

## Portrait of a Winning Resume

By Chris Hingle

A resume is your history. It's your education, your career, your life's work all fit on a single piece of paper. A resume is often a hiring manager's first introduction to a job candidate, and in many ways it's a portrait of who you are.

Even though the recovery has begun, the number of job openings remains smaller than the number of qualified candidates. To tip the scale in your favor, you must change the way you think of yourself and the way employers look at you. After a brutal recession, executives need to focus on self reflection and regaining confidence in the qualities that make them valuable in the workforce. Today's job search requires more than just preparing a resume, it's about Planning, Presentation and Performance.

### **Planning:**

Take an inventory of your skills, your strengths and your experience. What sets you apart? It's critical that you know yourself better than ever before so you can portray yourself in a more confident and effective way. Not only does confidence affect how your resume comes across, it's equally important during the interview.

The market downturn has afflicted many to such a degree that regaining a positive edge is now critical to making career progress. Find a methodical way to study the skills and traits that you can offer a potential employer. Resources like online versions of common personality tests can be useful tools to gain more insight into how you can best fit into an organization.

### **Presentation:**

Your resume's wording, tone and layout should be as distinctive as you are. Make your resume reflective of your position. For example, a marketing professional's resume would be more gregarious, while an engineer's would be simple and efficient. If writing is not your strong suit, a professional resume service can be well worth the investment.

Whatever your style, clarity is always critical. A resume should be full of facts, not questions. Extra time a hiring manager spends figuring out dates, locations, company descriptions and job titles can hamper your chances of being hired. If a hiring manager

does not recognize something, don't count on him or her looking it up. Likewise, it's important to stress recent accomplishments and responsibilities rather than examples that are dated or less significant to what you do now. Be honest. Be you!

**Performance:**

Once you've painted a portrait of who you are and what you can do, you've only partially finished. Success with a resume depends on who reads it and what catches their attention. Think beyond paper and e-mail. Explore the ways Web video, social networks and other venues can get your resume in front of the eyes that matter. Also, when the time comes to submit your resume, don't forget the impact a well written cover letter can have in making a good first impression. And to make that lasting impression, follow-up with a thank you note.

Renewed economic growth will create new opportunities and new competition for jobs. Forget about the Great Recession – it's time for the Great Resurgence, and a standout resume is a solid place to start.

At Christopher Frederick, we've spent more than 20 years seeking out the candidates best suited to our clients' top positions. To learn more about how we can open doors for your company, contact Chris Hingle at 800-EXU-FIRM (398-3476), [chingle@cfrederick.com](mailto:chingle@cfrederick.com)