



## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

The job search game is becoming increasingly competitive, and it isn't going to change. If anything, it's going to up the ante. Forget sitting around all day clicking APPLY to find a job. And while you're at it, you can throw all those old resume rules right out the window. To help kick off your job search, I've constructed this expert list of best resume tricks and tips.

### BEST RESUME TRICKS AND TIPS

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#### Create a *master* resume and commit to keeping it updated.

When you suddenly find yourself job searching, and you sit down to write your resume, it can be awfully difficult to recall all the numbers, figures, accomplishments, and successes you've had over your career. It's much easier to keep a log of it as it happens. Sure, it might take a couple of minutes a month to jot down your most notable achievements, and to keep a log of them; but when you sit down to write your resume or work with a professional resume writer, you'll thank me.

#### Get rid of the objective statement and add a summary statement instead.

2018 is begging you, please ... let it go! No one cares what you "Want" (ex. I want to work for a GREAT company and put my skills to work for them...duh...that is why you are applying for the job...) That objective isn't doing you any favors. Get a kick-butt branding statement and laser-focused career summary instead. In a national survey of 600 hiring managers, the overwhelming majority said that the most important part of your resume is your Summary or Profile section. This is a high impact section. Employers reported that this was one of the very first areas they read. If the briefly stated summary demonstrates a solid ability to fill the advertised job, it catches their attention and they slow down and give the applicant more consideration.

Think of it as a highly inferential summation of the specifics you bring to the job. This section usually consists of four to six sentences that present an overview of your experience, your accomplishments, talents, work habits and skills. This section speaks volumes by consolidating the best you have to bring to the job – it really stands out and pulls the employer in for a closer look.

**Ex.** Proven leadership directing the Human Resource divisions for billion-dollar organization. Delivered notable cost-saving results, operational improvements, and productivity. Demonstrated organizational development expertise, responding to changing business objectives and needs in fast changing environment. Core competencies include: strategic planning, project management, communications, and employee development. Recognized for developing award winning team members that achieve business and customer results.

#### Bring on the numbers, facts and figures.

Going back to keeping a master resume ... if you have one, adding in numbers should be no big deal. If you don't, then start tracking those numbers now! Quantify everything! If you led a team, tell your audience how many people were on the team; if you saved money, tell your audience how much you saved. Grew revenue? By how much? Managed a budget? Tell your audience how big the budget was. Always include a number!

Making generalized statements within your resume accomplishes absolutely nothing except taking up space.



## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

Give your audience something specific and tangible about your career history.

### Answer three simple questions.

These three simple questions will help you write a more concise and polished resume:

1. **WHO AM I PROFESSIONALLY?** When an employer reads your resume, it should communicate who you are professionally. Be specific about the position you're targeting, use a job title, and include certifications or credentials specific to you. Then ensure this information is located in the top third of your resume.
2. **WHAT DO I DO?** Your career experience is unlike any other candidates. Quantify your achievements; use metrics, numbers, facts, and figures to backup your experience as opposed to bland statements such as: results-driven and successful. Define your successes in a very specific way; avoid generalities and vague statements. Instead of saying you're a team player or a team leader, write about *how many* people you led and *what* you "led" them to do. When you're stumped regarding exactly how to be specific with something within your resume, ask yourself questions such as how much?, how many?, and how often?
3. **WHAT VALUE DO I OFFER?** Here's where you can connect all the puzzle pieces. Make the connection between who you are and what you do—and how these two elements will meet the employer's needs. This is the value you offer the employer; and the great thing about this is that no other candidate offers what *you* do. You possess a unique set of skills and experiences that you can bring to the table. Your job is to make the correlation between those past successes and this potential employer's present and future needs.

### Needs-based resume please!

Long gone are the days of telling employers what *you* want and need (ahem ... that objective statement that had BETTER NOT be on your resume!). Instead, review the job description to see what the employer's greatest needs are, and make sure your resume addresses your ability to meet those needs.

### Values, values, values.

Everyone has 'em, including the organization you're applying for. If you haven't identified your *own* values, stop and ask yourself "What are my non-negotiables here?" "What kind of organization do I want to be working with?" Your values and the organization's values should be in alignment. If not, there's a good chance this will be a short courtship.

Most organizations have an "About Us" page on their website...or better yet, a "values/missions" page. Social media is another good place to check out for this (what do they support, etc.) Then, weave some of your shared values into your resume.

### Give your career summary impact.

Use numbers, company names, and figures. It may be a "summary," but just because it's a summary doesn't mean it has to be bland and boring and sound like everyone else's. Use things unique to you to create more depth and impact in your career summary. High-profile companies or clients that you can name—include those. Managed lots of projects or big budgets? Use those numbers and quantify in your summary.



## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

### Cut the fluff.

Oh, how your audience cannot stand resume fluff. Cut the content to the lowest common denominator. Make your words work for you—and deliver the most bang for your buck. In other words, cut out the “team player,” “excellent communication/written skills,” and all those other overused terms and phrases that find their way into so many resumes.

### Use keywords in all the right places.

Don't be afraid to put keywords in your headline, branding statement, career summary, and work experience sections. Keywords aren't just for the bulleted “key skills and core competencies” section of the resume.

### Call out those accomplishments.

Have a career accomplishment or success you're particularly proud of? Create a key accomplishments section on your resume in the top third to really draw attention to the results you're most proud of.

### Incorporate YOU.

So many resumes contain generic and vague statements! Get rid of all the general terms and phrases—especially within your career summary. **Every resume gets six seconds** to capture the hiring manager's attention and if the first five lines of your resume read exactly the same as everyone else's, then you've done absolutely nothing to set yourself apart.

### Commit to customization.

Make a commitment to customize your resume as you apply for each opening. It could be as simple as changing the position title, your “POP” words, or job target at the top of your resume to removing irrelevant keywords. The more you tailor the resume to the specific position, the better your chances are of it getting you an interview.

### Reflect on past achievements.

Take time to think about what you've accomplished in your career, and quantify it when and where possible. To help jog your memory, think about challenges you've faced during your career, how you addressed those challenges, and what the outcomes were. Typically, this great exercise will help you to think of two or three key successes that will work well on your resume.

### Put those achievements in context.

Once you've thought about those great achievements, put them in the context of how they relate to the position you're applying for. Make the connection between what you can bring to the table (your past wins) and what the employer needs right now.

### Nix the common resume myths.

The false notion that a resume can be only one page long or nobody will bother to read it is a myth. So are the misconceptions that you need to include an objective statement, that you have to include every job you've ever had—even back to the '80s, and that you have to have a degree to get a job. What's not a myth is



## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

that hiring managers spend only about six seconds on their initial resume reviews; so needless to say, the top third of your resume had better look really great.

### Proofread the heck out of it—and then get three friends to do the same.

Don't ask them for their opinions about what it should look or sound like—unless they're a recruiter or a resume expert. Just ask them to review it for any typos or spelling errors that you may have overlooked. Nothing gets your resume thrown in the trash can faster than a bunch of errors.

### Your resume is not an autobiography.

One of the most common mistakes people make who write their own resume is that they view their resume as an autobiography. A resume must be viewed as a marketing document; with you being the product.

## YOUR PROFILE STATEMENT

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Your profile statement is all about highlighting your skills, strengths, experiences and core competencies that will best position you as a qualified candidate for the role, based upon what you know to be the requirements and needs of the position, play around and come up with a version that is accurate and uniquely describes you.

The following formula can be used to get started, and then you can tailor your summary statement as well as your resume to each position and company you apply to, as each will have its own unique hiring requirements.

### STEP 1: "What do you want your brand to communicate about you?"

*Example: "I'm an accomplished and award-winning copywriter who has a wide range of experience across multiple media, and a wide range of work within some of the best known consumer brands. I know my stuff, and I would be an asset to any creative team!"*

### STEP 2: Create a strong opening line. (1-2 lines)

The idea here is to be direct with 1) who you are, 2) what you do, and 3) what your level of expertise is. Begin the sentence with 2 or 3 powerful and supporting adjectives that uniquely describe you.

*Example: "Award-winning multi-lingual copywriter with 10+ years of experience in digital and traditional advertising agencies and design shops."*

### STEP 3: Talk about your strengths and core competencies. (1-2 lines)

Now that they know what you do and your level of expertise, talk about the specific functions within your role that are 1) most relevant to the job your applying to, and 2) that you consider your strongest attributes.

*Example: "Strengths focus around cross-cultural brand promotion for direct mail and print campaigns, and understanding how ads will resonate within international markets."*

### STEP 4: Talk about additional experience or transferrable skills. (1-2 lines)

Now that you've clarified what you are qualified to do, and really where you excel in relation to the experiences and skills the job requires, talk about what else you bring to the table that might set you apart from someone else with a similar background.

*Examples: "Additional experience working with consumer brands including Colgate, Home Depot and Macy's, and ability to create and understand strategic project plans, schedules and budgets."*



## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

### STEP 5: Put it all together!

Piece together each of the above components, and make sure the constructed message echoes what you said in Step 1. Be sure that the message doesn't just look or sound good on paper, but that it's an accurate and unique representation of you as a qualified professional in your field, and clearly communicates the type of role you're targeting and appeals to your target audience through the use of appropriate language and keywords.

**This is your personal brand (profile statement!).**

*"Award-winning multi-lingual copywriter with 10+ years of experience in digital and traditional advertising agencies and design shops. Strengths focus around cross-cultural brand promotion for direct mail and print campaigns, and understanding how ads will resonate within international markets. Additional experience working with consumer brands including Colgate, Home Depot and Macy's, and ability to create and understand strategic project plans, schedules and budgets."*

### STEP 6: Modify as needed.

Tailor this for each resume you send out so that you are appealing directly to the exact role and company to which you are applying. You can also use this for your LinkedIn profile.

Your profile summary statement is a marketing tool, and when used effectively it should communicate "you" in a way that screams, "Hire me! I'm qualified and full of potential that your company needs!"

## SUMMARY/PROFILE EXAMPLES

### Example 1:

Established, visible senior executive skilled at working in a progressive high-paced team environment where passion and profitability are highly valued. Self-motivated sales and marketing professional committed to driving profitability and growth. Demonstrated ability to work independently and make sound decisions involving high-risk situations under demanding conditions using superior analytical skills.

### Example 2:

Creative filmmaker and video technician with experience on and off the set. Three years of detail-oriented encoding and quality assurance work in a fast-paced DVD and Blu-Ray authoring house. Extensive knowledge of video codecs, editing, DVD and BD encoding work-flows and video manipulation software. Technical expertise blends with five years of experience in narrative and documentary production creating compelling stories with limited resources; on-set and in the field experience with cinematography and lighting, directing experienced and first-time talent, documentary production, and sports videography.

### Example 3:

Ambitious, performance driven professional with an extensive record of 12+ years of sales experience. A business builder whose diverse roles have included Sales Director, Manager, Trainer, Business Owner and Co-Founder. A self-motivated executive reflecting impassioned leadership experience driving revenues, strategic planning, analytics, predictive modeling and marketing experience.

Strong foundation in service, sales, training, relationship management, business development and strategic analysis reflecting:



## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

- Demonstrated strength of being deadline driven and multi task oriented, with expertise in simplifying complex tasks creating predictable outcomes in an unpredictable market.
- Results focused on executing plans and initiatives with extreme organization and the capacity to communicate cross-functionally.
- Proven talent for exceeding goals and maximizing profits by developing collaborative relationships with customers, vendors, and colleagues.
- Ability to navigate and bring together multiple contact points within customer and company divisions.
- Firm belief in “that you cannot learn from an experience you have not had”.

### Example 4:

An established, innovative sales professional with a “get it” factor that includes sales and territory management and customer orientation within industry pioneering companies. 12+ years of Action Sports Industry experience working on the retail sales floor, as a team manager and as a professional surfer leading to a professional sales representative with a 360-degree view of the industry. Competitive drive translating to all facets of life including work, sports, health and success. Provide creative, effective and forward-thinking problem solving. Ability to wrestle egos, agendas, impossible deadlines and bears.

### Example 5:

A self-motivated retail specialist with experience driving revenues, strategic planning and analytics combined with marketing and merchandising expertise. An established professional merchant skilled at working in a progressive high-paced team environment where passion and profitability are highly valued. A 360-degree viewpoint of successful retail operations as a buyer, merchandiser, customer service specialist, systems administrator, trainer and business owner.

Impactful background in Sales, Service, Merchandising, Relationship Management, Analysis, and Market Awareness  
Personifying:

- Proven talent for setting and exceeding goals and maximizing profits by developing collaborative relationships with customers, vendors, and colleagues.
- Results focused with the capacity to analyze inventory and market trends, strategically planning and managing financial landscapes to **maximize profits with efforts leading to a 4-year growth from \$250k to \$1.2M.**
- Demonstrated strength of being deadline driven and multi-task oriented, with expertise in simplifying complex tasks creating predictable outcomes in an unpredictable market.
- Ability to quickly shift strategies and approach when personality, environment or conflict dictates
- Deep knowledge of retail systems software, web and email marketing platforms and shipping solutions, as well as being a master Microsoft Office user and Photoshop savvy.

### Example 6:

Respected Software Test Engineer with 20+ years of proven results with full systems development life cycle experience, including designing, developing and implementing test processes and test plans, creating and executing test cases and fueling swift corrective actions, significant cost savings and fault-free audits.

An accomplished professional, adaptable and flexible working with co-located and virtual teams in requirements definition and software testing mirroring:





## Help Your Resume Stand Out from the Crowd: Resume Tricks and Tips

- Skilled software tester with experience testing applications built using a wide range of technologies (Java, .NET, HTML, JavaScript, Oracle, SQL Server) on various platforms (Windows, Web, Mobile).
- Extensive experience with proprietary applications built from the ground up, redesigns of existing systems, customization of custom off-the-shelf (COTS) products, and integration of COTS products with client developed proprietary applications.
- Thorough understanding of systems development life cycle (SDLC), CMMI Level 3 practices and agile methodologies.
- Impeccable written and oral communication skills, able to cross-functionally communicate up and down within both internal departments and external organizations while thriving in the technical side of the test planning, test strategy, test execution and defect tracking.

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE/STRENGTHS EXAMPLES

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Adaptable and Flexible  
 Adaptive Management  
 Budget Management, Invoicing and Expense Tracking  
 Business Development Planner  
 Conflict Resolution  
 Cost Assessment/Containment  
 Cross Functional Communication  
 Defect Tracking & Closure  
 Effective Written and Verbal Communicator  
 Fast Paced/Creative Work Environment  
 Proficiency  
 Fiscal Forecasting/Purchasing  
 Independent and Decisive  
 Independent Decision Making  
 Innovative Problem Solving  
 Intuitive Skills  
 Leadership, Coaching & Facilitation  
 Market Awareness/Trending  
 Market Research/Trend Forecasting  
 Marketing/Promotion Planning  
 Meticulous Organizational Skills  
 Microsoft Office and Apple Platforms

Microsoft Office Platform  
 Optimization Opportunities  
 Organizational Relationship Building  
 Product Line Planning/Management  
 Project & Process Management  
 Project Management  
 Requirements & Design Analysis  
 Requirements Development  
 Research, Analysis & Plan Design  
 Retailer/ Vendor Relationship Building  
 Sales Training & Public Speaking  
 Sourcing/Production  
 Strategic Planning  
 System & Regression Testing  
 Team Building  
 Test Processes, Plans, Cases  
 Test Reporting/Documentation  
 Test Standards & Methodologies  
 Test Strategies & Coverage

<https://www.powerthesaurus.org/> - meanings, phrases, and examples to help you when you can't think of another way to describe your areas of expertise or strengths.



### TEN BEST PRACTICES OF RESUME WRITING

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1. You will not have a one-page resume if you have over 5+ years of career experience.
2. You will not have a purpose statement on your resume. Don't tell them what you want, instead tell them who you are in a descriptive way that shows what you want. Give them a profile of you, not a purpose.
3. You will not list just duties, but instead, include accomplishments. What did you accomplish that someone else might not have doing the same job?
4. You will not bury your skills at the bottom of the resume. Readers might not make it to the end of the resume, so don't wait till the bottom!
5. You will not miss adding job requirement relevancy to your resume. They told you what they want in a candidate – be sure to show them you have that experience. They don't know if you don't tell them.
6. You will send your resume as a PDF (so the formatting is not “lost in translation.”)
7. You will use a font other than **TIMES NEW ROMAN** that fits your personality. No one likes to read a stuffy resume. Perfect time to add “character”.
8. You will have your resume proofread by someone other than yourself to pick up on issues such as “their” vs. “there.” (Especially if you have mentioned in your resume you have an attention to detail.)
9. You will not title your PDF resume “YourNameFinalDraft.” Your name and date is perfect. No one needs to see that you have been slaving over your resume and have finally gotten to the last draft.

And finally...

10. You will use the correct verb tense. If you are currently in a job, then everything in that description should be present tense. Duties of a past job should be in past tense.