

The Secrets to Writing a Resume That Gets Results

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Part One of Three

Are you contemplating a job change? Have you recently been the victim of corporate downsizing? Has the state of the current economy left you worried whether you will have a job to go to in the coming days?

If you can relate to any of the above mentioned situations, it's time to stop worrying about what the future holds, and start creating a future designed by you. One of the first issues that needs to be addressed is creating a winning resume that will get you in the door of top employers, and ensure that you are not taken out of the job race before you ever get started. In this article, we're going to discuss the different formats for creating a winning resume, and view the pros and cons of each through the employer's perspective. We'll also talk about what a hiring manager is looking in this document, and how you can effectively market your skills, experience and knowledge on one page. Finally, we'll disclose some of the secrets used by professional recruiters to get their candidate's resumes read, and how you can efficiently obtain the same results.

A resume is a personal summary of your professional history and qualifications. It includes information about your career goals, education, work experience, activities, honors, and any special skills you might have. You may hear this document referred to as a Curriculum Vitae (CV) , abstract, summary, synopsis, rundown, review, or recapitulation.

There are basically five widely-used resume formats that are used today. Let's take a look at them:

* The Chronological Resume - This format is designed to highlight progressive career growth and advancement. The most accepted format among hiring authorities, it is easily read and can be quickly scanned for employment history. This can be the right format for you, if you have a consistent job history, with no major gaps in employment. Avoid this format if you have recently changed career tracks. When your employment history displays progressively increased responsibility and you have worked with well-known companies, this format is an excellent choice. Always check to see that this is the format anticipated by the hiring managers in your field before utilizing the chronological style.

* The Functional Resume - Highlighting your key skills, accomplishments, and qualifications at the top of the document, this format minimizes the importance of your actual employment history by including a simple listing at bottom. This puts the focus on what you've done versus on where or when you did it. This format works well when most of your achievements have occurred in the past, you're a recent graduate from high school or college, you're returning to a previous line of work, you've been out of the job market for a period of time, or you've held a variety of unconnected positions. Keep in mind, while this format works well for the scenarios just mentioned, many hiring managers do not like this style because they believe it can be an attempt to cover up deficiencies. If you plan make your resume using this format, be sure to ask whether or not it is acceptable before submitting.

* The Combination Resume - Just as the title implies, the combination style utilizes both the chronological and functional formats. Summarize your most attractive skills, achievements, and qualifications at the top, and follow with an employment history area that supports the statements made in your summary. This format is excellent for situations where a chronological resume is requested, but you wish to highlight your special attributes, you have a steady employment history, or you wish to write a targeted resume that displays your skills as they relate to the position in which you are applying. The combination resume is widely accepted by hiring managers.

* The Inventory Resume - This format is designed for those individuals who have a general objective, and do not want to limit themselves to a specific job title. This allows you to use the same resume to apply to an unlimited number of companies, and requires that you simply list a general objective at the top. For instance, "Objective: To obtain a General Management Position in Marketing." The next step in preparing this type of resume is to choose four to six key skills and abilities you have that will market you to the target employer. This format is most conducive to large scale job search campaigns, and will allow you to use the same resume for multiple employers, while simply writing a fresh cover letter for each individual company.

* The Targeted Resume - For the job seeker with a specific career objective, from a specific industry, and created for a specific company, this format highlights the skills, experience and qualifications that match a job target. This is the preferred format when replying to an employment advertisement, applying for a position with a target company, or applying for a target position within a company.

Now that we have a working knowledge of the types of resumes you can choose from, it is up to you to decide which format is best suited for your job goals. In part two of our article, we'll talk about exactly what a prospective employer is looking for in your resume, and what helps ensure you are called in for the interview.

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