

# Employment Counsellor

SHIVANI MANCHANDA

CAREER  
TRACK

CONTACT FOR CAREER GUIDANCE, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION  
FREE APPLICATIONS AND VISA GUIDANCE FOR UK & SCOTLAND

Careertrack@gmail.com



## Job Hunting Skills

# Layout of Resume or Bio Data

Shivani Manchanda

In today's global world job hunting & related skills have become a life long process, you start looking for jobs in your early adulthood days & keep doing that till you retire professionally. More than forty years of our life is spent in looking for a job, doing the job & then preparing ourselves to do the next more significant job.

Since the major source of job hunting continues to be through newspaper advertisements & these days also through placement agencies. Apart from the cover letter & the application form, which were discussed in the previous issues of **Employment Counsellor**, the resume or the biodata is the first contact with a potential employer. Considering that these few sheets of paper have to market your capabilities to the employer, their power is immense.

The Resume or Biodata is conventionally defined as a brief summary of your skills, education, experience, personal qualifications and information that might be vital for an employer who is considering you as a candidate for a job. A resume is a powerful tool in your hands to make an impact on the potential employer. An effective resume will attract just enough employer interest to

gain you an invitation to a personal interview.

Considering the importance of the resume it is highly recommended that you make a few drafts before finalising the same. Several times I have had students come to me with a hastily written resume, in fact a few have submitted the document without their contact address or phone number! A carefully drafted resume reflects the professionalism of the person and how seriously they take their career. In view of the high impact the resume can have it requires considerable effort from you. Remember "The heights by great men reached & kept, were not attained by sudden flight, but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upwards in the night." Henry Longfellow

## DESIGN & LAYOUT OF YOUR RESUME:

Consider this scenario. A company places an advertisement in a newspaper & invites applicants. Depending on the type of job & level of specialisation required the number of applicants could be a dozen to a few hundred. If on an average an employer receives 100-200 applicants, there is a good chance that only 5-10% candidates will be called for an interview. That means you have a 10% chance of succeeding if you're qualified

& your resume is excellent. Let us look at some factors that will make your resume stand out from the others that an employer will receive. Thus increasing your chances of getting a job.

**"Typed:** The resume should be neatly typed, handwritten resumes are unclear & most employers do not have too much time to spend on a single resume

tually say the same thing but in fewer words. Use sufficient amounts of white space in your resume, as this helps the reader's eye to move along and grasp things better.

**"Heading Styles:** Use consistent heading styles and no more than three or four fonts. Since a person will have to go through a hundred or more resumes the

passed from. Thus do not highlight the names of these institutions, but highlight your achievements. If you were in the university merit list make sure the information finds place in italics or any other font just after your degree.

**Example:** Look at Table One where the employment record of a person is given. Notice that three types of fonts are used. Italics has been used to make the position held distinct from the companies name & the responsibilities held. Numbers & asterisks are used to organise & divide the information such that the reader can instantly locate the information. Also notice the use of white space to highlight the pay received & the duration of work, without using too much space. Similarly other elements of a resume can be organised to make it a dynamic tool.

The main purpose of a resume is to get you an invitation to the interview such that you can take off from where your resume left off. In summary what we can say is that the harder you will work on refining your resume - harder it will work for you in helping you get a job. In the next issue we will look at language of the resume & how it can give you the winning edge. □

when there are so many to choose from.

**"Proof Read:** After you have typed the resume proof-read it till you are sure that there are no spelling or grammatical mistakes. A resume full of errors indicates a careless person & does not make a positive impact.

**"Design:** The normal tendency is to try & fit as much information as possible in one or two sheets of paper. But if you use concise language you can ac-

chances are that s/he will not spend more than two or three minutes on one resume for the first screening. Thus if the information is well organised & properly highlighted a person can grasp the essence in the few minutes that s/he will look at your resume.

**"Highlight:** Focus on your strengths and remember that you are marketing yourself and not the company you are employed with or the university you have

TABLE I

## SUGGESTED STYLE FOR WRITING YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

### WORK EXPERIENCE

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Management Trainee                               | 1992-94       |
| Sandoz India  | Pay Rs.6500   |
| * Supervised three employees in the department      |               |
| * Coordinated the computerisation project           |               |
| * Established the LAN net network in the department |               |
| 2. Assistant Manager                                | 1995-97       |
| Track Tyres, Zanzibar                               | Pay Rs.20,000 |
| * Established the branch office in Zanzibar         |               |
| * Increased the tyre exports from Zanzibar to India |               |

Shivani Manchanda— B.Ed., MS Child Psychology, MA Career Counselling (USA) is Director-Career Track

Jobs Private Sector

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