

RESUMÉS OF THE 21st CENTURY ©

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Resumés are critical documents that should be designed as a personalized, professional introduction in today's fast-paced, competitive and ever-evolving job market. Resumés present vital input to employers before, during and after interviews.

Your resumé must be accurate, pertinent to the reader, and easy to read. It also must clearly identify your strengths and accomplishments relating to the direction of your employment. A hybrid chronological/functional resumé with a "Summary of Qualifications" is most effective in today's market. Employers should be able to immediately ascertain what you have done in the past and the skills you are able to provide. Do not overstate or understate your experience and skills.

A resumé should be one or maximum two pages in length. An extensive employment history with strong management experience should be on two pages. Do not exceed two pages, except on a Curriculum Vitae. Avoid entire page bulleted formats.

Employment "objectives" or "goals" are too confining and quite often eliminate you from other positions, as opposed to indicating what you -- the prospective employee -- are qualified and willing to do. The resumé should encompass all of your qualifications, enabling you to submit it for any opportunity for which you feel qualified. Your professional direction should be diversified and can be defined effectively in a "Summary of Qualifications." In most instances your entire employment history should be portrayed. Do not limit your employment history to ten or fifteen years.

Approximately 95% of all resumés currently being circulated are on white paper. Under fluorescent lighting, white paper is very harsh on the eyes, especially for the employer wearing corrective lenses who reviews numerous documents and resumés. The only time white paper should be used is when you are e-mailing, faxing or scanning your resumé. Beige, soft blue, tan, gray and natural are warm, conservative colors that will not get lost in the shuffle of white resumés and are much more pleasant to read. If given the opportunity to e-mail, fax and mail your resumé, do all three.

When responding to advertised employment opportunities, a brief and to-the-point cover letter should be attached to the resumé. Typewritten, not handwritten, envelopes and follow-up letters on matching color envelopes and papers are strongly encouraged. Since more employers today are requesting resumés to be e-mailed or faxed, a personalized introductory e-mail letter or fax cover letter is recommended.

Do not list salary or salary requirements on your resumé. Attach a separate salary history, but only when requested. When salary information has been requested, you must comply. If you do not, the employer can only assume that you are either being evasive or are unwilling to follow instructions. Address salary requirements as being "open to negotiation" on resumes and employment application forms.

Regarding references, indicate on the resumé that references will be "furnished upon request." Listing references on the resumé is a waste of valuable space that would be better utilized with your qualifications. In today's employment market list professional references (employers) or references relevant to your professional direction and a couple of personal references. List references on a separate page and submit them in person, or when requested to do so.

Letters of recommendation, certificates or awards received should not be mailed or attached to a resumé. They should be presented in person or when requested. For the employer's convenience, an additional copy should be taken to the interview.

How you present yourself in three basic areas is how you will be perceived by the employer: Resumé, interview preparation, and interview follow-up. An effective, professional resumé, thorough preparation, and follow-up are essential in obtaining employment in the 21st Century. Be prepared, thorough and above all -- be professional. Good luck and happy job hunting!

For free job placement or assistance: Gary C. Grace at (714) 543-9363

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