

Writing your resume:

The resume is a necessary tool for every job hunter and is particularly critical to the new graduate. There are two primary reasons for this:

1. The new graduate usually has little background and experience to sell a prospective employer.

2. The level of competition for entry-level jobs means that a prospective employer has a wide choice of applicants, and first impressions are important; the resume is frequently the first impression.

The most difficult part of preparing a resume is deciding how to make it stand out when so many people with similar backgrounds are also in competition with you. Putting several hundred words on one (or at the most two) pages in a manner that will convince someone whom you have never met that you should be interviewed is a challenge requiring your best creative and composition skills.

Before you begin preparing your resume, review what you know about the employment process. The problem the hiring organization has is that nonacceptable candidates must be sorted out so that there will be more time to concentrate on plausible applicants. Also, most of the subjective judgments in the selection process are made in the early stages. So do not give a potential employer any reason not to interview you by submitting a poor resume.

Your resume, then, must presell you. Personality is not yet a factor, as there is no interpersonal chemistry at this stage of the selection process. The potential employer reading your resume has no way of knowing whether you are bright or dull, eloquent or inarticulate, personable or introverted, because at this time you are just a collection of facts on a piece of paper. It is, therefore, critical that the proper information be conveyed on the resume so that a positive decision will be made to interview you.

Many books have been devoted to the topic of resumes alone. For our purposes here, it should suffice to concentrate on a few practical guidelines—some "do's" and "don't's".

Length is critical. Limit it to one page if you can, never more than two. The objective is not to write an autobiography. Only highlight your background, qualifications, and skills to this point in your life, noting the really pertinent information about yourself to make these facts as attractive as possible to a potential employer. This is essentially an inventory of your abilities and past accomplishments.

Be accurate, factual, and logical so that what is written forms a positive image in the mind of the reader. Do not volunteer information that might preclude a fact-to-fact meeting, such as a specific geographic preference, a percentage of acceptable travel, or absolute salary requirements.

Tailor the resume to your interests, hopes, and career ambitions by highlighting the accomplishment related to them. This may seem to be a difficult task if you have little specific work experience. If that's the case, emphasize interests and ambitions, as well as your energy and enthusiasm to apply them.

Be as specific as possible in stating a job objective, without precluding yourself from some situation by stating it too narrowly. Flexibility is an essential ingredient in finding the first job. You should have a number of options in mind. For example, you want a marketing job, but you might have to start in sales. Do not attempt to list separate options here; change the job preference for your resume as each option is explored unless it is closely related to your primary choice. This may mean more than one resume format, but, within reason, it could prove useful to you.

Your job descriptions should tell how results were produced, skills developed and used, and promotions attained. Every job has objectives, even the most menial, so

you should not sell any of your experience short. An assignment or two might make a difference in your favor. To make your job descriptions as meaningful as possible, use short phrases and the most positive semantics. For instance, rather than say, "In my summer job at XYZ Corporation I was made research assistant," say, "In my summer job at XYZ Corporation I was promoted to research assistant." Instead of "As assistant inventory control clerk, I handled liaison with other departments," say, "As assistant inventory control clerk, I was responsible for liaison with other departments."

Most large organizations tend to look for specialists, so try to convey your special skills as much as possible. Emphasize special interests and certifications achieved or anticipated; for example, "Will work toward MBA in Finance," "Certification as engineer," "Completed CAP examination" and the like. List any meaningful activities in or out of school that are related to your objectives.

Following are some of the major do's and don't's of resume preparation:

1. Don't attach a photograph of yourself. What you think is a good picture may not impress anyone else.

2. Don't say, "I'm looking for any kind of work that will utilize my education." That may well be interpreted by the potential employer as lack of direction and immaturity. Be as specific as possible about a job objective without being too restrictive.

3. Don't indicate a specific required salary. That will be discussed at the appropriate time, when both parties have established some mutuality of interest. The right job should be the key now. If you are good at what you do and



Ascot Domestic Services owners, Noeleen Conway, left, and Corina Charles are pictured in their new location at the Cascade Business Development Center on PCC Cascade Campus. The center rents space at below market cost for new businesses which will eventually locate in the North/Northeast Portland area and gives priority to women- and minority-owned businesses. The center was started as a joint project by PCC,

the City of Portland Private Industry Council and the Portland Development Commission. Funding for the project includes both state and federal dollars, as well as loans from the Portland Development Commission.

Business statistics show that 50-80 percent of the small businesses fail within five years and that 80 percent of the businesses in Oregon are classed as small business. (Photo: Alison McKinney)

What do you mean I'm fired?

Fired! What am I going to do? My mortgage! The house! My car! What about the children? What will my wife say? Will she leave me? I wonder if...? If you find yourself in this predicament, here are some steps to take that might lend some stability to this traumatic period in your life.

- Examine your present cash position. Include cash at hand, like salary, sick pay, and severance monies owed to you. Also include assets which can be easily converted to cash, i.e. bank accounts, savings bonds, stocks bonds, leases (cash value), land contracts, and cash

value of insurance policy.

- Contact your creditors and inform them of your status. Many decent creditors will allow you to reschedule your debt payments so that they meet the realities of your new financial position.

- Register at the unemployment office immediately if you are entitled to receive benefits. These benefits, if due you, begin the first day you are out of work.

- Contact a Fair Employment Practice agency if you feel you were wrongly dismissed and have enough grounds for suing the company. So this immediately because it usually is a drawn-out process.

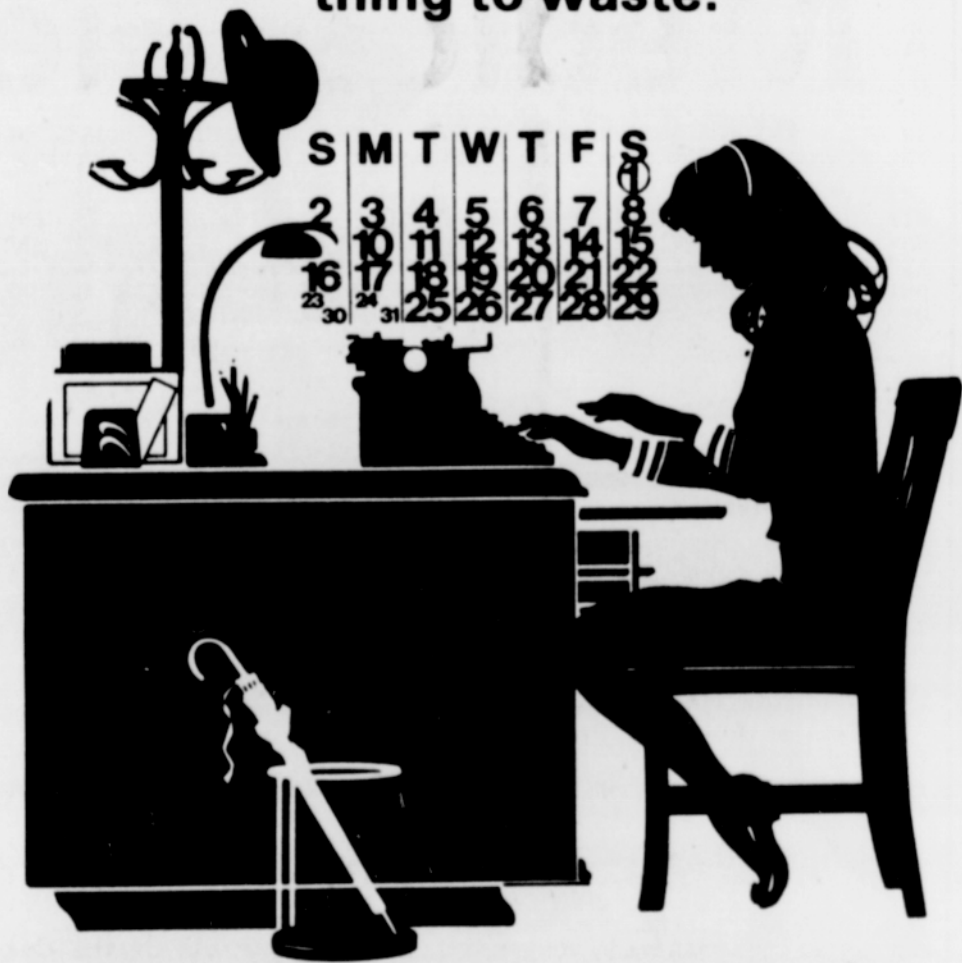
- Contact friends in your field of work to have them look out for opportunities that might interest you. Some may owe you favors that can be repaid with a good lead to a prospective job.

- Call on your contacts in the industry who might be able to introduce you to freelance or consulting work.

- Rewrite your resume and send it to the companies of your choice. You might need assistance in doing this, if so, there are many professional employment services that will help for a small fee.

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Careers in banking.

First Interstate Bank of Oregon is proud to offer a wide range of career opportunities. We have positions for people with all levels of education, and support the advancement of our employees through many educational and training programs. Here are just a few of our several thousand bank employees throughout Oregon...



Ann Williams

Ann began her banking career five years ago, and has been with First Interstate Bank as a manager in the Real Estate and Loan Division since 1983. She has a B.A. in English and a M.A. in Library Sciences. Ann chose a career in banking because it allows her to "build on my academic, professional and personal skills."



Kent Walton

Kent joined the bank in 1975 as a management trainee and is now assistant manager of the bank's Walnut Park branch. A graduate of the University of Colorado, Kent has also been able to take advantage of continuing his education through American Institute of Banking courses.



Ann Payne

Ann is assistant vice president and manager of the bank's Market Research and Planning Department. She has a B.A. from Notre Dame, and has been in bank marketing since 1980. She finds her work both challenging and rewarding. "As an industry in the midst of deregulation, banking offers exciting opportunities for marketing new products."

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