

A Great Resume – *what I wish I had known 20 years ago.*

First off, I've written nearly 4,000 resumes. On average, I spend ten hours to interview, compose, refine and finalize each client's resume. That's 40,000 hours spent crafting resumes. Since each one covers an average of four jobs/titles and ten years of work history, I've studied 12,000 jobs and 40,000 years of professional employment. What does this mean to you, in a nutshell, I practice what I'm about to preach.

With that said, I want to inspire you to write a great resume. The active verb in the last sentence is 'write', so you need to know the number one single most important element of writing a resume, ready - here it is: when you sit down to compose your thoughts, **blurt them out**. Or as one of my clients said indelicately, a decade ago, "I puked my thoughts out over eight pages" (this same client completed her B.A. in English with a perfect 4.0 GPA). I then took here thoughts and turned it into a two page document.

It is worth noting that 98% of job-seekers are eliminated or screened out by a poor resume. Companies do not spend time interviewing candidates with confusing or poorly communicated qualifications. To place in the top 2% of the candidate pool that is interviewed, we need to prove our value convincingly.

People get so wound up wanting to write perfect sentences that they become immobilized, which turns resume writing into mental constipation, something that is both un-fun and unproductive. It took me years to learn to type thoughts quickly without agonizing over typos, bad grammar, and poor word choice. It's a psychological battle that requires strong willpower to knowingly make mistakes without stopping to correct errors until it is time to edit our thoughts, but by doing so you give your thoughts room to breath. The second most important tip to writing the killer resume is that you have to edit your thoughts at least multiple times (I usually edit my writing four to six times). Each hour I type, requires two to three hours of editing. The best analogy I can offer is sculpting, where initial thoughts act like the marble block and editing represents chiseling. Just remember, don't edit your thoughts until after you type them.

When you write a resume, give yourself liberty to be creative. There are ways to make you're your job experience appear either boring or interesting, compelling and challenging. The key is realizing that you are a one-of-a-kind original. Your thumbprint proves that only one of you exist in the world. Paint your resume with creativity and share who you are and what motivates you as a person, employee and student.

Let me layout some basic resume science 'facts'. Typical resume length is one page for each ten years of employment. The following topic categories are included in most resumes in descending order:

- Name, address, contact data
- Objective
- Experience (this is the heart of the resume)
- Accomplishments/Awards/Personal Data, etc.
- Education

Resume guide-lines.

1. Name, address, contact information at top of resume. I use a 10.5 point type size in Times Roman font, although Arial is a good alternative. Only for a person's name do I use a larger font, typically 18 point.
2. Below name is an objective statement. The objective is used to apply for a specific job. For example, say you want to be an administrative clerk at an insurance office. You

objective could read; A role as administrative clerk where I will add value by meeting the organizational goals of the company.

3. This section has dates of employment, job title, company and city/state all on one line. Below that, briefly give an overview of the job (describe the office, department, team or company and the daily goals you helped meet). Next, outline the challenges and duties you performed to meet those expectations. And if you or your team accomplished any goals or delivered an impact make sure to note them explicitly. Here is one example, lets say you joined Green Peace for a summer. That you went out week by week to different neighborhoods to promote awareness and raise donations. Then your resume might state:

Challenge: Door-to-door campaign to promote Green Peace Initiatives and raise funds.

Actions: Contacted 100+ homeowners in 36 neighborhoods (an average of 3 blocks per 90 minute canvassing period)

Spoke to over 200 potential donors

Results Secured over \$5,000 in donations.

4. Accomplishments/awards. If you have them list them, if not, don't worry about it.
5. Education is date of graduation, school and degree attained.

A great resume can easily put you ahead of your competition. Remember, the resume balances art and science. Art represents the fact that you are a three dimensional, living and breathing individual, so your story should be unique. The science relates to the résumé's physical boundaries; i.e., type size, font choice, page margins, page count, grammar, etc. The science of the resume announces that you understand business expectations: concise, focused and direct language. The art makes reviewers want to call you.

Bio-Robert Meier, is a practicing career coach who can be reached at coach@godsjob.org
If you would like to see a couple examples of resumes please go to www.prestojob.com