Resumes
By Tom Whitley
Network World Fusion Focus on Careers, 02/22/99

As a recruiter I have read hundreds of resumes through the years. Many of them are well done, some have minor problems and a few are so poor that they present a serious problem in the hiring process. I suggest that you thoroughly read one of the readily available books on the subject before you even start writing your resume. A professional service is a good option but be careful, some hiring officials want to see the fruit of your own labor. While this column will hardly scratch the surface, here are some tips that address a few of the pet peeves I have developed from the mountain of resumes I have seen through the years.

· **Your present job should be in the present tense.**

· **Previous jobs should be in the past tense.**

· **Do not refer to yourself in the third person or use "I"; in a resume--the "I" is understood.**

  Overall, be consistent throughout your resume--with the formatting, style, and 'look' of the resume.

· **Use bullets instead of paragraphs for your responsibilities, it's easier to read. Highlight only those things you want the reader to see first. If it is not a positive, don't put it in bold.**

· Run spell check and grammar check several times, there is no excuse whatsoever for misspellings or grammatical errors. Make it perfect—small errors can reflect poorly and cause you to be eliminated from consideration.

· Have someone else proofread your work.

· Be meticulous and accurate with all information (work history, job duties, education, etc.). If you falsify anything you risk disaster and it can come back to haunt you long after you get a new job.

· **Be brief, the interview is the place to expand on your accomplishments.**

· If you have a technical summary list only the hardware and software that you have significant experience with. A list of dozens of products will raise questions and cast doubt.

· Be consistent in how you organize and describe your accomplishments. **Start each entry with an action word … designed, implemented, managed, directed, etc.**

· Double check beginning and ending dates. If there are overlaps or other easily misunderstood timeframes consider adding a concise explanation.

Write a resume, not a job description
By Frank Schoff
Network World Fusion Focus on Careers, 7/20/98

One of the most common, and serious, mistakes an individual makes in the development of a resume is to create what I call the "job description resume." Simply stated, it is nothing more than a reprint of old job descriptions, strung together in resume form. Typically, the individual will show the position title and then a series of "Responsible for" statements that have been lifted from job descriptions. This process is repeated for each job the person has held.

What's wrong with that format? Everything. If one of your goals in creating a resume is to distinguish yourself from the masses, a job description resume does exactly the reverse; it lumps you in with everyone else who has a similar job description. Further, you have not told the resume reader what you have done; you have only told the reader what you were responsible for. As a recruiter, I know the responsibilities are not always indicative of accomplishments.

That's what should be on your resume: **accomplishments.** But how do you get from responsibilities to accomplishments? **Take each responsibility statement and convert it to five specific accomplishments. Go back and review your performance appraisals. Go over reports and recommendations you've written. You'll have more accomplishments than resume space permits. Use only the best, and save the rest for interview material.**