

The Résumé Secret Employers Love and Job Seekers Rarely Use

By Robin Ryan, Career Coach

A human resources manager, working at a prominent Northwest company, asked for my help in writing her résumé. She told me: "I see résumés all the time. Thousands have passed through my hands, but when it comes to writing my own I have a difficult time doing it. A résumé is nothing more than a slick advertisement. But an important one, especially in today's job market."

She makes it clear that your [résumé](#) is all an employer has when they start the screening process. And employers report that most résumés get only a 15-20 second glance. If you don't capture their attention quickly, they pass you by and call in someone else for the interview.

There is a good technique that you can use, though, that employers really like to see on a résumé. When I did our national survey of 600 hiring managers, the overwhelming majority said the most important part of your résumé is your "Summary of Qualifications" section. Adding this triples your impact, and employers reported that this was one of the very first areas they read. And if the briefly stated summary demonstrates solid ability to fill the advertised job, it catches their attention and they slow down and give the applicant more careful consideration.

Hiring managers also reported only about 5 percent of résumés contained this key section, and I never write a résumé without it. Think of it as mini-outline of you: a highly influential summation of the specifics you bring to the job. This section usually consists of four to six sentences that present an overview of your experience, accomplishments, talents, work habits and skills. Here is a good example from one of my client's résumés:

Summary of Qualifications

Twelve years' management experience in human resources dealing with fast-paced, rapidly expanding companies. Expertise includes employment law, recruiting, employee and labor relations and compensation. Analytical decision maker with excellent problem-solving skills. Recognized for ability to develop employees' professional growth and increase their productivity.

It's easy to see by reading this brief summary how this candidate is qualified to do a human resources job. Indeed, she got several interviews and went on to work at Seattle's most famous coffee company.

One caution – employers complain that many people lie on their résumé. Exaggeration! Misrepresentation! Lying is a deadly error. Don't do it! Employers ask more questions and do more background checks now than ever before so when you get caught, and sooner or later you will get exposed, you'll likely be fired. Solid facts and verifiable experience should highlight your actions and accomplishments.

The summary of qualifications, which speaks volumes on consolidating the best you have to bring to the job, really stands out and pulls the employer in for a closer look. Be sure that your résumé has this essential section. It comes right after your name, address and career objectives.

Robin Ryan has appeared on the Dr. Phil Show, Oprah, NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw, CNN, CNBC and is considered America's top career coach. She is the best-selling author of: "60 Seconds & You're Hired!;" "Winning Resumés;" "Winning Cover Letters" and "What to Do with the Rest of Your Life." She's the creator of the highly acclaimed audio training program Interview Advantage and The DreamMaker. To purchase her books and audio training programs go to <http://www.robinryan.com>. To contact Robin, e-mail RobinRyan@aol.com or call 425-226-0414.