

GOOD CONTEMPORARY ADVICE FOR JOB SEEKERS

The advice I've always heard is to follow up with a phone call after submitting your resume to make sure you've been noticed. However, a majority of job postings specifically request no phone calls. What's the protocol in the digital age

Yes, we are seeing more and more of the direction to not place a phone call, but I am not sure that you still can't follow up and be okay. I would also consider blowing through the digital age and writing a handwritten note as follow up. Really, it's okay to still do some things the old fashioned way.

If you've worked in different areas (Logistics, Customer Svc & Inventory Analysis, for example) during your career, is it best to do a chronological or functional resume?

It's a situational answer. I'm a believer in targeted resumes, which means that if you are applying to a logistics job then you could consider focusing your resume on the functional experience of logistics as the primary and the other areas as secondary. You are still going to have to provide some chronological experience timeline, but calling out a certain area of expertise, that is applicable to the job specifications can be helpful to the resume reviewer. Functional resumes (those that are formatted for an area of skills) can tell a great story of you.

I have a solid background with sound experience and skill set that is easily transferable, however my resume is not getting me the interviews needed. I lost my job 11/2009 and am searching for FT Perm employment. What do you think about the gap/should it be addressed in resume? How? Thank you!

I can't tell from your question what you did with the "gap time", but if you have spent it doing things that are productive like volunteering or improving yourself then that is great to call out and use as an example of the kind of person you are.

We always hear it's best to find a person to send your resume directly to. What are good ways to find the best person to send a resume to (bypassing HR)? I've been told LinkedIn, calling and asking (though after having a job in an office in the past I know what a pain it can be to properly direct someone)

This is a great question and you are correct that getting to the right person is always the best. Yes, you can use LinkedIn to find who works there and who might be the hiring manager. Also,

consider Glassdoor.com to learn about the interview process and who might be the contact person. Regardless, doing the extra leg work can pay off.

Cover letter: How flashy should it be? How does it "tag team" with the resume?

Cover letters do still matter these days as they are a part of the story of you and since you are trying to tell a compelling story then use the cover letter to fill in the parts of your story that a resume can't easily tell. Think about the cover letter as the "why" of what you have done and what you want to do.

Is a one page resume with key words better than a three page resume with details for scanners? I recently read great advice on the importance of using KEYWORDS in your resume. This can help resumes pop up in a search, as well as reflect a grasp of a potential employers' language. With that said, how might a job-seeker learn what Keywords would be relevant and effective to use?

I am not a strong believer that what we are trying to do is fool/get past the keyword reader. Your resume will end up in the hands of a human and when it does you want it to reflect who you are and what you are about. At the end of the day, we tend to want to bring people in to interview because we are curious about what is "between the lines" on the resume. So, if you can tell your story shortly, all the better but don't let yourself be drug into the keyword search net solely.

Everyone's getting telephone screened now a days... how do I stand out in a telephone interview from the rest of the pack?

The best thing you can do on a telephone interview is to be really up on the company and have good questions for the interviewer. You also want to be concise with your answers. Just assume someone is doing email on the other end of the call, so be sure and bring them into the conversation with those insightful conversational questions.

I have begun to hear about using video as an attachment to my resumes.

In all disclosure, I sit on the Board of Directors of HireVue so I am a huge believer that we will all be doing a digital interview before we meet someone face to face. So, I am a fan of having a prepared video, if it authentic and really you. If a picture is worth a 1000 words then what will a video be worth? A lot.

What can you do to improve your resume, when your job history has several shorter employment (1-2 years per job) do to businesses closing, downsizing or merging.

Call out why those jobs were short and best you can explain how you were caught up in large scale downsizing, shutdowns, etc. It's okay, really. Companies realize in today's world that we can't control it all.

I am 27 and just finishing up my MBA. I have 4 years of experience in HR, but am trying to transition to a marketing career. I am happy with my resume format. But I feel that it lacks the powerful metrics that give a resume credibility. Because I have little experience, what is the best way to beef up my resume with credibility to facilitate my career transition.

You ask a great question that provides an insight that many people forget to include in their resume and that is the results that matter from the work that you do. When someone reviews a resume there is that question that is in their mind which is something like, "So what?" It sounds harsh but we need to be able to equate results with the work we do. We can always find some result to attach to your experience. You ask how to do so with credibility. Tell the truth obviously, but if you have examples of how what you did increased sales, service, or quality of the business then call them out. Even if small stuff. It matters.

IT positions today seem to have too many ultra-specific requirements on software type, version, language and tool skillsets required. I'm not sure whether to tailor every resume and every cover letter for every position of which I feel that I'm qualified, just so that a word-search bot can optimize my selection because someone in HR can't. Is there a better approach?

Don't tailor the resume for the keyword search. Tailor the resume to the job/company and to who you are and what you can do. But, tailoring for the company can be good. Again, check out the company as best you can to understand their "language".

Is it worth to have your CV done by a professional? In the past I worked with an outplacement rep and I'm satisfied with the final product. Lately I have been solicited by emails for me to pay for someone to rewrite my CV. Some of the comments seem valid but not sure spending a few hundred dollars make sense. I realized if it gets me a job it will be money well spent but in the long run it is worth it?

This all depends on how well you think you can tell your own story or need someone else to help you. You might want to take your current resume and share with five trusted people and see what they think.