

On Resumes

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Mary DeLuca, president and founder of Preferred Résumé® Group, LLC, is a Certified Professional Résumé Writer (CPRW) and a Certified Résumé Specialist for Financial Services (CRSFS). She has two decades of “hands on” experience in the sales divisions of Capital Markets – Taxable Fixed Income, eleven of which was spent as a vice president and top producer for Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette. Mary has recruited Harvard MBAs and has been successfully writing effective, results driven résumés for financial professionals and executives for more than 3 years. To learn more about Mary DeLuca CPRW, CRSFS and Preferred Résumé® Group, LLC, please visit: <http://www.preferredresumegroup.com>

Insider Tips for Résumé Writing

Not everyone is a professional résumé writer, nor wants to be, but this article will help you to go from thinking about writing a résumé to actually being able to write an effective, eye catching and results oriented résumé.

One of the most important things to remember about résumé writing in the 21st century is how dissimilar it is from the 20th century, and why. It is because of the wonderful creation of the *INTERNET*. We now can know within seconds when an earthquake is felt on the other side of the world, what our friends and neighbors earn and pay in taxes as well as where to get the best of anything for the least amount of money; all with the click of our mouse. It is with this same click that we search for job opportunities and apply. *Did you know that for every one job posting, more than 1000 job seekers apply?* That, in a nutshell, is the difference between the 20th and 21st century.

As we now know, the internet can be your friend or foe, but if you heed the following *to do's* and *not to do's* of résumé writing, you, and the internet may become very good friends.

- ✓ **TOOT YOUR OWN HORN:** Here is your opportunity to boast and brag. Start your résumé with a 3-4 sentence career profile, detailing who you are, what you do, how long you have been doing it and how well it is that you do it. Include your awards and recognitions in the later part of the résumé under the heading of the same title. It is a *must, must, must*, that you add results to your functions, preferably quantitative ones.
- ✓ **ALL THAT BUZZ:** Add industry/job specific key buzz words in the career profile, a section for your core competencies and throughout your bulleted functions. Very important – Make sure you can add relevance for the buzz word with a function.
- ✓ **SHOW ME THE MONEY:** This follows on the heels of the quantitative results. Include percentages, dollar amounts, as well as numbers wherever applicable. Remember there is more than one to say

the same thing; résumé writers try to use the phrasing that would capture the reader's attention and make a lasting impression.

- ✓ **HOW FAR IS TOO FAR?** Keep in mind; this is a résumé not an autobiography. The reader really has limited time and is mainly interested in your most recent employments, acquired skills and proven results. **DO NOT** go further back in your career history more than 12-15 years with details, unless deemed absolutely necessary for relevance.
- ✓ **TMI – TOO MUCH INFORMATION:** Again, along the same lines of going too far back in your employment history, too much information on a résumé is neither good nor appreciated. Do not list every mundane job function and do not be repetitive. Once again, there are many ways to say the same or similar thing, refer to a Thesaurus for alternative wording. Unlike the European CV – Curriculum Vitae, the résumé should not include one's personal interest, hobbies, or marital status.
- ✓ **SIZE DOES MATTER:** Do not exceed two full pages. For those with less than 5 years of experience and/or one to two positions I strongly recommend a one page résumé. The senior C-Level Executive may need three pages. On average, most professionals and CFAs fall into the category of a two page résumé. To aid in controlling the length of the résumé, do not exceed more than 5-7 bullets per employment position. I personally prefer to stick with 5 and like to decrease the amount of bullets incorporated for each position as I write in reverse chronological order. Use fonts ranging from 10-12 for content and 14-16 for Names and Headings.
- ✓ **TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES:** Never, ever be dishonest or include anything on the résumé that once checked will be found to be a work of fiction. Do not forget the beginning of this article concerning the Internet and how easy it is to find out just about anything in a click of the mouse. Of course, if there is an error on the résumé written without mal intent, no harm done, but for a deliberate deception, the consequences may be termination or rescission of an offering. Obviously, it is not worth it.
- ✓ **THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL:** Be creative; add a dash of conservative color to the résumé, enabling it to differentiate itself from the pile of résumés. I suggest using colors such as a navy blue, grey, and/or burgundy for the résumé border, category headings and/or bullets. Again, just a little will go a long way.
- ✓ **NETWORK, NETWORK, NETWORK:** The three most important things you can do in job searching. More than 75% of all newly acquired positions are attained through networking. One of the best for this is [Linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com).