



Only the Best Resumes Get the Interviews

By Bob Langieri

The rules and tools of job searching have changed, and your career can vary greatly depending on how you use them. It is no longer enough to just send a resume; it has become critical that you write your resume to be properly handled electronically by the likes of "HAL" of "2001 a Space Odyssey" and still have a format that is appealing to the "human" who actually understands what the company is looking for. You might be the best Developer/Programmer Analyst, IT manager, or systems administrator, but unless you are also a professional resume writer, you need to open your mind to learning something new about resume writing.

You Are Competing Against the World – Bigger Supply, Less Demand

The internet and email have really changed how you look for a job as well as how you present your skills. When a company advertises a position, it is rarely in the local paper classifieds; it is tied to job boards, and those job boards have a global reach. Most jobs are posted through recruiters and some direct employers. Over the past few years, opportunities for IBM i/RPG professionals have diminished and there are more people competing for fewer jobs. Because of the larger than normal pool of good people, employers are being more specific about what skills they will accept, insist on software or ERP packages they use, even specify maximum commuting distances. In other words they want someone that has everything. If they can't see the match in the first few paragraphs, you are out!

Your resume is the first impression you make on an employer. Think of your resume as your ad in the yellow pages that jumps out and says, "**Call me first; I have what you need.**" It is your opportunity to advertise your skills and abilities and show why you would be an asset to the potential employer. It's your opportunity to give the employer reasons to interview you. It is the "door opener." A poorly written resume could kill any chance of an interview.

The Age of Automation

A growing number of companies are using resume-tracking software to deal with the volume of resumes they have to deal with. Keep in mind that companies are not only looking for developers and systems support people, they are also looking for people in customer service, sales, accounting, etc. There are no less than 100 different software packages out there for tracking potential candidates. It can be fabulous when used effectively, but it is not perfect. Remember: Garbage in, Garbage out. Never send your resume as a .PDF because it cannot be imported to most of these parsing systems that pick up keywords. Text resumes look horrible and antiquated. They say that you are inept at the type of documentation users expect.

Your resume is the key to opening the doors opportunity. In its simplest form, your resume is an advertisement of your capabilities and potential to an employer.

Key Points:

- Name your resume document the same as your name – FirstName_LastName.doc
- Limit your resume to 2 pages 3 pages maximum (most people read only the top half of page one to screen a resume).
- Use a font size of 10 or 12 using either Arial (font size 10 or 11) or Times New Roman (12pt)
- Margins should be at least ¾ inch to 1 inch.
- Because more resumes are being captured by specialized HR software to parse contact info and key words, you must make sure your resume can be electronically imported properly. Do Not Use Text Boxes or side columns no matter how pretty they look.
- Your heading should include your Name on line 1, Address line 2, City, State, Zip Code on line 3, Home Phone on line 4, Business Phone on line 5, and E-Mail on line 6.

- Never send out a resume without all of your contact info including home e-mail address and a daytime phone number on the resume, and not just in your e-mail. Example:
- Include a Summary of Experience paragraph.
- Briefly list Accomplishments (in a bullet list). Objective is "old School"
- List Hardware and Software Skills
- List Employment History - Most recent first, include month and year (include the last 15 - 20 years depending on how many jobs you have had). Give the most information about current and recent jobs and minimal details about jobs more than 10-15 years ago. I recommend going back 15 years and then add a statement: Prior experience includes working with RPG400 in manufacturing, retail and distribution applications. Details upon request.
- List Education last - Degree, Technical Training, Certifications, classes
- Avoid using graphics like Microsoft Certified as they cannot be read by resume search engines
- E-mail your resume as a Word attachment only. Do not send as a PDF. Only Word documents can be easily imported by automation parsing and keyword software.
- Tailor your resume to what the company is looking for. When an ad lists several skill sets that they require, **use that list** as your bullet points to summarize your skills.
- Do not fax your resume unless there is no e-mail address. Does anyone not have an email?
- Do not include personal information about marital status, height, weight, etc.
- Do include IT organizations, like OCEAN, COMMON, charities & volunteer efforts. Be careful about listing organizations that could be polarizing or political.
- Spell check - spell check and spell check again!
- State "References available upon request" on the last line of your resume. Keep a current reference list on a separate document that you can submit when asked. Get permission to use references and include their daytime contact information.
- Update your resume once a year even if you are not looking. Add any new skills.
- Test that your attachment is received okay by sending it to a friend. This is also good to help proof read your resume.

First Impressions Are Critical

Your resume is the first chance you have to make an impression. How it looks and reads is almost as important as the experience you have. It's a sample of how well you communicate. There is not one perfect resume format, and you will find variations everywhere you look. The Web is full of resume tips and samples. You can also visit [my web site](#) for a small sampling of resumes for IBM i and network personnel.

Bob Langieri is the owner of [Excel Technical](#), an IT staffing and contract programming firm in Southern California specializing in the IBM i/RPG market. He is also a founding member of OCEAN and a past president and past board member of OCEAN User Group for over 25 years. He can be reached at bob@excelsearch.com.