

GETTING STARTED. Preparing to write a resume is always challenging, especially if you've never had to write one before or if you haven't written one in a long time. A lot has changed over the years. The purpose of a strong resume is to get interviews and lay the foundation for the actual interview meeting that follows. The best resumes are always the result of thorough advance preparation.

Prior to our first meeting, you will need to collect information in order to develop the content of your resume. Following this step-by-step approach will greatly expedite the process, save money and assure the best quality finished product.

1. **Gather your materials.** Come prepared and bring the following materials with you to our one-on-one meeting.
 - A copy of your most recent OLD RESUME, if you have one.
 - A copy of your current JOB DESCRIPTION and YOUR PRIOR JOB DESCRIPTION, if available.
 - Your LAST TWO PERFORMANCE REVIEWS, if you have them.
 - Any SELF-ASSESSMENT or SKILLS-ASSESSMENT MATERIALS you may have.
2. **Determine your career objective.** Knowing what you want your next career move to be can be challenging, but at least having a basic idea of the types of jobs (i.e., sales support, accounting management, mechanical engineering, marketing communications, etc.) you're seeking is an important step in positioning you strategically on paper.

Answer this question: The job I am seeking falls into one or more of the following lines of business or disciplines.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. **Where you'd like to work.** In writing your resume, it's important to know in what SECTOR, MARKET or INDUSTRY you'd like to work (i.e., business, academia, not-for-profit, health care, manufacturing, pharmaceutical, government, etc.).

Note: It's perfectly acceptable to make a career change outside the bounds of the position you presently hold or held. People do it all the time!

Answer this question: The job I would most like to secure would be found in the _____ sector, market or industry.

4. **Do a little research.** Visit one or more of the following Web sites and search for at least THREE JOB POSTINGS that you believe best suit you and your skills. Please print these postings and bring them with you to our one-on-one meeting.

- www.monster.com
- www.americasjobbank.com
- http://hotjobs.yahoo.com
- www.careerbuilder.com

5. **Identify your core qualifications.** Think of these as your “big picture skills” or those PARTICULAR SKILL SETS, COMPETENCIES or UNIQUE ABILITIES that you bring to the job market that would be valuable regardless of where you work. On your resume, these qualities will likely be captured under a heading called “Knowledge Base,” “Summary of Qualifications” and/or “Professional Profile.”

An example: Your list of core qualifications might look something like this if you were a human resources professional:

- Strategic thinking skills; visionary.
- Strong human resource planning skills.
- Extensive compensation and benefit plan design experience.
- Knowledgeable of HRIS, COBRA, ERISA and HIPAA.
- Experience managing in a union environment; contract negotiation expertise.

Answer this question: The six strongest core skills I bring to the job market are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Remember: The best core skills are the ones an organization is likely to be willing to pay money to acquire. So, lead with your best foot forward!

6. **Document your job history.** Be sure to come prepared with your employment history for the last fifteen years. Include the following:

- Names of all FORMER EMPLOYERS.
- TITLES AND DATES of all positions held.
- How you got each job (i.e., promoted to position, recruited for position, etc.).
- Why you left the job (i.e., left to accept promotional opportunity, relocated closer to family, accepted opportunity abroad, returned to school, etc.).

7. **Note your professional accomplishments.** Including the everyday tasks and duties associated with your job is no where near as important as focusing on the accomplishments you’ve had in your jobs. Therefore, it is ESSENTIAL that you spend some time developing a list of your BEST ACHIEVEMENTS in your jobs. It’s not as hard as you might think. Be sure to bring your list to our one-on-one meeting.

Try this exercise: Follow this simple three-step approach to developing your list of accomplishments. Please be prepared with three-to-six examples for each position you've held in the last ten to fifteen years. Don't worry if you're having trouble. Just having rough ideas down on paper is a good start!

- **Activity:** Think of an initiative, project or program where YOU achieved really great results (i.e., "Managed the XYZ product launch").
- **Outcome:** Think of the RESULTS from that effort (i.e., "Delivery of the product to market on plan, on budget and on time").
- **Measure:** Think about how those results were measured or what the quantitative or qualitative benefits were (i.e. "Saving the company \$100,000 in costs").

A few examples: Try writing a couple of AOM statements yourself. Begin with an "action" verb that describes what YOU did.

- Secured a \$30,000 concession from a vendor enabling the company to expedite production and reduce time to market by 10%.
- Managed a \$5 million program manufacturing widgets for pharmaceutical giant, taking the project from inception and manufacturing, through production, cost reduction and quality improvement, reducing costs annually by 3%.
- Developed and executed a key division strategy directing the implementation of an enterprise-wide "intelligent front office" solution—a highly successful launch that reduced man hours and saved thousands in consulting fees.
- Coordinated the integration of the company's computer system with global headquarters, thereby enabling the office to have direct access to critical customer information and reducing downtime measurably.
- Established procedures to gain control of the company's inventory of manufactured products—a major undertaking that maximized cash flow, controlled expenses and saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest charges.

8. **Your professional activities & affiliations.** Be sure to list ALL professional memberships, affiliations or other outside activities that relate to business or the community. Include any positions held (i.e., treasurer, team leader, etc.) Skip outside activities that are recreational in nature (i.e. your bowling league, bake sales, etc.).

A few examples:

- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), *treasurer*.
- International Association of Widget Inventors, *founder and former president*.
- Otetiana Council Boy Scouts of America, *Assistant Scout Master*.
- Fairport Rotary, *membership committee member*.
- Rochester Women's Network, *member*.