

Résumé-writing Tips

A Hands-On Approach to Résumé Writing

2009



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Why a résumé?

- The submission of a strong detailed resume will provide the Senior Member (SM) Review Panel with additional information and a strict timeline of your accomplishments
- A strong detailed resume will enable the SM review panel to make an informed decision on your qualifications

What is a résumé?

- A résumé is a marketing brochure
- A résumé markets a specific product: YOU.
- A great résumé sets you apart from your competition...it documents your value in the marketplace.



A résumé has one purpose:

- Just as a commercial draws you into a store or to a particular product, your résumé should impress your intended audience – Senior Member Review Panel.

Let's talk about the process for creating your résumé .

- Writing a résumé is a front-loaded process.
- Documenting your value to the marketplace will take the most effort and time.

On a pad ...

- Name this pad, **“WHAT I AM!”**
- As you write, describe in detail the
 - **S**ituations you’ve been in
 - **T**asks you perform / have performed
 - **A**ctions you take / have taken
 - **R**esults you make / have made possible

First Step...

- **Document, document, document.** Write things down as they occur to you. Don't worry about dates!
- Be specific about the **measurements** that affect your job –budget \$ responsible for, number of people supervised, size of project managed, etc.

Second Step...

- Review your information
- Begin attaching **accurate dates** and titles
- Compose a first rough draft of your résumé – don't worry about formatting.
- Set it aside. Walk away from it for a couple of days.
- Re-read it.
 - Where are there holes?
 - What sounds Great?
 - What doesn't make sense?

Third Step...

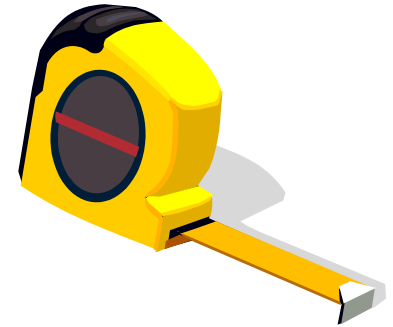
- Do another draft
 - Add more information as you remember it
 - Responsibility during a project
 - Accomplishment / achievement
 - Contribution to the project
 - Correct all typos
 - After a couple of days, re-read it, and fill in the gaps.

Fourth Step...

- Do another draft, this time thinking very carefully about choices you are making about marketing yourself. For example:
 - Keep things current; no more than 15-20 years of experience is relevant, include all patents
 - Publications; list those of significant importance, listing top 10 papers if applicable
 - Include professional development activities and volunteerism ONLY if they contribute to your professional skills
 - No company-specific jargon, abbreviations, etc. Use only industry-standard acronyms.
 - Make sure hardware/software terms are represented correctly

Final Step...

- Put your resume into a final format / formats.
- Make sure there are absolutely, positively
 - No typos
 - No misspelled words
 - No wrong dates
 - No grammatical errors
 - No incorrect punctuation, tenses, its/it's, there/they're/their
 - **This is important!**



Tip One: Measurements are Powerful

- For example, who would you choose?
 - Someone who says she processes payroll **OR** Someone who says she processes payroll for 1000+ staff and temporaries working in multi-state locations using Web portal-based payroll technology.
 - Someone who says he has responsibility for budget oversight **OR** someone who says he plans and oversees a \$5 million revenue line and a \$2 million expense budget, and that he produces monthly budget reports and adjusts monthly forecasts.
 - Someone who says she works in facilities maintenance **OR** someone who says she is part of a physical maintenance team that cares for a 1 million square foot physical plant in a three-building campus on ten acres.

Measurements tell the reader you understand how your job affects your employer's business. Measurements indicate you get things done!

Tip Two:

Find two proofreaders!

- Share this draft with someone who has a good understanding of what you do. **Listen carefully to his/her comments.** What do you learn that can be integrated into your résumé?
- Share this draft with someone who doesn't really know what you do – what do you learn from his/her comments?

Tip Three:

If you prefer, create multiple versions of your résumé.

- There are no rules about this!
- It's YOUR marketing brochure; you call the shots!

Tip Four: Professional Summary

- It's five-to-ten lines that describe your key strengths.
- A hiring manager may be looking at hundreds of résumés. Make it easy for the hiring manager by making your professional summary very compelling. Examples follow.

Tip Five:

Quantify, quantify, quantify

- Use your words and numbers to draw a clear picture of what you have done. For example:
 - Increased product sales from \$10 million to \$131 million over three years while reducing overhead expenses by 9%.
 - Led a 25-person work group comprised of staff, temporaries and contractors.
 - Oversaw the planning, layout and move to 20,000 square feet of new office space.
 - Identified and eliminated systemic causes of negative customer service experiences through continuous statistical measurements and analyses.
 - Developed and implemented a customer-rating program to gauge satisfaction; customer responses increased by 23% over prior rating program.

Tip Six:

Academic Achievements & Academic / credentials

- Pursuing Bachelor of Arts degree, Business Administration, Rutgers University (New Brunswick, NJ); anticipated graduation date of August 2009.
- Earned certificates in Microsoft Office Suite products, as well as Visio (2002 – 2005).
- Master of Business Administration, concentration in Marketing and Mass Communications, The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA), 2008.
- Certified Association Executive (CAE), ASAE-The Center for Association Leadership, conferred 1998. Re-certified 2001, 2004, 2007.
- Bachelor of Arts, Marketing, Rutgers University (New Brunswick, NJ), 1995.

Choosing a résumé type: it's up to you!

- In general, there are two types of résumés:
 - Skill-based
 - Chronological
- The strongest résumé is a résumé with STAR information that displays specific skills.

A skill-based résumé

- Groups your professional skills so that they appear to transfer from job to job.
- **Pro:** This may be a good choice for someone who
 - Has had the same job for many years
 - Has had many jobs in a short period of time
 - Has gaps in employment
- **Con:** It may be viewed with suspicion by savvy hiring managers who understand the pros of using a skill-based résumé format

A chronological résumé

- Provides a chronological review of current experience, followed by past experience.
- **Pro**: this is a great format for someone with a progressively responsible work history
- **Con**: it may be more difficult for the reader to discern your strengths

The usual parts of a skill-based résumé

- Name, credentials, contact information
- Professional summary
- Overview of key skills and achievements
- Brief work chronology (title, dates, company)
- Academic achievements, training, documentation of professional credentials
- Meaningful volunteerism / memberships

The usual parts of a chronological résumé

- Name, credentials, contact information
- Professional summary
- Chronological work history, beginning with the most recent and working back 10-20 years
- Academic achievements, training, documentation of professional credentials
- Meaningful volunteerism / memberships

How to Group Your Skills in a Skill-based Résumé

- If you've decided to use a skill-based résumé, review the notes you've been making for the past few weeks and group them into skill areas.
- Samples follow ...

Examples of Skill Areas

- **Team & Staff Supervision.** Supervise a 20-person meeting planning staff. Interview, make hiring recommendations, develop performance plans and incentive goals, review performance and progress toward goals, ensure effective on-boarding of new staff. Expectations include high levels of action ownership, empowerment and goal achievement. Current staff attrition rate is 3%. Time-to-hire averages less than six weeks.
- **Best Practices.** Actively support the selection and implementation of technical standards best practices. Developed and delivered education programs. Personally provided training to managers and line staff.
- **Process Innovation.** Researched, analyzed, recommended, and implemented process improvements to distribution of membership “welcome” packages. Decreased interim from membership purchase to ship-date from 23 calendar days to 1.5 calendar days in two months.

Sample Work Chronology for a Skill-based Résumé

- Senior Meeting Planner, The IEEE (Piscataway, NJ), June 2002 to present
- Meeting Planner, New Jersey Business and Industry Association (Trenton, NJ), August 1999 to May 2002
- Meeting Sales Agent, Hilton Airport Hotel (Elizabeth, NJ), June 1997 to April 2002

OR

- The IEEE (Piscataway, NJ)
 - Sr. Meeting Planner (2002 – Present)
 - Meeting Planner (1999 – 2002)
 - Meeting Administrator (1998 – 1999)
 - Facilities Technician (1997 – 1998)

Good Luck !!