

IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Confirming why a resume still matters — even in today's AI-driven hiring process
- » Catching up with current hiring trends
- » Understanding what it takes to capture employer attention

Chapter **1**

Getting Hired in the AI Era

Are resumes outdated? Every few years someone declares the resume dead, and every time the hiring process answers back: A resume is still required.

Even in today's automated and AI-heavy era, employers need a fast, trusted way to see who you are, how you deliver results, and why you match the job announcement. The job seeker who ultimately lands the interview is the one who learns to sell themselves with their resume by providing researchable proof instead of a life story told in bullet points.

If you want to be selected out of the hundreds, even thousands, of applicants for the job, this book provides a clear pathway to create a winning resume that can survive ATS, navigate AI, and get prospective employers delighted and excited to pick you. And in this chapter, you preview what's ahead in this comprehensive guide to resumes and how to craft your resume to reach your goal in the great job chase.

Writing a Resume: It's Still Required

Getting you through the door for an interview is the single job of your resume. In other words, your resume needs to keep what helps a screener say yes in seconds and cut the rest. Whether in an AI-heavy process or one that is exclusively human-driven, that means your resume must:

- » Prove at a glance you're qualified for the role.
- » Utilize a clean format structure that parses.
- » Offer bullets and tight paragraphs that connect required responsibilities to results.

Do this quick check: Does the top third of your resume show your role target, a branding summary, core required skills, and one or two quantified wins? If not, don't worry. You can find out exactly how to do this in Chapters 3 through 5.



REMEMBER

If content in your resume doesn't prove value or relevance, you should rewrite or cut it. This rule applies whether you're building a core resume or an OnTarget resume.

A core resume is your complete, behind-the-scenes master document. It holds all of your experience, accomplishments, skills, and career history — without worrying yet about length or focus. You'll use it as your source material.

An OnTarget resume is the tailored version you create from your core resume for a specific job or career direction. It highlights only what aligns with the role you're targeting, using language that matches what employers and screening systems are looking for.

Throughout this book, you'll learn how to build a strong core resume first and then turn it into focused OnTarget resumes that help you land interviews.

Keeping Up or Staying Behind

With the rapid pace of technology and AI, hiring moves faster and skims resumes harder. Yet, today's job market is filled with qualified candidates, so you have to step up and stand out like never before.



TIP

If your resume reads like it's from the last decade, you'll end up feeling, and being, invisible. Keeping up means modernizing with required headings, clean and attractive layouts, storytelling, crisp metrics, and language that mirrors the job target's requirements.

Be open to resetting your concept of what you must do to create a winning resume. When you're looking for a job, you're taking part in a game where you can't see your competition. Following the steps to create a powerful resume is critical to your success.

Inviting AI, navigating the risks

In Chapter 6 I show you how to use AI to brainstorm and refine phrasing, identify keywords, spot gaps, target the position you're seeking, and even do it all in your voice. However, AI is a tool that is only as powerful as the content and prompts that you give it, and it doesn't know your wins like you do. So if you don't take the time to come up with the stories and achievements that make you unique, your resume will be generic.



WARNING

Letting AI loose with your resume and not checking its output can wreak havoc on your job prospects. AI might include sensitive information that doesn't ever belong on your resume or rely on styles and sections that will immediately make you look out of touch to a potential employer. Plus, AI is known to hallucinate wildly, so don't paste AI text without checking it. Make sure achievements, dates, and metrics are accurate and yours.

Before you refine with AI in Chapter 6, help AI get to know you by gathering your data in Chapter 3 and identifying your stories in Chapter 4. Then you can be confident you have compiled enough information to get the most out of AI, stand out from the competition, and land those interviews.

Catching up with hiring trends

Hiring has changed, and your resume must adjust. Teams skim faster, how information is grabbed from your resume by parsers differs by applicant tracking system (ATS), and AI often ranks who's seen first. Having the experience for the job doesn't matter if you can't present it in a way that checks the boxes for how employers review resumes.

As you'll learn in Chapters 2 to 4, resumes can survive these new trends when they:

- » **Lead with a branding summary** that targets your match for the role, scope, and unique achievements in three to four tight lines.

- » **Write for parsers and people** by using standard section labels, simple structure, and keeping all key info as live text (no text boxes or graphics for essential keyword content).
- » **Align to skills-first screening** by naming skills the job posting calls for near the top and providing each with a result-focused bullet in related positions.
- » **Mirror the job's language responsibly** with natural keywords, close synonyms, and no keyword stuffing.
- » **Front-load measurable outcomes in job bullets**, such as time saved, revenue influenced, and risk reduced, so value is obvious in the top third of your resume.
- » **Signal the scope and context** of your outcomes, such as team size, budget, product/user scale, and customers to anchor impact.
- » **Show collaboration and communication strengths**, when target relevant, with results-focused success stories that involve cross-functional partners or stakeholders.



TIP

ATS systems aren't uniform with formats, field mapping, and keyword handling. If you follow the strategies in this book to first create a core resume in Chapter 4 and then deploy the OnTarget resume strategy in Chapter 5 when applying for each position, it *will* work.

HOW TECHNOLOGY SCREENS YOUR RESUME

Applicant tracking systems (ATS) are databases employers use to collect, store, and manage resumes. When you apply online, your resume is uploaded into an ATS, where it's parsed — meaning the system attempts to read and categorize your information into fields like job titles, employers, dates, and skills. If your resume isn't structured clearly, the system may misread or skip important details.

That's why structure and clarity matter more than ever. A resume that's visually clever but poorly organized can confuse parsing systems. Likewise, a resume that's keyword-stuffed but vague won't impress the human decision-maker who eventually reviews it.

The goal isn't to “beat” the technology — it's to work with it. When you understand how resumes are screened today, you stop guessing and start positioning yourself to win. And this book helps you do just that!



WARNING

Don't game keywords by playing tricks like stuffing or pasting them as invisible text. No matter what you see online and in social media, it backfires with humans and can get filtered by systems.

Positioning Your Resume to Win

A winning resume must target a specific job, so you have to adjust your resume for each job opening you're applying for. Your OnTarget resume is the tight version of your core resume tailored for a specific role or employer. It aligns your focus line, branding summary, keywords, and proof to the job posting so you pass first-glance human and system tests.

Need-to-know OnTarget essentials (Chapter 3) include, in order:

- » **Focus line:** The role you're targeting that appears at the top of your resume but is not an old-fashioned "Objective" sentence
- » **Branding summary:** Three to four lines of text, either in bulleted or paragraph form, that signal not only that you are qualified but that you bring a history of results and value-adds
- » **Keywords/areas of expertise:** Often a three-column list of the specific skills the position requires
- » **Results-focused experience:** Work history that tells stories front-loaded with results and actions that support the required skills



TIP

Generic resumes spray and pray. They read vague, miss keywords, and fail the first-glance test. Instead, swap generalities for evidence through brief, powerful story-based language that illustrates scope, context, account, and outcome. This will help screeners to say yes in seconds. Putting in the effort to craft your core resume (Chapter 4) and then customize OnTarget versions (Chapter 5) for each application is time well spent as it pays dividends with more interviews and a much shorter job search.

Getting in the door with a marketing mindset

Marketing means matching message to audience and delivering it through the right channel. Identify the decision-maker, speak their language, and send a concise, relevant OnTarget resume with a clear call-to-action.



TIP

When a posting appears, message someone close to the role with a three-line note and your OnTarget resume attached.

Treating yourself like a brand

A brand is a promise: who you are, what you deliver, and how teams feel working with you. Your resume needs to show an employer with many choices why you're worth considering. You'll want to always take steps to thoughtfully match your resume to the position, speak their language, and apply with a powerful, OnTarget resume (Chapter 5).



TIP

When navigating a job search, consider yourself the CEO of You, Inc. and recognize that your resume must function as your marketing brochure that gets prospective employers excited to meet you.

Zeroing in on what employers crave

Employers want impact, reliability, and alignment so it's always a win when your resume translates your work into their outcomes: growth, savings, speed, quality, safety, or satisfaction. Use short, front-loaded bullets to not just tell but sell by making sure they begin with an outcome, challenge, and action (Chapters 4 and 7).



REMEMBER

Never forget that it's not just about being qualified for the job and having the right words on the page. Instead, it's about making the prospective employer's life easy by framing experience in a way that is quick and easy to scan while showing how you stand out from equally qualified competition.