

Keeping It Current

By Melanie G. Lammers

I hate to say it, but life is all about the here and now. The longer we wait to do things, the less likely it is that we will ever do them. In fact, motivation has been known to dwindle exponentially with the passage of time.

Let's face it; almost every human being has a drop of procrastination in his or her blood, and the more that inkling is fed, the more likely we are to give in to it in the future. The best way to avoid this slippery slope is to nip it in the bud, right? But how does one apply this philosophy to writing a resume?

Ah, there's the rub. Resumes, boring and simple as they may seem, are perfect targets for procrastination due to the fact that they are, indeed, boring and simple for most people who have to write them. Unfortunately, if you think your resume is boring and simple, chances are employers will not see it in an entirely different light.

Yes, of course there are forms and structures to follow when writing a resume, but that does not mean all resumes are the same. Your qualifications are unique to you and your work experience alone, so do not fool yourself into thinking for one minute that there is nothing you can say to make yourself stand out.

The struggle for most people seeking employment is that they feel like they need to sit down some evening- or maybe even at the office- and whip out an entire document in one sitting including all of the qualifications, accomplishments, and skills they have acquired in all of the positions they have held over the duration of their adult lives. Yikes! No wonder finding a job seems so scary.

Obviously, formatting can be changed and adjusted until you are blue in the face, but it is really the resume content that needs constant adjustment. The thing about any steady position in a successful environment is that work is never exactly the same. The best positions to highlight on a resume are the ones that stretch you in new directions and teach you new, transferable skills.

Rather than attempt to teach you how to seek out opportunities that allow you to grow, I am going to remind you to identify them when they are staring you in the face. Every time your boss assigns you a new task, you are learning something. Every time you spend the extra few minutes to learn about a new computer program, paperwork process, applicable policy, or organizational-structure change, you have the potential to turn it into an impressive point on your resume.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST ATTORNEY RESUME SERVICE

ATTORNEY RESUME

• 800-737-9344

Now, if we did this with every task we ever performed, all of our resumes would turn into thesis-length curricula vitae, so you have to keep in mind that something like learning a new filing system only happens once. Even if the filing system changed five times, all you really did was “acquire knowledge of new filing system and implement with new clientele.” This is not something that requires repetition or redundant emphasis.

The important thing to remember here is that you can look at your daily tasks, quantify them in summarizing statements, and then stay on the lookout for additional changes later on. If, for instance, your boss decides to assign you a fresh caseload one day in a completely different practice area, go home that night and add the new practice area to your list. As you begin working in that new area of the law, add new documentation or legal procedures you learn along the way.

This way, when you reach the pressure point or decide to start exploring your options, the tools to start looking will already be at your fingertips, waiting, ready, and completely succinct. The best aspect of this method is that you can pick and choose points of particular interest to individual employers without sacrificing content. You simply weed out the bullets of text that have no application to the potential position at hand.