

HOW YOUR RÉSUMÉ CAN SEPERATE YOU FROM THE REST OF THE HERD OR ***WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES?***

When people bring or send in a résumé to me, that they have written, or a friend or family member has given them a hand with it; I see a document that, to me, reads like a *tombstone*. Such a document exclusively qualifies them for their current position with little hope of upward advancement. These candidates are attempting to sell their work history with generic job descriptions. In contrast, it *should* contain accomplishments that not only answer the employer's implicit question, "Is s/he *any good at the job?*" and should present compelling evidence that the candidate is highly qualified for the position to which they are applying. What are they doing wrong? In a nutshell, they fill the document up with a laundry list of duties and responsibilities. A duty is essentially a job function ... what you do / did, while a responsibility (listing these is, I-M-P-O, a greater sin) merely states 'what you were *'kind-of, sort-of supposed* to do' – but *doesn't say that you actually did it* nor do such statements give an indication that the activity was done well or delivered appreciable results

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DUTY/RESPONSIBILITY AND AN ACCOMPLISHMENT?

An accomplishment shows that you achieved something valuable and showcases how well you did it. For example: 'revamped inventory' is kind-of *ho-hum* and lists a duty, while '*Successfully revamped inventory systems eliminating surplus-ordering by 31% and slashing monthly expenditures by 28%.*' not only shows that the action was performed well, but *demonstrates quantifiable results!* The second example effectively communicates to the reader something that s/he doesn't know already. By including accomplishments and achievements, you can paint an effective picture of your capabilities — that will *sell you into your new position!*

Now that you can see the difference, you'll realize that you have to make some changes to your tombstone résumé. So, where do you begin?

MAKE A LIST

Start off by assembling a list of those qualities that makes you to stand out. For each of your positions, ask yourself the following questions:

- ◆ What examples demonstrate that I went above and beyond my normal job duties; going beyond my job description?
- ◆ Do I have the reputation of being the 'go-to' person for something that I excel at; i.e.: dealing with difficult customers; getting colleagues to pull together as a team; how to close the sale / deal; designing highly effective Excel spreadsheets ... etc ?
- ◆ In what ways do I stand out among my peers?
- ◆ What makes me really good at my job?
- ◆ Have I been commended by a superior, customer or peer for a job well done? When and why?
- ◆ Have I ever consistently met or exceeded goals, targets, objectives, or quotas?

- ◆ Did I save the organization money?
- ◆ What new procedures or processes did I engineer to bring about a tangible or quantifiable improvement? i.e. save money; save time; deliver the project on time despite a depletion in staff; etc.
- ◆ Was I ever nominated for an award?
- ◆ Have I solved a challenging problem?

PRESENT AN OVERVIEW PICTURE: PAINT BY NUMBERS

Next, take your list and flesh it out with facts and figures. How many staff are affected by your work? Have you exceeded your goals, targets, quotas, and if so, follow with quantifying the increase by a percentage. How does your performance compare with that of your peers, predecessor, or in the case of your moving on the person that took over your old job? A prospective employer wants to get a sense of ‘does *this candidate belong up here with us pros in the big leagues or down in the pee wee league?*’ Help make the hiring decision easier. Instead of just saying that you efficiently oversaw company inventory, state the dollar worth and number of items that you manage.

By quantifying your effectiveness, you make your professionalism more visual, enabling the hiring authority to effectively picture you doing a bang-up job in an area that s/he is concerned with. **There’s a HUGE difference between telling and selling.** The successful career advancement candidate needs to make the employer ‘smell *and feel* the sizzle’!

WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF YOUR EFFORTS? → SHOWCASE THE PAYOFF

Finally take each statement to the next level by showcasing the benefit that your actions actually delivered. In this way you effectively **highlight** the direct benefit the organization gets when they hire you. All employers listen to radio station WIFM ... and everyone wants to know what’s in it for them! Experienced, professional résumé writers use a formula in strategizing bullet point statements: PROBLEM ACTION → **RESULT** or CHALLENGE ACTION → **RESULT**.

Above all, it’s imperative that you do **not** waste valuable ‘résumé real estate TM’ on statements that leave the hiring authority with the feeling of ‘*so what? or who cares?*’

In reading your Unique Selling Points, the hiring manager will naturally see that if s/he hires you, you have the proven track record that makes the company feel good about the fact that you will be able to innovate methods to help make them more \$ucce\$\$ful. By including the benefit, you **make your value very concrete**.

A résumé incorporating your quantified achievements is the very best way to spotlight what you can do and position yourself for your next success: landing that great new job.

But what if you don’t have access to the sales figures or other numbers? Your job may not involve activities that you can quantify. Here is what you CAN do! You can **QUALIFY YOUR EFFECTIVENESS!!!** What have you been complimented on, achieved a particular professional reputation or received a pat on the back for? The fact that someone *else* thinks you’re darn good at something speaks volumes.

Let the words of others do some selling for you.

Mark Berkowitz is the owner and President of Career Development Resources, LLC. Changing lives and revolutionizing careers since 1985, Mark provides one-on-one career consulting services, résumé building assistance and guidance to help each client achieve not only job advancement, but lasting and meaningful success in their career path as well. A distinguished figure in his field, Berkowitz is one of the top career builders in the country and has been quoted in dozens of books and publications on the topic of career advancement.

Passionate about empowering others to realize their dreams, Mark served as an executive board member of the PROFESSIONAL ASSN. OF RÉSUMÉ WRITERS & CAREER COACHES. He has been helping clients successfully advance in, and/or change their careers for over 36 years. With a Master’s Degree in Career Development and four specialized certifications ([National Certified Career Counselor](#), [Certified Professional](#)

Résumé Writer, [Int'l Certified Job & Career Transition Coach](#), and [Certified Employment Interview Professional](#)), he is uniquely qualified to help you improve your career situation. A recognized expert in the field, he had not only taught in Graduate Schools and led workshops and seminars, but also trained other counselors. Mark served as chairman of the Certification Board for the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches and was a founding member of the Career Management Alliance (fkn Career Masters Institute). Additionally, he has shared his expertise in effectively utilizing career assessment tools with graduate counseling students from nearby Fordham University, helping to prepare them for their future counseling careers.

Mark connects with clients locally as well as international clients via the internet. He also provides outreach to high school and college students, presenting career planning and job search strategy workshops.

- Highly regarded with résumés, cover letters, and interview strategies showcased in nearly two dozen books.
- Enjoys an INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION as a “Résumé Guru” by members of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches.

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See how you can benefit from professional expertise instead of suffering from your career mistakes.