

# Matching The Job Announcement

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## Guidelines For Developing A Winning Resume

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**It's not the will to win, but the will to prepare to win that makes the difference.  
Bear Bryant**



**Saint Michael The Archangel Catholic Church  
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## Introduction

Whether you like it or not, you're now your own marketing manager. These guidelines are focused on helping you to acquire the marketing skills necessary to produce a winning resume.

Being successful in marketing is not an innate skill, but an acquired one, even for the most talented. It takes time and effort to develop that skill, whether developing a proposal or a resume. When I was program manager on a large Government contract another division chief asked for my assistance in helping his software engineer Bob prepare a proposal for a task order that the Government was competing among all 11 primes. Bob was a brilliant software engineer highly respected by our customer. Like all software engineers he was very detailed and precise. His first draft of the proposal showed that it was going to take some effort to get him from engineering mode to marketing mode. After five more iterations he had a proposal that we could submit to the Government. On the next task order proposal it took Bob only three iterations. And on his third task order proposal the first draft was right on target. What Bob went through you may find yourself going through but on a smaller scale.

Don't become discouraged if you find yourself struggling as you try to develop your resume. That's normal, even for experienced marketing managers. Throughout your career you may have focused on just getting the job done and never had to think about how to describe your accomplishments. Being so close to your own situation also makes it difficult to develop perspective. And the desire to not appear boastful is another hindrance. Stay at it. Perseverance will pay off.

If you find that your resume isn't getting you interviews, a resume review may be in order. Most individuals feel better about themselves afterwards and have a more positive sense of why they are best qualified for the job. If you are getting interviews but no offers, then it may be time to review the lists of standard interview questions and rehearse your interview with a friend.

It's important to understand that not getting selected after an interview is not a rejection nor is it a judgment that your experience is deficient. It just means that another individual was a better fit. You just have to keep at it. Appreciate the fact that just being selected for an interview is recognition that you are one of the candidates that the company considers highly qualified.

Work as if everything depends on you. Pray as if everything depends on God.

**“For I know I have plans for you,” says the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”**

**Jeremiah 29:11**

## **Resume Fundamentals**

### **What is a resume?**

A resume is a marketing document that showcases the value that you bring to your potential employer. A resume is about what you have to offer, not about what you want. It's about what you have to offer that will contribute to the success of the employer's business.

You show what you have to offer by describing what you have done. You make clear what your skills are not by asserting that you have them but by identifying what you have actually achieved using those skills. Not "I'm a skilled carpenter" but "I created a line of fine dining furniture."

### **What is the purpose of a resume?**

The sole purpose of a resume is to get you an interview.

### **What is the goal in writing a resume?**

Your goal in writing a resume is to convince the hiring manager that you are the candidate best qualified for the job. This is the image that you must project not only in the resume but also during the interview and after the interview.

You assert yourself as the best candidate not by attempting to compare yourself to others but by addressing the qualification and experience requirements in the job announcement.

### **What hiring managers are looking for**

While it may seem obvious, one of the keys to a successful job search is to always keep in mind what hiring managers are looking for. Whether filling a vacancy or establishing a new position, hiring managers have created a list of qualifications and job duties for the position that are found in the job announcement. Hiring managers have explicitly stated in the job announcement exactly what they are looking for. Your job is to convince the hiring manager that you are the best qualified candidate in meeting these requirements.

### **How hiring managers will evaluate a resume**

Hiring Managers will not be interested a description of what you are capable of doing, a description of skills you say you have or a description of your character traits that have made you a valuable employee in the past. While they will have some interest in previous responsibilities, they are much more interested with what you have actually achieved.

Their ideal candidate is someone who meets the qualifications and who has already successfully performed the duties listed in the job announcement. Put another way someone who has been there and done that. Hiring managers will be looking for accomplishment bullets in your resume that match those job duties. Only descriptions of your accomplishments, of what you have actually done on previous jobs, will do the trick. The best candidate will be one who has accomplishments that match each of the duties identified in the job announcement. That is

the perfect fit. You don't have to be a perfect fit to apply for a job. There may not be any candidate who is. But your goals should be to come as close as you can to be the perfect fit.

### **Your current resume isn't likely to be adequate**

Unless your most recent portion has been a mirror of the position in the job announcement, your current resume is highly unlikely to get the job done. Your baseline resume will need to be modified to target the requirements in the job announcement, addressing each qualification and job duty, using the same terminology as in the announcement.

### **You may think your resume is already a perfect fit but the hiring manager may not**

If you simply eyeball your resume, you may immediately conclude that it's a perfect fit. To you, it may be but maybe not so much to anyone reviewing the resume. You have perfect knowledge of all that you have done and can make the connections based on that knowledge. For example, you may have experience as a pricing analyst. The job announcement may have the following:

- This person will be responsible for creating and updating monthly reports, data analysis, data modeling, and producing pricing proposals for senior management

You may say to yourself that you've done those things but does your resume explicitly say that? You're looking at your resume through the prism of your own experience. The outside reader cannot. It's necessary to modify the resume to make those connections explicitly clear.

### **Your resume must make it easy for hiring manager to evaluate you**

It's necessary to organize information so that it is easy for the reviewer to see that you're best qualified. It's easy for reviewers to miss important information. Reviewers typically take 10-20 seconds to scan a resume. This means as much as possible pulling the most important information onto the first two thirds of the first page and recognizing that information on the second page may not be seen.

The summary paragraph has to pull together your best accomplishments wherever they may be scattered throughout the resume. Select some to combine and enter in summary form and others to copy and edit into the summary.

If you have multiple certifications, skills or awards that identifying you as the best qualified then move that whole paragraph up front immediately after the summary. For example:

#### **TECHNICAL SKILLS**

SAP, IBM, and MS BI Tools

Visio

Oracle

If you have a single certification, skill or award that is a discriminator then you can just enter it as the last sentence at the end of your summary paragraph. For example, "Awarded the Excalibur Award and my division was a Malcolm Baldrige finalist."

There are no rules on how long or short the summary paragraph can be. While there is no explicit limit on length, it should not be one long solid block of text. If your most recent

experience block is a perfect mirror of the job announcement duties, you may want to make the summary short so that the reader gets into the first experience block right away.

### Each job announcement is unique

Regardless of your profession, whether you are a software engineer, lawyer or administrative assistant, there will be no two job announcements that you are targeting that will have the same job requirements and duties. However well you may have initially prepared your baseline resume, your resume will need to be modified to address the specific requirements of the job announcement you are targeting. Figure 1 below illustrates this process. There is a later section that covers in detail the process of how to modify your baseline resume to target your desired position.

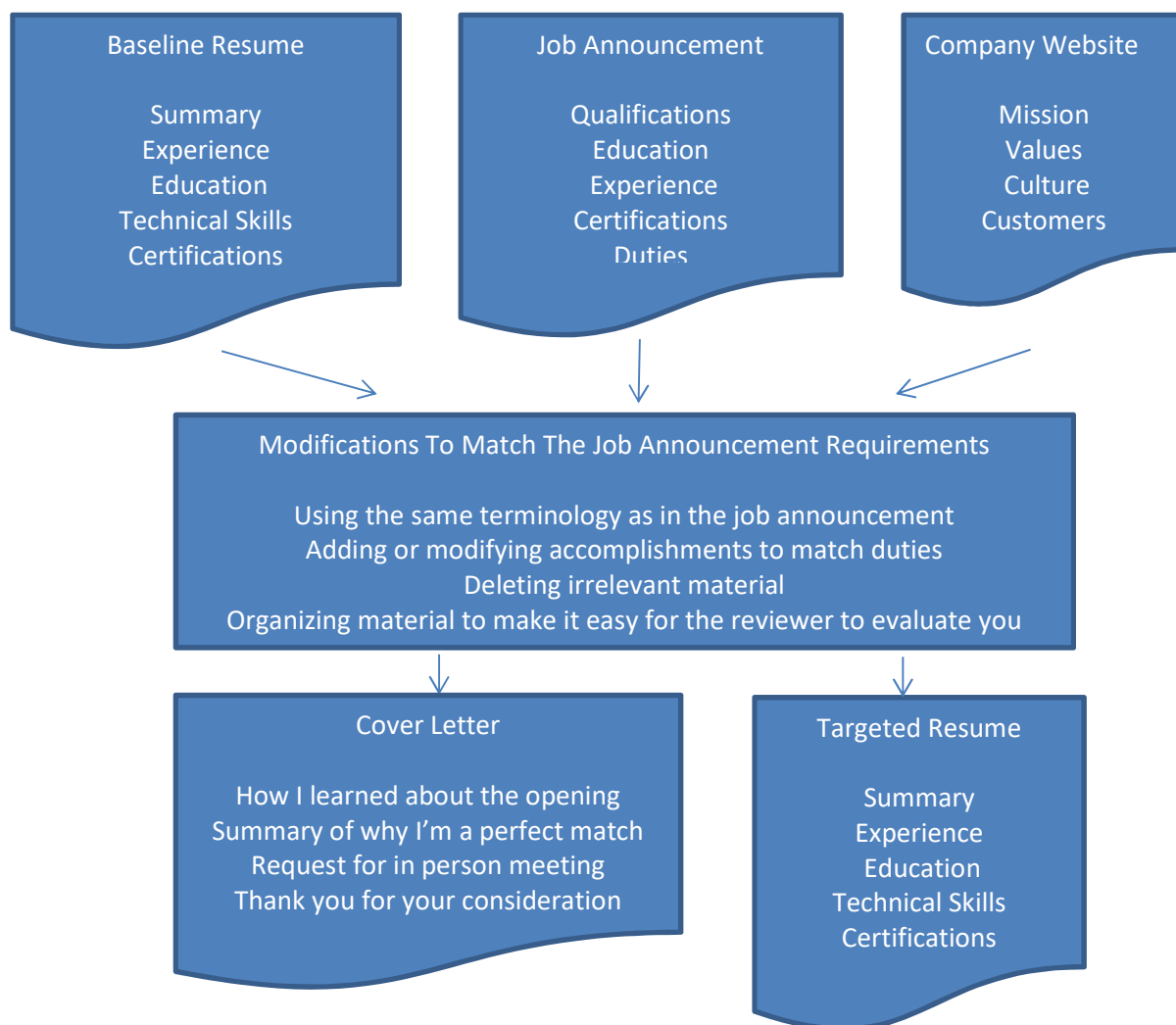


Figure 1 Creating A Targeted Resume.

### **What are the characteristics of successful resumes?**

- A summary paragraph that begins by labelling you with the same job title as in the job announcement.
- Modifications made so that the resume addresses the specific qualifications required by the target job and describes qualifications in the same terminology used in the job announcement. This applies to not only the most recent position but to each position.
- Accomplishment statements that mirror the same duties that are contained in the job announcement.
- A summary paragraph that makes it easy for the reader to evaluate you, that pulls together accomplishments scattered throughout the resume into an integrated, coherent, convincing case as to why you are best qualified for the job.
- A careful and judicious deletion of bullet statements and any other material in your standard resume that is not relevant for the job being applied for. These are a distraction that makes it more difficult for the reader to recognize what is relevant.
- Visual appeal, sufficient white space, adequate margins, font size at least 11 point, usually no more than 2 pages.
- Absolute uniformity and consistency in the use of capital letters, bullets, periods and boldface.
- No use of "&" except those in company titles.
- No abbreviations except those in standard use in your occupation.
- No errors - typographical, spelling, grammar, syntax or punctuation.

### **What should not be included in a resume?**

Do not include any of the following:

- Personal information like marital status, number of children or age.
- Hobbies not related to the position.
- Acronyms unless commonly used.
- Personal pronouns.
- "&"
- The word "Resume" at the top of the resume.
- Salary information.
- Reasons for leaving job.
- Names of supervisors.
- References or "References Will Be Provided Upon Request".

## **Baseline Resumes**

A baseline resume is a resume that is initially created without focusing on a specific job announcement.

It will include experience blocks for the past 10 years and may contain some experience blocks that go beyond 10 years to include some specific accomplishments that are critical for establishing you are best qualified for a position. This is particularly true for stay at home moms returning to the workplace or for individuals who may have had to leave the workforce to take care of a relative or friend.

If you have had multiple positions, for example marketing director, program manager and software engineer, the baseline resume will include experience blocks for each of those careers that will contain accomplishments bullets that establish you as best qualified for that position. The education, technical skills, certifications and award section of the resume will also include information covering each of the different professions.

The summary paragraph will also include all three professions and in lieu of the word SUMMARY as the heading will have:

**MARKETING DIRECTOR**

**PROGRAM MANAGER**

**SOFTWARE ENGINEER**

The baseline resume is what should be on LinkedIn and is also the resume that recruiters will want.

### **Chronological Resume Or Functional Resume**

Functional resumes focus on skills and while there is a work history section, only the job title, name of company and date and place of employment are provided. Hiring managers have no way of knowing what you did in each job. Some employers may get the impression the applicant might be trying to hide something and may not take the trouble to review the resume. Hiring managers want to know what you did in each job and are familiar and comfortable with chronological resumes. If for no other reason use a chronological resume because it's easier for the hiring manager.

There is no downside to using a chronological resume. The elements in general format for a chronological resume provided on the next page are not immovable and cast in iron. You can be creative in how you package your information for maximum impact using a chronological format.



## Chronological Resume Format

### Name

999 999-999  
Email address

Street Address  
City, State Zip code

### SUMMARY

This section begins by labelling you with a job title and is followed by the descriptions of your experience and accomplishments that make you the most qualified for this position. This paragraph should absolutely and always be done after every other part has been completed.

### EXPERIENCE

Company Name, City, State (latest Company followed by next latest) Month/Year- Month/Year  
Optional statement describing the company's business if the company is not well known.

#### Job Title

Optional statements that provide context and that might apply to a number of the bullets below, such as the number and professions of the employees supervised or mission or objectives.

- Accomplishment
- Accomplishment
- Accomplishment

Company Name, City, Country (more than one job at same company) earliest date with company – latest date  
Optional statement describing the company's business if the company is not well known.

#### Job Title

earliest date this position – latest date

Optional statements

- Accomplishment
- Accomplishment

#### Job Title

earliest year this position – latest date

Optional statements.

- Accomplishment
- Accomplishment

### EDUCATION

Technical or Refresher Course Description, Name of Provider, City, State  
Degree, Major, Name of University (highest degree first), City, State  
Degree, Major, Name of University, City, State

### CERTIFICATIONS

### TECHNICAL SKILLS

### AWARDS

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

## Formatting Specifics

### Why specific guidelines for formatting a resume?

Specific guidelines for formatting a resume serve a number of purposes:

- To provide hiring managers with a format they are familiar with.
- To make the resume aesthetically pleasing.
- To make the resume easy to read and the reader to discover what is important.
- To make the resume readable by Automated Resume Scanners.
- To make the most efficient use of space.
- To minimize the risk of accidental inconsistencies in formatting that would be interpreted by the reader as an inability to pay attention to detail.
- To make it easier to create.

In general, the formatting of the resume should be simple. Let the words speak for themselves. Avoid Italics and underlining. Limit bolding to job titles and section names.

For visual appeal there should be sufficient white space, 1 inch margins (top, bottom, right, left), font size at least 11 point. Use the same font size throughout except for your name at the top of the resume.

All section headings (summary, experience, education, etc.) should be either aligned center or all left margin.

All section headings should be capitalized the same way (all caps preferred) and all either bolded (preferred) or not bolded.

Avoid the use of "&" except those in company titles.

Avoid abbreviations except those in standard use in your occupation.

There should be uniformity and consistency in the use of capital letters, bullets and boldface.

It's recommended that bullets be flush to the left margin. If you want to indent bullets, be sure you do this consistently throughout the resume.

Each bullet should represent a single accomplishment. If there are multiple sentences in an accomplishment bullet they should be describing separate aspects of the same accomplishment.

All bullets should either have a period at the end or not. Either is fine. A mixture is not.

## Machine Readable Resumes

### What do I need to do to In order to make my resume readable by applicant tracking systems or automated resume screeners?

- Do not use tables, columns, text boxes, graphics, horizontal lines, borders, shading, headers (not even for contact information) or footers. If in your summary you provide categories of experience like the example below do not use a table since text scanners cannot pick up information in tables.
  - Recruitment
  - Global Talent Acquisition
  - HR Technology
  - Retention
  - Talent Development
  - Benefits Administration
- Titles that are after your name at the top of the page are not picked up by scanners. List certifications at the end of your summary if they are important.
- Use a font that is at least 11 point. Use the same font size throughout except for your name at the top of the resume.
- Avoid long paragraphs. Use bullet statements.
- Place dates to the right.
- Include keywords associated with the target job. If you have modified your resume to use the language in the job announcement you will have already done this.
- Do not use white words to insert keywords into your resume.

## Sample Resume

### RICHARD J. OVERACHIEVER

305-545-5603 (C)  
Richard.J.Overachiever@gmail.com

10813 Baldwin Road  
Lakeside, FL 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 manage 11 nonprofit hospitals in three states with combined revenues of \$210 million and with a total licensed complement of 1,700 beds. Also serve on the Board of Directors of 4 facilities. Throughout my career have consistently improved the bottom line through the implementation of cost savings systems and improved cash flow. At the same time have improved health care through the use of advanced technology. In 1986 led efforts for the installation of the first full-body CT scanner in the country and in my current assignment have added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all 11 hospitals.

#### EXPERIENCE

Methodist Health Management, Inc., Ocala, FL 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, VA

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, LA

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, TX

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, SC

## **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

\*Summary Charles O. West

## Cover Letter Format

Your street address  
Your city, state abbreviation, zip code  
Your email address  
Your phone

Name of addressee or skip if you don't have one  
Company name  
Company street address  
Company city, state abbreviation, zip code

Date

Dear Title Name: (If you don't have a name then either "Dear Sir or Madam:" or skip the salutation. Do not use "To Whom It May Concern:")

Paragraph 1  
Identify the position and where you became aware of it.

Paragraph 2  
If there are particular characteristics about this company that make you excited about working there, state that and explain why. Then make the case why you are best qualified for this position. Try to make this supplementary to your resume summary paragraph rather than duplicative of it. Use summary examples of accomplishments that match the duties in the job announcement. Provide examples of accomplishments that demonstrate qualifications that the company has indicated are important. Rather than have a paragraph that has many lines of unbroken text, either use bullets or break this paragraph up into more than one paragraph. However, do be careful to limit your cover letter to one page.

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Paragraph 3  
Ask specifically for an opportunity to discuss your qualifications in person.  
Provide your email address and phone number even though they are in the heading.  
Do not recommend a specific date and time.  
Do not state "I look forward to hearing from you."

Paragraph 4  
"Thank you for your consideration."

Sincerely,

Your name

Enclosure: Resume

## Sample Resume Cover Letter

6204 Cheryl Drive  
Glen Allen, VA 23060  
susan.m.smith@gmail.com  
804.750.2129

Mr. Keith Martin  
Universal Healthcare Unlimited  
1417 Cambridge Place, Suite 601  
Columbia, South Carolina 29302

November 27, 2017

Dear Mr. Martin:

I am writing in response to the position you advertised on your web site for Director of Marketing.

My experience makes me uniquely qualified for this position. As a Vice President at Chase Manhattan Bank I managed the marketing of eight luxury home mortgage financing offices located in 5 states. My personal success was based on marketing physicians through hospital department heads and residency programs. I was recognized as one of the top ten luxury home financing officers for Chase Manhattan in the country for three consecutive years.

Since 2002 I have worked as a marketing and branding consultant, helping companies build successful brands, increase market penetration and increase sales and profitability. Some of my accomplishments have included:

- Acquiring the coveted Virginia's Finest® designation for cupcakes for a Retail Gourmet Cupcakes and Frozen Yogurt Shop and increasing new customers by 69% through a social media campaign.
- Growing business from one office to five offices for a Residential Mortgage Lender and managing all internal and external public relations, direct mail opportunity and creation, websites management, advertising, presentation creation, speech writing, sales training and marketing opportunities for 30 loan officers.
- Designing all print ads for a weekly NY newspaper start-up.
- Designing high end advertisements for Connecticut Cottages & Garden Magazine and Westport News and writing direct mail content.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in person. I can be reached by phone at 804.750.2129 or via email at susan.m.smith@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Smith

Enclosure: Resume

## **Pitfalls To Avoid In Building Your Resume**

### **Not identifying yourself with a job title**

If your resume does not include a job title that matches the title in the announcement your resume will likely go onto the reject pile. Additionally, it's not possible for you to make the case why you are best qualified for a job if you haven't identified what the job is.

### **Writing your summary paragraph before completing the experience section**

If you do this you will waste time by writing a summary that describe your qualities, your skills, or what you can do, adjectives that describe your character or descriptions of your positive work habits. All of these are ignored by hiring managers who are looking for accomplishments that demonstrate the skills required by the duties in their job announcement. This means that you first need to write accomplishment bullets in your experience block before you write your summary because these will be the basis of your summary.

### **Using code words**

Avoid using code word, words that have a wealth of meaning to you but not so much to the rest of us, like "materials" and "invoices" in the examples below.

Example 1:

- Procured materials for jobs.

What does the word materials mean to you? It really is quite ambiguous to us although it was very clear to the writer. Filling in the detail results in this:

- Procured towers, antennas, parabolic dishes, bus bars, clamps, cables and steel for fabrication of microwave towers.

By filling in the details, the scope, complexity, and significance of what was done becomes clear.

Example 2:

- Processed invoices for communication services.

This seems to be a very mundane task, perhaps paying the phone and cable bill. Nothing that would grab one's attention.

- Saved \$500,000 by identifying and resolving discrepancies in monthly billing by vendors for T1 lines serving 600 locations.

Identifying the benefit and providing more specifics results in a resume that merits consideration rather than being placed in the reject pile.

### **Using abstract terms**

Avoid using terms like deliverables or documents to describe your accomplishments. These are meaningless. Describe what the documents or deliverables were, what was involved in producing them, whom they were for, the purpose they serve and its importance.

### **Failing to tell the rest of the story**

Avoid letting the description of the accomplishment end when it should be just beginning. For example, "Led an interdisciplinary workshop to address issues impacting the company." Who were the participants? Were they architects, engineers, finance, HR, operations, marketing?



Describe the issues. What caused them and what impact were they having on the business? How were issues resolved and with what benefits? Did the participants have conflicting interests and different agendas and what did you do to overcome these?

### **Attempting to be brief**

Develop the first draft of your resume without addressing the length. As you develop your accomplishments statements, turn them over like a prism, looking at them from all angles, seeing if you can shed some additional light and insight on your accomplishment.

When you have finished your first draft, then you can go back and review and edit your resume for size, keeping whatever most effectively describes your value and eliminating some of the rest.

### **Using an unprofessional email address**

Don't use something like johnlovesjudy or any other silly email address.

### **Accepting everyone's comments on your resume**

Before making any changes ask yourself will this change be a help in getting me an interview. If you don't think so don't make the change. If you think the person making the comment may not understand your situation, ask for clarification. If you get comments from more than one individual don't be surprised if they're conflicting.

### **Describing yourself with adjectives or character traits in your summary**

Don't describe your qualities, your skills, or what you can do. Don't use verbs in the present tense, adjectives that describe your character or descriptions of your positive work habits. Statements like these don't succeed in impressing hiring managers. Only accomplishments will do the job.

- Don't say you're a problem solver. Describe a problem you solved.
- Don't say you thrive in a fast paced environment. Give an example of when you met a challenging deadline.
- Don't say you can multi-task. Give an example of when you successfully juggled multiple tasks.

### **Failing to modify your resume for each job announcement**

You may not get past the initial review by the HR representative and the Automated Resume Scanner due to lack of key words.


### **Failing to meticulously review your resume before hitting send**

Don't expect phone calls offering you an interview.

## **Selling Your Experience Through Accomplishments**

What follows is Ed Landry's accomplishments workshop PowerPoint. Follow this guidance and when you have finished you will have the material that identifies you as the best qualified for the job and that will be the basis for creating your summary paragraph and cover letter.

# Accomplishments For Your Resumé and SOAR Stories Too

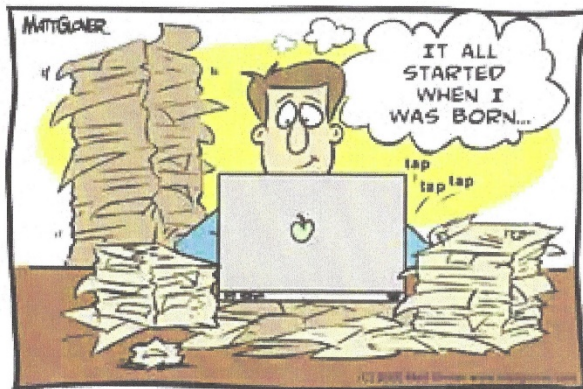


Ed Landry  
Founder & Leader  
Jobs Assistance Ministry

## Your Resumé: What It Is and Is Not

### Your Resumé Is Not:

- Entire job history
- A job description



Resume not Autobiography

### Your Resumé Is:

- A marketing brochure
  - What distinguishes you from other qualified candidates
- Your specialized skills and competencies
- **Major accomplishments**
- A tool to obtain an interview
- Your value to a prospective employer

## What's keeping you from identifying accomplishments?

- Feels like bragging
- Most work done in a team environment
- Never had to think about it
- Just did my job
- Difficult to quantify or measure results

What's your "reason"?

## Accomplishments, Not Responsibilities

### Responsibilities

- Performed
- Responsible for
- Managed
- Oversaw
- Provided
- Coordinated
- Conducted
- Prepared
- Maintained

### Accomplishments

- Created
- Initiated
- Designed
- Developed
- Decreased
- Increased
- Reorganized
- Strengthened
- Overhauled

**Not what you did but how well. What did you achieve?**

## Ask Yourself.....

- What are you most proud of?
- What would former associates say about your contributions?
- What have you enjoyed the most?
- How did you take initiative?
- Is there tangible evidence of your accomplishments?
- Did you receive any awards or positive performance reviews?
- How has the organization benefitted from your work performance?
- Can you quantify any of your experiences?
- What special projects did you work on and what was the outcome?

## Think Of A Time When You

- Increased Profits
- Reduced Costs, Errors, Conflicts, Losses
- Improved Quality, Teamwork, Process
- Eliminated Errors
- Developed New Process, Procedure, Service, Product
- Prevented or Protected Against Risk, Hazard
- Overcame Obstacle
- Received An Award

## How To Write An Accomplishment Statement

- Start with A Colorful, Unique Action Verb
  - Created
  - Initiated
  - Innovated
- Avoid Wordiness and Unnecessary Adjectives
- Quantify If Possible
- If Multiple, Significant Elements, Include in One Accomplishment
- Begin with Benefit, Then Your Actions and Finally Results

## How Can You Improve These Resume Bullets?

- Provided process support for clients' customer service
- Recognized as employee of the month
- Oversaw annual budget of \$20 million
- Improved financial close process
- Processed 200 claims monthly

## Accomplishment

- Good
  - Managed a portfolio that generated gross sales of over \$21 million annually
- Better
  - Increased gross sales of agricultural products by \$2 million, a 20% overall increase
- Best
  - Created new prospecting techniques that uncovered untapped markets for agricultural products resulting in increased sales of \$2 million, a 20% year over year increase. Recognized as sales leader for 2014

## Accomplishment

- Good
  - Drafted grant proposal
- Better
  - Drafted grant proposal obtaining \$300 K in new funding
- Best
  - Identified grant opportunity, persuaded foundation leader to apply, drafted proposal, and obtained \$300 K in new funding used to implement a food program in Western Africa

## Accomplishment

- Good
  - Recognized as top sales person in 2014
- Better
  - Increased sales by 40%, achieving top sales award in 2014
- Best
  - Developed and implemented new prospecting process that opened new markets resulting in sales increase of 40%. Recognized as top sales person in 2014

## Accomplishment

- Good
  - Directed a staff of 20 customer service staff in a fast-paced call center
- Better
  - Improved customer service by reducing average speed of answer from 20 seconds to 10 seconds
- Best
  - Engaged team in identifying root causes of slow average speed of answer (ASA), designed new process, improving phone call queuing and reducing ASA from 30 to 10 seconds. Increased customer satisfaction and retention by an estimated 20%

## SOAR – Framework for Structuring Accomplishments On The Resume and Interviews Too

You should:

- Identify the **Situation or Task**
- May include an **Obstacle**
- Describe the **Action(s)** taken
- Describe the **Results**
  - Skill demonstrated or
  - Outcome of your action



## Final Thoughts:

- Demonstrate Your Uniqueness
- Results Not Responsibilities
- Not Bragging
- Past Results Predict Future Performance

***Accomplishments***

## **Creating The Summary Paragraph**

### **Creating experience blocks and accomplishments are a prerequisite for creating a summary paragraph**

If you are creating your first baseline resume, having finished the heading and now starting to create the summary because that's next in the outline, please immediately stop. You won't have the material that you will need as the basis of the summary until you have finished all of your experience blocks with their accomplishment statements. When you have finished your experience blocks and accomplishment statements, the information you need as the basis for your summary will already be in your resume. Even if you are working to improve an existing summary paragraph that's weak and ineffective, improving it never involves adding additional information to the resume but using what you already have.

### **If all the information is already in my resume, why do I need a summary paragraph?**

Your accomplishment statements are scattered throughout your resume. Not all of them are equally important. Reviewers typically take 10-20 seconds to review a resume. Reviewers can easily miss and fail to appreciate important accomplishment statements you have if they are scattered on both pages of your resume or buried within some less than relevant material for the job you've targeted. Put another way, the accomplishments are not organized in way that will have the maximum impact.

By creating a summary paragraph you make it easy for reviewers to find the accomplishments that you want to be noticed. You do this by selecting your most important accomplishments wherever they are located in your resume and bringing them forward into the summary paragraph. You can do this either by summarizing several similar accomplishments or in other cases by copying the accomplishment bullet into the summary.

### **Isn't copying accomplishment statements into the summary paragraph redundant?**

The information copied is the same but presented in a way that insures that it will not be passed over. Brevity is not the goal. Creating impact and effectively marketing your accomplishments is the goal.

### **How long should the summary paragraph be?**

Conventional wisdom says no more than 3 lines or 50 words or four sentences at most. And also that reviewers will stop reading the summary at that point and go straight to the first experience block.

There are some shortfalls to having that short a summary.

A short summary may be effective when the accomplishments in your first experience block mirror the job duties in the job announcement. In this case you want the reviewer to quickly get to that material. In all other cases a longer summary is more effective because it allows you to select the important accomplishments and bring them right up front where the reviewer will be sure to see them.

With a short summary you lose control of what you want the reviewer to be sure to see. The sequence of where any accomplishment lies in your resume dictates how likely it is to be noticed. This is a problem if your first experience block is not your most important one and an even bigger problem for individuals returning to the work place after an absence, who need their accomplishments on the second page to find a way onto the first page.

With a sort summary you are also limited in your ability to create a more powerful first impression. The description of your accomplishment will be weaker and more abstract rather than a harder hitting description. For example, if Richard J. Overachiever's summary was limited to four sentences it would contain the following as the last line:

"Have improved the quality of health care by the use of advanced technology"

Not limiting the summary to four sentences allows the following more powerful, specific description to be added after the previous statement.

"In 1981 led efforts for installing the first full-body CT scanner in the U.S. and currently have added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all 11 hospitals."

### **Reviewers will not stop reading a longer summary if it is filled with accomplishments**

It is true that reviews will skip over your summary if it's filled with fluff. But reviewers will not stop reading summary paragraphs that are filled with accomplishments. On the pages that follow at the end of this section are four examples of different approaches for a summary paragraph. These examples are from JAM participants who were successful in landing jobs with their revised version of the summary paragraph. Counting blank lines these summary paragraphs were 14, 9, 11 and 17 lines respectively.

### **What besides accomplishments belong in the summary paragraph?**

The summary needs to include a job title and your categories of experience. It may also include:

- Context information that describes your level of responsibilities such as the size of the budget you managed and the number of people you supervised.
- Awards received.
- Selected education, technical skills and certifications. Conventional wisdom calls for these to be at the end of the second page where they could easily be missed. If these are essential for the position and uniquely qualify you, consider including the critical ones

at the end of the summary or alternatively in a separate section after the summary paragraph immediately before experience.

- Anything else that uniquely qualifies you.

### **Constructing the summary paragraph**

Begin your summary with a sentence that has your job title at the beginning and a description of your categories of experience. .

- Example 1: “Sales representative with experience in medical products, information technology and automotive.”
- Example 2: “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.”

The job title you use ideally should match the job title in the job announcement that you are targeting. Your resume may be screened by an automated text scanner or by an administrative assistant who has little knowledge of the nature of the position being filled and may not be able to recognize an alternative commonly accepted job title. If your job title does not match the title in the announcement your resume will likely go onto the reject pile.

Begin by following your lead in sentence with a description of the scope of your responsibilities. For example: “Managed 11 nonprofit hospitals in three states with combined revenues of \$210 million and with a total licensed complement of 1,700 beds.” Never describe your responsibilities by saying “Responsible for ...” Lead with an action verb in the past tense that says you actually did something.

Next carefully select from throughout all your accomplishment bullet statements those that you assess as the most important accomplishments. Summarize them and in some cases copy some bullets into the summary. For example: “Have consistently improved the bottom line by implementing cost savings systems and improving cash flow. Have improved the quality of health care by the use of advanced technology. In 1986 led efforts for installing the first full-body CT scanner in the U.S. and currently have added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all 11 hospitals.”

By selecting the important accomplishments and bringing them right up front into the summary you do more than just ensure that the reviewer will see them. Reviewers are focused on making a binary decision – keep for further consideration or reject. In their 10-20 seconds scan of a resume they move independently from one accomplishment to another to make their decision. Reviewers in this short period of time can't select accomplishments, piece them together and create their own summary. By creating the summary paragraph the way that you have you leave the reviewer with a focused and coherent description of why you are the best qualified.

It is key to remember that the hiring manager is looking for someone who has been there and done that. Only descriptions of your accomplishments, of what you have actually done on previous jobs, will do the trick. The perfect match will be a resume that has accomplishments for each or most of the job duties listed in the announcement.

## **What should not be included in the summary paragraph?**

Don't describe your qualities, your skills, or what you can do. Don't use verbs in the present tense, adjectives that describe your character or descriptions of your positive work habits. Statements like these aren't accomplishments and don't succeed in impressing hiring managers for several reasons:

- They tend not to be job specific and don't describe your experience in your job.
- They also don't help to differentiate you since anyone could submit a similar list.
- They are unsubstantiated assertions.

As an exception to the general rule of not listing skills, explicitly list skills contained in the job announcement using the same words that the announcement does. Do not simply make a naked assertion but provide a bullet that lists the skill together with an accomplishment that demonstrates the skill. For example.

Job Announcement: "Must be able to work under pressure and meet critical time constraints." .

Resume: "Able to work under pressure and meet critical time constraints as evidenced by producing the daily on-line version of the Washington Post each day for five years."

Examples of summary paragraphs of four successful JAM participants follow on the next pages. Near the end of this document is a section that provides an example of an approach for building a summary paragraph by analyzing the contents of your resume.

## Resume Summary Example 1

### SUMMARY (Original)

Experienced engineering manager with strong water utility operations experience. Proven track record of innovative, technology-based solutions leading to significant project cost savings. Broad background of projects in water, wastewater, industrial water treatment and groundwater remediation. Experienced people manager and team leader. Consistent history of developing strong client relationships and resultant contract signings.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Utility Operations</b></li> <li>• <b>Nutrient Removal</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Water Treatment Processes</b></li> <li>• <b>Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Client Management</b></li> <li>• <b>Community Service</b></li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

### SUMMARY (Revised)

Experienced engineering manager with strong water utility operations experience. Proven track record of innovative, technology-based solutions leading to significant project cost savings. Accomplishments have included:

- Managing 35 associates with over \$3.5 million in annual revenue managing industrial operations sites in Virginia, New Jersey, New York, West Virginia, and Maryland,
- Managing day-to-day operations for wastewater, sanitary sewer, groundwater, and alum dewatering treatment at 3,000 person DuPont Spruance chemical manufacturing plant.
- Negotiating contract renewals with a total value over \$8 million.
- Winning two internal company awards for Project Excellence and leading implementation of Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award systems at the project and corporate level.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Utility Operations</b></li> <li>• <b>Nutrient Removal</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Wastewater, Industrial Water Treatment</b></li> <li>• <b>Groundwater Remediation</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sanitary Sewer</b></li> <li>• <b>Membrane Bioreactor</b></li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

### Comment

While this summary is a mixture of text and bullet accomplishments, the lesson to be learned there is about the bulleted areas of expertise at the bottom.

In this updated version of the summary the bulleted items are all technical and are used to substantiate his assertion of strong water utility operations experience. In the original version his bulleted areas of expertise were a mix of apples, oranges and bananas and looked like this:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Utility Operations</b></li> <li>• <b>Nutrient Removal</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Water Treatment Processes</b></li> <li>• <b>Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Client Management</b></li> <li>• <b>Community Service</b></li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

Rather than a hodgepodge there should be a purpose and a single focus for the bulleted areas. There should be a clear message that you want to convey.

## Resume Summary Example 2

### SUMMARY (Original)

Versatile and successful Security Professional with more than 15 years of comprehensive security experience including personnel security, physical security and retail security. Dynamic, passionate and self-assured individual who possesses a broad knowledge of security solutions and methods. Proven experience in fostering strong internal and external professional relationships. Excellent ability to organize and prioritize responsibilities. Thrives in a fast paced environment, embraces challenges and faces tasks with a determination to exceed expectations.

### SUMMARY (Revised)

Security Manager with experience in personnel security, physical security and retail security.

- Managed the day to day physical security of a six story, 298,000 sq. ft. biotechnology laboratory and satellite locations that employed over 800 employees
  - Improved access controls, key controls and facility surveillance
  - Protected against potential loss of life, destruction of property and disruption of operations by developing and implemented security Standard Operating Procedures and Policies covering Active Shooter and Bomb Threat
- Managed physical security for Short Pump Town Center, a 1.2 million sq. ft. upscale retail mall

### Comment

This is an example of a summary paragraph that is composed of bullets that were missed by reviewers when an earlier version of the summary was used. This was despite the fact that they were under a section labeled Key Accomplishments that started at the middle of the first page.

His lead in sentence describes his different areas of experience and is a shortened version of the lead in sentence in his initial version. The only other reference to security in the five lines of his earlier version was an assertion of a broad knowledge of security solutions and methods.

In contrast, this version of the summary is filled with very specific information on security solutions:

- The second and last bullets both describe the scope of his responsibilities
- The first sub bullet "Improved access controls, key controls and facility surveillance" is a good bottom line summary of the following detailed accomplishment statements in his resume:
  - Provided a more secure work environment for employees at 10 offsite locations by implementing IP centered pin pad access control
  - Improved surveillance by installing a \$50,000 26 camera IP based CCTV/NVR system
  - Provided better key control accountability by eliminating flaws in the key issuing process
- The second sub bullet also describes specific accomplishments as they were described in the initial version but does add the business benefits at the beginning.

Is the takeaway here that a weak summary creates a poor impression that is difficult to overcome?

Or is that summarizing the three bullets conveyed a big picture to the reviewers which they themselves hadn't been able to come up with from just reading the three very detailed specific bullets? Put another way, in taking only 10-20 seconds to scan resumes, reviewers don't always have the time to reflect on what they have seen and synthesize information from appropriately detailed bullets into a good coherent summary of what they have seen.

### Resume Summary Example 3

#### Summary (Original)

**Malcolm Baldrige finalist** and **Excalibur winning nationally ranked** consultative and targeted account sales and marketing specialist, with documented ability to build brands through visionary strategies, prioritizing opportunities, ability to deal with the unknown in complex situations, strategic internal and cross-sell communication campaigns, targeted public relations and industry award opportunities, distinctive industry trade event execution, with a professional background in **affluent/luxury brands, consumer financial services, hospitals/physicians, corporations** and a personal passion for helping not-for-profits.

#### Summary (Revised)

Marketing manager with experience in affluent/luxury brands, consumer financial services, hospitals/physicians, real estate, large corporations and small businesses. Equally comfortable managing others or individually handling all tasks needed to build successful brands, increase market penetration and increase sales and profitability.

As a Vice President at Chase Manhattan, managed sales training and development, event planning and speaking, product development, and advertising for eight luxury home mortgage financing offices located in 5 states. Awarded the Excalibur Award and my division was a Malcolm Baldrige finalist.

Subsequently have worked as a marketing and branding consultant, helping businesses significantly improve their marketing and increase sales and profitability.

#### Comment

This summary is an example of stay at mom returning to the work place. This woman left a very successful career at Chase Manhattan and while a stay at home mom became a very successful marketing and branding consultant. Her most recent experience contained very impressive selected examples of accomplishments in this role supporting eleven different clients. Her Chase Manhattan experience was at the bottom of the second page.

There are two points to take away here.

First, if you have terrific experience that is old and on the second page but relevant, describe it in your summary.

The second is the answer to her question as to what level she should be trying to re-enter the work force - as a senior manager or as a consultant individually handling marketing tasks? My response was to let the market decide. Indicate you're equally comfortable in either role.



## Resume Summary Example 4

Summary (Original)		
<b>Energetic, Jill of all trades, with strong environmental writing, networking and organizational skills, is seeking a position in the renewable energy field.</b>		
Technical Writing	Research	Problem Solving
Critical Thinking	Detail Oriented	Education
Excellent Customer Service	Marketing/networking	MS Office Skills
<b>Environmental Scientist I Technical Writer and Communicator I Water Resources</b>		
Environmental Scientist with strong technical writing skills in regulatory research and reporting, work experience with the Clean Water Act, both NPDES and Section 404 reporting, would like to fill a needed role in environmental permitting and compliance.		
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Managed and wrote three O&amp;M Manuals according to the Clean Water Act - NPDES standards for facilities with combined construction costs of over \$25 million.</li><li>• Researched and wrote a Dredged Soil Management Plan for a Federal Facility.</li><li>• Wrote Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plans for above-ground tanks according to Clean Water Act requirements.</li><li>• Designed and wrote marketing materials for environmental programs.</li><li>• Developed good working relationships with clients, plant staff and operators, equipment vendors and contractors.</li><li>• Working with an environmental field team, conducted site investigations, monitoring, and remediation for a local cities underground storage tank program.</li><li>• Researched and wrote an Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan and Compost Study for a Federal facility.</li></ul>		
<b>Comment</b>		
<p>This is another resume of a stay at home mom returning to the work place. The “Jill of all trades” in the original was in response to a job announcement looking for a Jill of all trades.</p> <p>Placing these bullets in the summary ensured they would be noticed and provided an opportunity to create a good first impression. The reviewer didn’t become aware that the most recent dates for these were 1996 until reaching the bottom of the first page. Five of these seven bullet accomplishments were from experience blocks on the second page. Please note the following refresher courses that were under Education on the second page.</p> <p><b>Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality,</b> Stormwater Management Certification courses: Chesapeake Bay TMDL Action Plan Informational Plan Session, October 2014 Review of Stormwater Management Plans Using IIC, April 2015 Plants in Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control, April 2015 Stormwater Management Basic Class, April 2015 Stormwater Management - Basic Soil Science, May 2015</p>		

## **Researching Your Target Company**

### **Searching the web**

While what you will find varies from company to company, on a company's website the things you may find are a mission statement, company values, descriptions of products and services provided, customers, community relations, charities supported and vision statements.

If there are some of the aspects of the company's culture that personally appeal to you and align with your own set of values, then you can begin the second paragraph of your cover letter describing what it is about the company that makes the prospect of working for them exciting for you personally.

During the interview you will also want to demonstrate that you have taken the trouble to research the company by commenting on something about the company you have learned that appeals to you.

### **Contacting current employees of the company**

Check to see if you have a connection on LinkedIn who is a current employee of the company. If so, call and explain that you are applying for an advertised position at the company. Begin by asking a rather open ended general question such as "What is it like to work at XYZ Corporation?" Let your connection take his or her answer wherever it may lead. You can then ask follow up questions to bits of information that you find helpful and would like to know more about. For example, knowing what the hiring manager is like.

## **Matching The Job Announcement**

### **Targeted resumes**

Targeted resumes are resumes that focus on a particular job announcement with laser like precision. The goal is to make it easy for the reviewer to recognize your accomplishments and assess you as the best qualified for the job. To do this is necessary to address each announcement requirement, to use the same terminology as in the job announcement and to organize the information so that it is easy for the reviewer to find it.

To the extent possible, targeted resumes contain an accomplishment bullet that explicitly and clearly addresses each requirement listed in the job announcement using the same terminology found in the job announcement.

To make it easy for the reviewer to recognize your qualifications, the summary paragraph is revised to focus only on accomplishments that are relative to this announcement. It may also be desirable in some experience blocks to delete some accomplishment bullets not relevant to this announcement to make it easier to recognize the ones that are.

### **Addressing each requirement**

If you simply eyeball your resume, you may immediately conclude that it's a perfect fit. To you, it may be but maybe not so much to anyone reviewing the resume. You have perfect knowledge of all that you have done and can make the connections based on that knowledge. The outside reader cannot. It's necessary to modify the resume to make those connections explicitly clear.

For example, you may have experience as a pricing analyst. The job announcement may have the following:

- This person will be responsible for creating and updating monthly reports, data analysis, data modeling, and producing pricing proposals for senior management

If your resume has only the following it will not be adequate:

- Produced pricing proposals.

Begin by opening your baseline resume and "save as" to create a new resume labeled as your target. Review each job announcement qualification and experience requirement and listed job duties one by one, assessing where in your resume you have addressed that requirement with a matching accomplishment bullet. In doing this step include any information from your resume that in any way even imperfectly addressed that item. Modify each resume response as needed to more explicitly address that requirement and/or to use the same exact terminology as in the job announcement. If you have actual relevant to a job announcement requirement that has never found its way into your resume, add an accomplishment for that to your resume.

Update your baseline resume with the newly added accomplishment statements and any modified statements where you like the new wording better than your old wording.

### **Deleting material from your resume that is not relevant for this job announcement**

At this point save a backup copy of your target resume. This way, if you delete some information that you later decide should really be back in the resume, you can copy it back in. This will also

allow you to experiment with how much or how little you want to delete, knowing that you can restore anything that's been deleted.

Print out a copy of your target resume and highlight everything that addresses a requirement in the job announcement. What is highlighted is what is relevant to the position you've targeted. Your goal at this point is not to have a resume that you can use for other announcements but just for this one.

The goal of deleting some non-relevant material is to provide more visibility to the relevant and make it easier for the reviewer to find it, keeping in mind that reviewers take 10-20 seconds to review a resume and can easily miss accomplishments. It will be up to you to decide how much or how little you want to delete. This needs to be done judiciously so that you don't make it appear that significant positions now seem to be insignificant. In making your decision, ask yourself will keeping this accomplishment help me get an interview?

Go through each of your experience blocks and delete some of the non-relevant accomplishments if these are making it difficult for your relevant accomplishments to be noticed. Retain any non-relevant one if leaving it out would create too weak of a description of that position.

There are some situations where it's clear that deleting accomplishments will have little or no adverse effect.

If your most recent or any other position was as a caregiver, delete any bullets and enter a single line similar to the following:

Caregiver for Mother

Mar 2014 - Nov 2017

-

If your most recent or any other position was in a stop gap position needed to allow you to keep paying the bills, delete any bullets and enter a single line similar to the following:

School Bus Driver for Henrico County

Aug 2016 – Aug 2016

If you have older experience blocks that you are keeping in only to fill the time gap that leads up to an older important and significant position, you can consider deleting all the bullets under those so the reviewer can more quickly see what is important.

If you have older experience blocks that cover entry or very junior level positions, you may want to consider minimizing or deleting accomplishment bullets in those positions that don't describe accomplishments that are relevant at your current level. You will want to retain any accomplishment that you are asserting has been a consistent accomplishment throughout your career.

### **Creating the target summary paragraph**

Create a new summary paragraph that pulls together information from accomplishments scattered throughout the resume into a coherent, convincing description of your experience and demonstrated abilities that identify you as the best candidate for this specific job.

- Begin with your job title and your categories of experience.
- Provide context information that describes your level of responsibilities such as the size of the budget you managed and the number of people you supervised.

- Assess which of the requirements in the job announcement are most important and identify the matching accomplishments in your resume. Select some to combine and enter in summary form and others to copy and edit into the summary.
- In responding to the specific qualifications identified in the job announcements as being important such as problem solving, communication skills, or no job is too small attitude, address these into the summary with examples of where you have demonstrated these skills.
- Place awards, any education, certifications, or technical skills that are essential discriminators at the end of the summary or alternatively in a separate section after the summary paragraph immediately before experience.

## Special Situations

### Volunteer experience

If your volunteer experience was a substantial position that included several duties where you demonstrated your qualification for the target job and/or your ability to perform the job duties, then treat that as a regular experience block with bullet statements and after the job title insert “(Volunteer).” Treat this as if it were a paid position in deciding if you want to include some of the volunteer accomplishments in your summary.

If your volunteer experience consists of separate activities then enter these as individual lines under your volunteer section at the back. For example:

#### **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

Webelos Cub Scout Leader	2005, 2007, 2009
President of the Millstone Homeowners Association	2015-2017

Volunteer experience can be a means of demonstrating leadership and/or commitment to the community. It can also be an accidental means of establishing rapport with the interviewer, for example you were a Girl Scout leader and her daughter was in Girl Scouts and she was a Girl Scout Leader also.

### Stay at home parent returning to the workplace

You will probably want to account for the time you spent as a stay at home parent rather than having an empty period of time in your resume. In the experience block enter a single line entry similar to the following:

<b>Stay at home mom</b>	2002-2017
-------------------------	-----------

If during this time period you have volunteer work or part time work that demonstrates your qualification for the job and/or your ability to perform the job duties, you can describe those with separate experience blocks.

Create the summary paragraph just as if your previous experience was more recent. If you have taken some refresher courses or have a recent certification, enter that information immediately below the summary. Resume Summary Examples 3 and 4 are moms returning to the workplace.

## **Caregivers returning to the workplace**

You will probably want to account for the time you spent as a caregiver rather than having an empty period of time in your resume. Have a single line entry similar to the following:

**Caregiver For My Mother**

2014-2017

Do not create any bullets describing this effort. They would not help you get and interview and they would slow the reader in getting to the important information in your resume.

## **Transitioning to a new career**

Ideally you would like to begin your summary paragraph branding yourself with the job title of your target position. You can do this if you have part time or independent experience in that position. Examples:

Freelance graphics artist seeking a full time position as a graphics artist.

Elementary school substitute teacher seeking a full time position as an elementary school teacher.

In doing this be sure to use the exact title in the job announcement. In the second example above it was important to say “elementary school teacher” rather than just “teacher.”

If you can’t brand yourself with the target job title then brand yourself with your current title and indicate what you are seeking. Examples:

Admin assistant seeking an entry level HR administrator position.

Your summary paragraph needs to be focused on accomplishments that demonstrate your qualifications for the target job, not your qualifications for your current job. You have to show how what you have done in the past relates to the target position. For example, if the target position is an elementary school teacher and one of the requirements is to protect the privacy of school records, be sure to have a bullet in your experience block describing how you have protected payroll and personnel records and cite that in your summary paragraph relating it to the requirement to protect school records.

## **Resumes for the well experienced**

Avoid starting out your summary with citing how many years of experience you have in your field. This will make you sound old and expensive. Instead describe the areas of expertise you as in the example below:

Human resources manager with experience in recruitment, retention, HR technology, benefits administration, global talent acquisition and talent development.

Avoid using the following words:

- Seasoned
- Highly experienced
- Extensive track record
- Veteran

## **Recent college graduates**

For recent college graduates, the education section should follow immediately after the summary.

Unless you have some part time experience in your targeted position, you may need to start your summary with something similar to the following:

Recent college graduate with a degree in biology seeking an entry level environmental scientist position.

If you have part time experience in which you have performed some of the duties in the job announcement or met some of the other requirements, then describe that next in the summary. If you have performed laboratory experiments or written papers relevant to the job, you should then describe them.



## **Posture Perfect**

The Fortune 500 company that I worked for would team with other companies in bidding on government procurements. Sometimes we would be the prime and sometimes we would be the sub.

On one occasion we were subbing to a small business and I was attending the dry run of the oral proposal that was being presented by a senior vice president of the small business. At one point he said, "If we are fortunate enough to win this..." at which point I politely interrupted and said that instead we needed to be asserting that we were the uniquely qualified to win the procurement.

That is the posture you need to maintain throughout the job search. You need to be presenting yourself as the best qualified candidate. You don't do this by comparing yourself to other candidates but by showing how your experience is a perfect fit for the qualifications and duties that are in the job announcement that you are targeting.

This is the posture you need to maintain as you are writing your resume, then during the interview and also after the interview, even if you are not selected.

This means that when you go to the interview, bring the copy of the resume you submitted, not the more recent version that you may have updated. You have been selected for the interview because the company has already decided that you are well qualified based on the resume you submitted. Don't do anything to diminish the good image that the company has of you. Bringing an updated version may make the company wonder if something was wrong with the original version or if there was some weakness in your experience there that they may have overlooked. If your new resume has some new insights into why you are best qualified or better descriptions of some accomplishments, you can use that information verbally during the interview itself.

If you are not selected for the position, do not ever, ever, ever ask about your weaknesses or deficiencies. Never do anything to diminish the good opinion that the company has of you. While you were not selected for the position, based on the good impression you made, you may be called back for a second interview for a different position in the company. It also sometimes happens that the person selected for the position declines the offer and you are then offered the position.

If you find that your resume is getting you interviews and you are not getting any offers, then ask someone you know with experience in your field to hear a dry run of your interview and give you feedback. Remember that when the interviewer gives you a friendly smile and says "Tell me about yourself," that's code for "Tell me why you're best qualified for this position."

## Building A Summary Paragraph By Analyzing The Contents Of A Resume.

The resume for Richard J. Overachiever from J. Larry Tyler's Healthcare Executive's Job Search didn't include a summary. Here is a step by step description of one approach to create a summary paragraph using the process that was used to create the summary for Richard.

Review each bullet in your resume and in the left margin write in a category that you assign to it, for example marketing, administration, purchasing or construction. Which categories to use will depend on the type of experience you've had. The resume of Richard J. Overachiever on the next page is annotated with the categories chosen for his resume.

Use the individual categories you found in your resume to create an introductory sentence to summarize the breadth of experience. Doing this with Richard's resume we created the following introductory sentence:

"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."

Next look in your resume for context information that describes your level of responsibilities such as the size of the budget you managed and the number of people you supervised. In Richard's case we added the following:

"In my current position manage 11 nonprofit hospitals in three states with combined revenues of \$210 million and with a total licensed complement of 1,700 beds. Also serve on the Board of Directors of 4 facilities."

Next search your resume for categories that appear more than once. You can either summarize the bullets in a single category or insert them into your summary

In Richard's case there are 4 entries in the finance category and from reviewing the resume we determined that these are taken from his last three positions.

Reduced accounts receivable in all hospitals resulting in \$10 million cash flow improvements in 12 months.	Finance
Developed first financial budget, personnel budget, and first capital equipment budget.	Finance
Added a data communication system that increased revenues by 6 percent.	Finance
Established a Management Engineering Department that reported cost savings of \$600,000 its first year.	Finance

We summarized these by saying:

"Throughout my career have consistently improved the bottom line through the implementation of cost savings systems and improved cash flow."

## RICHARD J. OVERACHIEVER

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### EXPERIENCE

- Methodist Health Management, Inc., Ocala, FL 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.
- Administration  
Purchasing  
Insurance  
Technology  
Finance
- Northside Memorial Hospital, Northside, VA 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.
- Finance  
Recruitment  
Finance
- St. Anthony's Hospital, Beaumont, LA 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.
- Finance  
Construction  
Technology
- Medical Center of Ft. Worth, Ft. Worth, TX 1982 - 1986  
**Assistant Administrator**  
Management of ancillary services for 350 bed facility and chairman of several committees.
- Administration

\*Edited from J. Larry Tyler's [Healthcare Executive's Job Search](#)

Continue in a similar manner with each category that has more than one entry. In Richard's case there are two table entries in the technology category.

Added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all hospitals.	Technology
Led planning, construction, and purchasing of one of the first full-body CT scanner installed in the country.	Technology

We transition from the previous statement and complete the summary paragraph as follows:

“At the same time have improved health care thought the use of advanced technology. In 1986 led efforts for the installation of the first full-body CT scanner in the country and in my current assignment have added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all 11 hospitals.”

The completed summary:

### **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. Manage 11 nonprofit hospitals in three states with combined revenues of \$210 million. Have consistently improved the bottom line by implementing cost savings systems and improving cash flow. Have improved the quality of health care by the use of advanced technology. In 1981 led efforts for installing the first full-body CT scanner in the U.S. and current have added 4 CT scanners and 2 digital subtraction angiography units for all 11 hospitals.

### **Comments**

This resume is an example of one that summaries accomplishments but doesn't include any bullet statements.

- The first sentence provides a job title and identifies the different categories of his extensive experience.
- The second sentence provides context by identifying the number of hospitals he manages and their combined revenues.
- The next sentence summarizes his fiscal accomplishments. He doesn't give any examples here but his experience blocks below have these three substantiating bullets.
  - Established a purchasing program that resulted in \$2 million in first year savings.
  - Added a data communication system that increased revenues by 6 percent.
  - Established a Management Engineering Department resulting in savings of \$600,000.
- His last two sentences describe his use of technology to improve medical care and gives specific examples.

accelerated	eliminated	overhauled
adapted	enhanced	persuaded
addressed	enlarged	planned
analyzed	established	presented
arranged	exceeded	procured
assembled	executed	proposed
attracted	expanded	provided
authored	expedited	
		recruited
budgeted	facilitated	reduced
built	formulated	refined
		renewed
chaired	handled	reorganized
charted		replaced
collected	illuminated	reported
compiled	illustrated	researched
completed	implemented	restructured
conceived	improved	reviewed
concluded	increased	revised
constructed	initiated	revitalized
contracted	innovated	
contributed	instructed	shut down
controlled	invented	simplified
coordinated	investigated	sold
corrected		solved
created	managed	started
	marketed	strengthened
decreased	maximized	stimulated
demonstrated	minimized	summarized
designed	motivated	supervised
developed		systematized
devised	negotiated	
diagrammed	obtained	terminated
directed	operated	took charge
documented	optimized	took over
	organized	trained
edited	originated	transacted

## Resume Review Checklist

Yes/No	*****Preferred Format*****
	Generally no more than 2 pages.
	Margins – 1 inch top, bottom, left, right.
	Font size no smaller than 11 points.
	Fonts all same size except name at top.
	Italics and underlining avoided.
	Bolding limited to job titles and section names.
	No tables. Automatic Text scanners used to screen resumes do not process information in tables.
	No graphics.
	All section headings (summary, experience, education, etc.) either aligned center or all left margin.
	All section headings capitalized the same way (all caps preferred) and all either bolded (preferred) or not bolded.
	No abbreviations unless universally accepted.
	No use of “&” unless it is in a company name.
	All accomplishment bullets either end with a period or don't.
	All accomplishment bullets are aligned to the margin the same way.
	No errors –typographical, spelling, grammar, syntax, or punctuation.
	<p>Experience section approximates the following format:</p> <p><b>EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p>Company Name, City, State month/year - present</p> <p><b>Job Title</b></p> <p>Optional two to three lines describing the number you supervise, your budget, your responsibilities and other information that adds context or may apply to more than one bullet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accomplishment</li> <li>• Accomplishment</li> </ul>
	Each bullet represents a single accomplishment. If there are multiple sentences in an accomplishment bullet they describe separate aspects of the same accomplishments.
	<p>Education section approximate the following format with most recent education first:</p> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Degree, Major, University Name, City, State</p>

Yes/No	***** <b>Content</b> *****
	Is the position desired clearly identified?
	<p>Does the Summary paragraph include the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lead in sentence that summarizes your experience.</li> <li>• A summary or examples of your most important accomplishments.</li> <li>• An example of an important problem you have solved.</li> <li>• A summary of how your results and experience demonstrate your ability to perform the specific responsibilities of the job being applied for.</li> </ul>
	Do the experience blocks include accomplishments?
	Do the accomplishments describe both the benefit to the employer and the action you took to achieve that benefit?
	When possible are accomplishments quantified with numbers and specifics?
	Are action verbs in the past tense used?
	Are verbs that give the impression of age avoided?
	Are dates omitted from degrees unless recent dates?
	After reading the first 2/3 of the first page will the reader be energized to want to continue?
Yes/No	***** <b>Critical</b> *****
	Has the resume been spelling checked?