AND CNE CERTIFICATION.
- Advanced Novell and Windows NT installation and administration skills.
- Lotus Notes and Domino Server Admin.
- MS product certifications.
- TCP/IP, VPN, and firewall working knowledge.

Sample Resume:

Byrd Cowley

2211 Main Street, San Antonio, TX 78219
(210) 665-6343 ByrdCowley@yahoo.com

OBJECTIVE

Accomplished IT professional with a proven track record seeking an IT manager position with a large telecommunication company.

SUMMARY

- Six years experience managing IT projects and systems, development teams, and customer service centers using in-house and outsourced resources.
- Experienced network infrastructure and capacity planner.
- Internet technology skills, including TCP/IP, VPN, and firewall setup and administration.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including helpdesk skills.
- Detail oriented, with very strong organizational and planning skills.

TECHNOLOGIES

- Windows 2000/NT 3.1-4.0 Server Administration
- Internet Information Server 3.0+ Administration
- Microsoft Project
- Microsoft Office 97, 2000, and XP
- IBM Netfinity Manager
- Visual Studio 6.0
- Networking/IP Technologies
- Internet Technologies (DNS, FTP, POP3, SMTP, WWW)
- Windows 3.1, 3.11WFW, 95, 98, ME

EXPERIENCE

- AAA Energy Group, San Antonio, TX 9/2000 – 8/2002
Manager, Technology Division
 Managed outsourced development team, created new team, and brought development services in-house. Outsourced web design and e-branding. Assisted in logical application development and systems architecture of online energy management and profiling service. Managed all Internet-based systems and equipment, including web, email, ftp, application, SQL ColdFusion, site minder servers and all routers, switches and redundant connectivity. Designed and implemented corporate network intranet and satellite office connectivity and integration of technologies across companies that were acquired.
- HomeOwners.com Inc., Houston, TX 8/1998 – 8/2000
IT Manager
 Project and technical management of a large home-based web portal. Included logical design and systems/network architecture. Managed development staff of 8 (DBA, Programmer x 2, Web Developer, Web Designer, HTML Coder). Acted as technical liaison representing the organization to investors and clients.
- ABC Web Services Inc., Austin, TX 1/1996 – 7/1998
Manager, On-Site Support
 Helpdesk/call center management covering telephone and on-site support with a staff of 20 employees.

EDUCATION

B.S. in Computer Science, University of Houston, Houston, TX

1995

You do –

Target your resume for each job you apply for.

You don't –

Just modify the Objective section of your resume before sending it out to different employers.



Statement

Do not make vague or generic statements about yourself and your professional accomplishments within your resume. Make your statements concrete and support them with quantitative information and qualitative information. Provide back-up support for the statements made in your resume.

For example, if you list a VB programmer position, mention your achievements during the time you held that position, such as the programs you coded and the generated results.

You do –

Make your statements concrete.

You don't –

Make vague or generic statements.



Sections

Do not make it hard to find information. Make sure the sections of your resume are clearly defined.

The common sections of a resume are: Heading, Job Objectives, Summary of Qualifications, Education, Accreditation and Licenses, Skills, Work and Employment Experience, Professional Affiliations, Military Service, References and Personal

Information. Only choose the sections that apply to you and arrange them neatly. Do not leave in too much extraneous information. Keep your resume short and simple. Try to use simple words and begin sentences with action verbs.

You do –

Clearly define sections of your resume.

You don't –

Make it hard to find information.



Sex

Do not mystify the reader about your sex; they'll go nuts till they know whether you're male or female. And while they're worrying about that, they're NOT thinking about what you can do for them. So if your name is Lee or Robin or Pat or anything else not clearly male or female, use a Mr. or Ms. prefix.

You do –

Use a Mr. or Ms. Prefix if your name is something not clearly male or female.

You don't –

Mystify the reader about your sex.

Chapter 11. Don't be Oversimplified



Short Resume

Because you've heard resumes shouldn't be too long, you try to squeeze your experiences onto one page. By doing this, you delete impressive achievements. Wrong! If you have two page's worth of information, go with it.

When writing your resume, ask yourself, "Will this statement help me land an interview?" Every word should sell you, so only include information that elicits a "yes."

You do –

Include all the information that may help you land an interview.

You don't –

Delete impressive achievements.



Objective

By not describing what job or field you want to work in, you start your resume off on the wrong foot. You force the employer to read it all the way through to figure out what kind of job you're suited for. You create more work for your busy reader. This is the last thing you want to do!

By starting your resume with a clear objective, you tell the reader exactly what you want to do for him or her. This establishes a rapport and sets the stage for the resume, which will greatly improve your results.

You do –

Start your resume with a clear objective.

You don't –

Omit the objective part.



Keywords

Use keywords to get your resume noticed. Be sure to include all of the buzzwords for qualifications you possess, as related to the position. Utilize what the employer wants and include those keywords into your resume. If you are not sure of what keywords relate to the position you are applying for, analyze several job descriptions and try to incorporate the keywords used.

You do –

Use keywords to get your resume noticed.

You don't –

Miss keywords.



Omit General Skills

Do not forget to include the general skills you know the majority of employers are looking for. You definitely want to demonstrate your ability to work well with others, your independent working skills, and your leadership skills. These are traits employers are looking for and failure to demonstrate them could result in your missing out on a good job opportunity.

You do –

Include the general skills employers are looking for.

You don't –

Miss general skills.



Dates

You have jumped around a lot and do not want prospective employers to think you're a flake. So you list the companies but eliminate the dates for each position.

Wrong! Leaving dates off your resume will surely cause eyebrows to raise and make people wonder what you've been up to lately.

Neither do you be mysterious by listing “years only” on your work history. Technically, if you worked one day in the year of 2001, you could put “2001”. However, this could be an eliminator. You should list the “month year” to the “month year” for each position. For example, May 2000 – June 2001.

You do –

Use “month year” to the “month year” for each position.

You don't –

Miss dates or list years only.



Acronyms

When you list your educational experience, always spell out the name of the degree and the area of specialization; for example, list “Master of Science, Geology” rather than “M.S.” In the same vein, spell out the name of your [Alma Mater](#). Although everyone may know what “MIT” stands for, take the effort to spell it out. However, this rule doesn't apply to scannable resumes, where acronyms for degrees are recommended.

You do –

Spell out the names unless you are preparing a scannable resume.

You don't –

Make people guess what you mean by the acronyms.



Don't assume that people reading your resume know what your company does. If your work for a relatively unknown company, you should briefly describe the business. Otherwise the hiring manager has to go online and look up a company description. And wasting the hiring manager's time is not a good idea.

**Name and
Location of
Companies**

You do –

Briefly describe the business of relatively unknown companies.

You don't –

Only list name and location of the companies.

Chapter 12. Remove Superfluous Info



Unrelated Info

Get rid of those things that are not related to the job you're applying for. For example, if you're applying for an IT position, do not include things like "*Internship as a English tutor*" or "*Courses taken in physical education.*" As long as you do not create a void in your work history, it's perfectly fine not to bring up the sticky matter on your resume.

You need to camouflage your experience by leaving out titles and descriptions of unrelated jobs. Instead, just list the company and the years of employment. For example, if you're applying for an engineer position with a mining company, you need to get rid of job titles such as "*press operator*", "*office manager*" or "*truck driver.*"

You do –

Get rid of those things that are not related to the job you're applying for.

You don't –

Bring up the unrelated matter on your resume.



Being A Jack of All Trades

If you had to hammer 2000 nails into a wall, would you choose a hammer that also squeegees windows and cuts glass, or a hammer that specializes in hitting nails?

Unless extra skills and capabilities are relevant, don't include them. Being good in many fields at once gives an impression that you lack focus, and makes a hiring manager suspect that you might not be master of any specific field.

You do –

Show the focus of your skills.

You don't –

Include extra skills that are not required by the job you're applying for.



Self-employed

If you've owned a business, don't say so on your resume. In the hiring world, it's often thought that once people have worked for themselves, they'll never make a good employee again. As an entrepreneur, they can be a threat to a company for fear the candidate may use the company's resources/clients to start another business. They are also often stereotyped as freethinking troublemakers in the corporate structure. A way around revealing your self-employment is to give yourself a job title in your business, choosing a title that supports your current job objective, if possible.

Do not use "your name" as a company for which you've worked. This can alert a company that you are either an entrepreneur or covering a period of unemployment and may eliminate you from being considered.

You do –

Use a job title other than "Owner" if you've owned a business.

You don't –

Make people think you've been self-employed or unemployed.



Outdated or Irrelevant Skills

If you do not have the highest level of experience or strongest skill set, do not include outdated skills or basic skills, such as "*passed MS Networking Essentials exam*" or "*Proficient in Window 95.*"

John has lots of experience, but none of it is directly supporting an IT position he was seeking. Notice that the skills-based resume eliminates the outdated and irrelevant history and highlights his ability to apply his general business knowledge to an IT position and his management and sales skills. The skills-based resume draws out his knowledge and skills and makes them more prominent on paper. Job history is downplayed by simply listing his employment history at the end of the resume with little information about the actual company and job.

Sample resume for an over-50 career changer candidate:

John Rutherford

89 Duboce Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 323-1795 JohnR@yahoo.com

Objective

I am eager to utilize the skills and experience that I have acquired in the positions I have held in the last 24 years. I have been on both sides, having worked as an employee and a business owner. I am very motivated, dependable, professional, and a self-starter who enjoys challenges. I am looking for a position with both growth potential and long-term opportunities.

Experience

8/1999 – Present Albertson Shower Walls Co., Branch Office, San Francisco, CA

Manager

- Responsible for entire branch operation.
- Increase sales by 40% in the first year.
- Hired and trained installers.
- Controlled all inventory and production.
- Built and reviewed weekly, biweekly, monthly reports with the owner.
- Set up a network in our main office.
- Made several databases using Access for direct marketing.

6/1998 – 8/1999 Self-employed, JR Showers Co., Francisco, CA

Owner

- Established and built up custom shower wall business.
- Responsible for entire business operation.

4/1997 – 6/1998 ABC Real Estate, San Jose, CA

Property Manager

- Responsible for eight apartment buildings, totaling 990 units.

- Trained and supervised 50 employees ranging from managers to leasing agents and maintenance personnel.
- Managed advertising in newspapers, as well as magazines.
- Controlled all bids for work needed and signing of contracts.
- Reported on a weekly basis to the president and vice-president of the company.

11/1995 – 3/1997 Self-employed, J&J Coffee Distributorship Co., Houston, TX

Sales and Service

- Serviced grocery food chain stores with organic whole bean coffee. Dealt directly with store managers and serviced displays.

Computer Skills

Proficient

- DOS, Win95, Win98, Win2000Pro, NT 4.0, Windows for Work Groups
- MS Office 97 – 2000 Pro, Outlook, IE5
- Netscape 4.75, Netscape 6
- WinZip, WinRar, WinAce
- Norton Software
- Various anti-virus programs

Working Knowledge

- Novell NetWare, Adobe Photoshop, Hot Dog Pro, Linux/Mandrake, MS PowerPoint.

Education

Church Hill High School – Graduated 1978, San Antonio, TX
Houston College, Houston, TX

- Fundamentals, LAN, WAN, Cisco TCP/IP, Jan – Jun 2000.
- I am A+ certified.
- Currently pursuing NT and CCNA certificates.

Interests

Computers, flying, snow and water skiing.

Skills-based resume:

John Rutherford

89 Duboce Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 323-1795 JohnR@yahoo.com

Objective

I am seeking to apply my 24 years of sales and management experience to a position selling technical solutions.

Summary of Qualifications

- Seasoned sales and management professional experienced in solution selling
- More than 12 years experience in operating business
- Technically knowledgeable with more than 15 years computer experience and broad software knowledge

Technical Skills

Networking: LAN/WAN, Windows NT 4.0, Novell NetWare, Linux, Cisco, TCP/IP
Software: DOS, Windows 95/98, Windows 2000 Professional, Internet Explorer 5, Netscape 4.6, Access, PowerPoint, Photoshop, Norton Utilities, and various anti-virus software
Certifications: A+ certified, pursuing MCSE and CCNA

- Set up a network in our main office
- Made several databases using Access for direct marketing

Experience

PC/Networking

- Hands-on experience in the installation of the Houston College computer lab, including installation of Windows NT servers, configuration of Cisco routers, hubs, and switches, and cabling installation
- Management of Windows NT, including setting up and configuring user accounts, printing environment, and security
- PC software installation and upgrades

Small Business Sales and Operations

- Independent organic coffee distributor servicing grocery food chain stores working directly with store managers
- Established and built up custom shower wall business
- Four years experience in managing all business operations
- Proven ability to drive sales (40% increase in the first year of operation)
- Personnel management, including hiring and training installation team
- Effective inventory control and production

Property Management

- Managed eight apartment buildings totaling 990 units.
- Trained and supervised 50 employees ranging from managers to leasing agents and maintenance personnel.

- Prepared budgets and stayed with budgets while improving properties and clientele.
- Managed property advertisements in newspapers and magazines.
- Oversaw all outsourced bids and contracts for work needed.
- Provided weekly revenue and operations reports to executive management.

Work History

8/1999 – Present	Branch Office Manager, Albertson Shower Walls Co., San Francisco, CA
6/1998 – 8/1999	President, JR Showers Co., Francisco, CA
4/1997 – 6/1998	ABC Real Estate, San Jose, CA
11/1995 – 3/1997	Manager, J&J Coffee Distributorship Co., Houston, TX

Education

A.S. Network Administration, Houston College, Houston, TX

You do –

Use skills-based resume to eliminate outdated skills.

You don't –

Include outdated skills or basic skills.



Gaps in Employment History

Many people feel compelled to offer excuses for why they left former jobs. This is a mistake. Excuses such as "Company downsized," "personality conflict with management" and "Commute too long" should never appear on your resume.

Within your resume never include the reasons why you stopped working for an employer, switched jobs, or are currently looking for a new job. If necessary, this information can be brought up later during an interview.

If there're only one or two gaps in your employment history, you can still use a chronological resume format, but don't include lines stating "Unemployed" or "Out of

Work” along with the corresponding dates. If you mention anything like "sexual harassment", "lawsuit", "workers compensation claim", or "fired me for no good reason", things could become much worse. Instead, you could state that in between jobs you took time off to pursue additional schooling, for example.

Focus your resume on the positives – when you were employed and what you accomplished while employed. However, if you have many gaps in your employment history, strongly consider using a different resume format, such as a functional resume. A functional resume focuses attention on your accomplishments and is often used more successfully if you are trying to downplay gaps in your career or to change careers or industries.

You do –

Use a functional resume if you have many gaps in your employment history, and focus your resume on the positives.

You don't –

Include the reasons why you stopped working for an employer.



Frequent Job Hopping

Frequent job-hopping is something employers don't look favorably upon. Since it's expensive to train new employees, few employers are willing to invest in someone with a record of jumping between jobs extremely frequently. Someone who can demonstrate a sense of loyalty to their past employer will be more desirable.

If you are a frequent job hopper, consider using a skills-based functional resume. Highlight your skills the employer is looking for. Downplay your job history by simply listing it at the end of the resume with little information about the actual company and job.

You do –

Use skills-based functional resume if you are a frequent job hopper.

You don't –

Highlight frequent job-hopping.



Personal

Info

Do not include personal information that doesn't directly relate the job you're applying for, such as irrelevant hobbies or special skills.

Unless each piece of information within your resume helps specifically showcase you as an ideal candidate for the job you're applying for, refrain from including it. For example, if you're applying for a network administrator position, listing that your favorite hobby is hiking is irrelevant. At the same time, you want to demonstrate through your resume that you are a person with skills and experience that the employer find useful.

For the same reason, do not include other personal information such as your age, sex, religion, race, and martial status. No hiring manager wants to hear any of those.

You do –

Demonstrate that you are a person with skills and experience that the employer find useful.

You don't –

Include personal info irrelevant to the job you're applying for.



Age,

Salaries,

References,

& Additional

Materials

References to your age should be left out of the resume. Today in business world, ageism remains a common problem. If you're perceived to be too young or too old for a position, you might not be considered. Thus, your resume should offer little or no hint of your age.

Using a chronological formatted resume makes it possible for an employer to calculate your approximate age, but this requires work on the part of the employer.

Do not list your salary demand on your resume, or you will risk sounding either overpriced or under-priced. You risk the reading jumping to conclusions about the salary level you would or would not accept despite the possibility that the benefits may make a lower base salary desirable. In general, it's best to negotiate salary further down the interviewing road.

Do not include references on the resume. They take valuable space, and the employer won't need them until you've survived initial screening and probably initial interview. Equally unnecessary is the often-used statement "References available upon request." It's an obvious truth, so why waste space on the resume to state it? It only makes you look dumb.

An exception to this rule might be a professional reference, such as a widely known industry figure, of such weight that the opportunity to the "name drop" might be helpful in grabbing the reader's attention.

Nor should you enclose additional materials, such as transcripts and self-serving letters of recommendation from friends and former employers, in your resume package unless they are specifically requested. You can bring them to your interview and present them if appropriate.

You do –

Only include something that can help you land an interview.

You don't –

Include age, salaries, references and additional materials.



Listing too many professional associations can cause a potential employer to become concerned that these obligations will interfere with your regular work schedule.

Professional

Affiliations

Suppose you are a member of five organizations according to your resume. It's natural for the employer to wonder how much of your time is left for your current company. So, choose one or two of the organizations that are directly related to the job you're applying.

You do –

List one or two of the organizations that are directly related to the job you're applying.

You don't –

List too many professional associations.

Chapter 13. Improve Your Wording



Technical Jargon & Big Words

While it's important to include keywords in your resume that describe a specific job or responsibilities, avoid using too much technical jargon. Someone in an HR department at a company might not understand technical jargon associated with your particular job.

A good resume is often ruined when the author utilizes a superabundance of polysyllabic terminology, or uses too many big words. When your resume is not clear and to the point, the reader gets bored, time is wasted and your resume goes in the trash.

Instead of saying "implemented," try "adopted" or "set up". Never "utilize" what you can simply "use." Don't "interface" with people; "work" with them.

You do –

Make your resume clear and to the point.

You don't –

Use too much technical jargon and too many big words.



Overused Words & Gerunds

Refrain from using overused phrases or words, such as “hardworking.” Focus on using action verbs and descriptive phrases to get your main points across. Below is a list of some action words that you can use to enhance you resume and to make your descriptions more powerful.

Various Skills

Achieved
Arranged
Built
Collected
Contributed
Delivered
Designed
Dispatched
Examined
Improved
Increased
Informed
Maintained
Organized
Performed
Purchased
Prepared
Scheduled
Supervised
Trained

Technical Skills

Assembled
Balanced
Built
Calculated
Cut
Designed
Detected
Developed
Formed
Generated
Inspected
Installed
Maintained
Molded
Operated
Packaged
Processed
Remodeled

Sales Skills

Accomplished
Arbitrated
Budgeted
Computed
Consulted
Demonstrated
Dissuaded
Exceeded
Forecasted
Generated
Increased
Influenced
Marketed
Ordered
Persuaded
Produced
Projected
Promoted
Realized
Saved
Sold

Communication Skills

Addressed
Authored
Clarified
Created
Demonstrated
Drafted
Presented
Persuaded
Proofread
Reported

Clerical Skills

Assigned
Balanced
Catalogued
Charted
Compiled
Composed
Distributed
Edited
Followed up
Identified
Ordered
Planned
Prepared
Recorded

Helping Skills

Assisted
Attended
Comforted
Consoled
Encouraged
Facilitated
Guided
Helped
Nursed
Reassured
Served
Supported
Tutored

Avoid gerunds (“ing”) in your writing whenever possible. For example, say “Devised electronic network *that facilitates* communications with more than 200 remote locations” instead of “Devised electronic network *facilitating* communications with more than 200 remote locations.”

Do not mix up the two terms “*Work History*” and “*Employment History*”. If the section is entitled “Work History”, you can include both paid and unpaid work because work is work, whether it’s done for free or for money. On the other hand, if the section is entitled “Employment History”, you can only include paid work.

“More than” and “Over” are two terms that are often confused. “More than” sounds more serious than “over”, so on your resume, use “more than” instead of “over.” For instance, use “more than 10 years of experience” instead of “over 10 years of experience.”

You do –

Use action words and complex sentences to enhance your statement.

You don’t –

Avoid overused words and gerunds.



Statement such as “I designed the company’s Web site” or “I was in charge of the database management” can make you appear arrogant. Instead, you should use an impersonal voice. For example, the statements “Designed the company’s Web site” and “Was in charge of the database management” have a better tone. I strongly recommend removing pronouns such as “I”, “you”, “he”, “she”, “it” or “they”, etc.

**Impersonal
Approach**

You do –

Use an impersonal approach.

You don't –

Appear arrogant by using a personal voice.

Chapter 14. Make It Short



Resume Length

If you are using a two-page resume, consider re-phrasing the content to fit in one single page. You want the person to attain all of the most pertinent information and key points you're attempting to convey within your resume by glancing at the document for that brief period of time. So try to rely on a standard one-page resume for your job hunting.

If you have to use a two-page resume, make sure you have two page's worth of information and don't staple them. The person initially reading your resume will probably scan it for about 20 seconds to understand who you are and what qualifications you have, and to determine if you should get the interview. A resume longer than two pages is hard for anyone to scan in the 20 seconds.

However, if you are submitting a scannable resume, it's less critical that you keep its length at one page.

You do –

Make your resume no longer than two pages.

You don't –

Use a long resume that is hard for anyone to scan for a brief period of time.



Redundancy

Don't waste words. Every line or sentence in your resume should say something important and specific about you, your educational background, your work history, or your accomplishments. All sentences and bulleted points should be short and to the point.

The sentences should be under twenty words each, and all paragraphs should be ten lines or less. Remove words and phrases that are redundant.

You do –

Remove words and phrases that are redundant.

You don't –

Waste words.



Long

Paragraphs

Instead of using long paragraphs to describe past work experience, you should use a bulleted list. Most employers will spend less than one minute initially reading a resume to determine whether or not he should invite the applicant to an interview, so it's critical that key information, such as work experience, is easy to find and described using descriptive and punchy action words and phrases. Using keywords is particularly important if your resume is going to be scanned into applicant tracking software.

You do –

Use a bulleted list.

You don't –

Use long paragraphs.



Long-winded Work History & Job Listing

Only your relatives have the patience to read through every job you've held since stocking groceries in high school. Prospective employers want to know what relevant experience you've had in the past 10-12 years. Highlight the most recent jobs and consolidate the past into several lines on a strong 1-page resume.

You have changed fields more than models change outfits at a fashion show. Your resume looks like a jumble of job listings. If you have experience in more than one field and it needs to be included on the resume, consider grouping the types of jobs together under specific headings such as "Instructional/Training" or "Customer Service/Sales."

You do –

Highlight the most recent jobs, and group the types of jobs together if you have had too many.

You don't –

Turn your resume into a jumble of job listings.



Endorsements

An endorsement is a quote from an associate or boss that describes your attributes or success in a previous or current job. The endorsement is appropriate as part of a job description or functional skill description. Using one or two endorsements if space allows can enhance your resume. Using more than two endorsements can make you or your resume appear self-exalting.

You do –

Use one or two endorsements if space allows.

You don't –

Appear self-exalting by using too many endorsements.

Chapter 15. Write a Perfect Cover Letter



Once you have carefully checked over your professionally written resume to ensure that the salient points mentioned above have been addressed, don't forget one of the most important adjuncts to a good resume – the cover letter.

Reason for Sending Resume

In the cover letter, you have the chance to state why you are sending your resume to this company and for what specific position. Don't make people guess as to why you have sent them your resume -- make it clear right up front.

You do –

Use cover letter to introduce yourself.

You don't –

Forget cover letter when you send out your resume.



Do not write a general or generic cover letter and send it to multiple employers. They will know a form letter when they see one. Always tailor your letter to the employer and position for which you are applying. It will be well worth your time and efforts.

Generic Cover Letter

You do –

Taylor your cover letter to the employer and position.

You don't –

Use generic cover letter.



Rules for Cover Letter

The purpose of your cover letter is to get your resume read. It's not a summary of your resume. Instead, it should be a personalized letter that gets to the point quickly and concisely, and reveals some of the positive aspects about yourself. Some of the fatal mistakes of a cover letter are:

- × Grammatical, spelling, or formatting errors.
- × Salutations such as “*Dear Sir*” or “*To whom It May Concern.*” Instead, personalize the letter with a name, but if that is not possible, use “*Dear Hiring Manager*” or “*Dear Employer.*”
- × A handwritten cover letter.
- × Specific salary figures. If they are requested, state the your salary is negotiable and can be discussed in the interview.
- × Summarizing your resume.
- × Exaggerations of qualifications or experience.
- × Negative or controversial subject matter such as political or religious topics, or insults to your previous employer or company.
- × Revealing too much about why are looking for a job.
- × Personal issues or feelings.
- × Overly aggressive sales pitch about yourself.

- × Personal or cheesy closing such as “*Yours truly*”, “*Eagerly waiting*”, or “*Your next employee*”.

Here are what you should include in your cover letter:

- ✓ State your purpose or objective in the opening sentence of your letter. Specifically name the position for which you are applying so that the employer knows immediately what you want.
- ✓ Mention how you learned about the job opening and why it interests you.
- ✓ If possible, mention a name. For example, "Professor Jones suggested I contact you about" Make sure you have permission from the person to whom you refer, and that the contact knows the person to whom you are sending your letter.
- ✓ Show some familiarity with the company or organization to which you are applying. Do some research about the employer and indicate in your letter why you are particularly interested in them. For example, discuss that you are familiar with their future plans or current issues or problems.
- ✓ Stress any particular strengths you have which qualify you for the job. It can be effective to expand on one or two related experiences listed in your resume. Do not repeat information on your resume word for word.
- ✓ Close your letter by thanking the employer for their consideration and requesting an interview.
- ✓ Always include your own contact information on your cover letter. If your resume should become separated from your letter, an employer will still know how to reach you.

Randy has lots of work experience, but none of it is directly supporting a position in IT. He is now applying for a position selling technical solutions. Compare example A with example B. Example A is a poorly written cover letter. Example B is an improved cover letter that better serves its purpose.

Example A:

Randy Shockley
586 Overton Way
Memphis, TN 38112
RandyS@earthlink.net
(901) 243-0685

October 4, 2002

Dear Sirs,

With my 24 years of being in the work force and the experience that I have acquired, I would be an asset to your company. I have been a business owner for 12 years, and have held management positions in different fields.

I have been involved with computers for over 15 years. I have experience with building and upgrading computer systems for standalone as well as LAN systems. I am A+ certified and am currently pursuing NT and CCNA certificates. I have been attending Houston College on weeknights and Saturdays. I have, to date, completed Network Fundamentals, LAN, WAN, and Cisco TCP/IP. The Houston College Lab was moved to a different location in which I helped. This involved OS installs, mostly NT 4.0, setting up of routers, hubs, and switches, and manufacturing RJ45 cables. I have had hands-on experience with Cisco routers. I am very familiar with Windows 95, 98, NT 4.0, ME, 2000 Pro, MS Office 97-2000 Pro, and working knowledge of Linux/Mandrake 7.4. Due to my continual usage of upgrades and trial version software, I am well versed with a broad platform of software being used with cutting-edge companies.

I would like to meet with you to discuss your opportunity in more detail. I am available for a personal interview at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Randy Shockley

Randy Shockley

Example B:

Randy Shockley
586 Overton Way
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October 4, 2002

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am submitting my resume for consideration for the channel sales position listed in the *San Antonio Express* on July 29, 2000. After 24 years in sales and management, I believe that I bring a well-rounded set of skills that meet the requirements advertised for this position. I would like to highlight some in particular that fit well with the position advertised.

- ◆ Experienced in solution selling
- ◆ Technically knowledgeable
- ◆ Broad software knowledge
- ◆ Customer service focus

I have been involved with computers for more than 15 years and have experience with building and upgrading computer systems for standalone as well as LAN systems. I am A+ certified and am currently pursuing NT and CCNA certificates. I have been attending Houston College on weeknights and Saturdays. To date, I have completed Network Fundamentals, LAN, WAN, and Cisco TCP/IP courses. As testament to my diverse capabilities, I was instrumental in helping the Houston College Lab move to a different location during the past year. This involved OS installs, mostly NT 4.0, setting up of routers, hubs, and switches, and manufacturing RJ45 cables. I have also had hands-on experience with Cisco routers. I am very familiar with Windows 95, 98, NT 4.0, ME, 2000 Pro, MS Office 97-2000 Pro, and working knowledge of Linux/Mandrake 7.4. Due to my continual usage of upgrades and trial version software, I am well versed with a broad platform of software being used with cutting-edge companies.

I would like to meet with you to discuss in more detail. I am available for a personal interview at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Randy Shockley

Randy Shockley

Enclosures: Resume

You do –

Follow the rules of writing a cover letter.

You don't –

Ignore the importance of the cover letter.

Chapter 16. Do's and Don'ts

Again, this book is not to teach you how to write a resume. By reading this book, you know where to find the “bugs” in your resume, how to correct them, and the do’s and don’ts of making your resume into a winner. As you move forward in your career and write a new resume for each of your career goals, come back to this book and check out the do’s and don’t listed below. Your winning resume will guide you in successfully competing for future jobs. You will consistently market yourself as a top candidate. Good Luck! With a winning resume, you will [get](#) the job of your dream!

You do –

- 1. Proofread your resume carefully, and ask someone else to proofread it for typographical, spelling & grammar mistakes. (Page 3)**
- 2. Check the spelling of the recipient's name and the company's name. (Page 3)**
- 3. Make sure your resume looks clean, polished, and balanced. (Page 5)**
- 4. Use plain white or ivory, in a quality appropriate for your job objective. (Page 5)**
- 5. Make sure the text of your resume is easily readable both to human eyes and to computer scanners. (Page 6)**
- 6. Choose one easy-to-read, 12-point font such as Times [New Roman](#). (Page 6)**
- 7. Makes better use of white space. (Page 8)**

8. **Use a laser printer to generate copies from a computer, or have it professionally typeset and printed. (Page 9)**
9. **Mail your resume and cover letter in a large envelope. (Page 9)**
10. **Use a conservative format for your resume. (Page 10)**
11. **Describe yourself by your words, not by your photo. (Page 10)**
12. **Use an email address that looks professional. (Page 11)**
13. **Make sure an employer can reach you easily. (Page 11)**
14. **Keep your job search a secret while still employed. (Page 12)**
15. **Begin your resume with your name and contact info. (Page 12)**
16. **Check if resume format is specified in the job ad. (Page 13)**
17. **Confirm that your resume has been received in advance of the deadline. (Page 13)**
18. **Customize your resume for each job opening. (Page 14)**
19. **Try to send a resume addressed to an individual. (Page 14)**
20. **Make necessary changes on your resume. (Page 15)**
21. **Send your resume by mail. (Page 15)**

- 22. Use a laser printer to generate resumes from a computer, or have them professionally typeset and printed. (Page 16)**
- 23. Show your serious attitude in your resume. (Page 16)**
- 24. Update your resume frequently. (Page 17)**
- 25. Choose the resume format that serves you best. (Page 17)**
- 26. Design your resume in the style matching your profession. (Page 18)**
- 27. Design your resume in word-processing programs such as MS Word. (Page 18)**
- 28. Use familiar industry keywords to describe your skills and experience in your scannable resume. (Page 25)**
- 29. Follow the rules for designing and handling a ASCII resume. (Page 26)**
- 30. Lead with your strong points as they relate to the job you're applying for. (Page 27)**
- 31. Use a single powerful job title. (Page 28)**
- 32. Write about your achievements. (Page 29)**
- 33. Say "Managed a department of 10 with a budget of \$1,000,000." (Page 31)**
- 34. Highlight your most important accomplishments. (Page 31)**
- 35. Focus on the skills and accomplishments the employer is looking for. (Page 32)**

- 36. Write about what you want to do. (Page 33)**
- 37. Write a strong Summary of Qualifications. (Page 33)**
- 38. Focus on your present job. (Page 33)**
- 39. Taylor your resume to fit the job opening. (Page 34)**
- 40. Highlight your new skills, knowledge and responsibilities if you have spent many years in one spot. (Page 35)**
- 41. Think what the employer needs. (Page 35)**
- 42. De-emphasize your previous employers if you are making dramatic career changes. (Page 36)**
- 43. Transfer military skills to the private sector. (Page 38)**
- 44. Set up an ASCII formatted resume. (Page 39)**
- 45. Be 100% honest. (Page 39)**
- 46. Try to be creative. (Page 40)**
- 47. Consider Delivery Questions. (Page 41)**
- 48. Follow up on your resume. (Page 42)**
- 49. Emphasize your experience if you don't have the required degree. (Page 45)**
- 50. Speak confidently. (Page 46)**

- 51. Make the objective statement closely match the job you're applying for. (Page 47)**
- 52. Target your resume for each job you apply for. (Page 50)**
- 53. Make your statements concrete. (Page 51)**
- 54. Clearly define sections of your resume. (Page 52)**
- 55. Use a Mr. or Ms. Prefix if your name is something not clearly male or female. (Page 52)**
- 56. Include all the information that may help you land an interview. (Page 53)**
- 57. Start your resume with a clear objective. (Page 53)**
- 58. Use keywords to get your resume noticed. (Page 54)**
- 59. Include the general skills employers are looking for. (Page 54)**
- 60. Use "month year" to the "month year" for each position. (Page 55)**
- 61. Spell out the names unless you are preparing a scannable resume. (Page 56)**
- 62. Briefly describe the business of relatively unknown companies. (Page 56)**
- 63. Get rid of those things that are not related to the job you're applying for. (Page 57)**
- 64. Show the focus of your skills. (Page 57)**

- 65. Use a job title other than "Owner" if you've owned a business. (Page 58)**
- 66. Use skills-based resume to eliminate outdated skills. (Page 62)**
- 67. Use a functional resume if you have many gaps in your employment history, and focus your resume on the positives. (Page 63)**
- 68. Use skills-based functional resume if you are a frequent job hopper. (Page 64)**
- 69. Demonstrate that you are a person with skills and experience that the employer find useful. (Page 64)**
- 70. Only include something that can help you land an interview. (Page 66)**
- 71. List one or two of the organizations that are directly relates to the job you're applying. (Page 66)**
- 72. Make your resume clear and to the point. (Page 67)**
- 73. Use action words and complex sentences to enhance your statement. (Page 69)**
- 74. Use an impersonal approach. (Page 70)**
- 75. Make your resume no longer than two pages. (Page 71)**
- 76. Remove words and phrases that are redundant. (Page 72)**
- 77. Use a bulleted list. (Page 73)**

- 78. Highlight the most recent jobs, and group the types of jobs together if you have had too many. (Page 73)**
- 79. Use one or two endorsements if space allows. (Page 73)**
- 80. Use cover letter to introduce yourself. (Page 75)**
- 81. Tailor your cover letter to the employer and position. (Page 75)**
- 82. Follow the rules of writing a cover letter. (Page 80)**

You don't –

- 1. Refuse to take the time necessary to proofread your resume thoroughly. (Page 3)**
- 2. Misspell the recipient's name and the company's name. (Page 4)**
- 3. Use cheap paper and fold your resume. (Page 5)**
- 4. Use colored paper unless there's a very good reason for it, like, you're a modern artist. (Page 5)**
- 5. Use ink in wild colors and mixing multiple colors. (Page 6)**
- 6. Overuse bold, underlining, italic typestyle and mixing font sizes. (Page 6)**
- 7. Use lots of blank space and squeezed text to one side or one corner. (Page 8)**

8. **Send out photocopies of your resume. (Page 9)**
9. **Stable your resume to a cover letter. (Page 9)**
10. **Use charts, graphs and other graphic elements in your resume. (Page 10)**
11. **Include yourself by your photo. (Page 10)**
12. **Use an email address that looks unprofessional. (Page 11)**
13. **Make an employer figure out how to contact you. (Page 11)**
14. **List your current work phone number or e-mail address at work. (Page 12)**
15. **Put the word "Resume" at the top of your resume. (Page 12)**
16. **Submit your resume in a wrong format the employer has asked for. (Page 13)**
17. **Miss the deadline of resume delivery. (Page 13)**
18. **Just blast a generic resume to every job opening you find. (Page 14)**
19. **Address the resume to "Dear Sir" or "To Whom It May Concern". (Page 14)**
20. **Handwrite the changes on back of envelope. (Page 15)**
21. **Send your resume on a computer disk. (Page 15)**
22. **Handwrite the resume. (Page 16)**

23. **Demonstrate your sense of humor in your resume. (Page 16)**
24. **Use a resume in undergrad format. (Page 17)**
25. **Choose the resume format that exposes your weakness. (Page 17)**
26. **Cross the boundaries of your profession. (Page 18)**
27. **Use resume designing templates or wizards. (Page 18)**
28. **Use a regular resume for database scanning. (Page 25)**
29. **Send a regular resume via the Internet or email. (Page 26)**
30. **Bury your top qualifications. (Page 29)**
31. **List multiple weak job titles. (Page 30)**
32. **Write about your job duties. (Page 31)**
33. **Say "Managed a department of ten with a budget of one million dollars."
(Page 31)**
34. **Lose your most important accomplishments. (Page 32)**
35. **List skills and accomplishments that are unimportant. (Page 32)**
36. **Write about what you do not want to do. (Page 33)**
37. **Ignore the importance of the Summary of Qualifications. (Page 33)**

- 38. Focus on your older jobs. (Page 34)**
- 39. Submit an overqualified resume. (Page 34)**
- 40. Make your work history look stagnant. (Page 35)**
- 41. Think what you need. (Page 36)**
- 42. List many unrelated employers in your resume. (Page 36)**
- 43. Use military skills for corporate world. (Page 39)**
- 44. Send your resume as an email attachment. (Page 39)**
- 45. Lie on your resume. (Page 40)**
- 46. Over-do your creativity. (Page 40)**
- 47. Drop resume in mail and forget about it. (Page 41)**
- 48. Wait without doing anything after sending out resume. (Page 42)**
- 49. Give up because of lack of a degree. (Page 45)**
- 50. Show negativity. (Page 46)**
- 51. Use a vague job objective. (Page 47)**
- 52. Just modify the Objective section of your resume before sending it out to different employers. (Page 51)**

- 53. Make vague or generic statements. (Page 51)**
- 54. Make it hard to find information. (Page 52)**
- 55. Mystify the reader about your sex. (Page 52)**
- 56. Delete impressive achievements. (Page 53)**
- 57. Omit the objective part. (Page 54)**
- 58. Miss keywords. (Page 55)**
- 59. Miss general skills. (Page 55)**
- 60. Miss dates or list years only. (Page 55)**
- 61. Make people guess what you mean by the acronyms. (Page 56)**
- 62. Only list name and location of the companies. (Page 56)**
- 63. Bring up the unrelated matter on your resume. (Page 57)**
- 64. Include extra skills that are not required by the job you're applying for. (Page 58)**
- 65. Make people think you've been self-employed or unemployed. (Page 58)**
- 66. Include outdated skills or basic skills. (Page 62)**
- 67. Include the reasons why you stopped working for an employer. (Page 63)**

- 68. Highlight frequent job-hopping. (Page 64)**
- 69. Include personal info irrelevant to the job you're applying for. (Page 64)**
- 70. Include age, salaries, references and additional materials. (Page 66)**
- 71. List too many professional associations. (Page 66)**
- 72. Use too much technical jargon and too many big words. (Page 67)**
- 73. Avoid overused words and gerunds. (Page 69)**
- 74. Appear arrogant by using a personal voice. (Page 70)**
- 75. Use a long resume that is hard for anyone to scan for a brief period of time. (Page 71)**
- 76. Waste words. (Page 72)**
- 77. Use long paragraphs. (Page 72)**
- 78. Turn your resume into a jumble of job listings. (Page 73)**
- 79. Appear self-exalting by using too many endorsements. (Page 74)**
- 80. Forget cover letter when you send out your resume. (Page 75)**
- 81. Use generic cover letter. (Page 75)**
- 82. Ignore the importance of the cover letter. (Page 80)**