

Network to Work Meeting

January 2019

RESOURCE DOCUMENT – *RESUME DEVELOPMENT*

Resume Tips and Pointers, Especially for Older Job Seekers

The following are 10 important pointers to keep in mind when developing a resume.

1. **Limit your Content:** Your resume doesn't need to include everything you've ever done. Limit your content to your experience that relates to the job you are applying for, and keep the chronological content limited to the past 10 – 15 years. This will help you avoid the stigma of being considered "too old".
 - a. Stay focused on your job target and downplay irrelevant information.
2. **Avoid Certain Dates:** Don't include dates of courses taken or school graduations.
3. **Include a well-crafted summary of qualifications / professional profile.** Speak to your skills and experience but avoid phrases like "have 20 years of experience in xyz". Also, don't include industry jargon that may not be understandable or obvious to younger recruiters.
4. **Detail your most valuable skills** in a separate section.
 - a. Start by writing down all the key skills and traits you have that make you qualified for the kind of job you want. Can you think of examples of how you used these skills and traits to benefit a previous employer? If so, be sure to include these on your resume.
 - b. If you are changing careers, highlight those skills that are transferrable to your new focus area.

- c. These are the types of soft skills that most employers look for in all of their applicants. Wherever possible, you should demonstrate these skills by sharing examples of how you have used them.
 - i. Analytical
 - ii. Communication
 - iii. Interpersonal
 - iv. Leadership
 - v. Positive Attitude
 - vi. Teamwork
 - vii. Technical

- 5. **Don't focus on the *tasks*** you've performed in your past jobs. Recruiters know what a customer service representative does, for example. Instead, stress what you've accomplished, communicating how you have been an asset to your previous employers.
 - a. It is essential to position yourself as a solution to an organization's problems, and as a resource to help them achieve their goals. Give examples of how you have used your related skills to the benefit of your past employers.
 - b. Consider using a "highlights" section to showcase these specific accomplishments and the professional results and contributions you have achieved applying your skills.
 - c. Where possible, quantify your accomplishments using percentages, dollar amounts and quantities because they are tangible and persuasive.
 - d. Think about how you might tell a story to demonstrate these accomplishments.

- 6. **Show you are up-to-date with current technology.** List the latest programs and apps you are familiar with, and leave off outdated technology. For example, you can say Word 2016 but not Word 2002. If you have a LinkedIn profile, list it. Include any recently-completed training.

- 7. **Make sure your resume is polished looking, well presented and current in style.** Look for the latest templates that will showcase current styles, formatting and fonts. When uploading a resume or sending it by email, use a version in the PDF format to ensure your formatting stays intact.

8. **Tailor your resume for each job you apply for.** Include applicable keywords from the job description that will show hiring managers you have the specific skill set they are looking for. This also makes it more likely your resume will make it discoverable by search engines and selected by applicant tracking software.
 - a. Review the company’s website and job description carefully to help you identify the points and job experiences you want to highlight.
9. **Toot your horn.** Explain how your exact background and skill set can help the organization reach its goals.
10. **Be careful with your wording.** Hiring managers, human resource professionals and recruiters see a lot of resumes and tire of often-used buzzwords and clichés. Consider the following “best” and “worst” resume terms:

The Worst Resume Terms:

- Results-driven
- Team player
- Hard worker
- Go-to person
- Strategic thinker
- Go-getter
- Outside of the box thinker
- Detail oriented
- Self-motivated
- Dynamic
- Proactive
- Track record

The Best Resume Terms: (These are strong and simple action verbs that should be built upon to highlight your achievements.)

- Achieved
- Improved
- Trained / Mentored
- Managed
- Created
- Resolved
- Volunteered
- (Developed) ideas

- Influenced
- Increased / decreased
- Negotiated
- Launched

Sources:

“Resume Tips for Older Job Seekers: Tips and Advice for Age Proofing your Resume”, by Alison Doyle, from *The Balance*, updated May 19, 2018.

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/resume-tips-for-older-job-seekers-2064046>

“How to Write an Effective Resume if you’re Over 40”, by Sally Kane, from *The Balance*, updated November 25, 2018.

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/resume-tips-for-older-workers-2164243>

“Tips for Including Accomplishments on a Resume”; by Alison Doyle, from *The Balance*, updated August 6, 2018.

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tips-for-including-accomplishments-on-a-resume-2061917>

“Resume Tips for Older Workers with Skills to Spare”, by Dawn Papandrea, Contributor, from *Monster.com*.

<https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/get-your-50-plus-resume-right>

“The 3 Most Important Things to Include on Your Resume”, by Robin Madell, Contributor, from *U.S. News*.

<https://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/articles/2016-09-05/the-3-most-important-things-to-include-on-your-resume>

“Ten Words Recruiters Hate Seeing on Your Resume (and 10 They Love)”, by Erin Greenawald, from *The Muse*.

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/10-words-recruiters-hate-seeing-on-your-resume-and-10-they-love>