

*A Stronger Resume Will Increase Your Odds*

**By Michael Sterling**

Reality Check: Given the choice of two candidates of equal ability, hiring managers will always prefer to interview the one with the most effectively constructed resume. For that reason, candidates with superb qualifications are often overlooked. And companies end up hiring from a more shallow pool of talent; a pool made up of those candidates whose experience is represented by powerfully written, visually appealing resumes.

Of course, many of the best candidates also have the best resumes; and sometimes, highly qualified candidates manage to surface through word-of-mouth referral. In fact, the referral method is the one I use to present talented people to my client companies.

But unless you can afford to rely on your “reputation,” or on the recommendation of a trusted recruiter, you’ll need more than the right qualifications to get the job you want—you’ll need a dynamite resume.

In today’s competitive employment market, your resume has to stand out in order to get the attention of the decision maker and create a strong impression. And later on, when you meet the prospective employer face to face, a strong resume will act as a valuable tool during the interviewing process.

**Truth in Advertising**

The best way to prepare a dynamic resume is not to change the facts, just make them more impactful. This can be accomplished in two ways: [1] by strengthening the content of your resume; and [2] by enhancing its appearance.

Although there’s no regulatory agency to act as a watchdog, I consider it to be ethical common sense to honestly and clearly document your credentials. In other words, don’t make exaggerated claims about your past.

Remember, your resume is written for the employer, not for you. Its main purpose, once in the hands of the reader, is to answer the following questions: How do you present yourself to others? What have you done in the past? And what are you likely to accomplish in the future?

In addition to providing a factual representation of your background, your resume serves as an advertisement. The more effective your 30-second commercial, the more the customer—the employer—will want to buy the expertise you’re selling.