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## Recharge Your Resume: Review, Revise, Revive

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The average television commercial lasts 30 seconds. Most of us are impatient when it comes to commercials. We become restless and are guilty of channel surfing until the program returns.

This puts resume-reading in perspective. A resume is your commercial to a hiring manager. Imagine a stack of resumes lying on your desk; how much time would you allot to each resume before making a decision to discard it or save it for a later more in-depth review? The average reader only looks at a resume for 25-30 seconds; some veteran hiring managers admit that they make their decisions in a mere six seconds.

Presenting a powerful resume is the difference between landing in the trash or in the interview room. You should be prepared to present your polished resume at any given time; even if you are not currently looking and are satisfied in your position, you cannot predict when an opportunity that you cannot pass up will surface. Recharge your resume now to increase your chances for future success.

REVIEW your resume.

- **Is your contact information complete?** Don't make the employer work to find you. Use your permanent address and include a professional-sounding personal email address (i.e., mmurphy@hotmail.com).
- **Have you graduated from the objective?** A resume should demonstrate how you can help an organization meet its objectives, not how it can help you meet your personal career ambitions. The days of the objective have passed. Use a professional summary/offering in lieu of an objective.
- **Does your professional summary/offering give your resume focus?** This section should be short and specific, highlighting the value you could add to an organization: technical competencies, leadership capabilities, and management style. This is your intro and could be the only part of your resume readers look at; catch their attention now.
- **Does the content support your aspirations?** As your career goals change, so should your resume. Make sure it reflects activities and accomplishments that are relevant and supportive to the roles you are seeking.
- **Is your formatting consistent?** The format – spacing, alignment, fonts – of your resume should be consistent throughout. Your headings should all be of the same style and font size as well.
- **Is your resume reader-friendly?** Your resume should look clean and organized. It should contain sufficient white space to let the reader's eye rest, as well as to highlight the important information. Use headings and bulleted lists to allow for smooth reading.

REVISE your resume.

- **Include only relevant content.** This is your professional resume and all content should be reflective of your career self. Include educational and professional training, volunteer experience, and skill sets only if they are pertinent to your profession or the position in question.
- **Emphasize achievements.** Past performance predicts future success. Employers not only want to know what you have done in the past, but how well you did it. Work your achievements into your job responsibilities to give concrete examples of your success in previous roles. Use dollar figures, numbers, and percentages to quantify your accomplishments if possible.

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- ***Give your job responsibilities punch.*** Use power action verbs (i.e., lead, create, strategize, execute) instead of passive verbs (i.e., am, do) to demonstrate that you are a results-driven, self-starter.
- ***Make your resume about them, not you.*** When reading your resume, employers are trying to make connections between your background and what you can do for them. Avoid "I" statements that turn the focus back to you. "I" statements also seem self-oriented versus team-oriented.

REVIVE your resume.

- ***Are your job responsibilities and title current?*** Update your position description as your current role broadens. Include all new tasks and accomplishments.
- ***Have you joined a new association or group?*** Employers look for industry involvement. They want to know that you are dedicated to your profession and your industry. Outside association participation, even minimal involvement, is one way to demonstrate your commitment.
- ***Have you attended a new class or seminar?*** Each personal or professional development course you participate in shows that you are dedicated to self-improvement. Employers want professionals that are willing to continually learn and better themselves.
- ***Have you recently received an honor or reward?*** Incorporate all accomplishments, including any honors or rewards issued by associations or employers. These are concrete examples of your success.