



Randy's Work *and You*

August Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

Our feature article is "Power-Up Your Résumé" by Joe Turner. He offers four tips that will help your résumé get noticed. In Interview Tips, I look at two tough interview questions. In Boomer Corner, click on a link that talks about Boomers and Generation X.

I keep hearing mixed prognoses for video resumes, but for those who are intrigued, Vault offers a brief (about 2.5 minutes) video guide to video resumes: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdH4FejMB7k>

Copies of all past E-zines are archived on my website. Feel free to pass this E-zine on.

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This month's topics:

- 1. Featured Article: Four Tips to *Power-Up* Your Resume**
- 2. Interview Tips: Two tough questions**
- 3. Boomer Corner: Boomers vs. Generation X**
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1. Four Tips to *Power-Up* Your Resume

By Joe Turner, "*The Job Search Guy*"

The job market is tough and it's getting tougher. Your resume is your number one marketing tool and it may not be doing its job - getting you an interview.

One reason may be lack of time. With the increased competition for jobs, there is very little time spent reading any one resume. It's been estimated that today's resume is only getting about 20 seconds of "eyeball time". That's not much time to score. In fact, most resumes will get quickly screened out and dumped on the reject pile.

The other reason is lack of interest. Most resumes today lack a sense of urgency. They don't answer the all-important question, "What's in it for the employer?"

Here are 4 tips on how you can power up your resume for today's more competitive job search arena to overcome these dilemmas.

1. Focused Objective

Does your resume have a clear, focused objective? Does it identify one clear job title that you are seeking? Leave out all that nonsense about "challenging opportunity with a dynamic company". Remember, it's not about *you*.

Try this: lead off with a clear statement of the job title you are seeking under the Objective heading. For example, "Chief Financial Officer". Nothing more is needed.

2. Keyword Section

Everyone pays lip service to this, but few act on it. If you don't, you're missing the boat in two major ways:

Your resume needs to get flagged by a computer. To strengthen your odds, you need every potential keyword working for you. And not just your skill sets, either. Make sure to add all your industry buzzwords as well as your biggest soft skills. Did you know that some of the highest searched keywords today include terms we often overlook? These include "problem-solving", "leadership", and "oral/written communication".

You must appeal to the human that reads your resume. A reader will scan a great keyword summary section within the first 20 seconds of looking at your resume. When added to your personal branding statement below, you increase your chances of hooking this reader and getting a more in-depth reading.

3. Personal Branding Statement

It doesn't matter whether you're a CFO, a software project manager or a wedding photographer. Answer this question: "What is it that makes you unique from other applicants?"

Don't think that just having great skill sets or years of experience is going to give you any edge. Lots of other candidates have the same or better skills as you.

The solution is to create a brand for yourself.

So how do you create your own brand? Review your resume. Does it have a clear statement that describes who you are and what you offer? This is called a "branding statement" and may also be described as a "value added" or "unique selling proposition". Don't confuse this with a "Summary of Qualifications" section that many candidates like to include. These are merely laundry lists of

core competencies and do nothing to make you stand out.

A true branding statement is a one-sentence description of who you are and what critical benefit you offer your next employer. It should describe your biggest strength and the resulting benefit to your previous employer. The best branding statements usually incorporate figures in dollars or percentages of money, or time that was gained or saved over a certain period of time. Here is an example for that CFO:

"Seasoned Chief Financial Officer strong in optimizing organizations to achieve maximum growth and market share who has produced new revenues or savings of over \$65 Million for my employers over the past eight years."

Does your resume have this strong a branding statement? If not, think about adding one. It'll take some time to develop a really good statement for yourself. Once done, however, you'll break that 20-second barrier and move that much farther ahead of your competitors.

4. Specific Achievements

Companies hire employees to be an asset to their balance sheet. That means your work involves helping a company either make money or save money. Think beyond your skill sets and job duties and think of as many ways as you can as to how you accomplish this.

For example, suppose you're a video photographer taping and editing weddings and special events. You take the extra step of performing all of your post-production work *before* submitting your final results. Your extra effort has saved your employer several hundred hours of additional work.

This translates into dollars saved by the employer and it's just this sort of achievement that must be on your resume. When you can, try to monetize, or put a dollar value on your achievements. Our photographer example might look like this:

"Saved my employer over \$6K in additional labor costs over the past 2 years by performing post-production work before submitting my final results."

By including several specific achievements where you've helped your employer make or save money, you separate yourself from your competitors and quickly gain the attention of your reader.

Summary

As the economy gets tougher, employers expect more from candidates before they hire them. This means more is expected from your resume to make the cut these days. If you add these four crucial elements to your resume, you can power it up to win that phone interview and take a step closer to the job you really

want.

As a recruiter, Joe Turner has spent the past 15 years finding and placing top candidates in some of the best jobs of their careers. Author of *Job Search Secrets Unlocked* and *Paycheck 911*, Joe has interviewed on radio talk shows and offers free insider job search secrets at:

<http://www.jobchangesecrets.com> <<http://www.jobchangesecrets.com>> .

2. Interview Tips— 2 tough interview questions.

What's your biggest fear?

In my search practice, I asked this question to see if candidates were truly risk takers. There is really only one wrong answer to this question: “Fear of failure”.

This answer indicates that the person pretty much plays it safe by fearing making a mistake. We all know that we learn from our mistakes and not our achievements.

Do you have any regrets?

This query somewhat relates to the fear question. If I received a litany of regrets, that was a red flag. Why? Because the candidate was still working through what they had learned from their experience. The right answer to this question is: “I have no regrets. I learn from my mistakes. And I don't make the same mistake twice.”

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Randy brings expertise in executive search as a certified career coach. He has guided all levels of professionals in the areas of career transition: changing careers, choosing a career direction, evaluating/negotiating offers, executive career marketing, finding jobs, getting organized, as well as finding opportunities for self-employment, freelancing and consulting. He holds an IJCTC certificate from the Career Planning and Adult Development, a CCMC (Certified Career Management Coach) from Career Coach

3. Boomer Corner:

Here is a website that helps delineate the difference between Boomers and Generation X. It has some good information and throws in some humor also.

<http://www.bbhq.com/bomrgenx.htm>

4. Success Story

How long should job hunters search before admitting they won't find the kind of work they want any time soon? In Amy Oberg's case, at least two years. She looked a bit longer than that before redirecting her path.

Ms. Oberg was building a career in corporate competitive intelligence when she suffered back-to-back job losses. But not just any job losses. She was a manager of competitive intelligence for Enron Corp. until the Houston energy giant became embroiled in an accounting scandal and laid off thousands in late 2001.

Ms. Oberg's next position, a contract competitive-intelligence role for Dynegy Inc., lasted about nine months. The concern laid off many staffers after settling a federal accounting probe.

She soon moved to Boston. Recession-battered companies were still slashing costs. Her Enron experience didn't help.

"People were interested in talking with me because they wanted to find out the inside skinny on Enron," Ms. Oberg says. "But there was a real cloud over that name. I had to be really sure that people were aware that I wasn't party to any of the stuff that (had been) going on there."

Ms. Oberg networked like crazy, joining groups such as Wind (which stands for "Wednesday is Networking Day"). She called everyone she knew from as far back as high school. She had about 150 informational meetings in Boston in a two year period.

Ms. Oberg even sent her resume to a Boston radio station with a weekly program about a local job seeker. The station interviewed her on air about her background and search. No nibbles.

By last fall, Ms. Oberg had interviewed for only six openings without receiving any offers. Her optimism was fading. "It was difficult to figure out what I was doing wrong and rectify it," she says. She finally decided to give up on pursuing a competitive-intelligence position. "It just wasn't going to work," she explains.

Unsure of her direction, Ms. Oberg began perusing Web sites for jobs, including craigslist.com. The free classified-ad site offers postings about hundreds of subjects organized by U.S. city. In December, she noticed that Gemini Advisors LLC was seeking an associate. The Concord, Mass., financial-advisory and investment-management firm had been launched in May 2004 to advise individuals and corporate clients about tax and investment issues.

The boutique needed someone who could manage its office while training to be a financial analyst and ultimately an adviser to clients, according to David Matias, a managing partner. About 10 of the 46 people responding to the ad were qualified, he says. The firm hired Ms. Oberg as its third employee because of her strong educational background, poised personality and self-motivation, he remembers. "She's very good on her feet."

Ms. Oberg, now 48 years old, feels she stumbled on an ideal career field.

Analyzing companies for investment purposes isn't much different from analyzing them for strategic reasons, she says. She must be licensed before she can begin advising clients -- and resume making the kind of money she earned before. But she believes the investment field offers good career prospects.

As for her two-year job search, "the most valuable lesson I learned was recognizing when to change course," she says. "That's a really hard thing to know, and it requires a lot of soul searching."

5. Humor Department

Here are some words of wisdom that make you think, and laugh.

1. 42.7% of all statistics are made up on the spot.
2. On the other hand, you have different fingers.
3. Remember, half the people you know are below average.
4. Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.
5. If you think nobody cares, try missing a couple of payments.
6. Hard work pays off in the future. Laziness pays off now.
7. Why do psychics have to ask you your name?
8. Light travels faster than sound. That's why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
9. OK, so what's the speed of dark?

6. Words that Inspire

"It is *always* your next move."

---Napoleon Hill,

Writer and motivational speaker

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