

JOBS ASSISTANCE MINISTRY RESUME GUIDELINES

April 2010

INTRODUCTION

Why write a resume? Most people will say because I have to if I want to get a job. How does a resume help you get a job? The sole purpose of a resume is to get you an interview. Your goal in writing a resume is to make the reviewer excited about learning more about you and your skills and strengths. Your resume is a marketing brochure about you and your potential value to the employer. Your skills experience and education are important information that you must include. However, even more importantly, you must include measurable results that you have achieved in the past in performing in a similar environment. Your value to a prospective employer stems not from your years of experience but from what you can achieve with your personality, attitude, energy and the unique skill set you can bring to the job in the here and now. Nothing speaks louder to the employer about what you can achieve in the present than what you have achieved in the past. It's quantifiable achievements - not a list of your key strengths or your previous job titles, duties and length of service - that you need to underscore in your resume. If you do, the results will be a resume with focus, punch and ultimately results.

The most productive resumes have the following characteristics:

- A clear identification of the kind of job you're seeking, either from the resume itself or the cover letter. If you don't know what you want to do, an employer won't sort that out for you.
- A focus on the needs of the employer, not your needs or desires in a job. It's not about what you want. It's about what you have to offer that will contribute to the success of the employer's business.
- A description of any specialized skills, experience and education you have that are required for the target job.
- Measurable and quantifiable results that you have achieved. The identification of your accomplishments and results should showcase the benefits that you have provided to your employers. The results you have achieved in the past should clearly demonstrate that you have the proven ability to excel in the responsibilities of your target position.
- The inclusion of keywords associated with your target job.
- A description of how you meet and even exceed the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities required by your target job.
- Visual appeal, no more than 2 pages.
- Absolute uniformity and consistency in the use of italics, capital letters, bullets, boldface, and underlining.
- No errors - typographical, spelling, grammar, syntax, punctuation - nor errors of fact.
- The value that you offer is readily apparent at the very beginning of the resume. This value must be clearly expressed in a few brief seconds, because that's all the attention your resume will get in its first perusal.

Regardless of your profession, whether you're an accountant, a nurse, an engineer or whatever else, when you sit down to write your resume, you are now the Director of Marketing for Y.O.U. While this may seem daunting at first, the first step in achieving any goal is to recognize what it

is. The guidelines that follow will assist you in navigating through some of the steps in developing an effective resume.

In using these guidelines, keep in mind that there simply is no universal “right way” to write a resume. So while these guidelines have some very clear thoughts on how to write an effective and professional resume, ultimately you will need to decide what works for you, your situation and, ultimately, your comfort level.

These guidelines are by necessity limited. Some of the material has been based on the following website which is an excellent resource for some examples and more detailed coverage of how to develop a resume: www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes.html *How to write a masterpiece of a resume*. Also helpful is www.free-resume-tips.com/10tips.html *10 Tips to Bullet Proof Your Resume*.

You can have your resume reviewed by the Jobs Assistance Ministry by emailing it to westcharleso@verizon.net.

OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These guidelines are based on materials in a document titled JAM Job Search Packet Contents dated January 14, 2009, a document titled Resume Writing Tips that I received from Cheryl Matt this February, and some of my own observations as a JAM mentor over the twelve months. The material on Using Keywords were my notes based on a presentation by Veronica Boyd during one of the JAM Wednesday weekly meetings.

Material taken from other sources is specifically referenced where it appears in the guidelines.

My thanks to those who provided comments on the first draft. These include Sean O’Brien, Rush Paul and Resume Review Committee members Joe Kapelewski, Jim Kutz, Miriam Lindsey, and Gary Obeck. A second thank you to Sean O’Brien for his editorial comments on the final introduction.

Charley West
JAM Resume Review Committee Chair
April 2010

GENERAL

The resume must be visually appealing, uncluttered, with sufficient white space. It should be easy to read. The Sample Chronological Resume at enclosure 2 is a good example. Using a format like this will result in a resume that is neat, focused and has visual appeal.

No more than 2 pages.

One font – either arial or times new roman. Font size no smaller than 11 points, preferably 12 points.

Margins – 1 inch top, bottom, left, right.

No tables. Automatic Text scanners used to screen resumes do not correctly process information in tables.

No tabs. Automatic Text scanners are inconsistent in their ability to process information that has tabs.

No abbreviations.

Use keywords in your Summary, Experience and Education sections.

Ensure uniformity and consistency in the use of italics, capital letters, bullets, boldface, and underlining.

No errors –typographical, spelling, grammar, syntax, or punctuation. No errors of fact.

Do not include any of the following:

- personal information like marital status, hobbies, etc
- the word "Resume" at the top of the resume
- salary information
- reasons for leaving jobs
- names of supervisors
- references or "References Will be Provided Upon Request"

ORGANIZATION

The chronological resume is the more traditional structure for a resume. A typical chronological resume has the following sections:

- Identification (name address, phone, email)
- Summary
- Experience
- Education

This format is a guideline only. There is no one-size-fits-all perfect resume format. As appropriate to improve your marketability, other paragraphs can be added, e.g., Objective (before

the Summary), Achievements (before Experience), Technical Training and Skills (after Education), Publications (after Education).

It is recommended that you not use a functional resume format. The disadvantage of a functional resume format is that it is hard for the employer to know exactly what you did in which job, which may be a problem. Some employers may find the functional format difficult to read and confusing, may get the impression the applicant might be trying to hide something and may not take the trouble to review the resume. However, the functional resume does have some advantages. It highlights your major skills and accomplishments from the very beginning. It also helps the reader see clearly what you can do for them, rather than having to read through the job descriptions to find out. Many of the advantages of a functional resume can be achieved with a chronological resume by adding additional paragraphs like Achievements and/or Technical Expertise immediately after the Summary paragraph. More information on resume formats can be found at: www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes.html *How to write a masterpiece of a resume.*

Whatever format you use, in general avoid using tables or lists identifying core competencies (e.g., result-driven, known strategist) or key strengths or functions supported (e.g., Budgeting, Quality Assurance, Customer Service). These don't succeed in impressing hiring managers for several reasons. These lists tend to be abstract and general. They tend not to be job specific but lists that someone might submit for any number of different jobs. They also don't help to differentiate you since any number of people might submit similar lists. Lastly, they are unsubstantiated assertions. Try instead to list accomplishments that demonstrate these. For example, rather than saying "extremely skilled with a hammer, chisel and saw," say "Voted best cabinetmaker in Richmond by Richmond Magazine" or "Built additions ranging from 400 square feet to 3,000 square feet." Your accomplishments are what will convince a prospective employer of your value.

However, as an exception to the general practice of not using lists, providing a list of specific technical skills as shown below is fine:

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE:

- Desktop Support and help desk network technologist experience.
- Microsoft Active Directory, proficient with MS Office 2000, 2003, TCP/IP, Windows NT, 2000, XP Professional, Windows NT Server, 2000.
- Electronics Technician, Network+, A+, Certified Broadcast Technologist.
- Installation and service support for Satellite communications equipment.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH TO BUILDING YOUR RESUME

Develop the first draft of your resume without addressing the length. Successful resumes focus on the results that were achieved. Begin by listing all of your achievements, accomplishments, awards and recognitions. Then complete the remainder. Be sure to use keywords and address all of the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities requirements of the job you're applying for. Then you can go back and review your resume for size, rewriting and prioritizing, keeping whatever most effectively describes your value and eliminating some of the rest.

THE EXPERIENCE SECTION

Start with the last company you worked for. Enter the name of the company, city, state and dates on the first line.

Enter your job title on the second line. The purpose of the job title is not to reflect exactly what you were called by a particular employer, but rather to provide a generic identification that will be understood by as many employers as possible, e.g., Accountant rather than Junior Accountant Level II.

Source: Resumes that Knock'em Dead – Martin Yate, C.P.C

Skip 3 lines to give you space to go back and later enter a description of your responsibilities.

Now list all of your achievements, accomplishments, awards and recognitions at that company, identifying the actions you took to make things happen and what supportive professional behaviors you brought to the task. Describe your achievements and accomplishments from the perspective of the benefit provided to the employer, listing the benefit to the employer first and then the action you took to achieve that benefit. For example, “Increased sales by 30% by ...” Quantify your achievements with numbers and specifics, rather than using general statements or naked assertions. Use action verbs in the past tense. A list of sample action words is provided as an enclosure.

Once you have completed describing your achievements, go back and enter a 2-3 line description of your responsibilities at each company. Quantify your responsibilities with numbers if possible, e.g., “Responsible for all HR for 44,000 employees.” Include any factors that describe the scope, complexity or difficulty of your work.

Once you have completed the information for the last company where you were employed, continue in the same way with your previous positions until you have covered your last 10 years experience.

Since employers who review resumes may take only 10-20 seconds to review your resume, you must grab the reviewer’s attention in the top half of the first page of your resume. This usually consists of the Summary Paragraph and your description of your responsibilities and achievements in your last two positions.

THE SUMMARY SECTION

The reviewer of your resume may take only 10-20 seconds to decide on whether to reject the resume or read further. This makes the Summary paragraph the most important part of your resume.

The Summary paragraph is not a summary of your work experience and education. It is a summary of why you are the best candidate for the job. It needs to showcase your demonstrated ability to shine in the job you have targeted as your next logical step in your career.

The Summary is the one place to include professional characteristics (extremely energetic, a gift for solving complex problems in a fast-paced environment, etc.) which may be helpful in winning the interview. In asserting these, follow the assertion with an evidence statement, e.g., “For example, at The John B. Smith Company I ... “

The Summary paragraph is also the place to address any of the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities of the target position to the extent that you have not addressed these completely in Experience and Education sections.

The Summary paragraph also provides an opportunity to bring to the front some of your more important achievements, even if under the job descriptions they appear on the second page.

The Summary paragraph may include the following:

- A lead in sentence that summarizes your experience
- A list of the most important customers you have supported
- Your most important achievements
- Important problems you have solved
- Key words in the ad or job description
- A summary of how your results and experience demonstrate your ability to perform the specific responsibilities of the job being applied for

USING KEYWORDS

Up to 80 % of all resumes received are scanned into a resume tracking system. Understanding how this technology affects the way your résumé is stored and received dramatically affects your chances for success in your job hunt.

It works like this: the recruiter uses a storage and retrieval program and enters a job title into the program. Then the recruiter selects from extensive selection of keywords that can be used to describe the skills needed for the job the keywords that best fit the job vacancy. The recruiter can then search through resumes that have been scanned into their database to select resumes that contain the keywords and ranks the selected resumes based on how many of the keywords it found in the resume.

As a result of scanning, your resume will typically be placed in one of 5 queues:

- meets requirements
- does not meet requirements
- no interest –typos, funky email address, objective doesn't match, objective not clear, unexplained gaps
- over qualified
- do not hire –false information, white keywords

Note: *You can research keywords by going on dice.com, monster.com, careerbuilder.com or some other online job search site and reviewing job postings similar to what you would like.*

ADDRESSING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES IN JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Some job announcements include a list of Knowledge, Skill and Abilities that are required for the job. If the job you're applying for has KSAs listed, then you need to modify your resume to address these in the Summary, Experience and Education sections as needed. In writing up your responses to each KSA, you may want to consider showing that you not only meet that KSA but that you exceed that requirement in some way. For example, having 7 years of experience rather than the required 5; having a masters degree rather than the required bachelors degree. However, in showing that you exceed the requirements you also want to avoid appearing over qualified.

RESUMES FOR RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES

For recent college graduates, after the Identification section, the Education section should come first, then the Experience section.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE ANY ACHIEVEMENTS

If you can't think of any achievements, ask yourselves these questions:

- How did I do my job better than others?
- Did I performer faster than some others?
- Was I more productive than some others?
- Did I have fewer errors than some others?
- Were my customers happier?
- What compliments have I received?

Let's try the example of a check out clerk in a supermarket. How can someone in a position like that have achievements? Let's try the following:

- I greeted each customer cheerfully as he or she came through the door
- I always asked each person checking out if they found everything all right
- I always asked if they preferred plastic or paper bags
- I was careful to double bag when there were heavy items
- I was careful to put the canned goods on the bottom and the loaf of bread on the top rather than vice versa
- I developed friendships with many of the regular customers because of my friendly demeanor
- Customers would migrate to my counter because invariably my lines would move faster
- I was selected as employee of the month 3 times during the past year

If, after all else, you can't think of any achievements, then enter some of your responsibilities as bullets.

RESUMES FOR THE MATURE

Don't make yourself sound old and tired. Avoid using the following words:

- Seasoned
- Well-seasoned
- Extensive track record
- Veteran
- Mature professional
- Long tenured
- A long and illustrious career
- Long-standing
- Long-time

What most job seekers of a certain age fail to understand is that your value to a prospective employer stems not from your years of experience but from your personality, attitude and the unique skill set you can bring to the job in the here and now. Focus on your strengths, capabilities, qualifications, and achievements — not your previous job titles, duties and length of service. To improve your wow factor - as in, “Wow, we need to talk to this person!” - choose language that is empowering, attention grabbing and persuasive. Consider using these or similar terms to better convey your can-do attitude and intrinsic worth:

- Dynamic
- Enthusiastic
- Energetic
- High energy
- Prodigious energy
- Excited
- Self-motivated
- Skilled
- A quick study
- Ready to hit the ground running
- Thoroughly schooled in
- Well-versed in

Summarized from “Is Age Discrimination an Issue in Job Search?” by Alex Freund

Appendix 1

Examples of Action Verbs (*The Job Search Trilogy*)

accelerated	eliminated	overhauled
adapted	enhanced	persuaded
addressed	enlarged	planned
analyzed	established	presented
arranged	exceeded	procured
assembled	executed	proposed
attracted	expanded	provided
authored	expedited	
		recruited
		reduced
		refined
		renewed
		reorganized
		replaced
		reported
		researched
		restructured
		reviewed
		revised
		revitalized
		shut down
		simplified
		sold
		solved
		started
		strengthened
		stimulated
		summarized
		supervised
		systematized
		terminated
		took charge
		took over
		trained
		transacted

RICHARD J. OVERACHIEVER

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Lakeside, Florida 38123

SUMMARY

Senior executive with a proven track record of excelling in all aspects of hospital administration – financial management, purchasing, insurance programs, physician recruitment, medical technology and construction. In my current position I manage 11 nonprofit hospitals in three states with combined revenues of \$210 million and with a total licensed complement of 1,700 beds. I also serve on the Board of Directors of 4 facilities. Throughout my career I have consistently improved the bottom line through the implementation of cost savings systems and improved cash flow. At the same time I have improved health care through the use of advanced technology. In 1986 I led efforts for the installation of the first full-body CT scanner in the country and in my current assignment I've added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all 11 hospitals.

EXPERIENCE

METHODIST HEALTH MANAGEMENT, INC., Ocala, Florida 1988 to Present
Vice President/Operations

Managed 11 nonprofit hospitals in three states with combined revenues of \$210 million and with a total licensed complement of 1,700 beds. Served on the Board of Directors of 4 facilities.

- Converted 6 hospitals from county ownership to Methodist Health Management ownership within a 12 -month period.
- Established a purchasing program for the entire system that resulted in \$2 million in first year savings.
- Developed system wide insurance programs for self-funding health insurance.
- Added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all hospitals.
- Reduced accounts receivable in all hospitals resulting in \$10 million cash flow improvements in 12 months.

NORTHSIDE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, Northside, Virginia 1989 - 1992
Executive Director

Administrative management of 356 bed facility.

- Developed first financial budget, personnel budget, and first capital equipment budget.
- Developed and participated in physician recruitment program that added 23 physicians to a medical staff of 90.
- Added a data communication system that increased revenues by 6 percent.

RICHARD J. OVERACHIEVER

ST. ANTHONY'S HOSPITAL, Beaumont, Louisiana

1986 – 1989

Administrator

Administrative management of 18 departments in 350 bed facility.

- Established a Management Engineering Department that reported cost savings of \$600,000 its first year.
- Led planning and construction of a \$1.2 million expansion of the Nuclear Medicine Department.
- Led planning, construction, and purchasing of one of the first full-body CT scanner installed in the country.

MEDICAL CENTER OF FT. WORTH, Ft. Worth, Texas

1982 - 1986

Assistant Administrator

Management of ancillary services for 350 bed facility and chairman of several committees.

EDUCATION

MHA Hospital Administration, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

BS (Cum Laude) Business Administration, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American College of Healthcare Executives

American Hospital Association

Florida Hospital Association, Chairman

*Edited from J. Larry Tyler's Healthcare Executive's Job Search

Appendix 3 Cover Letter Instructions

The cover letter can be your "first impression" and should compel the reader to view the enclosed resume. It should complement your resume to present you and your career goals in the most professional light. You can customize each letter for the particular position in which you are interested.

Structure: Three Paragraphs

Paragraph #1

- Explain why you are writing.
- Use a mutual friend's name with permission.
- Specify the position advertised and where you read the ad.

Paragraph #2

- Detail your accomplishments, experience or abilities and relate them to the job as you understand it.
- Use numbers to quantify results where applicable.

Paragraph #3

- Ask specifically for further consideration for the position and an interview.
- Indicate your intent to follow up on your resume at a later specific date and do it.
- Do not end with "I look forward to hearing from you".
- Following up shows genuine interest on your part and ensures that the right person has received your cover letter and resume.

Finally: Proofread your cover letter for content, grammar, spelling and typos. Mistakes could cost you an interview. Find out the correct name of the person to whom you are addressing the letter. Attention to detail demonstrates your genuine interest in the position.

Appendix 4 Sample Cover Letter*

January 8, 2009

Mr. Kevin Lindsey
University Healthcare Associates
1400 Oxford Place, Suite 300
Columbia, South Carolina 29302

Dear Mr. Lindsey:

My former college roommate, Lauren Weeks, suggested that I contact you in reference to the Materials Management position currently available in your organization as listed in the *Southern Hospitals* classified section.

Following my graduation from the University of Florida's Graduate School of Public Health, I began working at Ocala Regional Medical Center as a purchasing agent. Since that time, I have reduced equipment costs by 18 percent, increased the use of competitive bidding with net savings to the bottom line of \$650,000 per year, and completed my own database for inventory tracking.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in person. I will call you next week to inquire about a mutually convenient time for us to meet.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,
Angela Buckley

*Based on a cover letter by J .Larry Tyler's
Healthcare Executive's Job Search

