

Revitalize Your Resume & Prepare to Compete

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Multiple sources indicate that the United States private-sector is expected to add jobs in manufacturing and services in 2011. (WorldatWork, 2011) The talent management picture becomes even more apparent when reflecting on the results of a recent survey published by Zenger Folkman. Tracking more than 220,000 employees on “intention to leave”, Zenger Folkman predicts that “the job market recovery will send a record number of people out the door.” (Zenger Folkman as cited by WorldatWork, 2011). These intertwined trends, combined with predicted talent shortages in targeted job groups, suggest high performing employees have a timely opportunity to **prepare to compete**.



Although a well-structured resume will not be the primary factor that will get you the job in the end, the exceptional resume will be placed in the advance forward pile during the pre-screening process. Many Recruiters and third-party vendors today are reviewing, scanning, or screening 500+ resumes per day using combinations of highly automated systems and the visual eye. And within 60-90 seconds the Recruiter will decide whether your resume transitions to the Hiring Manager for interviewing or is rejected. So, what are those characteristics that separate the exceptional resume from the mundane and discarded resume? Take a look at these top ten tips that will help move your resume to the top of the heap:

- Design a resume template that provides a professional and eye-catching style. Be consistent in your formatting, margins, bolding, font sizes and shading. There is nothing more annoying to a Recruiter than a messy and difficult-to-follow resume.
- Include key resume sections such as Professional Profile, Work Experience & Results, Education & Certifications, Memberships & Volunteer Experiences, Awards, Software and References.
- Develop a *Professional Profile* paragraph - a summary of your background, your job objective and a sampling of your competencies/strengths. This is your value proposition. Be clear about why someone should want to hire you.
- Use modern, not fussy fonts. The best business fonts for resumes are simple, and include Arial, Verdana and Calibri.
- Use words and phrases that demonstrate job progression and promotion such as “Hired as Work Cell Leader; Promoted to Work Cell Supervisor.”
- Integrate key words into your resume that are prominent and important in your professional field. Sprinkle these words into your resume, but don’t over-use them.
- De-clutter your resume of unnecessary sections and verbiage. For example, eliminate verbose sections describing “skills”; summarize these into your top eight competencies using no more than five words for each competency.
- Turn detailed and wordy sentences into concise quantitative result statements. Use action verbs such as “launched, designed, developed, analyzed, coached & spearheaded”. Avoid verbs such as “handled, assisted, and ensured.” End each sentence with a measurable outcome. (E.g. “resulting in a 15% increase in sales”)
- When you think you are finished with your resume, review it in print, multiple times. Read and fine tune every word, clean up, shorten and place periods at the end of sentences. Ask a trusted professional to review your resume.
- Spell check, and spell check again. The resume must be immaculate!

As America turns the corner from tough economic times to repositioning for recovery, employers will be clamoring to retain their best performers and entice away their competitor’s top performers. Be prepared to compete. Revitalize your resume to top notch order and assure you are placed on the pile that moves ahead in the employment process.

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