

# This is How **YOUR RESUME**

Gets in  
Front of  
the Hiring  
Manager



# This is How Your Resume Gets In Front of Hiring Managers

*“Hey, Jan. I’ve sent out what feels like a million resumes and I haven’t heard back from ONE company. What am I doing wrong?”*

That’s a question I hear frequently.

A resume is the most requested document in any job search and that begs the question – why are they so hard to write?

How can a one to two-page document cause us such angst?

From entry-level to the senior executive, many job seekers struggle when it comes to writing resumes and it doesn’t help when people who are supposed to be in-the-know hand down edicts that are to be followed. There is so much nonsense spewed from so-called experts about resumes that applicants have come to believe it is some supernatural piece of paper that only a fraction of the people will ever understand.

I am going to throw the BS card on that one. Yes, a big red BS card.

You want the truth? There are no rules when it comes to writing resumes. There are best practices and guidelines but never a single rule. Guess what, if your resume is two pages instead of one page, that is okay.

## **Why, then, is it so hard to write?**

The resume is relatively a straightforward document. It is not complex – when you understand it. And, people stress way too much about how it should visually look. I’ve yet to meet a manager who has made a hiring decision based solely on the visuals of a resume.

*Do they want it to be clear and concise? Yes.*

*Are they looking for it to be achievement-oriented? Yes.*

*Do they want it to be brief without dragging on for pages? Yes.*

But never has someone fallen so head-over-heels in love with the way a resume looked that they exclaimed, “You’re hired!”

So, let’s not focus on what doesn’t matter. Instead, let’s focus on what gets you noticed.

## HIRING TOUCHPOINTS

Your resume hits three touchpoints that generally flow from one step to the next. They are:

- Applicant Tracking System (ATS),
- Recruiter
- Hiring Manager

Let's break it down to show you what happens at each step of the way.

### **Touchpoint 1: The Applicant Tracking System**

When you upload your resume via a company's career portal, that resume goes to their Applicant Tracking System (ATS). The ATS is nothing more than a software application that enables the electronic handling of recruitment needs. In layman's terms, it is the database that holds resumes and makes things more efficient for Recruiting and Human Resources.

While it may feel like you are feeding the infamous black hole of recruiting, the ATS is seldom the issue. The problem is how recruiters view the candidate relationship experience and how applicants have not learned how to match their resume to the position – but I'll explain more about what I mean here shortly.

It's frustrating to believe you are qualified for the job, but you never hear back from the recruiter. However, if your resume doesn't tell your story correctly, you won't get to the next stage of the process.

### **Touchpoint 2: The Recruiter**

The job of the recruiter is to filter through the applicants in the ATS and screen resumes (or screen them out) for the hiring manager. The best resume match will rise to the top and get the interview.

You've no doubt heard that recruiters spend 6-10 seconds on a resume before deciding if you are going to get an interview. It's true. That's right. You have seven seconds to make the right impression. No wonder the job search process is so frustrating!

Think about your resume for a second and ask yourself what would happen if you handed it to a random stranger and asked them to view the top third of your resume for no more than 20

seconds. Would they be able to easily identify who you are, your experience level, and the qualifications you have? If not, you have some work to do.

### **Touchpoint 3: The Hiring Manager**

Once you pass that recruiter phase, your resume is turned over to the hiring manager. The hiring manager, aka your future boss, is not looking to see what duties you have performed but they are looking to see how *well* you do your job. They want to see your successes. We will demystify this in a second as well.

#### **SO, WHAT'S THIS ALL MEAN?**

It means that if you want to get an interview you will need to have a clear, concise, and achievement-oriented resume that makes a positive impression – all within ten seconds. And, I promise you this is not impossible. It's not as hard as you might think.

*Let's read on...*

## WHAT'S A GOOD RESUME LOOK LIKE?

**It's organized!** A good resume tells a succinct story about your work history in an organized fashion. I have laid eyes upon more resumes than I remember and I can appreciate seeing something new and unique. Depending on your industry, unique may work fine. However, while applicant tracking systems have advanced and many can keep the same formatting and font, not all are advanced to do that. It's best to keep a fairly simple format and font. And, please don't try to scrunch a bunch of words or buzzwords on a page. Make it easy to read.

### Your resume should include five main sections:

- **Contact information:** Captain Obvious, right? But, I've seen resumes without a phone number or other contact info. If you have a great LinkedIn profile – and if you don't, you should get one – include that link as well. Make it easy to be found *and* contacted.
- **Professional Summary:** Grab attention immediately by telling them who you are and leaving them with wanting to know more about you. The top third of your resume is crucial and the most viewed so show your value instantly with a key brief paragraph, perhaps three to five sentences such as:
  - *Accomplished, ambitious, and results-driven financial executive with broad based expertise leading geographically-dispersed teams in support of multi-billion dollar organizations. Recognized as subject matter expert in transforming declining businesses into thriving organizations. Led key initiatives including reducing operating budgets by \$30 million and increasing stock value by 250%. Track record of defining new business strategies, launching new ventures, and challenging the status quo.*
- **Skills or Competencies:** This is the place to incorporate the right keywords to optimize your resume for the applicant tracking system. Review the position description and if you have those key skills, expertise, or the technology required, include a skills section beneath your summary in short, bulleted columns.
- **Professional Experience:** This is where you list the company, your title, and bullet points about your job. Job seekers typically list their duties for each role they have held but remember your end audience – the hiring manager. You don't want your resume to read like job positing. [Turn your duties into accomplishments.](#) Showcase your achievements by citing quantifiable results – dollars, numbers, or percentages.
- **Education / Certifications:** Easy-peasy. Simply list where you went college and the degree you were awarded. If you graduated with honors, highlight it. And, don't forget to add your certifications as well. It's best to leave off the graduation year. Yes, age discrimination is illegal, but you don't need any sneaky recruiter trying to calculate someone's age.

**It is keyword driven.** The ATS algorithm scans for keywords that are based on the position description. It can also scan for information related to your work experience, expertise, and education. If the ATS determines that your resume is a good match for the position, this improves your chances of being seen by a recruiter. There is no mystery to keywords. Just review the description. Next, determine what words keep popping up. Keywords are nothing more than those short phrases or words that are instrumental to the requirements of a job. If you've done it, put it in your resume. If not, the ATS will not see you for a match for the requirements of the role.

**It's written in reverse chronological order.** Most hiring managers prefer to see a reverse chronological resume. Your recent jobs come first with the central focus on the last few years. Five bullet points is enough for each position you have. Less is fine with older positions.

**Limit work experience to 10-15 years.** A resume typically covers about 10 years' worth of employment. If you have something germane to the position, you can go up to 15 but do not go overboard. What you did 20 years ago most likely will not be relevant to what you do today. It also ages you. And, it breaks my heart saying that. While I believe that most companies are ethical, don't give them the opportunity to stereotype you.

**It matches the job.** This is the big one and probably the number one mistake I see on resumes. *If a recruiter cannot easily see how you match the job, you won't get a chance to interview.*

## HOW DO YOU DO IT?

Read the description! I mean the *whole* description. Now read your resume. Does it *clearly* demonstrate that you meet or exceed the position requirements? Does your resume list the specific skill requirements, technology requirements, and educational or certifications required for the job? Do you have the number of years' experience required? If someone is asking for five years' experience, make sure your resume shows five full years if you have it.

I would never tell people to stop applying to positions where they did not meet 100% of the qualifications. Sometimes you have to take a chance. However, be aware that many recruiters will review your resume based on the hard requirements of the role. So, if you do not meet at least 70% of the requirements, be prepared for an uphill battle. I know we can debate the merits of the recruiting world and hiring practices do need to change. I get it. But, until that happens, put effort into having your resume telling your story correctly.

Think of your resume as an opportunity to make a case for your candidacy, to get the salary you desire earned, and to convince a hiring manager they should hire you. It will feel tedious putting together a resume at first but once you have a solid foundation, you can always tweak and edit based on your applications. And, don't forget to update it at least once a year so you lessen your headache for the future.

Finally, you do have an awesome story. Make sure that you tell it appropriately and the way you want it told.



# About Me

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**Jan Johnston Osburn, Certified Executive Coach & Certified Digital Branding Strategist**

I am passionately driven when it comes to personal empowerment. I help individuals redefine what is possible in their career and in their life.

I try my best to be an inspirational force for my clients as I work with them to tackle the obstacles that get in the way of their success – even when they don't understand what is in their way.

I am creative, energetic and progressive thinking – just because something has always been done the same way doesn't mean it's the right way. Old ways rarely open new doors.

Never judging. Always listening, but still holding clients accountable for their results is my approach. You can dream big – and you should. But, you must have actionable plans that will manifest that dream into real life.

## How I Got Here

After a storied and extensive career in Talent Acquisition, I formally began my coaching career and work as an organizational consultant in 2015.

I've been in my client's shoes. Talent doesn't always equal success and success doesn't always speak for itself. I wasn't always confident in my abilities to land the job I wanted or to have the life I desired until I learned a few secrets along the way.

I know that others struggle, too, when it comes to their career or personal development so I founded *Empower365* to fill the essential desires that clients have. Far too many people have that sinking feeling when Sundays roll around. You know the one – The one that leads to the Monday Blues. That's no way to live. My mission is to help others find or create a meaningful career so they get excited to jump out of bed in the morning.

I divide my time between my coaching practice and helping organizations with their organizational needs. I am a hands on practitioner and my consulting work helps keep my finger on the pulse of today's professional world. I have extensively recruited, interviewed, and hired thousands of key employees and I use that essential insight to assist my coaching clients.



## **Credentials**

I graduated with honors from the University of Buckingham, England where I earned a Master's degree in Social and Economic Transformation. I hold certifications in Executive and Professional Coaching and Advanced Social Media. My writing work has been seen on Success.com, POPSUGAR Career, NiagaraBuzz, Northern Virginia Style & Living, and I was a weekly contributor for ClearanceJobs.com.

## **CONTACT ME**

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### **Free Consultation**

All coaching begins with a free consultation. It's important for you to feel comfortable that coaching is right for you. You must be comfortable with me and we have to know what you want to happen. We speak before you make any decisions.

The best way to contact me is via email: [Jan@Empower365.net](mailto:Jan@Empower365.net). Reach out and we will set up a time to speak.

