Twenty-first Century Resume Tactics

In my forthcoming book *Working Assets: A Career Guide for Peers* I give a resume sample. In the book I analyze the content and format of a modern resume you can create when a hiring manager asks to see this document.

Here I offer you a trusty resume toolkit to sell yourself. Consider this the cheat sheet for creating a professional sales pitch. Your work ethic should shine through in your own words.

Take a *scissor* and cut from the document:

- Job Objective.
- "Responsible for."
- "Excellent written and verbal communication skills." "Able to work independently and as a team player" Instead give specific examples of how you did this on a job.
- Outside interests not related to the job (like cooking or bible camp in seventh grade when you're not applying to be a chef or deacon).
- "References available on request."
- Any fake job you've listed that you didn't do.
- Use of personal pronoun I.
- Any words that are overused, such as dynamic, hard worker, courteous, team player, etc.
- Reference to high school diploma when you have college courses or a degree. Okay to list high school or GED if you have no other schooling or training.
- The dates of completion of diplomas or degrees that would reveal you're 40 or older.
- Identifying details like a photo or reference to your age or relationship status.

***Hammer out* these details:**

- Insert *keywords* into the text of your resume that are used in the job description.

  This way the applicant tracking system/ATS software will pick up your resume. (For example, the posting lists 3 years of supervisory experience. If you have this requirement, your resume could list Food Market Manager with 3 years of supervisory experience in high-traffic store.)

- Quantify the results you achieved for an employer on your job, for instance:

  100% accuracy in sending through electronic cash payments.

  Increased by 20% opening of new credit card accounts at cash register.

- Use an Achievements header at top of resume. (This is where you list your results on a job or jobs that mirror what the advertised position requires.)

- Place job profile at top of resume when light on achievements. (This profile or qualifications summary can list in 5 to 6 sentences the skills, strengths, and experience you have that match those in job description. No need to use a header here. Can start for example with: Job Developer with 5 years of experience placing clients in local businesses.)

- Use the 12 pt. Times New Roman font that is preferred. Not a sans serif font like Arial. Type your name in 18-22 pt. Times New Roman bold font to convey confidence.

- Use three to five sentences under each employer section to list achievements on that job, awards received, and results for the company.

- Tailor each resume you send out to the specific position that you're applying for.

- Proofread the document carefully. (Spell Check won't pick up on misused homonyms like there and their or transposed letters in words like sing and sign.)

- List only marketable skills that can be backed up on the resume with specific examples of how you used them on your jobs. (What did you do that qualifies you to write that you were "courteous" or "hardworking?")

- Make a Wow impression at the top quarter of the page. (Create a persuasive statement here so that the person screening the resume reads to the bottom.)

- List education at top of resume if you're about to graduate or have just gotten a degree. List work experience at top if you've held a job since graduating.

- Use the "Save As" feature on your word processing software to save your resume. Choose the latest Word File Type option. Can also save as PDF. Send the version the employer requests—either Word or PDF. Title the document for example Brett Carson Accountant Resume.

- List any of the following to make yourself stand out:
    - Computer/Technical skills
    - Memberships and Professional affiliations
    - Awards and Honors
    - Impressive interests and hobbies linked to the position
    - Languages: fluent/read/write/speak/business vocabulary/conversational
    - Publications and speaking events with dates
    - Credentials and licenses

- Internships
- Volunteer Work

***Screw on* a lid to make your case airtight:**

- Double-check that your personal information is accurate.
- List your LinkedIn profile URL in your contact information. Make this a clickable link to direct the resume reader to your account. Use the technique to remove the numbers from your LinkedIn URL. Find out how to do this in *LinkedIn Optimization for Dummies*.
- Consider doing volunteer work to get experience to put on a resume when you have gaps in jobs or no work history. (A Deloitte study revealed that more than 85% of those involved in hiring decisions think volunteer work is impressive. Skills-based volunteering ups your odds.)
- State the current software programs you know. It's not good to list computer skills you don't have or that go back years ago to an outdated system. Remember MS Word 3.0 with the File Manager from the 1990s?

Make *wrench*ing decisions:

- Do not lie on your resume even if it's tempting to do so. (Employers will verify the information and if it is false, they will fire you from the job.)
- Take off the resume any jobs you've had older than 15 years since ageism is often a factor for workers forty and up.