



An Article on your powerful resume from "www.asktheheadhunter.com" a leading career management resource

Writing a Resume that gets you job offers

Put A Free Sample In Your Resume

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Your resume probably includes one kind of information: historical data that tells an employer who you are, where you came from, and what you did. It may also list skills that may or may not be transferable to a new job. None of this information tells an employer what you can do for him. The resume leaves it up to the employer to figure that out for himself. That's no way to market yourself. But that's all the information 99% of resumes contain. That's why most resumes get no response from an employer.

Give before you expect to receive.

It's an old marketing adage that says, give the customer a sample of your product before you expect him to buy from you. That gets the prospective customer hooked. It gives him or her a reason to want more. It also accomplishes the critical goal of proving to your customer how good your product is.

Do the same with your resume. Give the prospective employer a free sample of what you can do for him. This will get the employer's attention, and it will distinguish you as a job hunter whose goal is to do the job for the employer, rather than just to get a job.

What can you offer?

How do you put a free sample of the benefits you offer an employer into your resume?

First, you have to clearly understand what makes your work and abilities valuable to companies in your field. Don't just think about your skills. Think about how you have used your skills to help an employer succeed and be more profitable. But don't put that on your resume; that's just more historical stuff. Just because you helped your last employer is no proof that you can help me. You need to package the information in a way that says to a prospective employer: *This is what I can do for you.*

Before you can deliver this practical, job-offer-eliciting gift, you need to understand what an employer's needs are. That means understanding the problems and challenges his company faces. And that can take quite a bit of research. Do it. There are no shortcuts to delivering value.

Offer what's needed.

Most companies in an industry face the same general problems. You can learn about these by reading industry publications and talking with key people in the field. You find these folks by reading the articles they write, or articles that are written about them. Call them up. Or, call employees of your target company. Talk to the professional associations the company belongs to.

Dig. Talk to some of the company's customers. Talk to its competitors. You'll be surprised at what you'll learn. Use this information to figure out how you can use your skills to help solve the problems your prospective employer is facing.

Now go back to your past accomplishments. What skills did you use? Make a list of those skills to help you think about them. How did each accomplishment help your company become more successful or profitable? It doesn't have to be a huge difference that you made, but it has to be a difference that contributed to the bottom line. Now take those skills and ask yourself, how would I apply them to solve the problems and meet the challenges of the companies I want to work for?

Offer value.

Create a new area in your resume. Call it *Value Offered*. Put it at the beginning of your resume, under your name. In two sentences (no more than three or four lines on the resume), state the value you are offering. Be specific. You will probably have to do a separate resume for each company you approach. (It's worth it.)

These are examples of poor *Value Offered* statements:

- "Hardworking, capable operations manager seeking opportunity for advancement." (So's everybody! But, how are you going to advance my company's goals?)
- "Strong sales and marketing experience with exceptional communication skills to benefit your bottom line." (But what *exactly* will you *do* for my company?)
- "I bring great value to any company because I am very good at working with people." (Too general; doesn't address a specific problem or goal of the employer. Claiming you have good "people skills" is about the lamest, most common qualification offered on resumes.)

Here are some examples of good *Value Offered* statements:

- "I will reduce your operations costs by negotiating better deals with your freight vendors and streamlining your shipping department."
- "I will increase your revenues and profitability by teaching consultative selling techniques to your sales staff, and by establishing relationships with key opinion-makers in your target market."
- "I will increase your profitability by bringing programming projects in on time and

under cost. I will do this by using special techniques to help your design team work more closely with your end users."

This is a lot of work; but, so is the job you want.

Get the idea? It takes a lot of work to develop this kind of statement. You have to learn a lot about the company you are pursuing, including exactly what kind of specific help a particular manager needs. (By the way: this might be your current employer, if you're looking for an internal promotion or job change.)

You could spend your time doing the necessary research, and deciding what exact value you will offer a company, or you can spend it emailing hundreds of resumes to companies you understand very little about, and waiting by the phone.

Put a sample of your value into your resume. It's the jewel a hiring manager looks for.