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STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO BUILD AN AWESOME JOB RESUME



This guide will take you step-by-step through building a non-academic resume. At the end you will have a great 1-page accomplishment-based resume targeted for a specific industry job application.

INTRODUCTION

The job search process is a 5-step path:

1 JOB POSTING

Advertised or Unadvertised.
Find out as much about the
Job Requirements as possible.

2 APPLICATION - COVER & RESUME

Build a custom resume using specific
accomplishments to demonstrate Job
Requirement competencies.

3 INTERVIEW

Respond to questions, learn more
about the company, demonstrate your
competence & enthusiasm.

4 OFFER

Congratulations! You received a job
offer!!!

5 NEW JOB

Start your new job and continue
building your career.

The purpose of a resume is to get an interview;
The purpose of an interview is to get an offer;
An offer is an open door to negotiations & the career you seek.

This guide focuses on building an awesome accomplishments-based resume designed to get you an interview for that great job.

This process also prepares the answers you need to blow their socks off in a behavior-based interview.

A Resume is not a Curriculum Vitae

The one-page resume is a critical tool to move forward in the hiring process towards the career you want. Its purpose is to show the recruiter that you can do the job that they want done.

Your resume is a marketing document that you place in front of a recruiter to present your case for an interview. It has to be short, to the point, but compelling, and appropriate for the job. It must be an awesome resume.

A curriculum vitae is common in academic life but it is not appropriate for an industry job application.

The explanation is simple.

Employers are trying to answer 2 key questions:

1. Can you solve the problems and do the work I require?
2. Are you a good fit with my team or organization?

A curriculum vitae doesn't directly address either question.

A CV documents things you've done and papers you've published, but doesn't demonstrate outcomes you've achieved that are relevant for the job to be filled.

A Resume is not a Curriculum Vitae-2

An employer is looking to best satisfy their needs. It's about them, not about you. The more you learn about their requirements, the more you can focus your resume.

A job resume is results based. It documents past accomplishments and outcomes.

An awesome resume documents past accomplishments relevant to the job requirements in a way that demonstrates to the interviewer that you have solved similar problems in the past and that you will excel for them in the future.

An awesome resume tells the recruiter at a glance that you are a good fit for the job.

Wow!

What a scary prospect - distilling your knowledge, skills, experience and education into a single page that distinguishes you from other candidates and gets you invited to an interview.

Don't worry - we've got your back.

This guide shows you exactly how to build your resume.

I've also included a tool to help you capture and document your accomplishments in a format that also helps you answer interview questions.

THE RESUME

A recent study showed that professional recruiters spend about **6 seconds** reviewing a resume for their initial “fit – no fit” decision. Yes - **6 seconds!**

Fortunately, the human brain can take in and process a lot of information in 6 seconds:

IF THE INFORMATION IS PROPERLY STRUCTURED AND PRESENTED.

Recruiters are looking for 5 specific items when they scan a resume.

1. Name & contact information;
2. Current position, title & company;
3. Previous positions, titles & companies;
4. Accomplishments that demonstrate the ability to perform the job and solve problems for the employer;
5. Education.

A simple, clean and consistent structure will guide their eyes and present this information.

Resume Style

Resume style should be clean & consistent:

- Use a simple font;
 - Helvetica or Times are ok;
- 10 or 11 point font size;
- No graphics;
- Use consistent punctuation.

Resume Structure

A great 1-page resume has 3 sections:

- Contact Information;
- Experience (with Accomplishments);
- Education.



Let's start with the easiest two sections first (Contact Information and Education).

Section 1 - Contact Information

The purpose of the contact information section is to tell the recruiter how to contact you. They will need this to follow up on your application to arrange an interview or for a brief introductory phone call.

The contact information block is centered at the top page with the information.

Example:

William Smith, PhD
Edmonton, AB, 780-999-1212, wsmith99@gmail.com

The name and contact information are straightforward. I recommend not using your residence address. Use a personal cell phone and personal email address.

Do not use your work address, company phone number or company email. If you move on, they won't know where to find you.

Phone number: I recommend using a personal cell phone number. A cell phone will enable you to slip away from your desk for private calls with recruiters. And you won't miss a call because someone "forgot" to give you a message.

Pro Tip:

Set a professional greeting on voice mail. A greeting that is great for your buddies might not play very well with a prospective employer.

Email: A personal email is a long-term asset and allows you to control who sees your mail.

Pro Tip:

Set up a free email that you can use for current and future job searches. Select an account name as close to your name as possible.

Williamsmith2993@gmail.com is appropriate; fluffybunny222@gmail.com is not.
Gmail or Apple are two great free email options.

Gmail: <https://www.google.com/gmail/about/>

iCloud: <https://www.icloud.com>

Section 2 - Education

The education section is placed at the end of the resume in reverse chronological order. Educational experience and degrees are presented in the following order:

Degree & Specialization, Educational Institution, Location, Year Granted.

Example:

PhD – Mechanical Engineering, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, 2013

MDes – Industrial Design Engineering, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, 2009

BEng (Honors) – Mechanical Engineering, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, 2007



Section 3 - Experience and Accomplishments

The Experience section is the core of your targeted 1-page accomplishment-based resume. It shows your skills, abilities and knowledge through your accomplishments.

The format for the work experience section is straightforward. It presents the information in a very specific order that enables a recruiter to pick out the important information as they rapidly scan your resume.

Too often candidates list work tasks instead of meaningful outcomes and results. Two people doing the same job can have radically different experiences. You want to capture your experiences and present them in terms of the accomplishments that will show the recruiter how you are likely to perform in the job.

Furthermore, candidates frequently fail to include accomplishments outside of work. Include your volunteer and community work. Employers are looking for candidates that not only bring the right skills, but also candidates that go above and beyond and give back to their communities. You want to be able to present what you have done that would be beneficial to this company. Therefore, include relevant volunteer work or community service where you had a responsibility and achieved results. Volunteer positions can be a rich source of outcomes, especially for a recent graduate applying for the first professional job.

Accomplishments is the area where you should be explicit, quantitative and provide detail. For example, say that you increased sales by 25%, or that your decisions led to a 50% savings in operational costs.

The style in the Experience section is similar to the Education section. Positions are listed in reverse chronological order. For each position list:

Position, Title, Company, Start & End Dates (month & year), Job Responsibilities, Selected Accomplishments.

Make clear the time you spent in each position by giving the month and year in start and end dates. If only the year is given, then a short-term position that started in September and ended in January might be misinterpreted as a 2-year position rather than 4-month duration.

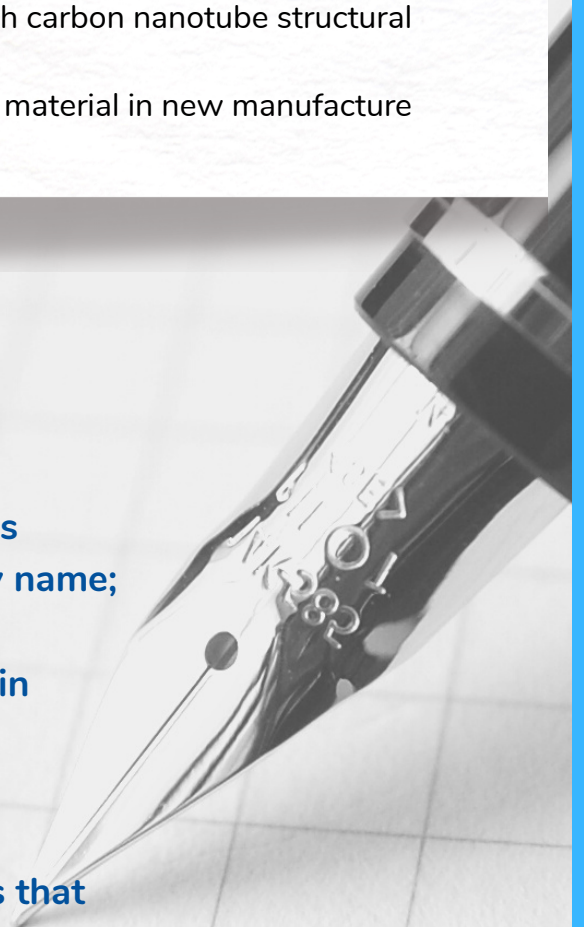
Example:

Feb 2014 – Present – Post Doctoral Fellow, University of Toronto. Responsible for developing carbon nanotubes as high load/weight structural material.

- Developed a unique material formulation that increase maximum structural load 700-fold with a 2-fold reduction in volume.
- Granted US Patent US 12344529, "Novel high load strength carbon nanotube structural material".
- Completed licensing agreement with Boeing to incorporate material in new manufacture process.

Experience Checklist:

- Start each position with the start and end dates followed by the position held and the company name;
- List in 1 sentence the responsibilities you had in the position;
- Provide up to 3 significant outcomes you achieved in that position. Select achievements that align with a responsibility listed in the job posting or that would be relevant for the position description;
- Repeat with each position in reverse chronological order.



Accomplishments

The key to a great resume that stands out is strong relevant accomplishments in the Experience section. It is about your practical knowledge. Employers know that past accomplishments are the best indicator of future performance. Accomplishments demonstrate your potential to solve problems and do meaningful work by showing how you have solved other similar problems and done other similar work.

Many job applicants struggle with the resume accomplishments section. Our memories are poor, time passes and recollections dim. The recency effect causes us to remember events in the recent past, but forget long past accomplishments in spite of their impact and importance.

Accomplishments Bank

I've created a worksheet to help you capture and record your accomplishments. The accomplishments are not only important for your resume, but also to formulate your responses to questions in a behaviors-based interview. (See worksheet).

Use the Job Accomplishments Bank Worksheet to capture as many accomplishments as you can recall. This process is likely to take a while as you recall more and more accomplishments.

Don't rush it. You can recall much more when not under pressure.

The Job Accomplishments Worksheet has 5 elements:

1. The position you held when the outcome happened;
2. A succinct statement of the outcome achieved. Be as concrete and quantifiable as possible;
3. A context for the outcome. Why was this a problem or why did this need to be done;
4. What was the problem, why was it important, and what was your role;
5. Summarize your approach to the problem and how you achieved the outcome.

The outcomes used to build your resume can be lifted directly from the statements in point 2 or 5.

Pro Tip:

Don't wait until the last minute. Capture your career accomplishments as you progress. They are easy to forget over time and hard to recall on short notice especially under stress or with a short deadline to respond to an ideal job posting.

Place a 30-minute appointment in your calendar for the last Friday of every month. Use the time to reflect on your activities and capture the outcomes. Placing a meeting in your calendar not only reminds you to record the outcomes while they are fresh in your mind, but also the calendar is also a great memory jogger as it is a record of key meetings and events. There may only be 1 or 2 accomplishments and nothing gets missed or lost over time.

As you follow this guidance through your career, you build up a large repository of accomplishments when the time comes to prepare a custom resume relevant to the job posting. The Accomplishments Bank also serves as a great resource to support your year-end performance review.

Summary:

This guide provides the core information necessary to build an accomplishments-based resume targeted to an industry career position.

I wish you all the best.

Please visit www.donback.com for more tools, strategies and to join the conversation.

I want to hear about your challenges and experiences.

Send me an email at don@donback.com.

I can help!



Accomplishments Bank Worksheet

(1 Accomplishment/Sheet)

Position:	Date:
Accomplishment: (State in 1 sentence).	
Context: (Provide a short context for the accomplishment).	
Approach: (Briefly describe the concept(s) used to approach the challenges/problem. Clearly identify the core concepts/competencies).	
Expand and explain: (Describe how you achieved the accomplishment).	

Example: Simple 1-Page Resume:

William Smith, PhD

Edmonton, AB, 780-999-1212, wsmith99@gmail.com

Experience:

Feb 2017 – Present – Post Doctoral Fellow, University of Toronto.

Responsible for carbon nanotubes as high load/weight structural material.

- Developed a unique material formulation that increased maximum structural load 700-fold with a 2-fold reduction in volume.
- Granted US Patent US 12344529, "Novel high load strength carbon nanotube structural material".
- Completed licensing agreement with Boeing to incorporate material in new manufacture process.

Jan 2014 – Jan 2017 – Post Doctoral Fellow, University of Alberta.

Responsible for developing novel silver ion/aromatic carboxylates as dermal surface antimicrobial agents.

- Developed a unique material formulations that increase antibacterial activity up to 2000-fold without negative effects on skin.
- Granted US Patent US 12344693, "Syntheses and Antibacterial Properties of Three Novel Coordination Polymers of Silver(I) Aromatic Carboxylates".
- Completed licensing agreement with Boeing to incorporate material in new manufacture process.

Sept 2012 – Jan 2014 – English as a Second Language Tutor, University of Alberta. Responsible for conversation English language experience for recently arrived foreign engineers.

- Conducted twice weekly conversational English classes for 15 foreign engineers per year. Students achieved qualifying TOFEL at a rate 75% higher than other programs.

Education:

PhD – Mechanical Engineering, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, 2013

MDes – Industrial Design Engineering, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, 2009

BEng (Honors) – Mechanical Engineering, University of Calgary, Calgary AB, 2007