

What is the connection between my resume and my interview?

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There are many good career coaches who do not write resumes. There are also many good resume writers who do not coach. I can both write and coach, so I like to do both for my clients when it is appropriate. From my perspective as a former recruiter, a resume is a written presentation of what will be said in an interview.

To me... there is a continuum of information. If the resume is not clear and focused, my experience has been that the person interviewing will also not be clear and focused. The resume should be the written presentation of what will be said in an interview. So what is the connection?

When I worked as a recruiter I had to be clear about each person presented to a hiring manager. What made that person special and unique. If I presented five accounting managers to a Controller, all five people were qualified to do the job. Only one of them would get hired.

But I had to be able to explain what each person offered that was different from the other four. The criteria varied – sometimes it was the technical skills, sometimes the education, sometimes the supervisory experience, or maybe prior industry experience.

If the resume was just a description of prior job duties, there was little for me to use to differentiate that person. I needed to understand how each person talked about themselves in a face-to-face conversation.

The best way to differentiate yourself is by being clear on these specific things:

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Experience
- Education
- Training
- Additional things that bring value (such as bilingual abilities)
- Accomplishments / Achievements
- Core Areas of Expertise
- Awards

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If your resume is not clear, the chances are that you will not be clear when you are in an interview. Sometimes when I'm working with people on their resumes, I am really pleasantly surprised about accomplishments they have had in their career – but they're too modest to really talk about them, or include them on a resume.

If you think “But I was just doing my job”..... you are probably understating your capabilities both in writing and in person.

Your resume should not overstate or understate your capabilities. It should match the way you talk about yourself. It should emphasize the things you want to do, not just the things you can do. Look at your current resume. Does it sound like you? Look like you? Think about what you really want to say to your next potential employer. What changes do you have to make to your resume to say the same things?

Fuzzy writing = fuzzy talking
Clear writing = clear conversation

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