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8th Edition

# Resumes

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
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to build a winning resume

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**Laura DeCarlo**

*Award-Winning Certified Master  
Resume Writer*





# Resumes

8th Edition

by **Laura DeCarlo**

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

## Resumes For Dummies<sup>®</sup>, 8th Edition

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# Introduction

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Let's be clear — this is not your father's resume! In our think-fast, technology-driven world of 24/7 communication, things change virtually overnight — including resume writing. The eighth edition of *Resumes For Dummies* includes extensive updated information on the newest trends and changes with a one-two punch of creative elements that the tech savvy will excitedly embrace.

Get ready for an innovative ride as I take you through fresh digital ideas — from social networking profiles to resume-capable mobile devices — and new techniques. I present a fresh but still user-friendly approach to making sure your resume stands up out of a virtual stack of applicants and screams, “Read me!”

Much of what worked before in resume writing still applies but is rarely sufficient now. Just as you have to keep up with the changes in your professional field, you have to keep up with changes in presenting yourself in writing, and this book helps you do exactly that. Prepare to embrace the next chapter in personal marketing!

Ready to win that interview for your dream job? Okay, let's getting going to update your resume and find the job you want.

## About This Book

---

*Resumes For Dummies*, 8th Edition, is the playbook showing you how to write powerful, targeted, and creative resumes. Just as importantly, I show you how to use them with important ideas and strategies in your search for the right job. The first five chapters spotlight the latest resume technology and innovations; the remainder of the book covers timeless resume success factors and includes samples of winning resumes. In this edition, I've upped the game by providing you with the new and the next in creative marketing resumes — *for those who dare*.

I hope you spend some time studying the sample resumes in the book, and maybe even model your own resume on one of the dozens I've included. Please note that all resume samples, except those in the creative resume chapter (Chapter 18), have the word *dates* as a placeholder for actual dates so you can focus your attention on key resume concepts.

You may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you have it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

## Foolish Assumptions

I assume you picked up this book for one of the following reasons:

- » You've never written a resume and want an expert, yet friendly, hand on your shoulder.
- » You've written a resume — it got you where you are today — and you want to do better next time.
- » You like where you are today but want more from life than blooming where you're planted. To move to the next level, your experience tells you that it's time for a resume makeover.
- » You need a new resume for that great job you heard about but worry that too many competitors will submit virtually the same cookie-cutter document pirated from somewhere. To stop looking like a human copy machine, you want to understand resume writing from the ground up.
- » You've heard about sweeping technology-based changes in the way people and jobs find each other. A realist, you know that technology can't be un-invented. You want to be sure your resume is in sync with the latest updates.
- » You understand that today, job searches (and resume writing) are all about self-marketing, and you want a competitive edge so you can stand out and compete in a world where resumes can look as glossy and polished as the finest advertising.

I further assume that you're someone who likes information that cuts to the chase, sometimes with a smile. You find all that and more in the following pages.

## Icons Used in This Book

For *Dummies* signature icons are the little round pictures you see in the margins of the book. I use them to guide your attention to key bits of information. Here's a list of the icons and what they mean.





REMEMBER

Some points in these pages are so useful that I hope you keep them in mind as you read. I make a big deal out of these ideas with this icon.



TIP

Advice and information that can spark a difference in the outcome of your resume-led job search are flagged with this icon.



WARNING

You don't want to go wrong when presenting yourself and your achievements on paper. This icon signals that trouble may be ahead if you don't make a good decision.

## Beyond the Book

In addition to all the great info you can find in the book you're reading right now, this product also comes with some access-anywhere goodies on the web. Check out the cheat sheet at [www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/resumes](http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/resumes) for details on how to make your resume the best it can be, how to protect your personal information, and what to leave off of your resume.

## Where to Go from Here

Most *For Dummies* books are set up so you can flip to the section of the book that meets your present needs. You can do that in this book, too. I tell you where to find the information you might need when I refer to a concept, and I define terms as they arise to enable you to feel at home no matter where you open the book.

But this book breaks new ground in resume creation and distribution. To get ahead and stay ahead, start by reading Chapters 1 through 5. In this era of tweeting and texting, they help you say hello to new ideas that offer more reach for your time investment.



# 1

## **Getting Started with Resumes**

## **IN THIS PART . . .**

Find out why resumes remain relevant and get an overview of how technology plays a role in your job search.

Mine the wide world of social media for job leads, networking opportunities, and self-marketing.

Discover the ins and outs of using smartphones and tablets in your job search.

Check out how employers gather information from your resume and see how formatting can affect this process.

Understand why it's so important to be aware of your online reputation and know how to keep it in top-notch condition.

Recognize when you have to go the extra mile to network your way to job opportunities.

- » Growing your career with truly terrific resumes
- » Blending human know-how with new technology
- » Staying on the leading edge in your job search

## Chapter **1**

# Getting a Job in the Digital Age

**A**re resumes outdated? Every few years an employment expert excitedly announces a so-called new discovery: Resumes are old hat and unnecessary. The expert advises job seekers to forgo resumes and talk their way into an interview. This advice rarely works in real life. Very few people are eloquent enough to carry the entire weight of an employment marketing presentation without a resume. Plus, employers expect some type of resume as a form of researchable and documentable proof.

One resume strategy depends not on verbal talent but on technology. In some situations, recruiting professionals encourage employers who've grown weary of hiking over mountains of resumes to decide who gets offered a job interview to replace them with rigid application forms on the web — complete with screening questions and tests.

Another scenario — also technology dependent — reflects the view that online profiles on social networking sites are pinch-hitting for resumes as self-marketing documents. As I point out in Chapter 2, online profiles are equivalent to generic resumes. Because prospective employers are likely to hunt down your LinkedIn profile, the ideal strategy is to make it as targeted as possible to your current job target.

Most recently, recruiters and employers are adopting artificial intelligence (AI) systems such as Mya and HigherVue to perform resume and interview screening. This development is yet another reason for having a strong and effective resume.

This book combines the details of creating a marvelous resume with various technological delivery options. In this chapter, you preview what's ahead in this comprehensive guide to resumes and how to use resumes and other career-marketing communications to reach your goal in the great job chase.

## Resumes Are Here to Stay

At some point in a hunt for better employment, everyone needs effective career-marketing communications. That is, everyone needs a resume — or something very much like a resume — that tells the employer why

- » You're an excellent match for a specific job
- » The value you bring matters
- » Your skills are essential to the bottom line
- » You're worth the money you hope to earn
- » You're qualified to solve the employer's problems
- » Your accomplishment claims can be believed (and verified)

Resumes that deliver on these decision points remain at the heart of the job search ecosystem.

## Keeping Up with Resume Times

The ongoing need for terrific resumes doesn't mean the job chase is frozen in time. Far from it. In this digital age — when 66 percent of young people (ages 18–24) are checking their social media updates when they first wake up, even before they go to the bathroom or brush their teeth — every job seeker needs to embrace the entire package of tools and strategies for getting a new job. The package contains new and traditional components:

- » Digital tools that are rapidly altering the nature of how jobs are found and filled in America and across the globe

» Timeless know-how and savvy developed by the best employment giants over decades



TIP

Don't think the digital age is just for the young. In fact, the number of people in the 55- to 64-year-old age bracket using social media has grown by 79 percent in the past few years with sites such as Twitter. Further, the 45-54 age group is currently the fastest growing demographic user of sites such as Facebook.



REMEMBER

New technological ideas enhanced with historically proven smarts are a winning combination. Technology changes in a decade; human nature doesn't.

Reset your concept of what you must know about resumes in the job chase. Writing great resumes is no longer enough. You must know how to distribute those resumes to people who can hire you or at least move you along in the process.

## Targeted resume rules

Job seekers, brace yourselves: Navigating the job market is getting ever trickier and requires considerably more effort than the last time you baited your resume hook — even a short five years ago. The *generic resume*, which I refer to as a *core resume* throughout this book, is at the top of the list of job search tools on the way out. (Read all about it in Chapter 8.)



WARNING

You probably have an all-purpose resume lying around in a desk drawer somewhere. What legions of job seekers everywhere like about the all-purpose resume is that it casts a wide net to snag the attention of many employers — and it saves time for those of us who are too busy getting through the day to keep writing different resumes for different jobs. I appreciate that. But your one-size-fits-all work of art is obsolete, and it's getting lost in more and more recruiting black holes.

The core resume has been replaced by the *targeted resume* (which I refer to in this book as OnTarget), a customized resume tailor-made for a specific employment opportunity.



REMEMBER

An *OnTarget resume* is a valuable marketing tool to convince the reader your work can benefit a specific employer and that you should make the cut of candidates invited in for a closer look. An OnTarget resume

- » Addresses a given opportunity, showing clearly how your qualifications are a close match to a job's requirements
- » Uses powerful words to persuade and clean design to attract interest
- » Plays up strengths and downplays any factor that undermines your bid for an interview

## OF FRIENDS AND RESUMES

“The number one way to use your OnTarget resume is to find a friend to walk it into the hiring manager’s office or recruiter’s office with the friend’s stamp of approval,” advises Mark Mehler, cofounder and principal of CareerXroads and a long-time Internet job-hunting expert. His firm’s annual survey of how people get hired at major corporations shows that one out of three openings is filled this way.

### Unfit resumes are zapped

The word got out, slowly at first. And then — *whoosh!* — millions of job seekers found out how easy it was to instantly put an online resume in the hands of employers across town as well as across the country.

*Post and pray* became the job seeker’s mantra as everyone figured out how to manipulate online resumes and upload them into the online world with the click of a mouse.

Resume overload began in the first phase of the World Wide Web, a time frame of about 1994 to 2005. It became exponentially larger and more frustrating as commercial resume-blasting services appeared on the scene. Almost overnight, it seemed, anyone willing to pay the price could splatter resume confetti everywhere an online address could be found.

The consequences of resume spamming for employers were staggering: Despite their use of the era’s best recruiting selection software (and now use of AI), employers were overrun with unsolicited, disorganized generic resumes containing everything but the kitchen sink.

And what about the job seekers who sent all those generic, unstructured resumes? They were left to wonder in disappointment why they never heard a peep from the recipient employer.

The answer’s in the numbers: A job advertised online by a major company creates a feeding frenzy of many thousands of resumes. Employment databases are hammered with such mismatches as sales clerks and sports trainers applying for jobs as scientists and senior managers, and vice versa.



WARNING

Even when you use your OnTarget resume to apply to opportunities you find posted online, don’t hold your breath. Popular job boards can have as many as 40,000 new resumes uploaded every day. With that kind of volume, an employer finding your resume among all the applicants for a job is like someone finding a needle in a haystack.



## Tried-and-true techniques remain

A resume that doesn't show off the great goods you're selling isn't worth much. Show off your assets in effective style by making sure you follow the suggestions in this book. I show you how to

- » **Choose the resume format that fits your goals and situation.** What goes where in a resume isn't a one-size-fits-all consideration. Chapter 6 tells you about formatting your resume and provides outlines for popular resume designs.
- » **Get your points across in powerful language.** Make your strengths stronger by describing results in vibrant language that stands tall. I give you examples in Chapter 10.
- » **Use design techniques effectively.** Big chunks of text cause eye strain (and boredom). Present your information in a way that enables readers instead of inhibiting them. Chapter 11 shows you how.
- » **Overcome hurdles.** Getting attention from potential employers is harder in certain situations. Chapter 14 gives you suggestions for easing your transition into a new phase of life by overcoming challenges in your background.
- » **Exercise your creative muscle and think outside the box with unique formatting options for a marketing-savvy, standout resume.** Chapter 12 walks you through steps on how to leverage these new layout techniques.



TIP

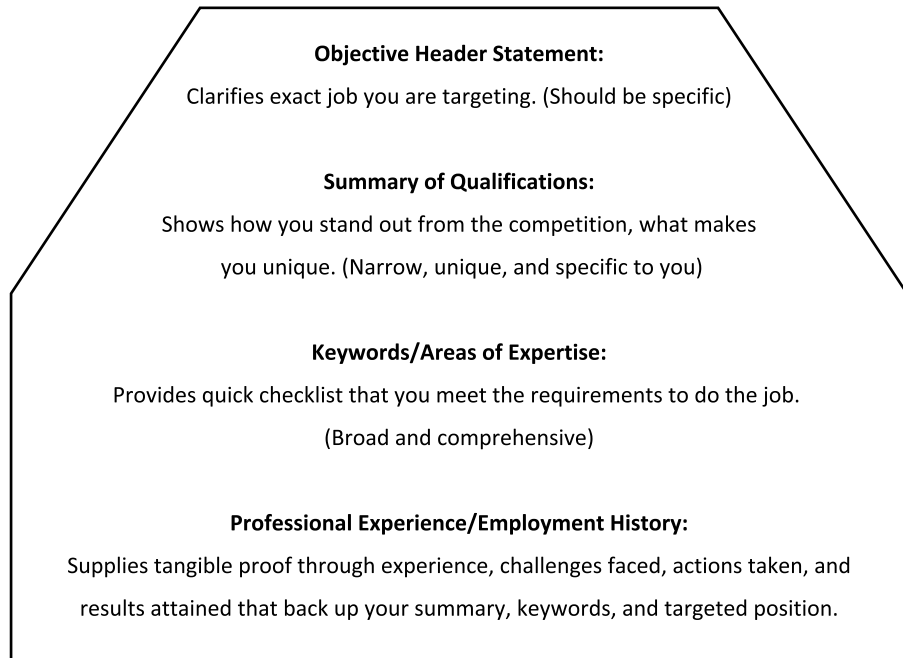
See your resume as a reverse funnel that pulls the prospective employer into it (see Figure 1-1). Your resume starts narrow to match the job you're targeting. Next, it expands with your summary to show how you stand out from the competition (which excites prospective employers and pulls them in further). Then your resume further expands to encompass all the requisite skills you possess to fit the position. Finally, your resume ends with the large base of the funnel showing your relevant employment experience using those skills and producing those results.

Use this easy system to create your resume funnel:

1. **Objective Header Statement:** Begin with the position you are targeting.
2. **Summary of Qualifications:** Add an overview of the strengths that make you a perfect fit for the job.
3. **Keywords/Areas of Expertise:** List the key skills you have for the position.
4. **Professional Experience/Employment History:** Your employment history section provides proof that supports the objective, summary, and keyword sections.

This simple strategy encourages employers to read your entire resume.

## RESUME FUNNEL



**FIGURE 1-1:** Use the reverse funnel method to write your resume and strategically present yourself and your qualifications.

## Technologies Facilitate Job Searching

After the Internet caught job-search fire in the mid-1990s — instantly whisking resumes to and fro — little new technology changed the picture until the social web groundswell burst upon us in the mid-2000s. Now job seekers have the tools to

- » Use social networks to dramatically enlarge personal networks
- » Tap their networks to identify jobs and for recommendations
- » Go directly to hiring authorities
- » Market accomplishments in professional profiles
- » Pinpoint employment targets with position mapping



REMEMBER

Continue to apply for jobs with an OnTarget resume and cover letter. Classic job-search methods still pay off, but they're not enough in an economy where jobs have gone missing.

Work every day on a well-rounded approach that emphasizes face-to-face networking, social networking, web tools, online identity building, and professional associations while still briefly touching on less viable elements such as job boards and print ads.

## Social networking scoops jobs

Enormously popular social networking sites and social media are poised to gain even more fans in the employment process. Chapter 2 reports on the state of the industry and suggests how you can “go social.”

Expect a never-ending stream of new technical bells and whistles in social media, which you can see in the constantly emerging (and disappearing) features on such biggies as LinkedIn and Facebook.

Tools such as location awareness will help you identify companies with opportunities in your area on Facebook. LinkedIn’s Search for Jobs feature and the ability to make contacts with just about anyone also let you identify and nail down opportunities as they are listed.

It’s all about the new and the now, which means watching trends. For breaking news about social networking, become acquainted with the following websites:

- » **Mashable** ([www.mashable.com](http://www.mashable.com)) is a top guide to social media and a hub for those looking to make sense of the online realm.
- » **Social Media Today** ([www.socialmediatoday.com/](http://www.socialmediatoday.com/)) provides the latest tools, tips, and trends in social media.

Chapter 5 discusses ways to keep your online reputation in good shape for the job search.

## Mobile’s on the move

Smartphones came on fast. Tablet computers are all the rage. Mobile communication is here to stay. Even when you’re not rooted to a desktop computer, you can send and receive emails, network online, and download apps. Chapter 3 examines the latest in mobile job chasing.



WARNING

Despite the move to mobile and Google’s penalties for sites that aren’t mobile adapted, many companies and job sites are still unable to accept applications from a phone or tablet. When you find yourself clicking an Apply Now link that just won’t click, that’s your tip that you need to migrate to a desktop to apply.

## Quick-change process customizes content

In this employers' market, you need to become 100 times more strategic and savvy in writing OnTarget resumes and getting them to key decision makers. The generic resume has become a nonstarter, and successful seekers are writing customized resumes.

But have no fear: In Chapter 9, I take you through how to turn a one-size-fits-all core resume into OnTarget resumes with ease.

## Bios gain new importance as profiles

The short professional bio is making a comeback as a social profile (see Chapter 2). The short bio helps when you want to apply for a job, network, post on a guest blog, and so on. It tells people quickly who you are, what you do, and why they should care.



TIP

Plan on writing a bio in three lengths — a micro bio, a short bio, and a longer bio. A micro bio is a sentence you can use on your Twitter profile (280 characters). A short bio is a paragraph (about 100 words). A long bio can be up to a page.

## YourName.com becomes vital

More people are living their lives on the Internet, and episodes of name highjacking are rising. Realization is mushrooming that controlling the exclusive online rights to your own name makes sense, even if you're not a business owner.

You can protect your identity in its purest web form by buying a domain for your name — YourName.com. You can also purchase a URL (web address) for your resume — YourNameresume.com. See Chapters 2 and 5 to find out why owning your name has gained red-alert status in the digital age. Claim your name!

- » Appreciating what social job searching can do for you
- » Tying into top-rated social networking sites
- » Creating profiles you're proud of

## Chapter 2

# Enlisting Social Media

The familiar adage claiming that the secret to landing a good job “is not what you know but who you know” is hereby officially stamped incomplete in this era of online social connectivity. Consider this revised version: The secret to landing a good job is what you know, who you know, who knows you, and who your friends know.

All this knowing is exploding on the web's *social networking sites*, a big part of *social media*. The terms overlap in popular usage and definitions vary widely. Here's my take:

» **Social networking sites** are web venues with huge online databases of information that individuals have uploaded about themselves. They do it to mingle with other people in the site's database — to put themselves “out there.” Their autobiographical information is public or semi-public and usually includes a description of who they are (a *profile*) or a short biography (a *bio*) or both.

Many social networkers just want to hang around with each other. Others aim to grow their circle of acquaintances and their influence. Still others are interested in a specific subject (such as dating or business). Social networking sites typically have a personal focus, but a growing number, such as LinkedIn, operate with a professional purpose.

» **Social media** is a set of technologies and channels that enable a virtual community to interact in the same space. Social media includes a wide variety of forums, ranging from social sharing sites, such as YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, and Flickr, to social networking sites, such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

There's little question that two-way communication on the interactive web is dramatically changing the game for job seekers and recruiters alike. If you're scratching your head about how social networking actually works and are unsure how to use it to find a job and promote your career, you won't want to miss this chapter.

## The Sweeping Reach of Social Networking

Reflecting the shape of job search now and job search to come, social networking dominates Internet use. With over two billion users, Facebook alone claims over 70 percent of the world's Internet population as visitors. Bigger than most countries, Facebook has more users than the United States has citizens.

To give you some context, when this book was last updated just three years ago, there were only half a billion Facebook users. The growth rate of social networking is startling: The number of people visiting social media sites keeps rising in all age brackets. Social networking is not a fad but an honest-to-goodness paradigm shift in the way people do business around the globe, including the business of finding employment.

Think about how to harness this power, which offers a double rainbow of job-search help — from direct access to hiring managers and quick identification of potential allies at prospective employers, to easy look-ups on company profiles and obtaining posted endorsements from your network. Just to keep it interesting, different services offer different features. (Similarly, some charge fees, and others are free.)

But, at root, the many benefits of using social networking services for career management and job-hunting fall into two basic categories. In signing on with one or more social networking services, you are

- » **Showing the world how hireable you are.** By filling out profiles and listing your credentials, you advertise your potential or immediate availability on an e-billboard that helps recruiters and employers find you.
- » **Gathering supporters to hold open doors.** When you collect, connect, and network with friendly contacts, you gain a potential source of referrals, get updates on their employers' hiring modes, receive insider fill-ins on company culture, and uncover other useful information.