

How To Craft The Opening Statement Of Your Resume

The most precious piece of real estate in your entire resume is the top of the first page. At the cursory glance, this is the area that is going to get the most attention. And there are some things you can do to make that most of that – or get your resume tossed in the “not interested” pile.

Crafting The Opening Statement Of Your Resume

Here’s a quick checklist of things NOT to do when crafting the opening statement of your resume:

1. Don’t Generalize

Focus, not generalization is critical. Say, for example, the VP of Sales for a Fortune 500 company gets a hold of your resume. They are reading your opening statement that starts with: “Sales executive with 15 years of experience building teams and consensus, expanding territories and so on...” Ultimately this tells the reader very little.

What questions might this reader have? I guarantee you they are trying to come up with a framework of perspective about you that includes things like: Do you have experience with regional, national or global sales? How big are the teams you have managed? What kind of companies have you called on and what is the dollar figure of the products or services you have represented? Any particular selling skills such as conceptual selling, or academic credentials like MBA? Using a combination of keywords and a brief opening statement, you can paint a picture (quickly) that satisfies (not frustrates) your reader.

2. Don’t Write An Opening Statement Over Six Lines Deep

If you have Googled executive resume writers and seen their samples, you might notice professional resumes are becoming more and more visually impactful and much less dense in text. This is because big blocks of text in your resume will seldom get read. You must say what you wish to say directly, simply and briefly. Focus on the value you bring to the table. In other words, what happens when you do what you do – vs. outlining tasks and skills. After all, what does someone who reads your resume want to know? It sounds harsh, but it is: “What good are you to me? Why should I be reading this?” Your focus on value demonstrates that you “get” that.

3. Don’t Speak In First Person Or Past Tense

New grad resumes, mid-level resumes and executive resumes all have one thing in common: they are written in implied first person. Don’t say: “I offer 5 years of social media marketing experience,” but “offer 5 years of social media marketing experience.”

