

IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Growing your career with truly terrific resumes
- » Blending human know-how with new technology
- » Staying on the leading edge in your job search

Chapter 1

Getting a Job in the Digital Age

Are resumes outdated? Every few years an employment expert excitedly announces a so-called new discovery: Resumes are old hat and unnecessary. The expert advises job seekers to forgo resumes and talk their way into an interview. This advice rarely works in real life. Very few people are eloquent enough to carry the entire weight of an employment marketing presentation without a resume. Plus, employers expect some type of resume as a form of researchable and documentable proof.

One resume strategy depends not on verbal talent but on technology. In some situations, recruiting professionals encourage employers who've grown weary of hiking over mountains of resumes to decide who gets offered a job interview to replace them with rigid application forms on the web — complete with screening questions and tests.

Another scenario — also technology dependent — reflects the view that online profiles on social networking sites are pinch-hitting for resumes as self-marketing documents. As I point out in Chapter 2, online profiles are equivalent to generic resumes. Because prospective employers are likely to hunt down your LinkedIn profile, the ideal strategy is to make it as targeted as possible to your current job target.

Most recently, recruiters and employers are adopting artificial intelligence (AI) systems such as Mya and HigherVue to perform resume and interview screening. This development is yet another reason for having a strong and effective resume.

This book combines the details of creating a marvelous resume with various technological delivery options. In this chapter, you preview what's ahead in this comprehensive guide to resumes and how to use resumes and other career-marketing communications to reach your goal in the great job chase.

Resumes Are Here to Stay

At some point in a hunt for better employment, everyone needs effective career-marketing communications. That is, everyone needs a resume — or something very much like a resume — that tells the employer why

- » You're an excellent match for a specific job
- » The value you bring matters
- » Your skills are essential to the bottom line
- » You're worth the money you hope to earn
- » You're qualified to solve the employer's problems
- » Your accomplishment claims can be believed (and verified)

Resumes that deliver on these decision points remain at the heart of the job search ecosystem.

Keeping Up with Resume Times

The ongoing need for terrific resumes doesn't mean the job chase is frozen in time. Far from it. In this digital age — when 66 percent of young people (ages 18–24) are checking their social media updates when they first wake up, even before they go to the bathroom or brush their teeth — every job seeker needs to embrace the entire package of tools and strategies for getting a new job. The package contains new and traditional components:

- » Digital tools that are rapidly altering the nature of how jobs are found and filled in America and across the globe

» Timeless know-how and savvy developed by the best employment giants over decades



TIP

Don't think the digital age is just for the young. In fact, the number of people in the 55- to 64-year-old age bracket using social media has grown by 79 percent in the past few years with sites such as Twitter. Further, the 45-54 age group is currently the fastest growing demographic user of sites such as Facebook.



REMEMBER

New technological ideas enhanced with historically proven smarts are a winning combination. Technology changes in a decade; human nature doesn't.

Reset your concept of what you must know about resumes in the job chase. Writing great resumes is no longer enough. You must know how to distribute those resumes to people who can hire you or at least move you along in the process.

Targeted resume rules

Job seekers, brace yourselves: Navigating the job market is getting ever trickier and requires considerably more effort than the last time you baited your resume hook — even a short five years ago. The *generic resume*, which I refer to as a *core resume* throughout this book, is at the top of the list of job search tools on the way out. (Read all about it in Chapter 8.)



WARNING

You probably have an all-purpose resume lying around in a desk drawer somewhere. What legions of job seekers everywhere like about the all-purpose resume is that it casts a wide net to snag the attention of many employers — and it saves time for those of us who are too busy getting through the day to keep writing different resumes for different jobs. I appreciate that. But your one-size-fits-all work of art is obsolete, and it's getting lost in more and more recruiting black holes.

The core resume has been replaced by the *targeted resume* (which I refer to in this book as OnTarget), a customized resume tailor-made for a specific employment opportunity.



REMEMBER

An *OnTarget resume* is a valuable marketing tool to convince the reader your work can benefit a specific employer and that you should make the cut of candidates invited in for a closer look. An OnTarget resume

- » Addresses a given opportunity, showing clearly how your qualifications are a close match to a job's requirements
- » Uses powerful words to persuade and clean design to attract interest
- » Plays up strengths and downplays any factor that undermines your bid for an interview

OF FRIENDS AND RESUMES

“The number one way to use your OnTarget resume is to find a friend to walk it into the hiring manager’s office or recruiter’s office with the friend’s stamp of approval,” advises Mark Mehler, cofounder and principal of CareerXroads and a long-time Internet job-hunting expert. His firm’s annual survey of how people get hired at major corporations shows that one out of three openings is filled this way.

Unfit resumes are zapped

The word got out, slowly at first. And then — *whoosh!* — millions of job seekers found out how easy it was to instantly put an online resume in the hands of employers across town as well as across the country.

Post and pray became the job seeker’s mantra as everyone figured out how to manipulate online resumes and upload them into the online world with the click of a mouse.

Resume overload began in the first phase of the World Wide Web, a time frame of about 1994 to 2005. It became exponentially larger and more frustrating as commercial resume-blasting services appeared on the scene. Almost overnight, it seemed, anyone willing to pay the price could splatter resume confetti everywhere an online address could be found.

The consequences of resume spamming for employers were staggering: Despite their use of the era’s best recruiting selection software (and now use of AI), employers were overrun with unsolicited, disorganized generic resumes containing everything but the kitchen sink.

And what about the job seekers who sent all those generic, unstructured resumes? They were left to wonder in disappointment why they never heard a peep from the recipient employer.

The answer’s in the numbers: A job advertised online by a major company creates a feeding frenzy of many thousands of resumes. Employment databases are hammered with such mismatches as sales clerks and sports trainers applying for jobs as scientists and senior managers, and vice versa.



WARNING

Even when you use your OnTarget resume to apply to opportunities you find posted online, don’t hold your breath. Popular job boards can have as many as 40,000 new resumes uploaded every day. With that kind of volume, an employer finding your resume among all the applicants for a job is like someone finding a needle in a haystack.

Tried-and-true techniques remain

A resume that doesn't show off the great goods you're selling isn't worth much. Show off your assets in effective style by making sure you follow the suggestions in this book. I show you how to

- » **Choose the resume format that fits your goals and situation.** What goes where in a resume isn't a one-size-fits-all consideration. Chapter 6 tells you about formatting your resume and provides outlines for popular resume designs.
- » **Get your points across in powerful language.** Make your strengths stronger by describing results in vibrant language that stands tall. I give you examples in Chapter 10.
- » **Use design techniques effectively.** Big chunks of text cause eye strain (and boredom). Present your information in a way that enables readers instead of inhibiting them. Chapter 11 shows you how.
- » **Overcome hurdles.** Getting attention from potential employers is harder in certain situations. Chapter 14 gives you suggestions for easing your transition into a new phase of life by overcoming challenges in your background.
- » **Exercise your creative muscle and think outside the box with unique formatting options for a marketing-savvy, standout resume.** Chapter 12 walks you through steps on how to leverage these new layout techniques.



TIP

See your resume as a reverse funnel that pulls the prospective employer into it (see Figure 1-1). Your resume starts narrow to match the job you're targeting. Next, it expands with your summary to show how you stand out from the competition (which excites prospective employers and pulls them in further). Then your resume further expands to encompass all the requisite skills you possess to fit the position. Finally, your resume ends with the large base of the funnel showing your relevant employment experience using those skills and producing those results.

Use this easy system to create your resume funnel:

1. **Objective Header Statement:** Begin with the position you are targeting.
2. **Summary of Qualifications:** Add an overview of the strengths that make you a perfect fit for the job.
3. **Keywords/Areas of Expertise:** List the key skills you have for the position.
4. **Professional Experience/Employment History:** Your employment history section provides proof that supports the objective, summary, and keyword sections.

This simple strategy encourages employers to read your entire resume.

RESUME FUNNEL

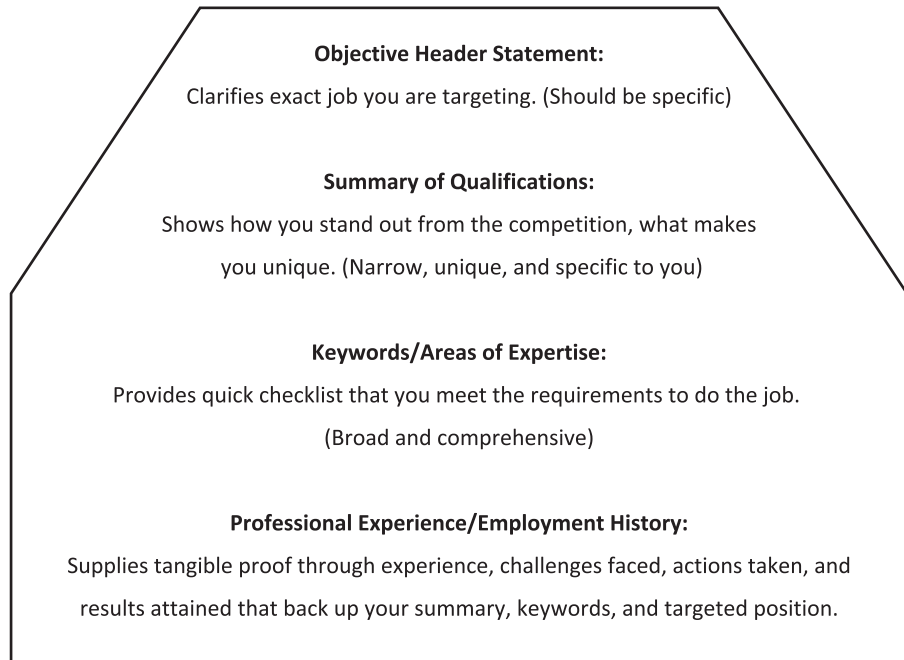


FIGURE 1-1: Use the reverse funnel method to write your resume and strategically present yourself and your qualifications.

Technologies Facilitate Job Searching

After the Internet caught job-search fire in the mid-1990s — instantly whisking resumes to and fro — little new technology changed the picture until the social web groundswell burst upon us in the mid-2000s. Now job seekers have the tools to

- » Use social networks to dramatically enlarge personal networks
- » Tap their networks to identify jobs and for recommendations
- » Go directly to hiring authorities
- » Market accomplishments in professional profiles
- » Pinpoint employment targets with position mapping



REMEMBER

Continue to apply for jobs with an OnTarget resume and cover letter. Classic job-search methods still pay off, but they're not enough in an economy where jobs have gone missing.

Work every day on a well-rounded approach that emphasizes face-to-face networking, social networking, web tools, online identity building, and professional associations while still briefly touching on less viable elements such as job boards and print ads.

Social networking scoops jobs

Enormously popular social networking sites and social media are poised to gain even more fans in the employment process. Chapter 2 reports on the state of the industry and suggests how you can “go social.”

Expect a never-ending stream of new technical bells and whistles in social media, which you can see in the constantly emerging (and disappearing) features on such biggies as LinkedIn and Facebook.

Tools such as location awareness will help you identify companies with opportunities in your area on Facebook. LinkedIn’s Search for Jobs feature and the ability to make contacts with just about anyone also let you identify and nail down opportunities as they are listed.

It’s all about the new and the now, which means watching trends. For breaking news about social networking, become acquainted with the following websites:

- » **Mashable** (www.mashable.com) is a top guide to social media and a hub for those looking to make sense of the online realm.
- » **Social Media Today** (www.socialmediatoday.com/) provides the latest tools, tips, and trends in social media.

Chapter 5 discusses ways to keep your online reputation in good shape for the job search.

Mobile’s on the move

Smartphones came on fast. Tablet computers are all the rage. Mobile communication is here to stay. Even when you’re not rooted to a desktop computer, you can send and receive emails, network online, and download apps. Chapter 3 examines the latest in mobile job chasing.



WARNING

Despite the move to mobile and Google’s penalties for sites that aren’t mobile adapted, many companies and job sites are still unable to accept applications from a phone or tablet. When you find yourself clicking an Apply Now link that just won’t click, that’s your tip that you need to migrate to a desktop to apply.

Quick-change process customizes content

In this employers' market, you need to become 100 times more strategic and savvy in writing OnTarget resumes and getting them to key decision makers. The generic resume has become a nonstarter, and successful seekers are writing customized resumes.

But have no fear: In Chapter 9, I take you through how to turn a one-size-fits-all core resume into OnTarget resumes with ease.

Bios gain new importance as profiles

The short professional bio is making a comeback as a social profile (see Chapter 2). The short bio helps when you want to apply for a job, network, post on a guest blog, and so on. It tells people quickly who you are, what you do, and why they should care.



TIP

Plan on writing a bio in three lengths — a micro bio, a short bio, and a longer bio. A micro bio is a sentence you can use on your Twitter profile (280 characters). A short bio is a paragraph (about 100 words). A long bio can be up to a page.

YourName.com becomes vital

More people are living their lives on the Internet, and episodes of name highjacking are rising. Realization is mushrooming that controlling the exclusive online rights to your own name makes sense, even if you're not a business owner.

You can protect your identity in its purest web form by buying a domain for your name — YourName.com. You can also purchase a URL (web address) for your resume — YourNamerresume.com. See Chapters 2 and 5 to find out why owning your name has gained red-alert status in the digital age. Claim your name!