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We are emotionally tied to our resume and our life's work. I always suggest using another person to write or at least review, your resume. It is like the clothes in our closet - we want to hold onto our favorite shirt or our jean jacket from college even if it is ripped, stained, or fits poorly. Old jobs are the same way. The career I had >16 years ago is full of life lessons, successes, failures, and fond memories, and certainly made me who I am today. However, it is 100% irrelevant to my career today (except for a few happy hour stories and laughs!). If you do not have a strong filter, ask someone to help you who does or hire a professional!

Write that Resume!

Below is some helpful information if you are going to tackle writing your own resume. These suggestions and practices have been tried on several applicant tracking systems (ATS) and have proven successful. ATS and technology changes all the time, so it is important to keep your information refreshed and up to date with the latest advancements.

Format

- The Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is the number one driving tool for your resume format. This means you should not use any themes, pictures, or special layouts, including headers/footers, columns, text boxes, section separators (script, scroll, etc.), special characters (other than traditional bullets, not checkboxes, or creative bullet markers) and the only separators to use are commas (not /, \, or |). All these extra characters are not read by an ATS and impact your resume from passing its first test.
  - Exception: If you are creating a resume that you will hand to someone in person, you can be more creative. It is important to maintain white space and readability.
- Your font should be 10-12 points and simple - serif (Garamond, Georgia, Cambria, Book Antigua) or sans serif (Arial, Calibri, or Helvetica). I typically use Garamond because it is professional, and you can size to 10pt. if you need to without the need for a magnifying glass to read it.
- 2 pages max; remember you have less than 30 seconds (usually 15-20) of review time from a recruiter if it gets into their hands (assuming it passes through an ATS)
  - Exception: Physicians, Academics, Researchers, etc. often have numerous publications, abstract, research, whitepapers, and presentations to include. These are often included in a curriculum vitae (CV) and are not necessary for every job. Format these so they fall on a separate page or are easily removed for a shorter version.

- Using standard headings (Professional Experience, Skills, Education, etc.) match up with most ATS and will be recognized accordingly to map your resume to the application.
- 3-5 bullets per position, the exception is if there are noteworthy accomplishments

Demographics

- Use your credentials if appropriate – typically these include advanced or terminal degrees (MBA, PhD, etc.) or professional distinctions (MD, JD, etc.) or certain training directly applicable to your career (PMP)
- **Location -** With so much work available remotely, adding a location may be limiting; however, if your work is more local, you can add city and state or region
- Include a professional email address, phone number and LinkedIn profile
    - If you do not have an email address with your name, sign up with Google or another free service to obtain one
    - Unless you are an academic, do not use your .edu address
    - Avoid any "cute" emails
    - You can request a LinkedIn URL with your name (Example: in/cmmencuccini/)
- Add personal (professional) website or blog if available

Content

- **Acronyms and jargon**
    - Avoid using acronyms and jargon.
    - Spell out any terms, especially industry-specific or those which may not be universally recognized.
    - Use proper format for an acronym
        - The first time it is used, it should read "return on investment (ROI)" and subsequent uses may be "ROI"
        - Incorrect example: "ROI (return on investment)"
        - Note: ROI is a common, cross-industry term that does not need to be spelled out.
    - Example(s) of terms that should be spelled out: net operating income (NOI), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Certified Energy Manager (CEM)
    - Examples of terms not needing to be spelled out: ROI, FEMA, AARP, HUD, HIPAA, OSHA

- **Training**
    - Include years and issuing organization for education, training, and certification
    - Do not include any training or certification that is outdated or expired

- **Professional experience**

- Try to keep your resume within the last 10 years (15 max) and include only relevant roles if possible. (This is a little fuzzy when the experience is >15 years old.)
- Ask yourself if it is relevant to the industry today (Example: I worked in an industry for 25 years, but the last time was >16 years ago and the technology has changed considerably. Could I learn it? Probably. Am I still a competitive candidate in it? Not likely because I have not kept up my learning, proficiency, and network.)
- Keep it relevant to the job for which you are applying.
- You can always address the related work and/or accomplishments in a cover letter without revealing how long ago it occurred (address that part in the interview and crosswalk it to your current roles/ responsibilities and their needs)
- Remember, going back too far is a dead giveaway on age
- Focus position bullets on accomplishments and not responsibilities. Do not regurgitate your job description.

- **Other information**
  - There are variations to the format but it all should fit the relevancy test
  - Experience that goes beyond 10 years may be summarized in other ways (cover letter, LinkedIn, portfolio website, etc.)
  - An achievements section may be included on a resume that is handed to someone. This section is unlikely to be read properly by an ATS and may hurt the application process.
  - To tailor your resume specific to each job, review the job description for keywords or use a keyword tool (https://tagcrowd.com/ or https://www.wordclouds.com/ will help identify most prominent words) I also recommend using them for your resume to crosswalk the keywords.