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Resumes

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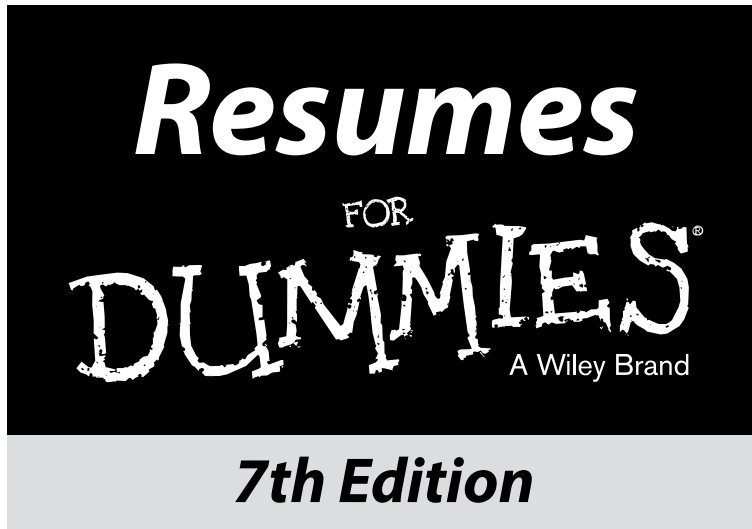
Learn to:

- Use the latest trends to craft a tailored resume
- Attract attention through a strong social media profile
- Navigate privacy controls and protect your online reputation

Laura DeCarlo

Certified Master Resume Writer





**by Laura DeCarlo
with Joyce Lain Kennedy**

FOR
DUMMIES[®]
A Wiley Brand

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Introduction

In our think-fast, technology-driven world of 24/7 communication, everything is changing virtually overnight — the same goes for resume writing. The seventh edition of *Resumes For Dummies* includes extensive updated information on the newest trends and changes. Get ready for an innovative ride as I take you through fresh digital ideas — from social networking profiles to resume-capable mobile devices — and new techniques. I’ve presented a fresh but still user-friendly approach to making sure your resume stands up out of a virtual stack of applicants and screams, “Read me!”

Much of what worked before in resume writing still applies. But what you found in the sixth edition is no longer enough. Just as you have to keep up with the changes in your professional field, you have to keep up with changes in presenting yourself in writing, and this book helps you do exactly that.

Ready to win that interview for your dream job? Okay, let’s go! Update your resume, catch up with a wave of new stuff, and find the job you want.

About This Book

Resumes For Dummies, 7th Edition, is a playbook showing you how to write powerful and targeted resumes and how to use them with important new ideas and strategies in your search for a good job. The first five chapters spotlight the latest resume technology and innovations; the remainder of the book covers timeless resume success factors and includes samples of winning resumes.

I hope you spend some time studying the sample resumes in the book, and maybe even model your own resume on one of the dozens I’ve included. Please note that I’ve substituted a reminder to add the relevant dates in your resume with the word *dates* instead of actual years to keep your attention focused on key resume concepts.

You may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you’re reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it’s noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn’t exist. If you’re reading this as an e-book, you’ve got it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Foolish Assumptions

I assume you picked up this book for one of the following reasons:

- ✔ You've never written a resume and want an expert, yet friendly, hand on your shoulder.
- ✔ You have written a resume — it got you where you are today — and you want to do better next time.
- ✔ You like where you are today but want more from life than blooming where you're planted. To move to the next level, your experience tells you that it's time for a resume makeover.
- ✔ You need a new resume for that great job you heard about but worry that too many competitors will submit virtually the same cookie-cutter document pirated from somewhere. To stop looking like a human photocopy machine, you want to understand resume writing from the ground up.
- ✔ You've heard about sweeping technology-based changes in the way people and jobs find each other. A realist, you know that technology can't be uninvented. You want to be sure your resume is in sync with the latest updates.

I further assume that you are someone who likes information that cuts to the chase, sometimes with a smile. You find all that and more in the following pages.

Icons Used in This Book

For Dummies signature icons are the little round pictures you see in the margins of the book. I use them to guide your attention to key bits of information. Here's a list of the icons and what they mean.



Some points in these pages are so useful that I hope you keep them in mind as you read. I make a big deal out of these ideas with this icon.



Advice and information that can spark a difference in the outcome of your resume-led job search are flagged with this icon.



You don't want to go wrong when presenting yourself and your achievements on paper. This icon signals there may be trouble ahead if you don't make a good decision.

Beyond the Book

In addition to all the great info you can find in the book you're reading right now, this product also comes with some access-anywhere goodies on the web. Check out the Cheat Sheet at www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/resumes for details on how to make your resume the best it can be, how to protect your personal information, and what to leave off of your resume.

You can also go online for more information about resume-related aspects of your job search. At www.dummies.com/extras/resumes, you can read about following up with an employer after submitting your resume, applying for a federal job, putting together a curriculum vitae, and finding folks to serve as references.

Where to Go from Here

Most *For Dummies* books are set up so you can flip to the section of the book that meets your present needs. You can do that in this book, too. I tell you where to find the information you might need when I refer to a concept, and I define terms as they arise to enable you to feel at home no matter where you open the book.

But this book breaks new ground in resume creation and distribution. To get ahead and stay ahead, start by reading Chapters 1 through 5. In this era of tweeting and texting, they help you say hello to new ideas that offer more reach for your time investment.

Part I
**Getting Started with
Resumes**



Visit www.dummies.com for free access to great Dummies content online.

In this part . . .

- ✔ Find out why resumes remain relevant and get an overview of how technology plays a role in your job search.
- ✔ Mine the wide world of social media for job leads, networking opportunities, and self-marketing.
- ✔ Discover the ins and outs of using smartphones and tablets in your job search.
- ✔ Check out how employers gather information from your resume and see how formatting can affect this process.
- ✔ Understand why it's so important to be aware of your online reputation and know how to keep it in top-notch condition.

Chapter 1

Seeing How the Digital Age Is Changing the Job Chase

In This Chapter

- ▶ Growing your career with truly terrific resumes
 - ▶ Blending human know-how with new technology
 - ▶ Staying on the leading edge in job search
-

Are resumes outdated? Every few years an employment expert excitedly announces a “new discovery” — that resumes are old hat and unnecessary. The expert advises job seekers to forgo resumes and talk their way into an interview. This advice rarely works in real life. Very few people are eloquent enough to carry the entire weight of an employment marketing presentation without a resume.

One resume strategy depends not on oratorical talent but on technology. In some situations, recruiting professionals encourage employers who’ve grown weary of hiking over mountains of resumes to do away with them, replacing resumes with rigid application forms on the web — complete with screening questions and tests — to decide who gets offered a job interview.

Another scenario — also technology dependent — reflects the view that online profiles on social networking sites are pinch hitting for resumes as self-marketing documents. As I point out in Chapter 2, online profiles are equivalent to generic resumes. Because prospective employers are likely to hunt down your LinkedIn profile, the ideal strategy is to make it as targeted as possible to your current job target.

This book combines the details of how to create marvelous resumes and also puts a microscope on various technological delivery options in the digital age. This chapter previews what’s ahead in this comprehensive guide to resumes and how to use resumes and other career marketing communications to reach your goal in the great job chase.

Resumes Are Here to Stay

At some point in a hunt for better employment, everyone needs effective career marketing communications. That is, everyone needs a resume — or something very much like a resume — that tells the employer why

- ✓ You're an excellent match for a specific job.
- ✓ The value you bring matters.
- ✓ Your skills are essential to the bottom line.
- ✓ You're worth the money you hope to earn.
- ✓ You're qualified to solve the employer's problems.
- ✓ Your accomplishment claims can be believed.

Resumes that deliver on these decision points remain at the heart of the job search ecosystem.

Keeping Up with Resume Times

The ongoing need for terrific resumes doesn't mean the job chase is frozen in time. Far from it. In this digital age — when 90 percent of young people (ages 18–34) are checking their social media updates when they first wake up, even before they go to the bathroom or brush their teeth — every job seeker needs to embrace the entire package of tools and strategies for getting a new job. The package contains new and traditional components:

- ✓ Digital tools that are rapidly altering the nature of how jobs are found and filled in America and across the globe.
- ✓ Timeless know-how and savvy developed by the best employment giants over decades.



Don't think the digital age is just for the young. In fact, the number of people in the 55- to 64-year-old age bracket using social media has grown by 79 percent in the past few years with sites such as Twitter. Further, the 45–54 age group is currently the fastest growing demographic user of sites such as Facebook.



New technological ideas standing on the shoulders of historically proven smarts are a winning combination. Technology changes in a decade; human nature doesn't.

Reset your concept of what you must know about resumes in the job chase. Writing great resumes is no longer enough. You must know how to distribute those resumes to people who can hire you, or at least can move you along in the process.

The targeted resume rules

Job seekers, brace yourselves: Navigating the job market is getting ever trickier and requires considerably more effort than the last time you baited your resume hook — even a short five years ago. The *generic resume*, which I refer to as a Core resume throughout this book, is at the top of the list of job search tools on the way out. (Read all about it in Chapter 8.)



You probably have an all-purpose resume lying around in a desk drawer somewhere. What legions of job seekers everywhere like about the all-purpose resume is that it casts a wide net to snag the attention of many employers — and it saves time for those of us who are too busy getting through the day to keep writing different resumes for different jobs. I appreciate that. But your one-size-fits-all work of art is obsolete, and it's getting lost in more and more recruiting black holes.

The Core resume has been replaced by the *targeted resume* (which I refer to in this book as OnTarget), a customized resume tailor-made for a specific employment opportunity.



An *OnTarget resume* is a valuable marketing tool to convince the reader your work can benefit a specific employer and that you should make the cut of candidates invited in for a closer look. An OnTarget resume

- ✓ Addresses a given opportunity, showing clearly how your qualifications are a close match to a job's requirements.
- ✓ Uses powerful words to persuade and clean design to attract interest.
- ✓ Plays up strengths and downplays any factor that undermines your bid for an interview.

Of friends and resumes

"The number one way to use your OnTarget resume is to find a friend to walk it into the hiring manager's office or recruiter's office with the friend's stamp of approval," advises Mark Mehler, cofounder and principal of

CareerXroads and a long-time Internet job-hunting expert. He says his firm's annual survey of how people get hired at major corporations shows that one out of three openings is filled this way.

Unfit resumes are zapped

The word got out, slowly at first. And then — *whoosh!* — millions of job seekers found out how easy it is to instantly put an online resume in the hands of employers across town as well as across the country.

Post and pray became the job seeker's mantra as everyone figured out how to manipulate online resumes and upload them into the online world with the click of a mouse.

Resume overload began in the first phase of the World Wide Web, a time frame of about 1994 to 2005. It became exponentially larger and more frustrating as commercial resume-blasting services appeared on the scene. Almost overnight, it seemed, anyone willing to pay the price could splatter resume confetti everywhere an online address could be found.

The consequences of resume spamming for employers were staggering: Despite their use of the era's best recruiting selection software, employers were overrun with unsolicited, disorganized generic resumes containing everything but the kitchen sink.

And what about the job seekers who sent all those generic, unstructured resumes? They were left to wonder in disappointment why they never heard a peep from the recipient employer.

The answer's in the numbers: A job advertised online by a major company creates a feeding frenzy of many thousands of resumes. Employment databases are hammered with such mismatches as sales clerks and sports trainers applying for jobs as scientists and senior managers, and vice versa.



Even when you use your OnTarget resume to apply to opportunities you find posted online, don't hold your breath. Popular job boards can have as many as 40,000 new resumes uploaded every day. With that kind of volume, having an employer find your resume among all the applicants for a job is like searching for a needle in a haystack.

Tried-and-true techniques remain

A resume that doesn't show off the great goods you're selling isn't worth much. Show off your assets in effective style by making sure you follow the suggestions in this book. I show you how to

- ✓ Choose the resume format that fits your goals and situation. What goes where in a resume isn't a one-size-fits-all consideration. Chapter 6 tells you about formatting your resume and provides outlines for popular resume designs.

- ✔ Get your points across in powerful language. Make your strengths stronger by describing results in vibrant language that stands tall. I give you examples in Chapter 10.
- ✔ Use design techniques effectively. Big chunks of text cause eye strain (and boredom). Present your information in a way that enables readers instead of inhibiting them. Chapter 11 shows you how.
- ✔ Overcome hurdles. Getting attention from potential employers is harder in certain situations. Chapter 13 gives you suggestions for easing your transition into a new phase of life by overcoming challenges in your background.



See your resume as a reverse funnel that pulls the prospective employer into it (see Figure 1-1). Your funnel starts out very narrow to match the job you're targeting. Then it expands with your summary to show how you stand out from the competition (which excites the prospective employer and pulls them in further). Next your resume further expands to encompass all the requisite skills you possess to fit the position. Finally, it ends with the large base of the funnel showing your relevant employment experience using those skills and producing those results.

RESUME FUNNEL

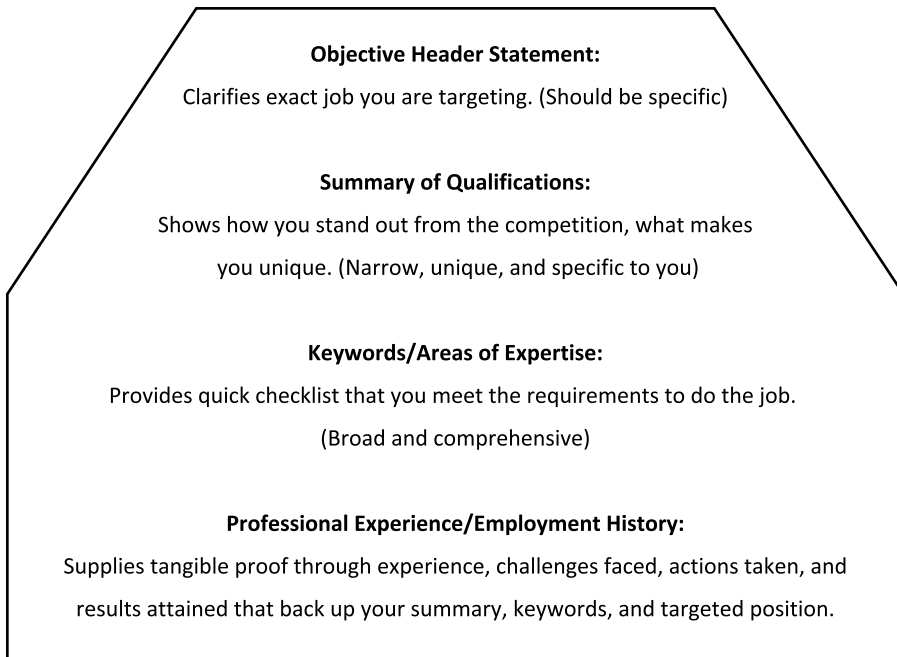


Figure 1-1: Use the reverse funnel method to write your resume and strategically present yourself and your qualifications.

You can use this easy system to create your resume funnel:

1. **Objective Header Statement:** Begin with the position you are targeting.
2. **Summary of Qualifications:** Add an overview of the strengths that make you a perfect fit for the job.
3. **Keyword Section:** List the key skills you have for the position.
4. **Professional Experience/Employment:** Your employment history section provides proof that supports the objective, summary, and keyword sections.

This simple strategy encourages employers to read the whole thing.

Technologies Facilitate Job Search

After the Internet caught job-search fire in the mid-1990s — instantly whisking resumes to and fro — little new technology changed the picture until the social web groundswell burst upon us in the mid-2000s. Now job seekers have the tools to

- ✓ Use social networks to dramatically enlarge personal networks
- ✓ Tap their networks to identify jobs and for recommendations
- ✓ Go directly to hiring authorities
- ✓ Market accomplishments in professional profiles
- ✓ Pinpoint employment targets with position-mapping



Continue to apply for jobs with an OnTarget resume and cover letter. Classic job-search methods continue to pay off, but they're not enough in an economy where jobs have gone missing.

Work every day on a well-rounded approach that emphasizes face-to-face networking, social networking, web tools, online identity building, and professional associations while still briefly touching on less viable elements such as job boards and print ads.

Social networking scoops jobs

Enormously popular social networking sites and social media are poised to gain even more fans in the employment process. Chapter 2 reports on the state of the industry and suggests how you can “go social.”

I expect a never-ending stream of new technical bells and whistles in social media. Location awareness is one example of what's rapidly gaining in use. When Facebook launched its Places feature in late 2010, social media expert Charlene Li explained: "Until now, Facebook knew who you were, what you are doing, and when you did it. Now they add an even richer dimension — where you are — that completes the picture." Facebook added Places to its posts, a smartphone app, and a mobile site.

How can a location-aware feature facilitate a job chase? Suppose you're looking for a retail or restaurant job in a given locale. The activity stream of a location feature indicates which restaurants and retail stores are the most popular — and, thus, good prospects for employment.



For breaking news about social networking, become acquainted with the following two websites:

- ✓ **Mashable** (www.mashable.com) is a top guide to social media and a hub for those looking to make sense of the online realm.
- ✓ **Altimeter Group** (www.altimetergroup.com) focuses on all things social, including the new field of social commerce. Be sure to read the Group's admirable disclosure policy.

Chapter 5 discusses ways to keep your online reputation in good shape for the job search.

Mobile's on the move

Smartphones came on fast. Tablet computers are all the rage. Mobile communication is here to stay. Even when you're not rooted to a desktop computer, you can send and receive e-mails, network online, and download apps. Chapter 3 examines the latest in mobile job chasing.

Quick-change process customizes content

In this employers' market, you need to become 100 times more strategic and savvy in writing OnTarget resumes and getting them to the key decision makers. The generic resume has become a nonstarter, and successful seekers are writing customized resumes.

But have no fear: In Chapter 9, I take you through how to turn a one-size-fits-all Core resume into OnTarget resumes with ease.

Bios gain new importance as profiles

The short professional bio is making a comeback as a social profile (see Chapter 2). The short bio helps when you want to apply for a job, network, post on a guest blog, and so on. It tells people quickly who you are, what you do, and why they should care.



Plan on writing a bio in three lengths — a micro bio, a short bio, and a longer bio. A micro bio is a sentence you can use on your Twitter profile (140 characters). A short bio is a paragraph (about 100 words). A long bio can be up to a page.

“YourName.com” becomes vital

More people are living their lives on the Internet, and episodes of name high-jacking are rising. Realization is mushrooming that controlling the exclusive online rights to your own name makes sense, even if you’re not a business owner.

You can protect your identity in its purest web form by buying a domain for your name — YourName.com. You can also purchase a URL (web address) for your resume — YourNameresume.com. See Chapters 2 and 5 to find out why owning your own name has gained red-alert status in a digital age. Claim your name!

Chapter 2

Finding Your Next Job in the Wide World of Social Media

In This Chapter

- ▶ Appreciating what social job search can do for you
 - ▶ Tying into top-rated social networking sites
 - ▶ Creating profiles you're proud of
-

The familiar adage claiming the secret to landing a good job “is not what you know, but who you know” is hereby officially stamped incomplete in this era of online social connectivity. Consider this revised version: The secret to landing a good job is what you know, who you know, who knows you, and who your friends know.

All this knowing is exploding on the web’s *social networking sites*, a big part of *social media*. The terms overlap in popular usage and definitions vary widely. Here’s my take:

✔ **Social networking sites** are web venues with huge online databases of information individuals have uploaded about themselves. They do it to mingle with other people in the site’s database — to put themselves “out there.” Their autobiographical information is public or semi-public and usually includes a description of who they are (*a profile*) and/or a short biography (*a bio*).

Many social networkers just want to hang around with each other. Others aim to grow their circle of acquaintances. Still others are interested in a specific subject (like dating or business). Social networking sites typically have a personal focus, but a growing number operate with a professional purpose.

✔ **Social media** is a set of technologies and channels that enable a virtual community to interact in the same space. Social media includes a wide variety of forums, ranging from social sharing sites, such as YouTube and Flickr, to social networking sites, such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

There's little question that two-way communication on the interactive web is dramatically changing the game for job seekers and recruiters alike. If you're scratching your head about how social networking actually works, and are unsure how to use it to find a job and promote your career, you won't want to miss this chapter.

The Sweeping Reach of Social Networking

Reflecting the shape of job search now and job search to come, social networking dominates Internet use. At a half-billion strong, Facebook alone claims 72 percent of the world's Internet population as visitors. Bigger than most countries, Facebook has more users than the United States has citizens.

What's more, the growth rate of social networking is startling: The number of people visiting social media sites keeps rising in all age brackets. Social networking is not a fad but an honest-to-goodness paradigm shift in the way people do business around the globe, including the business of finding employment.

Think about how to harness this power that offers a double rainbow of job-search help — from direct access to hiring managers and quick identification of potential allies at prospective employers, to easy look-ups on company profiles and obtaining posted endorsements from your network. Just to keep it interesting, different services offer different features. (Similarly, some charge fees, and others are free.)

But, at root, the many benefits of using social networking services for career management and job-hunting fall into two basic categories. In signing on with one or more social networking services, you are

- ✔ **Showing the world how hireable you are.** By filling out profiles and listing your credentials, you advertise your potential or immediate availability on an “e-billboard” that helps recruiters and employers find you.
- ✔ **Gathering supporters to hold open doors.** When you collect, connect, and network with friendly contacts, you gain a potential source of referrals, get updates on their employers' hiring modes, receive insider fill-ins on company culture, and uncover other useful information.