

## Resume Questions & Answers

A resume is a self-promotional marketing tool that enables you to tell the employer why they want to see you. A good resume helps the employer predict how you might perform in the job they want to fill. Its purpose is to get you an interview. It is not an official personnel document, a job application, a career autobiography or a job description.

A good resume effectively sells you to the job.

### **Where to start?**

Select the job you want and write down the 5 experiences you have had that prove you can do that exact job better than anyone else. If there are a few jobs you want, do this exercise for each specific job.

### **How do you sell yourself on a resume?**

Write in terms of accomplishments, not responsibilities. Talk about what the results were and why. Paint a picture of what you did, how you did it, and why the potential employer should meet you by making your skills and accomplishments match up to their needs.

Fill your resume with CAR statements as they relate to the job you are going after. CAR = challenge, action, results. State your challenge, what actions you took to meet the objective, and how you contributed to the bottom line. Example: Reduced reject rate from 28% to <2% by empowering workers: cross-trained staff, initiated morning meetings, and implemented SPC.

### **Chronological or functional?**

The chronological format is widely preferred by employers because it efficiently answers the questions they want answered: who (company name), what (job), when (dates). A functional format is often viewed with a doubting eye as it can easily hide or slant data. If you want to use a functional format, make sure you include a clear chronological work history.

### **Job objective?**

If you do include one, make sure it is stated clearly and matches what the company is looking for. The company should be able to easily and quickly categorize you professionally by reading your objective and/or scanning the resume. Make the job objective precise, brief and a perfect fit. Common mistakes are to ask for what you want instead of what they need, to give multiple objectives or target jobs at a higher level than what is being offered.

### **Mass market or target market?**

A one-resume-fits-all approach works best when candidate supply is lower than demand. Targeting your resume to specific jobs / industries helps the employer understand why and how you fit their exact needs. This is a niche marketing technique.

### **Title is misleading?**

Choose a title that accurately reflects your level of responsibility. Using a title that is misleading can eliminate you from jobs you are qualified for. If you are called Production Manager and yet Production, Materials, Purchasing, Logistics, Quality and Manufacturing Engineering report to you, then use the title Operations Manager. This title reflects what you are doing. If you are called a VP of Operations but the only department that reports to you is Production, you are better off using the title Production Manager. Even though most job hunters resist using a lesser title, the title that best describes your experience will attract opportunities you are qualified for.

### **Unstable work history?**

To minimize the job-hopper image, combine several similar jobs into one "chunk". For example:

- 1998-2000 Acme, AAA and BBB Corporation

Supply Chain Management

-or-

- 1994-1999 Contact Supply Chain Assignments:

McAcme, O'BBB and AAA Corporations

Also you can omit some of the less important, briefest, or oldest jobs.

Sometimes the way you present jobs can make you look unstable. Resume readers scan resumes and can interpret the format below as 4 jobs, not 2:

- 1991-1992 Acme
  - Production Manager
  
- 1990-1991 Acme
  - Production Supervisor
  
- 1989-1990 Acme
  - Production Planner
  
- 1985-1989 AAA
  - Finished Goods Planner

A better format is:

- 1990-1998 Acme**  
A \$100M pen manufacturer
  - Production Manager 1995-1998
  - Production Supervisor 1993-1995
  - Production Planner 1990-1992
  
- 1985-1990 AAA**
  - Finished Goods Planner

If you have made rapid moves that are justifiable, say so.

- 2002-2003 Acme** (company relocated out of state)
  
- 2001-2002 AAA** (company sold)
  
- 2000-2001 BBB** (company closed)

Can you see how explaining the jobs moves put the job seeker in a better light?

## Wording?

Extraneous data is self defeating. Because your resume will be scanned (not read), write your resume accordingly. For each and every line in your resume ask yourself, does this help me get this job?

Example:

**Objective:** To join a progressive company where my skills and abilities in purchasing can be utilized to produce greater profits and better efficiencies for the employer.

-or-

**Expertise:** Supply Chain Management

Example:

**1/12/2002-1/21/2005      Acme      Boston, MA.**

A \$100M publicly traded pen manufacturer selling to multiple markets world wide with multiple distribution channels.

**5/20/1999-1/15/2002      AAA      Boston, MA.**

A \$100M privately held perfume manufacturer founded in 1910 and family owned. The the CEO is the son of the founder and the executive committee is all family members.

**5/5/1994-1/30/1999      BBB      Boston, MA.**

A start up modem manufacturer with venture capital backing that began ramping up for manufacturer but due to unfavorable market conditions never went into production.

-or-

**2002-2005      Acme**

A \$100M publicly traded pen manufacturer

**1999-2002      AAA**

A \$100M privately held perfume manufacturer

**1994-1999      BBB**

A start up modem manufacturer

Which is easier to comprehend when scanning? Select your words carefully. You have limited space (2 pages or less) and only have seconds to prove you fit the job. Rule of thumb: if it does not help you get this job, don't say it = Sell, don't tell.

## **One long term employer?**

Explain your years of experience by focusing on change, showing job progression, listing new mandates and new challenges.

## **In progress education?**

Let the employer know your intentions and your current situation. If the degree or credential is within reach soon, state it. “In-progress” or “going for” can imply a month, a year, or a decade so give yourself as much credit as possible.

- Graduate Studies in Instructional Design, in progress
- MBA anticipated 20xx
- Sitting for CPM exam in December
- Candidate for MSME, 5 courses until completion
- CPIM Passed 3 of 5 modules
- 20xx BSME, 2002 ASME
- BSME, 75% complete

Which statement gives you the most recognition?

## **Foreign education??**

Explain the degree to the resume reader, for instance – equivalent to a BSME or comparable to a Masters Degree in Industrial Engineering.

## **Hobbies and Interests?**

Include hobbies on a resume if they are relevant to your job objective, or clearly reveal a characteristic that supports the job you are applying for.

## **The Sanity Check:**

Your resume is ready to go IF...

1. Your professional life can be assessed in 10-15 seconds
2. In 10-15 seconds it is obvious to even a layman why you are the best fit for this job
3. The important info *leaps* off the page
4. The crucial info appears in the top ¼ of the resume
5. You have had it spell-checked AND proof-read multiple times by multiple readers

