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FIRST-AID FOR AN AILING RESUME

By Meredith Pond

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With the economy threatening a recession, many corporations aren't doing as well as their profit projections have predicted. As a result, thousands of people are being laid off every week. All of these people are out there looking for a shrinking number of high-paying jobs with the few companies that ARE financially sound. If you're one of those unfortunate professionals who has been left to hunt for a new job, it's more important than ever that you make a good first impression.

Most people would assume that the first opportunity to make an impression on a company arises at the first personal interview. As reasonable as that sounds, reality is a bit less obvious. Have you ever stopped to think that the absolute first impression you make on a potential employer is made through your resume?

As you might expect, most HR managers will start by sorting out which resumes include the required experience, skills, and education. Contrary to popular belief, however, you won't necessarily be dismissed off-hand if you don't possess everything mentioned in the company's ad.

Many companies (especially the good ones) place a huge amount of importance on personality, work ethic, and general "fit" with the company and its employees. If you can get in for an interview, you have a good chance of filling those empty shoes. So how do you get your foot in the door, especially if you don't have all the required skills and education? You guessed it: your stunning resume.

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When writing your resume, there are a lot of things to think about. First, always include your "objective" near the top, right under your name and contact information. In one or two sentences, convey your desire for a challenging, long-term career with a strong company. You don't need to reveal any personal information or tell them your life story. Supplement your objective with a BRIEF, to-the-point cover letter, explaining who you are, where you saw the ad, and why you should be considered for the job.

When listing your past work experience, start with the most recent position and work your way back. When describing your

duties, don't water it down too much, and be specific. Instead of saying that you were in charge of accounts payable, tell them you were responsible for accurate and timely invoice entry, as well as reviewing vouchers for errors, posting transactions, printing checks, etc.

Also, don't assume that certain skills and responsibilities won't be applicable to the job you're applying for. When listing your skills, list all of them. If you're applying for a receptionist position, but you have excellent writing skills, say so. If you're a graphic artist by profession but know Microsoft Excel like the back of your hand, tell them that, too. When it comes to fundamentals like computer and communication skills, there's no such thing as overkill.

When writing about your education, it's always appropriate to toot your own horn. If you were student body president, say so. If you were a member of your high school or college Key Club, Chess Club, or Lawnchair Rewebbing Association (as I was), put it down. At the very least, such information will arouse curiosity about you and show that you're a well-rounded person.

As far as your GPA is concerned, a high one is always impressive, especially when combined with a lot of extracurricular activities. However, even if your grades weren't always honor roll material, your experience and student involvement will always make that number look better than you think. If your GPA was pretty decent in your eyes, don't feel strange about revealing it.

In college, many of us (myself included) earned higher grades in our specific programs than in college in general. If that's the

case, you can list both averages separately, or simply state that your English department GPA was a 3.6. Most employers won't ask you to tell them any more than that.

As a general rule, a resume should be comprised of headlines (objective, experience, education, and skills) followed by bullet points, not long paragraphs. HR managers are busy, and they don't have time to sit and read a narrative. Give them the information they want, but give it to them briefly, in plain English. In short, include anything that will make you look good to the professional world without revealing too much personal information or telling a story.

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Resume Writing and Preparation is Free Online

By Donna Monday

Creating a strong resume is a very important part of applying for a job, either online or off line. There are many resume writing services that will help you build an impressive resume for job interviews.

You can also learn how to write a resume for free by surfing the Internet for resume writing help. Many sites will show you tips and advice on choosing a resume style that works best for you.

You can also find samples of resumes, resume templates, resume software, and examples of resume cover sheets or letters.

Whether you're looking to create a business resume, marketing resume, military resume, electronic resume, accounting resume, nursing resume, acting resume, sales resume, teacher resume, executive resume, student resume or a customer service resume, you can find great advice online with a little research.

When preparing your resume, keep in mind that employers use resumes for several purposes:

Screen Applicants - Most employers will only look at a resume for about 30 seconds to determine whether or not an applicant is a good fit for their organization.

Develop Interview Questions - Statements on your resume can be used to formulate questions they may ask during an interview.

Communication Skills - Employers want to see how well you express yourself.

FIRST-AID FOR AN AILING RESUME

Qualifications - Employers will reference your resume when making hiring decisions based on how closely your qualifications match their needs.

Writing a resume isn't easy, but by studying various tips and advice, you can learn to create a type of resume that will get you one step closer to your ultimate goal of finding a great job.

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Donna Monday writes employment related articles for

Resume Writing and Preparation is Free Online

How To Choose The Right Resume Format

Tips For Writing Your Winning Resume

Understanding Resume Styles

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Create Your Own Scrapbook at minimum cost.

Complete Library Of Cooking



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