

Top Resume Tactics for Executives



By now, you've seen plenty of resumes float across your desk. The occasional stellar one. The one that's plenty qualified but that's about it. And, of course, plenty of resumes filled with misspellings and typos that aren't worth the paper they were printed on... It's been a while since you sent out a resume of your own. Heck, maybe you haven't even updated it in the last decade. That's ok. The likelihood is that you're going to want to send it out at some point. Yes, your accomplishments speak for themselves. But guess what? So do those of everyone else that's interested in the coveted position you're applying for. And a mistake I see all the time is focusing your resume on what your responsibilities and duties were and forgetting to list what you accomplished while carrying out those responsibilities and duties.

No one is saying you have to jump ship right away. But, in the event that an opportunity comes up, you'd be wise to stand out amongst the crowd of other qualified applicants.

It All Starts with the Headline

As you've probably already noticed, we're in the era of instant gratification. As consumers, we don't want to spend a lot of time reading endless paragraphs about a product's features. That's exactly what a hiring manager is. A consumer. And, you guessed it, your headline needs to stand out. Not sure how to craft that perfect headline that grabs attention? There are plenty of credible resources out there to help with this one aspect of your resume. When your headline grabs attention, your resume is going to get a hard look.

Document by Numbers

Too many resumes are full of the right words but lack any substance. In the position you're applying for, you're expected to get results. That's why you need to highlight them on your resume. Sure, it's great that you lead a team of chemists and engineers. But, what did you achieve? Metrics. Use your resume to give specific numbers and timeframes to your accomplishments. I recommend updating your resume every year when you get your performance review. Add any significant achievements, special awards, or new skills learned. And, as mentioned before, use the specific numbers while they're still fresh in your memory instead of trying to remember what you accomplished 5 or more years ago. As great as soft leadership skills are, your next employer wants to know that you can deliver results.

What About Your Hires?

You've made more than one hire in your time. Out of that bunch, there's bound to be someone that's achieved results beyond expectation. As much as your next employer wants to hire you for your talent, they're hiring you to find other exceptional talent too. To stand out, you need to be able to show that you're capable of hiring capable people and that they follow your lead. Don't save these folks for your references. Incorporate them in your resume. If you've mentored someone that went on to be promoted or became a team leader themselves, put that on your resume.

Focus on the Present

You should be proud of the fact that you lead the way in bringing a product to market in 2004. Unfortunately, that was a long time ago. In order for your resume to stand out, you need to highlight your achievements post pleated khakis era.

What have you done for me lately? That's the question any competent hiring manager wants to know. While you shouldn't fully discount your accomplishments from yesteryear, you need to make your most recent successes stand out as much as possible.

Audience

Before you fire off your resume, give some thought to who will be reading it. Yes, the basic dynamic is clear. You're selling yourself to someone else with the hope they'll call you for an interview.

A common mistake executives make on their resume is, only trying to write down what the hiring manager wants to hear. If you're applying for an important position within a company, the language you use in your resume should reflect that role. Your verbiage should mirror that of a decision maker and trusted business partner. The trick is to find a blend of being bold and audacious, but humble enough to consider the opinions of others as well.

Maybe it's been a while since you polished up your resume. You've been a tremendous asset in your current position but, perhaps you're eager for another challenge. There's nothing wrong with exploring other options and new opportunities. If you're going to take that step, you need to do it in the right way. The reality is your first introduction is most likely going to be your resume. If you take the knowledge you already have and, consider some of the advice above, you just might surprise yourself with the doors that open.

Words to Include in Your Resume



We've all been there. Whether you're still employed and looking for another opportunity or switching careers entirely, updating and customizing your resume

is the first step when beginning the [job hunt](#). You've probably downloaded a template from the Internet and filled it out in chronological order with places of employment, title, lists of your duties and a section at the end that highlights your skills and other interests. Maybe you've even spent hours going over it with a fine-tooth comb to sure it's squeaky clean. This is all good and well, but have you thought carefully about the words you choose? Sadly, the resumes most people submit to prospective employers use language that is either too basic and antiquated or too sophisticated and over the top. To help you out next time someone asks for resume, we've come up with a list of the most impactful words to include.

Numbers

No, we don't mean the actual word "numbers." We're talking about metrics like revenue you generated, money or time you saved, people you managed, etc. It doesn't mean much when you say that "you reduce the time required to X." Your employer is going to want to know by how much. A better way to put it would be "reduced processing time by 40%.", or "cleared out a backlog in 7 months" Bottom line, if there is anything you did in a previous job that can be expressed in numbers, it better be on your resume.

Modernized

Maybe a responsibility you had in your last job was to improve existing systems or come up with new ways of doing things entirely. While you might be tempted to write "updated policies and procedures manual" on your resume, simply exchanging the word "modernized" for "updated" is like a switch to the hiring manager. In their eyes, anyone can update a simple document, but to modernize or streamline it? That's powerful stuff.

Value

When companies are looking to hire someone for a position, they want a person who will add value to the organization. If you make it known on your resume that you're hard-working, that only goes so far. Sure, hard work is commendable, but it doesn't always achieve results. By using the words value or valuable, you make

it known that you think about the work you do in terms of how it will improve the company at large.

Action Verbs

Action verbs are words like supervised, authorized, guided, managed, unified, initiated and designed, to name a few. These words show your ability to succeed. Moreover, they tell a hiring manager that you have been trusted with significant responsibility in the past. When choosing which action verbs to use, it might be a good idea to create an extensive list and carefully choose the ones that best communicate the message you're trying to get across.

Orchestrated

Anyone can say that they've led a team or organized a charity event. Sure, those are qualities that are favorable to an employer but if you use the word orchestrated instead, you communicate that you were the one in charge.

Spearheaded

The last place you want to appear modest is on your resume. Much like the word orchestrated, spearheaded emphasizes your level of involvement. For example, instead of saying you "created a new submission procedure," telling the employer that you "spearheaded the modernization of the submission process" is much more specific and conveys confidence in your abilities.

Committed

Simply put, employers want to see that you're committed to your work and to your employer from the beginning to the end. While it's great if you can use this word specifically, using any type of language that evokes loyalty and dedication places you ahead those that don't.

Results

While stating what you do and what you are responsible for is good, listing what you accomplished while in your role paints a much clearer picture of what you can do for your employer and the impact you can have.

Skimmable

Again, we aren't talking about using this word specifically. Your resume needs to be skimmable when someone reads it. Interviewers are going to look over anywhere from dozens to hundreds of resumes so you want yours to not only stand out from the rest, but be easy to read as well. Avoid excessively long sentences and exclude any information that isn't relevant. Remember, your resume is your personal highlight reel and nothing more.

Edit

We can't emphasize this enough. Your resume is your first impression so you need to make it count. If you have any grammar or spelling mistakes, you might as well kiss the job goodbye. Even though it might be tedious, take the time to edit your resume so it's perfect. When you think you're done, give it to a trusted friend to review.

Ask any interviewer and they will tell you that the number of bad resumes they receive is astounding. While some are just flat out awful because they're riddled with bad spelling and grammar, others just don't seem that exciting because the language is simple, vague and boring. Even if someone else is more qualified than you, the words you use in your resume can paint you in a favorable light and put you ahead of the competition. Next time you have to go polish it up, try using some of the words above to emphasize your accomplishments and abilities. Doing so just might be what it takes to get you the job.

As a [Regulatory and Quality Assurance Recruiter](#), I can help you refine your resume. I help employees find jobs that fit in the [pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device industries](#).

Six Buzzwords to Avoid in a CV



When writing your CV, you may get sidetracked by what you think the employer wants to hear. This can lead to buzzwords that weakens your resume rather than making it stand out – or at least stand out in a good way!

Keep the following buzzwords out of your CV to avoid getting shortlisted by the hiring manager:

Hard Working

Stating that you are hardworking is not enough to prove your work ethic to potential employers. Instead of using the buzzword, mention times when you went the extra mile for your company. This could be an additional project that led to a promotion. Prove that you are a hard worker. Don't just state it.

Creative

Would a creative person list that they are creative or show that they are creative on their resume? Most likely, a creative person would find a unique way to depict their creativity.

Creative Opportunities for Resume

- Color Blocking
- Font Choice (but not too wild or hard to read)
- White Space

- Infographics
- Prioritize Information

Strong Communication Skills

Every employer wants an employee with strong communication skills. However, a more professional method to depicting your strong communication skills is to use well-structured sentences, and perfect spelling and grammar. Also, organize your CV so it is easy to read.

Works Well in a Team

A great team player is important for almost every job position. Demonstrate your ability to work well on a team with job descriptions. Include your interaction with co-workers and clients.

For example:

- Format information for internal and external communication - memos, emails, presentations, reports
- Be the point of contact between the executives and company employees/clients and manage information flow
- Screen and direct phone calls and distribute correspondence

Results-Driven

Everything is motivated by needing a result. Therefore, even if we only get out of bed during the day, we are all results-driven. Employers do not want to hear that you are results-driven but HOW you are results-driven.

- Did you create a new program at your previous job leading to an increase in efficiency?
- How did you generate revenue?
- Did you streamline a process?

- What projects did you deliver?

Show your employer tangible facts and figures of how you create results. Don't just talk about what you did, talk about what was achieved.

Thought Leader

A thought leader is the informed, go-to expert in their field of expertise. Examples of thought-leaders are Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, and Bill Gates. If you are thought leader than you are probably not writing a resume anymore.

A more modest approach would be to explain your expertise in the field, including awards and achievements or any special recognition from your employer or associations.

A great resume can determine whether you receive an interview. The trick is knowing what to include and exclude. Deterring from these cliché buzzwords can help your chances of standing out and getting the job.

How to Write a Resume that Gets Attention



THE PURPOSE OF YOUR RESUME

Your resume is your first chance to make an impression on a potential employer. Careful thought should be put into this very important document. Your resume not only informs the employer about your background, but also your communication style, writing (and spelling) ability, organizational skills, and ability to briefly and concisely convey information.

It is also important to be truthful on your resume. Your industry is smaller than you might think and you may run into people with whom you have worked at other companies. They might even be someone with whom you worked on a project and knows your contributions, or knows someone that has worked with you in the past. Either way, if you have lied or exaggerated about your level of contribution, you will be found out and your reputation ruined. Also, with the number of companies doing background and education verification checks, it isn't worth the humiliation of being caught in a lie and ruining your reputation for solid, quality work. Be proud of your accomplishments and state them honestly.

SETTING UP YOUR RESUME FOR MORE IMPACT

Now, about the layout of your resume: I'm sure you have been told that your resume should only be 1 or 2 pages. That is only partially true. If you have 5 years or less of experience, yes, it should only be a 1-2-pager. If you have more experience than that, you may short-change yourself by trying to keep it to 2 pages. It is better to give your potential employer (or Recruiter) a good idea of what you have done, and are capable of doing, than to have a short resume. Under no circumstances should you go over 4 pages. Beyond that and you risk having your resume find the bottom of the pile to be read "when they have time". The key is to make sure EVERYTHING on your resume sells you to a potential employer, and gives them a clear picture of what you are capable of doing for them.

If you are someone who has done a number of publications or presentations, you can simply state on your resume: "Extensive publication and presentations experience. A detailed list is available upon request", and place it under a heading

of “Publications and Presentations”.

Most hiring managers and recruiters focus on your most recent 3-5 years of experience. For positions held within that time period, you should make sure to put your most relevant bullet points to describe what you’ve done. For position beyond the 5 year mark, try to pick the most important 3-5 bullet points to list. This will help keep your resume more concise without filling it with information that is not as relevant to the reader.

Also try to eliminate any date gaps in your resume. If you have taken an extended leave, or have been unemployed for more than 6 months, you may need to list this time gap on your resume. Many employers become suspicious of big time gaps and may wonder what you are hiding. If they are wondering about these gaps, they are not concentrating on your accomplishments. If what they remember about your resume is that it had “curious” time gaps, you may not fare too well against your competition.

I have collected thousands of resumes during my Recruiting career. Some layouts are very difficult to follow and read, and leave the reader confused about what the job candidate has done, or can do. A chronological resume layout is easier to follow as it uses bullet points to highlight accomplishments and responsibilities. This is the format used by a majority of the people in the market, and is very good, but there are options to help you stand out as well.

A key component to any effective resume is having a “Skills Summary” or “Significant Accomplishments” section at the very top of the first page. This is your chance to shine and get your reader’s attention right off the bat. Most people write their resumes like a job description; listing how they spent time during their days. Employers don’t hire people to come in and spend time, they hire them to get things done and accomplish something. That’s what your resume needs to list.

Anything you can list that had a big impact on your group or company should be listed in your Skills Summary or Significant Accomplishments section. If you streamlined a process, completed a project ahead of schedule, or got a submission in and approved quickly, those are the kind of things a hiring manager wants to know about. You may be uncomfortable bragging about your accomplishments, but if you don’t brag a little, the reader of your resume will never know how good you are.

A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT RESUME

Using the same chronological layout, you can take it one step further to really give your resume some impact. This extra step is the information we can use as recruiters to really get the attention of the hiring manager, and will set you way ahead of other resumes/job candidates they are considering.

This is a step using the PPR approach. PPR stands for Project, Participation, and Results. The Projects portion is simply facts about significant projects you've worked on. This part should be pretty easy since that is what resumes are made up of anyway. The Participation portion lists significant, measurable results you personally achieved on these projects in your previous positions, and the Results portion specifies what this project achieved for the company, and let's the potential employer know what you think you can do for them if they hire you, based on what you've done in the past. Here's an example of how that might look.

2007-2010

Senior Manager, Regulatory/Clinical Affairs, 123 Surgical, San Jose, CA

Provide leadership for regulatory policy and strategy through example, guidance, internal communication, follow-up and verification for corporate operations and operations of corporate partners. Formulate global clinical development plans, monitor clinical trials and manage the Clinical Research Department.

Project

My Role

Results

Develop content for regulatory filings, ensuring quality of content, approving minor or routine submissions and meeting predetermined timelines for all submissions.

Consistently met all deadlines

Project

My Role

Results

Manage Clinical Trials

Responsible for all facets of development including discovery, development and clinical trials

CTrial approved by the FDA on the first pass, including 25 sites in the US and 5 in Europe; enrollment completed 9 months ahead of schedule.

By doing this you are answering the basic question of the hiring manager that is at the core of the entire interviewing process: What's in it for me? The potential employer is looking at your resume to decide what's in it for them to bring you on board. The hiring manager is trying to fill a position to solve a problem they have, and they are looking at your background and capabilities to see if you are someone that can help them accomplish the goals they have for their department. That's what's in it for them.

As the process continues, and you learn more about the opportunity, you can determine what's in it for you. Once you get in the door to interview, you can learn a lot more about the company, culture, and people you would be working with. This information can turn a pretty good opportunity into a great one, or let you know it might not be quite right for you. But unless you can get in the door to interview, and eventually get an offer, you will never know what's in it for you.

As Recruiters, it is our job to present you in the best possible light, and to do a first stage screening to make sure you have the background the employer is looking for. That is a service we provide our client companies, and they have come to expect from us. Your resume is still a very key component. We can give our contacts within the company a lot of detailed information about you to entice them to look further at your background, but resumes get passed internally to other members of the interviewing team to see if it's worth bringing you in. Since we are not part of these conversations, your resume needs to stand on its own.

One last note. You should also review your social media accounts to make sure there is nothing on them that a potential employer may see and get a negative impression of you. You can either delete the material that may give a bad impression, or change your settings as to who has access to view your account. Employers are increasingly checking social media pages of job applicants to get a better idea of the individual.

We hope this information and the following sample resume is helpful in giving you

the best resume possible to help you advance in your career. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact us.