

How To Read A Job Description

I have had countless conversations with transitioning folks on resumes. We talk about key words and impact statements. For this month's article, I'm taking a job description from www.shrm.org and breaking it down to emphasize the need to address the employer's needs when composing the resume.

First and foremost, research the company's website and check in with any connections that you might have to get the real "scoop" on what the company is seeking. Get as much information about the company and the position requirements that you possibly can. This insight is invaluable when you sit down to write the resume.

The next step is to save the master resume labeled to this particular job description. For those who haven't followed my articles, the master is your "living" resume. It's something that you continually enhance with your key skills and impact statements as your careers progress. This will be the basis for all future resumes as you only need to cut and refine to two pages specific to the job description.

Ok, now we begin. I'm working with a generic description for a project manager. However, you should get the idea as we proceed. The resume intro can be refined to directly reflect what the company seeks.

The KEY SKILLS are the probably the first wicket to pass. Remember, you first need to get by the algorithms of the applicant tracking system and the first set of eyes reviewing the resume. The key skills need to match the job description words. The computer is looking. The reviewer spends about seven to ten seconds reviewing the resume. Don't mess up by thinking you are smarter than the computer. Use the same words.

Next, whether you are using a chronological, functional or hybrid resume format, you will need to impress the reviewer with impact statements that relate your PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES to their needs. Show the results, the impact that you made on that particular task, etc. Numbers, percentage and dollar signs slow the eye down. I even recommend using the word **RESULT** to emphasize the importance. Here are some examples.

- Leads an interdepartmental team to complete an assigned project on time, to specification, and with accuracy and efficiency. *Created and implemented crossfunctional team to evaluate current budgeting procedures and developed processes that eliminated duplication. **RESULTS:** Utilized refined budgeting that produced a more accurate budget with tools to track and cross reference financial results with greater accuracy. Reduced variances by 5%, identifying issues and eliminating errors.*
- Communicates and collaborates with sales and marketing teams to provide training and information required to promote and sell new projects programs, and systems. *Working with vendor, developed, and implemented training programs to implement new budget management system. **RESULTS:** New system operational prior to required date, including sufficient time for upgraded training for new staff. **RESULTS:** New system saved two weeks off previous process with savings of \$25,000.*

The next key section is EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS. List your formal education from the most recent with the school, the degree and the date of completion. If currently in progress, state the estimated completion date. The same goes with training and certifications. The only additional item needed on certifications is the certification expiration date. For example, Senior Professional Human Resources (SPHR), Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI), 2024. Another note is to list only training and certifications that are applicable to the position.

The last section is ASSOCIATION AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES. That's your opportunity to show your community impact. Employers look for employees that are engaged. Many companies focus on opportunities for corporate engagement. My chamber of commerce activities were always an add-on to the employer, especially at the executive level.

The resume is your opportunity to show what you've done that will benefit the company and fill the needed skill set. Don't be shy. Tell them about the things that you are proud of and how these will benefit them.

Best of luck,

Kitty

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