Great Resumes If You're Over 50

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Everyone needs a great resume to help open doors for them.

Notice I said, "help open doors."

You see, your experience is actually what opens the door for you. The resume is the vehicle to formally communicate your experience.

Resumes are rarely seen as physical documents any more

When someone receives an email of your resume, they are usually reading it as "screen shots" of one third to one half page each.
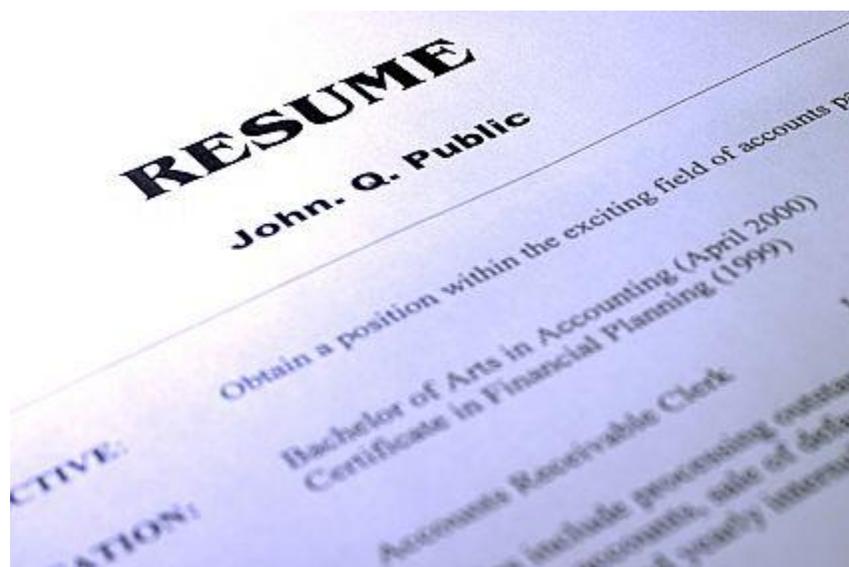
Sometimes, a resume will be "parsed," 'sliced and diced," imported into a company's applicant tracking system BEFORE anyone actually sees it.

Companies do this to comply with government reporting requirements and to allow them to contact you at a later date if another position becomes available that might fit your experience.

At the stage where someone will decide whether to interview you by telephone or in-person, your resume is generally not being seen on a piece of paper.

As a result you need to think of your resume in three distinct ways:

How it appears on a computer screen where generally people are only looking at a portion of a page.

How the content reflects your experience as it might be evaluated in an applicant tracking system.

How does your resume look on a physical piece of paper?

Before you start to write your resume, you need to be honest with yourself.
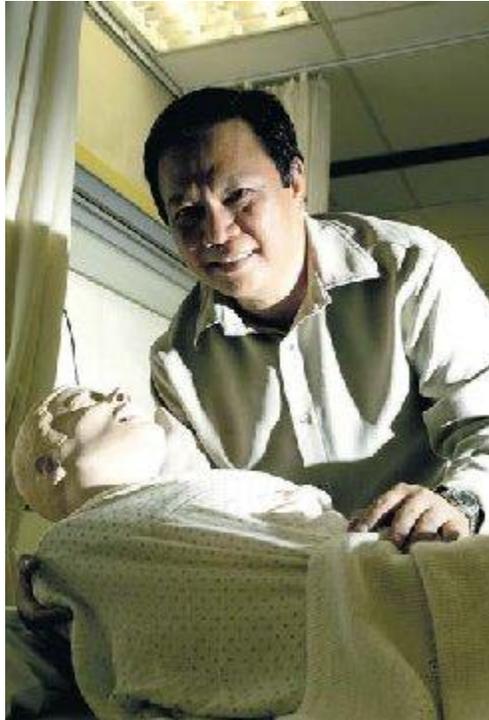
Ask yourself this question.

Am I so afraid of age discrimination that I believe it necessary to obscure my employment history?

I am several months away from my 60th birthday and certainly am aware of age discrimination. In sales, younger arrogant workers often try to feel superior and their arrogance by taking shots at older sales people. There is a classic scene in the movie, "Wall Street" where the young traders ridicule one of the older ones.

In my case, I experienced in a firm I was associated with many years ago and got the young sales people to stop when I looked at one of the jackals and said, "Just remember. I am your future . . . if you're lucky."

That's me. You are you and have to act in ways that are consistent to your beliefs.

If you are someone who will be competing for a job as a leader, do very little to obscure your age because, frankly, you want to highlight your successes at a high level, your job titles, the people you managed, who you interacted with, etc..

However, many of you are willing to make a professional concession by taking a step backward professionally in order to land an acceptable position.

This report will offer suggestions to each of you about how to construct your resume, given your different objectives.

So, what goes into a great resume for someone who is over 50?

1. There needs to be a way for someone to contact you.

If you look at John Q. Public's resume above, there is no address for John, no telephone number, no cell phone number and no email address on the resume. John's initial email may be replied to in order to contact him, but the resume will never enter the applicant tracking system for later contact.

Why?

Because John expects someone to manually data enter his email address and whatever contact information he provided in his original email.

No one has time for that when they are screening hundreds of resumes per day, interviewing 4-8 candidates in person, responding to telephone calls and meeting with hiring managers about new job openings.

Details:

I understand that you may not want to include your address on your resume. Doing so is often unnecessary or can be used to screen you out of a job as someone who might live too far away.

You must include your full name. Your first AND last name.

You must include your home number and mobile number

You must include your email address.

If the area code of your mobile number is different than one that someone might associate with your area, you must include your address or, minimally, your town.

This tells an employer that you live near them and not elsewhere.

Do not use the embedded header or footer feature in Microsoft Word for your name and address because someone will have to manually reveal the header and then copy and paste it onto the resume before it is parsed into the ATS. No one makes the time to do that.

You may notice I did not require you include your address. It is preferable but not required.

2. Skip the objective statement. They all say the same thing. No one is interviewed because of their objective. People are rejected because of them. Instead of an objective, use a cover email to tell the reader the position you are applying for and how your experience fits.
3. Summary sections on resumes can be extremely useful if they are not mundane pablum but instead actually summarize your experience and skills competence. This will make it clear to someone screening your resume what you can do for them.

   Skip fluffy language and terms like "Highly motivated, self-starter" and "Excellent oral and written communications skills." Until the day that

someone writes they are unmotivated and have poor oral and written communications skills, using terms like this are a waste of the reader's time.

For someone who is seeking a position in leadership, it is an opportunity for you to encapsulate the significant parts of your experience, your successes, your achievements, P&L, your place in the reporting hierarchy and accomplishments.

Include primary keywords that someone might use to locate you here and secondary or related keywords in the body of your resume.

If your resume is targeted to a lesser position, make sure your summary is appropriate for the role you want to interview for. No one will interview you for a staff position if you highlight the size of your P&L, numbers of people who reported to you and similar responsibilities. If you emphasize your executive title and responsibilities and want to interview for a staff level position, you are "shooting yourself in the foot."

4. Education: Put your degrees, university and graduation dates next IF, and only if, you attended an exceptional school, an excellent school, or a a very good school. If you graduated with modest grades or went to an average school or worse, place your education at the end of the resume.

   For example:

Education:

M.S. Computer Science   World Renowned University GPA 4.0

B.S. Accounting Nice Regional School GPA 3.7/4.0

DETAILS:

If you do not have an undergraduate degree, do not include an education category unless you have obtained certain specific and well-regarded professional training from a well-regarded source.

If you are in doubt, do not include it.

If you have completed your Bachelor's degree and are in progress with your Masters or PhD, list the degrees for which you are in progress program for which you are in progress and then your completed degree first you have completed first, and, using the format above, state the information about that degree and list the degree program you are participating in as being in progress.

PdD candidate Physics Internationally Acclaimed School   (in progress)

M.S. Computer Science   World Renowned University GPA 4.0

B.S. Accounting Nice Regional School GPA 3.7/4.0

Next, list relevant professional training you have completed. No one will care if you received a Novell CNE in 1987. They care about the important training you have completed that relate to "modern times" that may relate to the job they are filling. They rarely care about training that you obtained when Ronald Reagan was President of the United States.

5. If you work in a field with certifications that are important to achieve as part of your career path, list them following the education if education is the second section of your resume or following your summary if your education is at the end of the resume. Include the seal of the certification next to your name and contact information. The seal makes the certification seem authentic and important.

6. If you work in an IT field. list hardware and software you have worked with next.

Categories you may include are:

Systems:

Hardware:

Software:

Networking:

Languages:

API's/Frameworks:

Data Bases:

Development Utilities:

Applications:

7. List your professional experience

EXPERIENCE:

Describe your role, responsibilities, accomplishments and specific technology utilized, company name, title and dates of employment and your successes. State awards you received for your efforts.

Describe the impact of your work on the business in the format of Action➔Result.

Goldman Sachs   **June 2006 – present**

Program Manager

- Managed firm-wide technology initiatives in the Global Relationship Management group. Led project teams of 10-15 people, with total budgets of over $1M per year.
- Projects included: firm-wide account information management system, which streamlined the entry and maintenance of all client-related information, automating the account opening process for various groups across the firm; periodic reporting of account performance to clients – delivering timely automated information leveraging the firm's internal reporting capabilities. Both projects improved operational efficiencies, as well as delivered value-added for the firm's clients.
- Programs implemented were delivered ahead of schedule and 8^ under budget.

Active member of the firm's Process Committee, improving firm-wide technology practices.

Details:

There are two schools of thought about describing your work: Using bullet points vs. using paragraphs.

Bullet points will tend to result in interviews that feel more like an inquisition. Paragraph style descriptions tend to allow you greater freedom when writing.

Use paragraphs to describe role, responsibilities and technology utilized and bullets for your achievements. This makes the visual for the achievements more noticeable.

Avoid using pronouns like "I." They become repetitive and turn off the resume screener.

Create this section of your resume in reverse chronological order.

Use powerful verbs when describing the work you performed.

Here's an extremely thorough list of keywords:

Accelerated

Accomplished
Achieved
Acquired
Acted
Activated
Adapted
Addressed
Adjusted
Administered
Advanced
Advertised
Advised
Advocated
Aided
Allocated
Analyzed
Answered
Anticipated
Applied
Appraised
Approved
Arbitrated
Arranged
Ascertained
Aspired
Assembled
Assessed
Assigned
Assisted
Attained
Audited
Augmented
Authored
Automated
Awarded
Balanced
Began
Boosted
Briefed
Budgeted

Built
Calculated
Captured
Catalogued
Centralized
Changed
Chaired
Charted
Checked
Clarified
Classified
Coached
Collaborated
Collected
Combined
Commanded
Communicated
Compared
Compiled
Completed
Composed
Computed
Conceptualized
Condensed
Conducted
Conferred
Conserved
Consolidated
Constructed
Consulted
Contacted
Contained
 Continued
Contracted
Contributed
Controlled
Converted
Cooperated
Coordinated
Correlated

Corresponded
Counseled
Created
Critiqued
Cultivated
Customized
Cut
Debugged
Decided
Decreased
Defined
Delegated
Delivered
Demonstrated
Designated
Designed
Detected
Determined
Developed
Devised
Diagnosed
Directed
Discovered
Dispatched
Dispensed
Displayed
Dissected
Distinguished
Distributed
Diversified
Documented
Doubled
Drafted
Earned
Edited
Educated
Eliminated
Emphasized
Employed

Enabled
Enacted
Encouraged
Enforced
Engineered
Enhanced
Enlarged
Enlisted
Ensured
Entertained
Established
Estimated
Evaluated
Examined
Executed
Expanded
Expedited
Experimented
Explained
Explored
Expressed
Extended
Extracted
Fabricated
Facilitated
Familiarized
Fashioned
Finalized
Fixed
Focused
Forecasted
Formed
Formulated
Fostered
Found
Founded
Fulfilled
Furnished
Gained
Gathered

Generated
Governed
Guided
Handled
Headed
Heightened
Helped
Hired
Honed
Hypothesized
Identified
Illustrated
Imagined
Implemented
Improved
Improvised
Incorporated
Increased
Indexed
Indoctrinated
Influenced
Informed
Initiated
Innovated
Inspected
Inspired
Installed
Instituted
Instructed
Insured
Integrated
Interacted
Interpreted
Interviewed
Introduced
Invented
Investigated
Inventoried
Involved
Issued

Joined
Judged
Justified
Kept
Launched
Learned
Lectured
Led
Lifted
Located
Logged
Maintained
Managed
Marketed
Maximized
Measured
Mediated
Merged
Minimized
Mobilized
Moderated
Modified
Monitored
Motivated
Navigated
Negotiated
Netted
Observed
Obtained
Opened
Operated
Ordered
Orchestrated
Organized
Originated
Outlined
Overcame
Overhauled
Oversaw
Participated

Performed
Persuaded
Pinpointed
Piloted
Pioneered
Placed
Planned
Predicted
Prepared
Prescribed
Presented
Presided
Prevented
Printed
Prioritized
Processed
Produced

Programmed

Projected
Promoted
Proofread
Proposed
Protected
Proved
Provided
Publicized
Published
Purchased
Qualified
Questioned
Raised
Ran
Rated
Reached
Realized
Reasoned
Received
Recommended

Reconciled
Recorded
Recruited
Reduced
Referred
Refreshed
Regulated
Rehabilitated
Related
Remodeled
Rendered
Reorganized
Repaired
Replaced
Reported
Represented
Researched
Reshaped
Resolved
Responded
Restored
Restructured
Retrieved
Reversed
Reviewed
Revised
Revitalized
Routed
Saved
Scheduled
Screened
Set
Searched
Secured
Selected
Separated
Served
Set up
Shaped

Shared
Simplified
Simulated
Sketched
Sold
Solidified
Solved
Sorted
Spearheaded
Specialized
Specified
Sponsored
Stabilized
Staffed
Standardized
Started
Stimulated
Stored
Streamlined
Strengthened
Structured
Studied
Summarized
Supervised
Supplied
Supplemented
Supported
Surpassed
Surveyed
Sustained
Synthesized
Systematized
Tabulated
Targeted
Taught
Terminated
Tested
Tightened
Totaled
Tracked

Traded
Trained
Transcribed
Transferred
Transformed
Translated
Transmitted
Traveled
Treated
Trimmed
Tutored
Typed
Uncovered
Undertook
Unified
United
Updated
Upgraded
Used
Utilized
Validated
Verbalized
Verified
Vitalized
Volunteered
Weighed Widened
Won
Worked
Wrote

Emphasize your experience as it relates to the job that is trying to be filled, rather than just writing about your experience. The company will not simply interview and hire you because of your experience but because of the experience you have that they need for the job that they want performed.

Most resumes should be no more than 2- 2.5 pages. Some resumes are quite complete in one page or 1.5 pages.

Don't s-t-r-e-t-c-h your resume out to make it longer. Conversely, don't agonize to edit it to one page unless it exceeds the page by a few words or lines.

I want to repeat something I just said.

The point of your resume is to provide the best information possible about your experience and accomplishments in the context of what the potential employer is looking for.

This is true whether you are competing for an executive position and *is particularly true if you are submitting a resume for a position that is a step down in responsibility from what you have been doing in recent times.*

As I mentioned before in the context of education, no one cares about what you did 20 or more years ago. They are about work that you have performed in the past 10 – 15 years.

Details

You do not want to be seen as overqualified. You want to be seen as qualified!

Cover Letters:

Skip cover letters. Use cover emails, instead and are highly recommended IF AND ONLY IF they tailored to the specific job.

A cover email is the use of the message area of an email as you used to use a cover letter. If you decide to use a separate file for a cover letter, it will be ignored.

A generic cover letter that does nothing to pre-show your fit for the job is a waste of time for you and for the reader. It shows no thought and ignores an opportunity to sell your credentials.

8. Look at your resume in screen shots.

What does the first screen shot reveal about you? Your name and contact information. Your education. Maybe a little of your experience.

Hit the Page-Down key on your keyboard. What do you see now? Information about your current employer and what you did for them and

your achievements. Maybe, there is some information about your previous employer.

Hit the Page-Down key once more.

By now, the relevant experience that will cause an employer to want to interview you has to appear.

Details:

Make your fit for the specific job obvious. No one has the time or interest to figure out what you have done that is relevant. If this means customizing your resume for every single job you submit your resume for, do it!

The broken watch is right twice a day. Submitting the same resume to every single job you apply for may result in some interviews but will fail more often than it should.

Script / Freehand Styles

Brush Script	Revival 565
Freehand 591	Lydian
Cataneo	Dom Casual
Script MT	Lucida
Mural Script	Cooper Lt.
Amaze	Dauphin
Kids	Commercial
Comic Sans	

Block Font Styles

Arial	AdvantGrande
Franklin	Gothic752
Futura	Humnst752
Swiss 721	BANK GOTHIC
Square	COPPERPLATE
Swiss	Futura Black
Zurich	

Modern Block Styles

Bookman	Clarendon
Times Roman	Serifa BT
Palatino	Latin752
Georgia	Souvenir
MANDATORY	Cooper BK
Century Schoolbook	

Full Block - Athletic Styles

ARCHEN	CLARENDON
FRESHMAN	ROCKWELL
VARSITY	PRINCETOWN
PLAYBILL	SPORTS NIGHT
ATHLETIC	

Layout Styles

TOP ARCHED
BOTTOM ARCH
ENVELOPE TOP
ENVELOPE MIDDLE
ENVELOPE BOTTOM
BOLD *ITALIC*

Fun and Funky Styles

Hobo	PAINTBRUSH
Expo	RUBBER STAMP
KARATE	TREASURE ISLAND
Curlz	Distress
PLAZA REG	STENCIL
URWOOD	Ravie
IGLOO	Broadway
LIQUID	Space Toaster
Exotc350	Mariage FULL
Beach	
Beach	

Choose simple and attractive fonts.

I like Calibri. You may like something else. Just pick something clean and simple.

Do not use script; it is hard for many applicant tracking systems to parse resumes that involve a script font.

Spell-check your resume. After you use spell-checker, visually look at the professional or technical terms in your resume to make sure they are spelled correctly. There are certain misspelling of technical terms that are correctly spelled non-technical terms.

Grammar check your resume.

Avoid using frames. Frames are those pre-boxed sections of resumes that are used in templates. Often, resumes that use frames do not display properly. They are also hard for recruiters to re-purpose onto their letterhead.

This next detail will make your resume really distinguish itself from the average resume and takes very little time and cost you nothing.
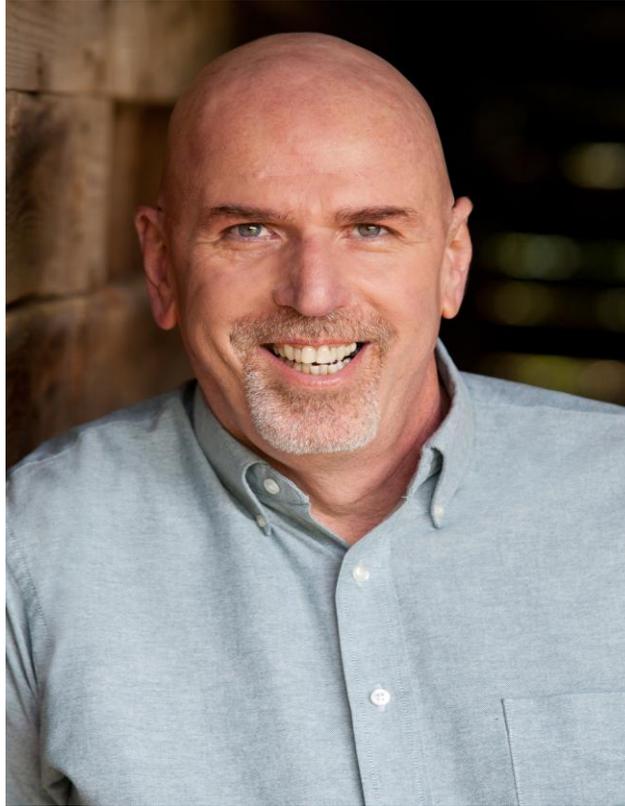
Add color.

Add color logos.

Don't go crazy with color but let me show you some examples.

Adding a logo makes the visuals of your resume far more powerful.

Many logos can be found using Google images.

About Jeff Altman, The Big Game Hunter

Jeff Altman, The Big Game Hunter has been a recruiter for more than 40 years.

[Follow him at the Big Game Hunter, Inc. on LinkedIn](http://linkd.in/1momsP9)
http://linkd.in/1momsP9 for more articles, videos and podcasts than what are offered here and jobs he is recruiting for.

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http://bit.ly/1tSmssc

Sign up for a complimentary subscription to No B.S. Job Search Advice at TheBigGameHunter.us.

Connect with me on LinkedIn.

Trying to hire someone? Email me at JeffAltman@TheBigGameHunter.us.

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Want to ask me a question via email, chat, or phone? Reach me via LivePerson http://bit.ly/1gtypSu