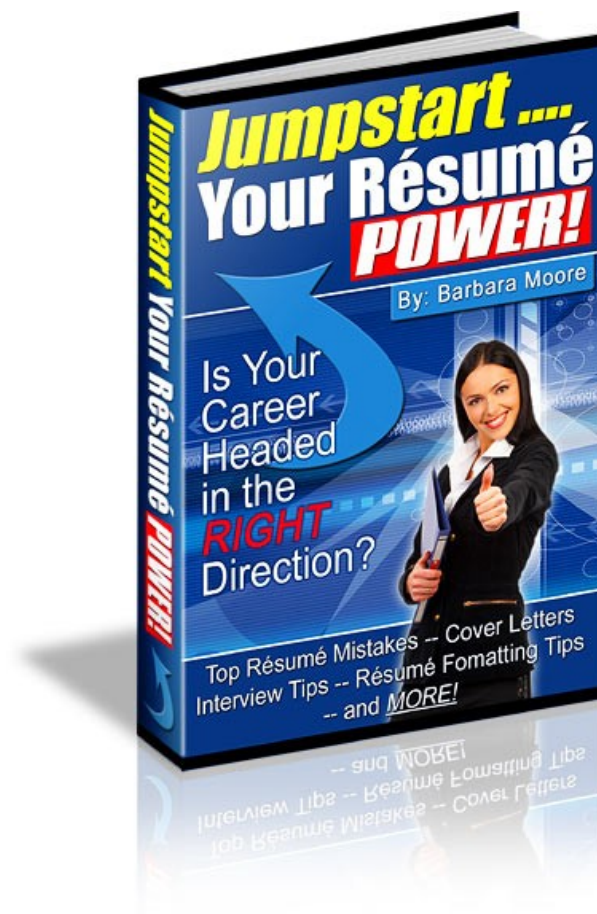


# Jumpstart ...Your Resume Power !



Version 1.1 5/07

# Jumpstart... Your Resume Power !

Dear Professional,

First of all, thank you for caring enough about your career to read ***Jumpstart Your Resume Power!***

This information kit is designed and written to help everyone from new grads to seasoned professionals in their job search ... with tips that can be applied to any profession!

Please take a moment to check the Table of Contents to see which sections you can apply ***today*** in your job search.

You will want to refer to this often, as it will answer many of the common questions you're likely to have and many you never thought to ask! I will continually be updating this book, so bookmark my website and check back to be sure you have the latest.

***To your career!***

*Barbara Moore*

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**[Subscribe to my FREE 7-day  
E-course on Resume Writing](#)**

## Section I:

QUESTION NUMBER ONE:

WHAT TO ASK YOURSELF **BEFORE** YOU  
START WRITING A RÉSUMÉ,  
WHETHER YOU ARE A  
NEW GRAD OR A SEASONED PROFESSIONAL  
IS.....

**DO I WANT A NEW JOB OR A NEW CAREER?**

*“What separates the winners from the losers is how a person reacts to each new twist of fate”*

*Donald Trump*

## Why I Wrote This Book

There are people who never struggle for interviews, people whose résumé always get a response. Are they better than you? No, it's because their résumés are better than yours.

There are millions of résumés floating around in cyberspace. The job market is more competitive than ever before and Internet job boards and computer résumé databases have made it even harder than ever for you to stand out.

When email replaced "snail mail" and on line ads replaced newspaper ads, the total hiring process changed. Candidates now had access to positions in all parts of the country rather than those close to them geographically. It became much easier to apply for jobs without the need to buy stamps, nice paper and physically taking the time to mail your résumé at the post office. Instead, the new trend taking over was to just take a few moments to attach your résumé and hit the send button, not knowing where in cyberspace you were sending your important document to or, most importantly, if it was being received by the right person.

Suddenly employers were receiving hundreds (sometimes thousands) of résumés for their open positions, many of which were coming from people who were either unqualified or who lived out of their geographic area. As a result of this, employers did not have the time to weed through all those poorly written résumés and changes had to be made in how these would be handled.

Most résumés are just plain AWFUL. Candidates are not giving employers the right information, or they are not presenting it effectively using the right keywords to help them stand out from the rest of the crowd.

Having a poorly designed and uninspirational resume will destroy any chance of getting your foot in the door, so "don't apply if you don't apply" yourself. It's possible to write a résumé quickly and easily. It's possible to do anything easily and quickly if you are willing to do it "badly"! My wish for this book is to reach as many of you as possible **BEFORE** you make critical mistakes that will impact your careers.

**[Your résumé is the most important document you will ever write!](#)**

## In a Nutshell....

- **Is your résumé showing you in the best light?**
- **Is your résumé losing you jobs?**
- **Do you know the major “do” & “do not” of writing a résumé?**
- **Do you want to have the edge over other candidates?**
- **Have you really given your résumé its due diligence?**
- **Are you using outdated résumé formats you found on the Internet?**

**Your résumé is your primary marketing tool** to get your foot in the door and the lead element in any job campaign, **but it is also an elimination tool for employers.** If your résumé does not command attention while highlighting your most valuable attributes immediately, your résumé gets shuffled to the bottom of the pile indefinitely.

Writing a great résumé does not necessarily mean you should follow the rules you hear through the grapevine. It does not have to be one page or follow a specific résumé format. Every résumé is a one-of-a-kind marketing communication. It should be appropriate to your industry and do exactly what you want it to do.

The résumé is a tool with one specific purpose: to win an interview. If it doesn't, it isn't an effective résumé. A résumé is an advertisement, nothing more, nothing less.

What you need to know **BEFORE** you put your résumé on the Internet! Don't rely on what you read or hear about writing a résumé because your career is too important to leave it to a “catch all” guideline... You need someone to work with you that knows Health care and what clients are looking for. You don't have to pay a lot of money to have your résumé reviewed and/or rewritten whether you're a new grad, in mid-career or a management candidate.

Most job searches are conducted from the "this is what I want" perspective. However, the reality is that most companies don't really care about what you want until you are able to demonstrate that you have the experience they want

## Section II:

### Résumé Mistakes for All Professionals

As a professional Recruiter with 14 years of experience placing both temporary and permanent professionals (in the medical field mostly), I have seen the same mistakes over and over again at all levels, from new grads to top management (unfortunately, these mistakes are not exclusive to medical professionals).

Not taking your résumé/CV seriously can kill your career, especially after you have gained experience in your field of expertise. A sub-standard résumé or CV can prevent you from ever being called for that job you so desperately want and most likely are qualified for.

Unfortunately, if your résumé/CV isn't perfect, you're not alone!

Here are some of the most common mistakes that ruin most medical résumés and CVs.

(**Note:** Names will be withheld to protect the guilty, but all examples of what not to do throughout this article are taken from actual résumés.)

#### **Mistake #1: Objective is NOT used in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century résumé!**

Objectives went “out of style” many years ago and employer's are not impressed with objectives that say:

“Objective: To get a job as an Ultrasound Tech”

“Objective: A nurse position utilizing my many years experience caring for patients”

“Objective: Challenging administrative position within a professional environment providing opportunity for growth and career advancement.”

What has taken the place of objectives, you ask? Well, you can use either **“Summary”** or **“Summary of Qualifications”**. The exception to this would be new grads...in those cases, résumés would begin with “Education” since your “objective” is TO GET A JOB, right?

A “Summary” or “Summary of Qualifications” consists of two to three sentences summarizing your career and what you can offer an employer. You only have **30**



**seconds** to grab the attention of the person reading your résumé, so you need to put a lot of thought into what you highlight!

### **Mistake #2: Personalizing your résumé**

OK, I know what you're thinking....isn't it supposed to be personal since it is MY résumé? The answer is **NO!**

There is nothing "personal" about a résumé, a résumé is a "tool" to get you an interview and ultimately get you the job/position you are wanting. The HR Department sees hundreds of résumés and, as I pointed out above, you only have **30 seconds** to make them pick yours to read.

There should be no personal pronouns ANYWHERE in your résumé (for example: me, my, I, etc.). I have changed many résumés by just eliminating those little "personal" words and the sentences were still sentences, which means the words were unnecessary to begin with.

Employer's are NOT interested in your "hobbies", "sports", "volunteer activities", "church affiliations", etc. In fact, these types of "personal" interjections in a résumé can actually LOSE you the job interview.

**MAJOR** "personalization" errors on résumés are:

- Social Security Numbers (oh yes, you'd be surprised how many people put their SSN on a résumé)
- Birth dates
- Driver's license numbers
- Marital status
- Number of children
- Your medical professional license numbers (you can give them to employer's when you are hired)
- **NEVER, NEVER, NEVER put your picture on your résumé/CV**

### **Mistake #3: What does not belong under Education?**

If you have any type of higher education, whether it is a certificate, associates degree or higher, you DO NOT need to put your high school diploma on your résumé (even if you are a new grad). You could not have continued with your education if you never received a high school diploma or GED, since the colleges always verify that prior to enrollment.

You DO NOT put any colleges attended unless you obtained a certificate or degree from that institution. If you only took courses towards another degree, that belongs in

another category at the bottom of your résumé, such as "continuing education". But, if you attended more than one college before completing a degree, the only college you put on your résumé is the one where you completed the degree (employers do not care how many years or how many colleges it took to get that degree). Only put completed degrees under education.

Unless you are a new grad, you do not need to put your graduation year (you can give that information on the employer's application), but you can and should include your GPA "only" if it is over 3.0.

You DO NOT put your certifications or licenses, such as CPR, ARRT, BLS, ACLS etc. under Education, those belong under another category such as "Licensure/Certifications" directly beneath Education.

#### **Mistake #4: Addressing job responsibilities instead of results**

**IMPORTANT: Please use "Professional Experience" as a title (do not use "work experience" or "work history" etc. you are a PROFESSIONAL)**  
New grads use "Clinical Experience"

In the medical profession, all employer's know what your routine responsibilities were "in general", so putting "took vital signs, administered medications, gave shots, took x-rays, assessed patients, etc." is nothing new for them to read. Most people writing résumés have forgotten what they have done that is NOT routine and you need to think (I hate this phrase, but it applies) "outside the box". In other words, what did YOU DO that makes you a BETTER employee that will make them want to speak with you.

In many cases, the potential employer is paying for interview expenses including airfare, hotels, cars, etc., so they are going to pick the "best" candidates to bring in. Employers want to see RESULTS....did you write any policies and procedures, did you initiate any programs, did you make a suggestion to management that turned into a great idea. I have talked to candidates and found out they did extraordinary things and not one of them was on their résumé because they didn't think they were important.

Even though I tell you to leave out personal pronouns in Mistake #2, it does not mean you can't "blow your horn".....if you don't, who will? There's a BIG difference between saying I, I, I, me, me, me and saying "Accomplished", "Initiated", "Resulted In", etc.

If you supervised, be sure to include how many FTEs in each department you worked in, employers always want to know that, especially if they're not familiar with the facilities and their sizes. Did you increase patient satisfaction scores? Did a patient send a letter about your services to management? This is a BIG ONE....did you save money (budgets, low turnover, cost saving idea, etc.)?

Employers want to see what "value" you can bring to them and you need to tell them. If you highlight your accomplishments you tell them you ARE valuable.

Most of you will need to think hard about every day you were on the job and what happened that you did not think was important when you sat down to write your résumé, or you just forgot about.

### **Mistake #5: Big Words and Abbreviations**

If your résumé is not clear and to the point, the “first” person reading it will not pass it to the second person. In most cases, the “first” person is a Human Resources staffer and you need to rely on that person forwarding it to the Human Resources Director or to the Department Head of the department you are applying for.

Simplify...sometimes using the wrong words makes you come across as arrogant, self centered or someone who looks “down” at people. That is NOT the impression you want to give obviously. It can be words as simple as “use” instead of “utilize” or “work” instead of “interact”.

The same for medical abbreviations. All business has their own unique “alphabet language” and some candidates talk nothing but alphabet to EVERYONE. I can't tell you how many times in an interview (or right after) I have had to look up an abbreviation quickly on the computer (one source is [www.pharma-lexicon.com](http://www.pharma-lexicon.com)) to try and keep up with the person and I've been in the medical placement field for 14 years (my colleagues have the same complaint).

I have also found over the years that each facility has a little different alphabet of their own, so be safe and watch how many abbreviations you use. There is no problem with RN, CPR, ACLS, BLS, etc., the ones that are more distinctive to a particular department or specialty are the ones that can cause the biggest problem.

### **Mistake #6: Punctuation/Spelling/Grammatical Errors**

#### **BIGGEST PET PEEVE OF ALL MISTAKES!!!!!!**

This category, to me, “should be” the most **unnecessary** category of all! Come on “professionals”, do you not have spell checkers on your computers?

Are you so busy that you do not have the time to read your résumé or have someone else read it for you to catch errors like (“their” vs. “there” or “a” vs. “at or an”, etc.) that the computer would not highlight because they are identifiable words in the dictionary, just not the right ones?

I open up résumés on a daily basis that are sent to me via email with green and red lines ALL OVER them (for those of you who don't use your spell checkers, a red line means a misspelled word and green lines are for incomplete sentences, grammatical errors, formatting errors, etc.). Your spell checker will also tell you when you have an incomplete sentence, but 98% of the résumés I get in have whole paragraphs and individual sentences underlined in green because they are grammatically incorrect. I have received some where 75% of the résumé was underlined in green! Do you not see those lines when you are typing your résumé?

### **Mistake #7: [Reasons for Leaving Jobs](#)**

Never put on a résumé your reason for leaving **any** job! Some examples I have seen are "left because I couldn't get along with supervisor" or "left for more money" or "left for personal reasons". These are ALL **"red flags"** for any employer!

### **Mistake #8: [Using Current Employer's Email Address](#)**

**NEVER, NEVER, NEVER under any circumstances, use your current employer's email address on a résumé!** This practice is used by many professionals, especially those in management positions. Even if no one can possibly access your computer and email, it does not look good to future employers that you are using your current employer's equipment and time to find a new position. If you do it once, you will do it again to them and that is understandably frowned upon. There are too many "free" email services available that you can sign up for, so use them!

The same policy should apply to using your current employer's phone number on your résumé. Again, you should not be looking for a position on your current employer's "dime"....at least not blatantly...there are ways around this also!

### **Mistake #9: [Applying for Jobs you are NOT qualified for](#)**

I know what you are thinking... "what are you talking about?". But, this is a common practice for Medical professionals. For example, a Charge Nurse may want to apply for a "Director" position, skipping the positions in between just because they "think" they're qualified in "their" mind, not taking into consideration the employer is looking for experience. Or, an Assistant CNO wants to be a COO without the experience "on paper". I'm not saying these candidate's can't do the jobs, but 99.9% of the résumés do not show why they are even qualified for the jobs.

Several Medical professionals **need to have more than one résumé depending on the position applying for**. If you are applying to be a Director in ER, then you need to highlight and emphasize your ER experience, not your OB or Telemetry experience, which the hiring authority doesn't need to know in detail.

You probably won't get a second shot. Make sure your first shot is right on the mark.

### **Mistake #10: Putting "Non-Employers" On Your Résumé**

In the medical field, there are "full time", "part time", "PRN", "temporary", "contract", "travel", "interim" and "locum tenen" jobs.

**The ONLY employers you can legally put on a résumé are those that gave you a pay check!**

If you work for or have worked for a temporary, contract or travel company that has assigned you to various locations and you are paid by them and **NOT** the facility you were assigned to, then you **CAN NOT** put that facility on your résumé as an employer of record. You can put them underneath the contract company's name as places you were assigned to and your job functions, as long as you indicate they were not your employer of record.

When this practice is not followed, future employers or recruiters may call those facilities "before" getting clarification from you for reference checks and/or employment verification checks and will be told you were never an employee of their facility. How does this make you look? It gives the impression that you are lying on your résumé and that nothing else you state on there is accurate and your reputation is in jeopardy (not to mention your job).

### **Mistake #11: Do Not Put Your Picture on Your Résumé**

**I can't think of one good reason for anyone to put their picture on their resume** except for personal conceit/ego trips, and that is **not** something you want to project to a future employer, even if you *do* think you're the greatest thing since sliced bread (save that "gem" as a surprise after you're hired, but chances are it will come across long before that)!

I personally have had to deal with way too many ego trips, so I know there are lots of you out there, ***are you one of them?*** Plus, I haven't even gotten to the part about the dreaded word .....**DISCRIMINATION** and, if you don't think you can be discriminated against, think again. There are more ways for employers to discriminate than you can count on your fingers and toes combined. If you think discrimination is just about race, color, age.....you are definitely wearing blinders or just not thinking correctly!

***P.S.: Never, NEVER Lie on Your résumé!!!!!!!!!!!!!!***

## Résumé Advice for New Grads

New grads have a more difficult time with a résumé in that they have no experience to highlight/offer to an employer. BUT, you do have your clinical and/or internship experience that you can highlight.

I've talked to hundreds of new grads and "almost" all of them start their résumé with an "objective"....wrong! Your objective is to "get a job" and "get experience" right? Most say how do you get the experience if no employer will hire you? Well, that question has been around since Adam and Eve, so stop asking it and stop using it as an excuse.

Yes, I am not denying some of you will have a difficult time getting that "first" job....but, I promise that if you follow the advice here and in other resources available, you will get that opportunity you want so badly. Just "**don't give up!**"

Now, regarding your résumé.... (**MUST READ SECTION ON MISTAKES FIRST!**)

Start with your "Education" first and then with your licenses and certifications. If you are in the process of taking or have a time frame when you will take the exams, put that on there with an estimate of when you plan to have your license or certification.

For example: ARRT (expected completion in .....)

ARDMS (completed/passed first exam, second exam scheduled for.....)

NCLEX (in process)

Just let an employer know that you will have your requirements "soon".

After your education, licenses, certifications, etc., you want to go right into your clinical and/or internship experience since this all the "medical" experience you have to offer. Read the first section on "mistakes" so you learn the right ways from the beginning.

After your clinical section then put a title "Non Medical Experience". This is where you just "highlight" what you did while attending school or before changing careers if that is your case. You do not need to go into a lot of detail since most employers know what cashiers, drivers, etc. do. You just want to show that you have worked and have shown responsibilities to an employer before and possibly paid your own way through school.

# Résumé Formatting

Let me start out by saying that if you ask 12 people how to write a résumé, you will get 12 different answers.....there is **NO** "one size fits all" when it comes to résumé formatting and content.

That said, these are tips that will make your résumé look better visually, read better without unnecessary words/formatting and transfer via email to anyone's computer with any type of programming (MS Word, Microsoft Works, etc.).

This is just a "brief" list and some need sections of their own.....

1. **If you earned a title, use it!** Right at the beginning of your résumé after your name, put the initials you worked so hard for. For example, RN, CRNA, ARRT, ARDMS, BSN, MBA.
2. If you have only one phone number on your résumé, **you DO NOT need to put the word "phone"!**
3. If you put an email address in your header, **you DO NOT need to put the word "email"**....everyone today knows what @ means! Also, there are many "free" email addresses you can get and it would be smart to get one designated only for your job search with no "cute" or "funny" addresses. For example, use your initials and your specialty ([bbmrn@hotmail.com](mailto:bbmrn@hotmail.com) or [bbmpt@hotmail.com](mailto:bbmpt@hotmail.com)) anything but ([outforfun@hotmail.com](mailto:outforfun@hotmail.com) or [beerbuddy@hotmail.com](mailto:beerbuddy@hotmail.com), etc....you get the picture).
4. **You DO NOT need to put "References Upon Request"** at the bottom of your résumé....that went out many years ago. It is a "given" that if you are asked for references you will provide them. Besides, who will provide a reference that will say bad things about them? Nobody!
5. Speaking of references, **DO NOT put your references on your résumé.** You are held responsible for protecting those references and their privacy and putting their email address, home addresses, work numbers and personal phone numbers all over the Internet is **NOT** protecting them. BUT, do have references ready for when you are asked for them by a recruiter or an employer and be sure that you have their permission **BEFORE** giving out their names and numbers.

**A true story:** A few years ago, an employer, impressed with the résumé skills and achievements of a potential candidate, picked up the phone to follow-up on a reference check.



The candidate had had an excellent rapport with his previous manager, and the reference knew the candidate's work "like the back of his hand" (according to the applicant!). There was just one "little" problem with the reference.

**He'd been dead for three years!**

Reference Check Rule Number One: Ensure your references are still warm and wiggling before offering their contact information to a potential employer.

"References available upon request" It's amazing how quickly those four simple words can kill a job seeker's chances for obtaining employment, especially when you realize it is one of the aspects of the job search the candidate has so much control over. And yet, many people let contact with former colleagues and supervisors slide into the abyss, never following up on the networking and information sharing opportunities that abound in today's marketplace.

One exceptional reference from a former supervisor can offer credibility against achievements stated on a résumé. Two or three references that sing praises can overwhelmingly tip the scales in the job seeker's favor.

An ideal wish list for references would include at least one recent immediate supervisor, one or two co-workers, and perhaps a subordinate.

6. **DO NOT use fancy formatting** with boxes and lines all over your résumé. These do not transfer to all computers the same and can arrive with characters that are not even on a keyboard. For some reason, there are some templates out there that many people use the they are terrible. You DO NOT need a template, just type your résumé in a Word document without anything fancy. Most employers will not tell you that your résumé came in "funky", they'll just trash it!
7. Remember, you are not writing a book or a diary, so avoid large paragraphs with unnecessary words. You only want to highlight your career and what you can offer an employer, they **DO NOT want your life history!** So, using bullets and short sentences makes a résumé a quick read and more importantly making the odds higher that it will get read. The face-to-face interview is where you elaborate and put your best foot forward.
8. **MYTH: résumés should only be one page.** I have seen a LOT of information crammed onto one page because the candidates were under the impression résumés HAD to be one page. As long as you are not writing a "book" or putting in unnecessary information, your résumé should be as long as needed.

9. "Most" employer's are most interested in what you've done in the last 10-15 years that is relevant to the position you are applying for. You DO NOT need to go into detail on jobs prior to that (this is on a résumé only....in person or on the employer's application is when you can give more information). In most cases, if you have been in the same field for more than 15 years, the earlier years were in staff positions leading up to where you are today. In no way am I saying to lie or purposely leave off information on a résumé....**the NUMBER ONE priority on a résumé is TRUTH**...what I'm saying is that you can group your earlier jobs at the end of your "professional experience" without any descriptions or specific dates.
10. As stated in the "Mistakes" section, **DO NOT put personal information on a résumé** such as SSN, birth date, number of children, marital status, church affiliation, hobbies, clubs, etc.
11. You DO want to **include any professional memberships** under a category with that name at the end of your résumé.
12. **If some of your positions were "contract", "PRN" or "temporary", you MUST put that on your résumé** or employers will think that you are "job hopping". One of the first things employers look at are your employment dates....they DO NOT want "job hoppers", so be careful how frequently you change jobs before it's too late to do anything about it. If they see "PRN", etc. that will explain the frequent employers/dates.
13. You **DO NOT put employer addresses, phone numbers and supervisor names on a résumé**, that information can be given at the proper time. There are many reasons I have for saying this and that's another chapter but for now, trust me.
14. **DO NOT use fancy fonts**, not all computers have the same fonts and you are taking a chance that your résumé will look like something written in "Greek". Stay with the most common fonts of "Arial" (this is the best), "Times New Roman", "Verdana" or "Tahoma" (Tahoma is what I'm using in this booklet). These are the ones that are universal to all computers and are the easiest on the eye. When you have people reading résumés all day long, they do not want to strain to understand some fancy written résumé and it could end up in the trash.....keep them neat, clean and easy to read! Also stay with a 10 or 11 pt. font consistently from the beginning to the end. Use standard size paper in white or cream ONLY.

15. **Punctuation is a big problem** and in some cases, can cause all those "green lines" I mentioned above. Some résumés have periods at the end of every line, whether it is a sentence or not (I've seen them after their address). If you are bulleting your job responsibilities, you do not need to put a period at the end of each bullet since you are just "highlighting". The bulleted information needs to be grammatically correct, but not in complete sentences.
16. Present tense vs. past tense.....when you are talking about a *former* job, **be sure you stay in the correct tense**, such as "took" NOT "take" or "planned" NOT "plan" or "was responsible for" NOT "am responsible for", etc. The only position that should be in the present tense is the one you are currently working at when you write your résumé.
17. **Give your résumé a creative title when saving it.** Most people use "resume.doc" or "résumé2006.doc" or "lastname.doc". Every single résumé I receive gets saved IMMEDIATELY with a different title or I would have a zillion résumés in my database with "resume.doc" and would not be able to find the one I was looking for (don't you think the employers have the same problem?), so be creative when naming your résumé. You should save it with something like "bobjones\_ptmanager.doc" or "jsmith\_ultratech.doc" ...anything that will make you stand out from the ones that say "resume.doc".
18. **There are two types of résumés**, one is based on "skills or job functions" and the other by "chronological employment history". I strongly recommend that you design your résumé in the traditional format of "chronological employment history" beginning with your current or most recent position and working backwards.
19. Placement of "Education"....**if your education pertains to your employment, it goes at the beginning of your résumé** before your experience. If someone has a degree in Economics and is working in sales, then education is placed at the end. In those cases, you want to highlight your experience first. In the medical profession you want to highlight your education immediately. **DO NOT** put your high school on a résumé if you have a degree, it is assumed that you could not have continued your education without a high school diploma. **DO NOT** put incomplete education (courses taken without a completed degree) under education, use a separate category called "Additional Courses" or "Continuing Education", you do not want any confusion that you have a completed degree if you only took courses.

20. **Be sure to use "key words"** that are likely to be found in the type of job description you are seeking. Many employers and recruiters upload scanned paper résumés and digital résumés into their databases. When searching for candidates, they use key words directly from their own job descriptions to pull up all résumés that have those key words. So, for example, if understanding JCAHO is a prerequisite for the job, be sure and use "JCAHO" in your résumé. To figure out the key words that you want to include, review advertisements or listings of the jobs similar to what you are looking for. What words do they emphasize? Use those same words in your résumé.

21. **Ask a trusted friend to read your résumé.**

Sound Obvious?

If it were so obvious, we wouldn't see so many misspellings and grammatical errors in the dozens of résumés we see on a daily basis.

These mistakes are made by literate people, just like you and me. But, most people are simply too involved with the story of their résumés to accurately judge the contents. As a result, they miss the forest for the trees, as it were. They fail to see mistakes in spelling or grammar that are obvious to someone else reading their résumé for the first time. Mistakes like these can result in the phone NOT ringing for a very long time.

It is crucial to get a second opinion from someone you trust. When this person is reading your résumé, ask them to check areas such as: the accuracy of commas, periods, hyphens, spacing between words, spelling of words and the overall meaning of the content. Also, a spell checker will not spot the difference between *there*, *their*, and *they're*, but your friend will. Ask them to circle words that are not 100% clear so you can re-evaluate those areas.

**You only get one chance to make a good first impression with your résumé and if you mess it up....you're finished!**

Meanwhile, that job you really wanted, the one you've been daydreaming about, went to someone less qualified than you and someone that will not do half as well as you would have. All because their résumé was better written than yours.

What a shame!

In summary: ***IF your résumé does not contain at least some of the keywords that the employer or recruiter is using, then your résumé will be skipped by the computer***, even if you have all of the experience and skills required by the job. Identifying industry-related keywords can make a difference between bland and "fabulous" résumé copy. One source to check out is [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) . Also check your newspaper ads to see what words the employers are using in to entice qualified candidates, chances are they will respond to the same key words.

Sources for "power" words and other writing tips:

[www.powerwords.com](http://www.powerwords.com)

### **Final Thought:**

In the impatient age of information overload, unless your resume can quickly answer the employer's unstated question, you're out of luck. That unstated question is "Why should I bother talking to this person?" Answer the question quickly or you're "history".

***"Nothing stops the man who desires to achieve. Every obstacle is simply a course to develop his achievement muscle. It's a strengthening of his powers of accomplishment."***

## Section III

### How NOT to Post Your Résumé on the Internet

I am going to go against **everything** you are doing, been told to do or are going to do on how to use the Internet to post your résumé, locate positions and respond to openings of interest.

#### **First issue: Posting Your résumé on the Internet**

In today's technology and the social/criminal problems that come along with it, I **DO NOT** recommend posting your résumé on **any** website unless it is posted anonymously. You are giving out your address, phone number, email address, place of employment and phone numbers to EVERYONE (good and bad!) If you feel you need to "go with the crowd", then use your first initial and last name only (for example: G. Smith) and an email address (use a free service email that you use only for a job search)...do not give any more information than that....**PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY.**

If you are looking for a management position, employers do not want candidates that blast their résumé all over the Internet, they feel those candidates are not the quality candidates they are looking for. The quality candidates do not need to find a position in that format, those candidates use more creative ways to "network" themselves.

**DO NOT** name your postings anything like: (these were taken off the Internet!)

- "Want to stay long-term"
- "All About Me"
- "Extreme Makeover"
- "Ready to Work" (I hope so!)
- "Supervisor" (of what?)
- "Seeking Employment"
- "Formal résumé" (as opposed to informal?)
- "Your Search Ends Here"
- "Need A Change"
- "Self Motivated"
- "Jack of all Trades"

Get the picture? Would you hire anyone that can't bother to be professional even on their résumé title? There are so many qualified candidates that you are competing with that employers and recruiters just skip over these titles because they just do not have the time to open them up only to find the person does not have the experience they are looking for.

How should you name them? With your specialty!

"Physical Therapist" or "Experienced Physical Therapist"  
 "Experienced Oncology RN" or "Oncology RN"  
 "Experienced Ultrasound Tech w/ARDMS" or "Ultrasound Tech"  
 "Respiratory Therapist New Grad"  
 "Director of ICU"  
 "Medical Assistant with 5 yrs. experience"

By identifying your specialty, your résumé will be opened by anyone looking to hire in that field. You can go into more details on your résumé, but you want them to open it first or you will get no responses at all.

## Second issue: Locating Positions

There are the several common websites for locating positions and, but if you want to find those positions that everyone else is ignoring, be creative! Check with your association's website or if you want a particular geographic area go to [www.hospitalsoup.com](http://www.hospitalsoup.com) and pull up all the types of facilities that you are interested in working for in the cities you want and click on each website and check their current job openings.

[illegible]

**NOTE TO NEW GRADS:**

For new grads, remember that ALL the job postings will say “experience required”, but DO NOT let that stop you from applying. Since the beginning of mankind, the same question has been asked over and over again “How do I get experience if nobody will hire me?”. You will have to be even more determined and more creative than the candidates with experience. Remember, EVERYONE got that first break someplace and never lose hope or take rejection personally (sometimes a facility may not be able to take a new grad because they don't have enough experienced personnel to mentor and that could put you in a bad situation if they did hire you). You want to be sure there are good mentors on your first job so you can learn and grow in your profession. Stay away from major metropolitan areas, start out in smaller cities or rural areas where they don't draw the “crowd”.

[illegible]

### **Third issue: Responding to Positions**

#### **Remember your "first" question....are you looking for a "career" or a "job"?**

OK, you have your list of "possible" opportunities from various sources....now what? Well, if you are well organized, you are keeping a notebook of all the possibilities with full job descriptions, names of the facilities, addresses, contact person, contact phone number, title of contact person (if it was made known).

Start "rating" them with codes of 1-5, 1 being the ones you are most interested in and 5 having the least interest to you. If you live in the area where you are looking, map out a course so you are not backtracking, have your portfolio with extra résumés and notepaper, two pens and a pencil, breath mints, etc. Dress for success and leave by 8:30 in the morning to follow your course of action that you planned out.

I know you are thinking at this point "why is she telling me to GO to the facilities when I can just email my résumé?". Do you know how many emails these facilities receive in a day/week/month? It is very easy to ignore an email, but not so easy to ignore a face you are looking at in front of you! They can discriminate on paper, but **NOT** in person.

If you are looking to relocate there is a different course of action you can take. Again, **DO NOT email your résumé to any employer**, for the same reasons mentioned above. Your best resource is a recruiter (or headhunter) that specializes in medical placements. There are good and bad recruiters and I will tell you how to work with recruiters in another section.

It can be a full time job to locate your "perfect" position, so you need to be in that mindset and treat it that way.



## How to Work With a Recruiter

All recruiters have a responsibility to the employer. They are representing the employer's interest when you are interviewed. Treat the recruiter with the same respect, integrity and professionalism that you would want to present to a prospective employer. **Be honest, positive, knowledgeable and confident.**

In many ways, you will want to be more "upfront" with the recruiter than you usually would be with an employer. You will want to treat the recruiter much like you would a best friend because the more the recruiter knows about you, the easier it will be for them to describe you in the best light. A recruiter can be a great adviser and mentor. With their knowledge of the industry, you may also learn much about the hiring process. Be charming, **you need to sell yourself** not only to the staff at the facility but also the recruiter. Recruiters are gatekeepers and if you don't make a favorable impression with your recruiter, the recruiter can not represent you appropriately to the facility. If you really blow it, you won't get presented at all by the best recruiters.

**And, above all, always be honest with the recruiter about other opportunities, offers or interviews that you are engaging in!**

Recruiters can ....

- Get you "to" and "through" the interview much quicker and smoother than you can yourself, since they most likely are talking directly to the hiring authorities that you could never reach on your own.
- They can contact private practices, clinics and hospitals in the area you are searching to see if they are seeking to replace or add any staff members.
- They can match your career objectives to available positions and determine if it is the right match. This can save you considerable time and effort.
- They can prepare you for the interview, obtain information about the area, and make travel arrangements.
- After the interview, they can do follow-up calls with the interviewer to obtain feedback.
- They can work with you and your new employer to finalize a contract keeping you out of the negotiations and in a more comfortable position so you can just focus on the job responsibilities and opportunity.

These are the some of the questions and concerns I hear from candidates:

Q. "Recruiters call and ask for my résumé, but then I never hear from them again."

A. If you are contacted by a recruiter and asked to send your résumé, **don't be afraid to ask questions** about why they want to see it.

But, there are several reasons and none of them mean you have been forgotten or are not qualified. Most candidates are very particular about the type of facility, the location, the salary, etc. This is good information for recruiters, but sometimes they don't have a "match" at that particular time. But, they are always on the lookout for that match, since placing you means income for them and a good candidate for their client. If recruiters constantly called candidates just to check in with them, then they would not have the time to find those positions. But, that does not mean you can't call or email them to get an update on their progress or if they have any "possible" openings.

Another reason recruiters ask for your résumé is because they DO have a position for you, but not in your city, and want to find out if you will relocate. If you say you will not relocate, then your chances with that recruiter are less.

Recruiters have a difficult time placing candidates that only will only go within 5-25 miles of their residence, so you are pretty much tying their hands in placing you.

If you choose to post on a job site, **the more information you give to recruiters and employers the less likely you will be to get invalid requests for your résumé.** That doesn't mean that all recruiters will pay attention to your comments, but "most" of them will.

Q. "A recruiter sent me on an interview, but I can't seem to get any feedback about how I did. They say the company is still interviewing, so I'm in limbo."

A. All recruiters want to hear from YOU first before they talk to the client for their feedback. Share with the recruiter all that you learned about the company and department. Who you met with, what you learned about the position, etc. This will put the recruiter in a better position to evaluate the interview process.

**The recruiter needs to be as honest with you as you are with them,** but sometimes they have difficulty getting their feedback if the facility is still interviewing. Give the recruiter a couple days "at most" before expecting your feedback. Don't ever put "all your eggs in one basket" and leave yourself in "limbo", you have every right to keep interviewing and if you end up with more than one offer, then you'll be in a great position to negotiate.

- Q. "I have sent out dozens of résumés - sometimes hundreds - to recruiters, but I never hear from them, and can't get them to return my calls."
- A. Then don't give up your search. Chances are you didn't have the qualifications they were looking for on the day you sent your résumé. Also, if you do not have a degree or certification, or your specialty is not one that clients will pay recruiters to locate candidates for, then your requests will never be answered. In the medical profession "most" clients will not pay a recruiter to find them a medical assistant, certified nurse assistant, medical secretary, etc. **Recruiters are used by employers to find the hard to fill positions and management positions. Also, "most" recruiters will NOT tell you that your resume is poorly written! And, if it's poorly written, how do they know you are qualified for the position they are trying to fill?**

Q. What should I ask a recruiter before sending my résumé?

A. Is there a particular job you have in mind for me?

Once you have my résumé, when can I expect to hear from you again?

Will you send my résumé to anyone without my consent? (the answer should be a resounding NO!)

Will you contact my references without my knowledge? (Again, should be NO!)

**Note: Understanding your recruiter, and ensuring that they understand you, is the first step in successfully seeking a new job through a recruiter.**

## **COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION**

Job seekers MUST ensure that their contact information is correct and reliable. ALWAYS provide a backup contact number or email so you can always be current and informed. If you can't be found then you can't be relied upon to make interview appointments. This makes you and the recruiter look bad and you won't be called again.

There are many sites that provide free email service, but sites like [ureach.com](http://ureach.com) will provide users with a simplified communications service including email, voice mail, and fax services. Another similar site is [onebox.com](http://onebox.com).

Communication is key, the way you interact with recruiters speaks volumes about you as a professional and that you are serious about your job search, don't let small details keep you from your goals and derail everything you've accomplished.

### **Establish a relationship...**

Work with two or three recruiters (no more than three, "trust me") you trust and are comfortable with. Share with them what you want your next position to be and what positions that you think you are qualified for. **Recruiters will partner together where one may have a qualified candidate and the other a matching client/job.** This is considered "one" recruiter and usually one of them will take charge after the initial profiling and introductions are done so you will not be confused, but they maintain contact with each other to be sure everyone is up to speed on your job search.

### **Give feedback on positions you turn down....**

If a recruiter does call with an inappropriate position, remember to **listen with an open mind** and if it is still of no interest, explain why. For example, "It sounds like they want the person to do pediatrics and I have only done adults." If it is a technical requirement perhaps a definition will help the recruiter to better understand the requirement. Be open with your referrals. If you know someone that might be a fit, pass on the email address and phone number or offer to pass the recruiters contact information to your referral. Most recruiters pay referral fees if they place someone you referred, so ask about that also.

### **Be fair to the recruiter**

They can only share with you what they know, and managers are not always responsive. **Keep in touch** with them and let them know the status of your search. If you are interviewing with other companies, keep them posted on where you are in the job process. A good recruiter will share that information with the hiring manager and, hopefully, guide the decision making process at a faster pace.

The key is opportunities and who has them. **Recruiters are a source of opportunities** because they network with clients and other recruiters for years establishing their own trustworthy network of resources for both their candidates and clients. Most do national placements, so you can work with a few recruiters and cover a variety of cities and states that are of interest to you.

### **Keep your network open**

If you are not actively looking for a position, DO NOT be rude to recruiters that contact you and respond to them either by email or phone. Six months down the road, or next year, you may find yourself needing their services due to change of management or downsizing at your facility and **you do not want those doors closed.** You will kick yourself for not having kept those names. We've seen many "happily employed" professionals get a big shock when things turn on them and they have not kept a network going. DO NOT let that happen to you! **Net "working", not Net "waiting" is the successful key to any career.**

## Section IV:

### How to Interview

Now that we have your résumé in order, step one, and how to promote yourself, step two, we're now ready to move into step three – phone interviews and face-to-face interviews. The best written résumé and the greatest preparation will **not** get you the job you want if you blow the interview!

Obviously, the preparation for each of these types of interviews is totally different. If your first interview is by phone, then you have to be totally prepared to sell yourself verbally in order to get to the next phase, the face-to-face. This is not as difficult as it sounds IF you prepare and don't take it lightly.

No matter where you went to school, no matter what your GPA is, no matter how much experience you have, no matter who you know--if you aren't able to interview successfully, you won't get the job!

#### **Dress Code for face-to-face interviews:**

Unfortunately, most college grads are under-prepared with proper interview dress. They feel they can "get by" with what is already in their wardrobe. Usually not. Dressing for the world outside college is quite different from the campus scene. Remember that stylish is not conservative. You should be doing the talking, not your clothes.

In the medical field, even experienced candidates do not know how to dress for an interview, so it's not just new grads...believe me! It may have to do with the fact that most of you wear uniforms, but that's not an excuse for being sloppy, dirty, and not well manicured in hair, nails and makeup. You don't have to go out and buy expensive clothes if you know how to dress properly.

#### **Men**

- Necktie should be a conservative pattern
- Dark shoes (black lace-ups are best)
- Dark socks (black is best)
- Get a haircut; short hair always fares best in interviews
- No beards
- Mustaches must be neat and trimmed
- No rings other than wedding ring or college ring
- No earrings (if you normally wear one, take it out!)

## **Women**

- Always wear a suit with a jacket; **no dresses**
- Shoes with conservative heels
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin color (and no runs!)
- No purses, small or large; carry a briefcase instead
- If you wear nail polish (not required), use clear or a conservative color
- Minimal use of makeup (it should not be too noticeable)
- No more than one ring on each hand
- One set of earrings only

## **Men and Women**

- Conservative two-piece business suit (solid dark blue or gray is best)
- Conservative long-sleeved shirt/blouse (white is best, pastel is next best)
- Clean, polished conservative shoes
- Well-groomed hairstyle
- Clean, trimmed fingernails
- **DO NOT wear cologne or perfume since you can't wear them when working any medical facility**
- Empty pockets--no bulges or coins you may be tempted to nervously jingle
- No gum, candy, cigarettes, cigars
- Light portfolio case ONLY
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.)
- Well brushed teeth and fresh breath
- No body odor

## **Face-to-Face Interview Basics:**

- ➔ Know where you are going BEFORE the day of the interview.
- ➔ Arrive "at least" 10 minutes early. Feel the place out and get comfortable with your surroundings. This also shows that you are punctual and courteous of other people's time.
- ➔ Dress appropriately (see above section on proper attire). Even if everyone in the facility is not dressed professionally, you need to present yourself as a professional they want to hire, not someone who already works there.
- ➔ Always have extra copies of your resume with you. If you were given an itinerary of those you will be interviewing with, be sure to have that with you so you are mentally prepared for the next meeting.

- Everyone tells you to have your questions ready....well, there is a reason for that or you would not hear it so much. Have questions about the company, the job, the people, the community (if you are relocating), the goals of the department and what they expect your contribution to be. As you work these questions in at the appropriate time, it will show that you did your homework and are interested in the position.
- The handshake is probably the most important thing to address, but nobody ever does. I don't care if you're a man or a woman (I've received the most "wimpy" handshakes from big strong men many times), you **MUST** have a firm handshake .....**do not give a wet wimpy handshake!** Immediately you will portray confidence and a "let's get started" attitude.
- Unless the interviewer tells you to call them by their first name ALWAYS be formal by calling them Mr., Mrs. or Ms.
- Be sure to have a notebook with you and don't just sit there with it in front of you.....**TAKE NOTES!** You don't have to write down everything that is said, just enough to jog your memory later. This will also show the interviewer that you are being attentive and interested in what they are saying.
- **DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES CROSS YOUR LEGS** (men and women). Sit up straight, do not slouch in the chair, with BOTH feet on the floor. If possible, lean slightly forward towards the interviewer showing that you are hearing every word and are interested.
- Always get business cards for every person you interview with. When you write your thank you notes later, you will be glad you did. Just in case you forget one, the first note in your notebook should be each person's name and title.

**Note: On the next few pages, some of this will be repeated from quotes and articles I've included from other sources. BUT, you can't hear some of these "musts" too often and it never hurts to have them pounded into your heads so they become natural motions.**

# Telephone Interview Tips & Techniques

Employers use telephone interviews as a way of identifying and recruiting candidates for employment. Phone interviews are often used to screen candidates in order to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited for in-person interviews. They are also used as a way to minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates.

While you're actively job searching, it's important to be prepared for a phone interview on a moment's notice. You never know when a recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk.

## Be Prepared to Interview

Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular interview. Compile a list of your strengths and weaknesses, as well as a list of answers to [typical interview questions](#). In addition, plan on being prepared for a phone conversation about your background and skills.

- Keep your résumé in clear view, on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall near the phone, so it's at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.
- Have a short list of your accomplishments available to review.
- Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.
- Turn call-waiting off so your call isn't interrupted.
- Clear the room - evict the kids and the pets. Turn off the stereo and the TV. Close the door.

## Practice Interviewing

Talking on the phone isn't as easy as it seems. I've always found it's helpful to practice. Have a friend or family member conduct a mock interview and tape record it so you can see how you sound over the phone. Any cassette recorder will work. You'll be able to hear your "ums" and "uhs" and "okays" and you can practice reducing them from your conversational speech. Also rehearse answers to those typical questions you'll be asked.

## During the Phone Interview

- Don't smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.
- Do keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.
- Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice.
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.
- Use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use a first name if they ask you to.



- Don't interrupt the interviewer.
- Take your time - it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Give short answers.
- Remember your goal is to set-up a face-to-face interview. After you thank the interviewer ask if it would be possible to meet in person.

### **After the Interview:**

- Take notes about what you were asked and how you answered.
- Remember to say "thank you." Follow with a [thank you note](#) which reiterates your interest in the job.

This is just a "guideline"...do what is most comfortable for you. But, take my word for it....if you lie, it will come back to haunt you in ways you never could imagine, so tell the truth about your job responsibilities and salary (salary is one most candidates will lie about "thinking" it will get them more money.....W R O N G!!!!.....it will get you more interviews since you'll be back on the job hunt again.) There are ways to show you are worth more money to a future employer without having to lie, talk to your recruiter and be honest about what you are looking for.

Speaking of salary, that brings up a LOT of problems in itself. These are a "few" of the reasons we hear from candidates why they "need" a certain salary.....

- "I have too many bills"
- "I thought it sounded like a good number"
- "I have a friend that makes that much"
- "I need a new car"
- "I'm a single parent"
- "I'm worth that"
- "That's what I deserve"
- "I was told by my professor that I should make that"

# The 10 Biggest Interview Killers

Here are 10 of the most common "advantage killers" and how you can steer clear of them during your next job interview.

1. **Not knowing your aim**  
Too often candidates think their purpose in an interview is simply to ask for a job. Your goals are to demonstrate how you are a good fit for the organization, and to assess whether the job is really right for you.
2. **Being too needy**  
Neediness is probably the No. 1 advantage-killer in an interview. Remind yourself before walking in the door: you do not need this job. You do need food, you do need air, and you do need water. Keep things in perspective.
3. **Lousy nonverbal communication**  
This is about demonstrating confidence. Your first impression makes the difference. When you enter the interview room, stand up straight, make eye contact, and offer a strong handshake with your interviewer. If necessary, jot their name on your notepad as soon as you seat yourself. Do the same for any other individual you are meeting with.
4. **Compromising your position**  
You should always participate in the interview as an equal, not a subordinate, of the person conducting the interview. Often this is a subtle matter of self-perception, so remind yourself before the interview.
5. **Falling into the answers-only rut**  
An interview is a conversation. Don't just answer their questions. That's why you've prepared stories to highlight your accomplishments, which will be your moments to shine. When you do answer any questions, make sure that you answer immediately and follow up with a question of your own, if at all possible.
6. **Rambling**  
Telling your interviewer more than they need to know could be fatal. Your stories should be 60 to 90 seconds long and they should have a relevant point. Focus, focus, focus. Stick with your rehearsed stories, your research, and the questions you need to ask. Don't fill up the silence with unnecessary talk.
7. **Being overly familiar**  
A good interviewer will be skilled enough to put you at ease within the first 10 minutes of the interview. That doesn't mean that they have become your best friend. Don't let your guard down. You're there to interview them and get answers to your questions. Treat this from start to finish as the professional business meeting that it is.

8. **Making incorrect assumptions**

Points are not deducted at the interview for asking questions when you don't understand something. Don't guess at what your interviewer means. Effective interviewing is all about collecting information in real time, taking good notes, and responding only to the actual facts you've collected. If you find yourself making assumptions or guessing about something that was said, stop and ask for clarification before you answer.

9. **Getting emotional**

At times the interviewer may hit a nerve or consciously try to provoke you into an "outburst." Don't fall for it. Clear your mind of any fears or expectations, so you can maintain a calm, open-minded perspective at all times. When emotions enter into an interview, failure follows.

10. **Not asking specific questions**

You want to find out more about what this job is really about and whether you want it. Arrive with a list of several prepared questions about the company, the position, and the people who work there. Ask questions that begin with "what," "how," and "why." Avoid simple yes/no questions. Get your interviewer talking as much as possible, then take notes. Most interviewers are unimpressed by someone who has no questions.

# Fundamentals of a Successful Interview

*By Bill Radin*

Bill Radin is a top-producing recruiter whose innovative books, tapes and training seminars have helped thousands of professionals make positive career moves.

**To a large degree, the success of your interview will depend on your ability to discover needs and empathize with the interviewer.**

You can do this by asking questions that verify your understanding of what the interviewer has just told you, without editorializing or expressing an opinion. By establishing empathy in this manner, you'll be in a better position to freely exchange ideas and demonstrate your suitability for the job.

In addition to establishing empathy, there are four intangible fundamentals to a successful interview. These intangibles will influence the way your personality is perceived and will affect the degree of rapport, or personal chemistry, you'll share with the employer.

1) Enthusiasm --- Leave no doubt as to your level of interest in the job. You may think it's unnecessary to do this, but **employers often choose the more enthusiastic candidate in the case of a two-way tie**. Besides, it's best to keep your options open -- wouldn't you rather be in a position to turn down an offer, than have a prospective job evaporate from your grasp by giving a lethargic interview?

2) Technical interest --- **Employers look for people who love what they do**; people who get excited by the prospect of tearing into the nitty-gritty of the job and want to grow in their profession.

3) Confidence --- No one likes a braggart, but **the candidate who's sure of his or her abilities will almost certainly be more favorably received**.

4) Intensity --- The last thing you want to do is come across as "flat" in your interview. There's nothing inherently wrong with being a laid-back person; but sleepwalkers rarely get hired. **(NOTE: In a phone interview, it's even more important to make sure you put some energy and inflection in your voice because there is no body language to help communicate for you. You don't want to sound low-key and monotone.)**

Since interviewing also involves the exchange of tangible information, make sure to:

- Present your background in a thorough and accurate manner
- Gather data concerning the company, the position and future growth opportunities
- Link your abilities with the company needs in the mind of the employer
- **Build a strong case for why the company should hire you, based on the discoveries you make from building rapport and asking the right questions.**

Both for your sake and the employer's, try not to leave an interview without exchanging fundamental information. The more you know about each other, the more potential you'll have for establishing rapport and making an informed decision.

## **Nonverbal Communications: Escape the Pitfalls**

by Carole Martin

It begins even before you say your first word in an interview. **By the time the interviewer walks toward you, an opinion is already being formed.**

There you sit, waiting to spew out answers to questions you've prepared for when you are **already being judged by your appearance, posture, smile or nervous look.**

A study done at UCLA a few years ago revealed that the impact of an interview performance was based on 7 percent of the words used, 38 percent on voice quality and **55 percent on nonverbal communication.**

Look back at speakers or teachers you've listened to. Which ones stand out as memorable? Were they the ones who were more animated and entertaining or the ones who just gave out information?

This is not to say you have to entertain the interviewer (no jokes, please), but it does mean **the interview should be interactive and your facial expressions should reflect positive emotions.** If you say you are excited about the prospect of working for this company but don't show any enthusiasm, your message will probably fall flat (i.e. . be unbelievable because the nonverbal message doesn't match the verbal message).

**So smile, gesture once in a while, show some energy and make the experience more pleasurable for both sides.**

## Non-verbal Pitfalls to Watch For...

· **The handshake: It's your first encounter with the interviewer. If she holds out her hand and receives a limp hand in return, that's not a very good beginning. Your handshake, both men and women, should be firm -- not bone-crushing. (Make sure YOU Initiate the handshake if the interviewer doesn't do it first.)**

Your hand should also be dry and warm. If your hands tend to be cold, try running warm water on them when you first arrive at the interview site. Run cold water on them if your hands tend to sweat. The insides of your wrists are especially sensitive to temperature control.

· **Eye contact: Look the interviewer in the eye. This is especially important when you shake their hand.** During the interview, to keep from staring (which shows aggression) you can occasionally glance at the interviewer's hand as she is speaking. If you are constantly looking around the room while the interviewer is talking or when you are talking, you convey a lack of confidence or discomfort with what is being discussed.

· **Your hands:** Gesturing or talking with your hands is very natural. But getting carried away with hand gestures can be distracting. Also, avoid touching your mouth while talking. Watch yourself in a mirror while talking on the phone. Chances are you are probably using some of the same gestures in an interview.

· **Your posture:** Stand and sit erect. We're not talking "ramrod" posture, but show some energy and enthusiasm. A slouching posture looks tired and uncaring. Check yourself out in a mirror or on videotape.

· **Don't fidget:** There is nothing worse than someone playing with his or her hair, clicking a pen top, tapping a foot or unconsciously touching parts of the body.

Preparing what you have to say is important, but practicing HOW YOU LOOK AND SOUND when you say it is imperative. **Nonverbal messages speak louder than the verbal messages you are sending.**

## The Short and Long of It

There are two ways to answer interview questions -- the short version and the long version.

**When a question is open-ended, I always suggest to candidates that they say, "Let me give you the short version. If we need to explore some aspect of my answer more fully, I'd be happy to go into greater depth and give you the long version."**

The reason you should respond this way is because it's often difficult to know what type of answer each question will need. A question like, "What was your most difficult assignment?" might take anywhere from thirty seconds to thirty minutes to answer, depending on the detail you choose to give.

Therefore, you must always remember that the interviewer is the one who asked the question. **So you should tailor your answer to what he or she needs to know, without a lot of extraneous rambling or superfluous explanation.** Why waste time and create a negative impression by giving a sermon when a short prayer would do just fine?

Let's suppose you were interviewing for a management position and the interviewer asked you, "What sort of management experience have you had in the past?"

Well, that's exactly the sort of question that can get you into trouble if you don't use the short version/long version method.

Most people would just start rattling off everything in their memory that relates to their management experience. Though the information might be useful to the interviewer, your answer could get pretty complicated and long-winded unless it's neatly packaged.

One way to answer the question might be, "I've held management positions with three different medical facilities over a nine-year period. Where would you like me to start?"

Or, you might simply say, "Let me give you the short version first and you can tell me where you want me to go into more depth. I've had nine years experience in management positions with three different companies and held the titles of charge, assistant, and director. What aspect of my background would you like to concentrate on?"

By using this method, you telegraph to the interviewer that your thoughts are well organized, and that you want to understand the intent of the question before you travel too far in a direction neither of you wants to go. After you get the green light, you can spend your interviewing time discussing in detail the things that are important, not whatever happens to pop into your mind.

### **True Interview Stories:**

(Names are withheld to protect the "guilty")

Candidate asked to be excused in the middle of the interview to take a "cigarette break"....needless to say, she DID NOT get the position!

Vice President level candidate was flown in for an interview and the last person to interview with was the President and the candidate took shoes off and started rubbing feet and said "these shoes are really hurting my feet".

Candidate got offer for a position in Texas and spouse would not relocate to Texas because she heard the cockroaches were as big as rats!

Candidate wore a powder blue leisure suit with bell bottom pants that smelled like moth balls since it had been in mother's attic for years.

Client called and said the candidate came dressed like a hooker and they were not hiring for hookers!



## Section V:

### Thank You Notes

**A Thank You Note can be the most important, yet least used tools in a job search.** It is used to establish goodwill, and/or strengthen your interest in the position and express your appreciation for the interview. It should be sent to anyone who helped you through the job search process. Thank you letters should be sent within 24 hours to everyone you interviewed with.

- Thank you notes should be brief, only 4 - 6 lines in length.
- Thank you notes can be typed, handwritten or emailed (preferably handwritten).
- If you mail them, they should be neatly handwritten and addressed to specific individuals.
- The thank you note can be more informal and personal than a cover letter.
- Reaffirm anything you liked about the facility/company and/or any ways you believe you will meet their needs.
- Mention anything important about yourself that you may have forgotten in the interview.
- If you have decided you don't want the job, thank them for their time BUT let them know **now**. (Never burn your bridges!)
- If you are more interested than ever, let them know. Enthusiasm is a highly prized commodity!
- Close by saying you are looking forward to hearing from them by date agreed upon (if you don't hear by that date, it is okay to call and ask about the status)
- BE SURE to proofread your messages/notes for spelling errors, this is just as important as your résumé/cover letter accuracy.

If time is of the essence and they are going to make their decision quickly, then by all means email your thank you notes. You can always follow up with "snail mail", but this way you will be sure they receive them and know of your interest (or non-interest).

Be sure to keep copies of your thank you notes, both printed and in a folder in your email account. You don't have to "cc" yourself, just go to your "sent folder" and move your message into the folder you created to keep track of everything related to your job search. If you are working with a recruiter, be sure to thank them also and let them know that you sent their client(s) thank you notes.

# Cover Letters

Let me start out by stating that I am not a big fan of cover letters. I have seen too many poorly written cover letters that I have refused to submit to clients or recruiters and have basically ignored them. It is very rare that I see one that is properly written. So, if you don't know how to write one.....**DON'T DO ONE!!!!**

Careless mistakes in your cover letter can doom your job search and short-circuit any chances for an interview.

With that in mind, here are 5 mistakes to avoid.

1. **Never begin your cover letter with "Dear Sir".** If you don't know the gender of the hiring authority, then use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Employer".
2. **Type your cover letter.** Thank you notes should be handwritten, but cover letters should be typewritten.
3. **Let them know how to contact you!** Even if you have your contact information on your résumé, do not assume your cover letter and résumé will remain together. If you say "please call me at your convenience" be sure to give a phone number to contact you at.
4. **Don't write a book!** Keep your paragraphs to two or three sentences and **NEVER** make your cover letter more than one page.
5. **Don't try to impress by rambling gibberish!** Keep in mind the person reading has many cover letters and résumés to read and they don't care that you know every word in the dictionary. Write as you would speak, but leave out the personal pronouns....get to the point.

In summary, take your time and ask a friend to read it. After reading it, ask yourself

- a) "So what?"
- b) Is every sentence compelling or is it just "fluff"?
- c) Is every sentence necessary?
- d) Is every sentence true?

Rewrite and review it until every sentence shines!

## References

Always consider your favorite professors, former supervisors and academic mentors as your best reference candidates. For college graduates, the specific use of "character" references is rare, so I wouldn't recommend your local minister or faithful Aunt Sarah as likely choices. Instead, you are expected to choose references who can speak to your character as well as your communication skills, or research ability, or classroom performance, or suitability for graduate study.

### **SEEK A MIX OF REFERENCES, AND SUGGEST THEIR SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE MIX**

Once you have secured someone as a reference, offer a copy of your résumé or application essay for the office files. This teaches them more about you, and you may even wow them with an accomplishment they didn't know you'd achieved. Most references will pull out your résumé or essay while they take a phone call or write a letter about you, thus making their responses more concrete and personal. Some references will even offer to critique these materials for you. Always accept such an offer.

Assuming that you've chosen your references thoughtfully, most people you approach will be happy to serve as a reference for you, just as others did for them. Nevertheless, listen carefully to avoid overlooking a potentially negative response. If you're hearing comments such as "I'm not sure I know your work well enough to provide a good recommendation," or "Maybe your other references can speak more specifically about your qualifications," or even "I'm so busy right now I'm not sure how I'll fit it in," be willing to reconsider your reference choice. Your reference may be hinting that he or she can't honestly give you a favorable recommendation, or that even being asked is irritating or that work is overwhelming just then. I've read several letters of recommendation in which it was clear that the letter writer was miffed with the student for not selecting an alternative reference. Obviously, such letters greatly reduce a student's chances of success.

### **DO NOT ASK FOR A GENERIC, ALL-PURPOSE LETTER**

### **BEGIN TO RECOGNIZE YOURSELF AS A PROFESSIONAL**

**FOLLOW-UP WITH YOUR REFERENCES** One of the most pleasant experiences one of your references can have is a follow-up thank-you note, an email, a phone call or a letter—ideally announcing that you have secured the desired position. **Regardless of whether you receive the position or not, initiating and maintaining follow-up contact with your references is both courteous and professionally smart.**

You are ultimately in charge of the effectiveness of your references, and you can act in ways that ensure quality recommendations and superior opportunities.

## Did You Know???

**ONE tiny typo**.....that's all it could take to sink your job prospects, according to a recent survey of senior executives. They were asked "How many typos in a résumé does it take for you to decide not to consider a job candidate for a position with your company?". Forty-seven percent of respondents said "one"; 37 percent were slightly more forgiving and considered "two" typos unacceptable.

These results prove that when you are competing for a job, EVERY WORD COUNTS. Overlooking even simple errors can derail your chances. For example, one applicant submits an impressive résumé but misspelled the prospective employer's address in several places. Instead of "Blvd," he wrote "Bled". While the word was likely accidentally changed when the job seeker ran a spell check, the mistake shows the importance of meticulously proofreading your résumé. Obviously the candidate did not!

Here are more examples.....

**"Strengths":** Acurate tiping skills."

.....are you sure about that?

I'm assuming this next one meant to use the word "revel":

**"Skills":** Rebel in accepting exciting new challenges."

.....a rebel without a proofreader.

In addition to checking for typos, pay attention to the content of your job application materials. Does every sentence make sense and add value?

**Cover Letter:** "I am quiet by nature and talkative"

.....which is it?

**"Skills":** Typing, data entry, data entry

.....you can say that again

Expressing negativity about former employers is another faux pas....

**Cover Letter:** "I worked for a multi billion-dollar company where the little guys like me did not matter. I now work for another company that only cares about the numbers, but nothing about the little guy."

.....a "little" too cynical

Unlike the following job seeker, don't make impossible requests of hiring managers:

**Cover Letter: "I ask that my résumé be considered." (No résumé attached)**

**Time worn cliché phrases in resumes like "Achieved the following" and "Responsible for... are out. In their place has come active use of appropriate verbs to describe what you actually did and how.**

## **IQ Test**

Is your résumé ready for the job search? Will it help or hinder your interview chances? Take this self-quiz to evaluate the effectiveness of your résumé.

- ( ) My résumé is packed with industry-specific keywords.
- ( ) My résumé emphasizes and quantifies my achievements showing not only what I have done, but how well I have done it.
- ( ) My résumé contains superior grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.
- ( ) My résumé uses varied action verbs and powerful phrases.
- ( ) My résumé clearly communicates my job target and my key strengths that I can bring to an employer within the first few lines.
- ( ) My résumé uses an inviting original design that is eye-catching (NOT a template)
- ( ) My résumé engages the reader from the first sentence and keeps their interest to the end.
- ( ) My résumé targets and communicates all my key transferable skills.
- ( ) My résumé minimizes any potential weaknesses and turns any potential “red flags” into positive assets for the employer.
- ( ) My résumé clearly displays my value to an employer and how I will meet their needs.
- ( ) My résumé is in a format that is scannable and will also enable email, web and electronic distribution without any problems.
- ( ) My résumé is targeted to a specific position I am applying for and is NOT a generic résumé used for all positions/facilities.

## **How did you do?**

### **If you checked 11-12 boxes:**

Congratulations, your résumé writing skills appear to be right on target. You “may” want to have your résumé critiqued by a professional, just to be sure you didn't miss anything critical.

### **If you checked 8-10 boxes:**

Very good, you are on the right track and your résumé is better than 98% of job seekers currently on the market. However, if you are leaving out some critical components, it could cost you interviews. Have your résumé checked by a professional who can help you fine tune and increase your results.

### **If you checked fewer than 8 boxes:**

You are not serious about your career and are missing out on many opportunities that may be your “perfect” match. You definitely need a professional to assist you.

**Need Help? Let me know [here](#)**



## **Five final questions to ask yourself BEFORE submitting your resume:**

- 1. Does my resume show that I fulfill the employer's needs?**
- 2. Are my strengths clear?**
- 3. Did I include anything that does not add value to my application?  
(These items probably can be removed.)**
- 4. Have I spell checked my resume and carefully read through to ensure that there are no typos, grammatical errors, etc.? To ensure that there are no typos, try reading your resume backwards, one word at a time, or have someone else proofread it.**
- 5. Have I used acronyms/abbreviations that may not be understood by prospective employers?**

## Additional Resources



### [Medical Resume Writing 100% Guaranteed](#)



[Click Here!](#) for this informative book *and...you will also get "Job Search "Secrets Exposed" for [FREE!](#)*

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## **In Conclusion**

Thank you for reading and I hope that everyone who reads this comes away with a better understanding of how important it is to write a great résumé, how to interview and the pitfalls to avoid. It is also imperative that you update your résumé every six months, you need to be “proactive” and ready for any opportunities that come up quickly. If you wait to throw a résumé together at the last minute, you will **LOSE!**

In some topics I know I have repeated information, but there are certain very important areas that need to be repeated in different ways to get the message across.

I wish you all the best in your careers and please feel free to contact me any time with suggestions, questions and/or assistance.

**To Your Career,**

*Barbara Moore*

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**Note:** I will probably continually update and “tweak” this book, so check out my website at [www.resumetherapy.com](http://www.resumetherapy.com) to be sure you have the “latest” edition.

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