

Corporate Restructuring and Your Resume
How to Deal with Mergers, Acquisitions, Company Closings and Layoffs
by Kim Isaacs

When an organization undergoes a merger, acquisition or closing, job seekers are left wondering how to handle the information on their resumes. Follow these tips to make your resume shine.

Mergers and Acquisitions

If your organization restructured, combine your employers and position history under one employment heading. By consolidating your job titles, you'll avoid giving the impression you're a job-hopper.

Example 1: Provide one company heading. List your newest employer first.

- COMPANY A (merged with Company B in August 2003)
- COMPANY A (acquired Company B in August 2003)
- COMPANY A (formerly Company B)

Example 2: Show a series of positions by stacking your job titles.

- COMPANY A (merged with Company B in August 2003)
Marketing Specialist, 8/2003 to present
Marketing Manager, 6/1995 to 8/2003
Marketing Assistant, 2/1993 to 6/1995

Demoted?

Restructuring has left many employees in lower-level positions than before the reorganization. How do you handle this if you're pursuing jobs similar to those you held before your demotion? Start by focusing on the positive; for example, the employer regarded your skills highly and kept you on board during a transitional period. You can write something like, "Retained as one of only XX employees through corporate downsizing effort based on exemplary performance." Also, by stacking your positions (see Example 2 above), you can list your contributions while in your previous, higher-level position first.

Laid Off?

If you lost your job as a result of a restructuring, include the position in your resume, and keep a positive tone. Highlight your contributions and the skills you developed, and use your [cover letter](#) to explain that you were laid off.

Still Standing?

[Surviving](#) multiple layoffs is an accomplishment in itself. Here's an example of how to express that your employer valued your work: "Earned a reputation for dedication, flexibility and positive work ethic; retained throughout organizational restructure consisting of four major layoffs in a six-month period."

Employer Out of Business

If your employer went out of business, you should still include the experience on your resume. Treat the position like any other job by demonstrating your accomplishments and contributions. If the position was recent, briefly explain the closure in your cover letter. Try to get [reference letters](#) and ask for permission to use former colleagues/supervisors as references. Be sure to get their personal contact information so you don't lose touch.

Did You Participate in the Restructuring?

When organizations undergo structural changes, hard work is expected from all employees. When writing about your accomplishments, ask yourself:

- What did you do to help ensure a smooth transition? Did you take on additional responsibilities or show flexibility regarding work hours, location, etc., to help meet organizational objectives?
- Did you keep the lines of communication open? Reinforce key messages? Boost employee morale?
- Did you help with strategy and planning? Were you involved in developing policies and procedures for the new organization? Did you assist with training?
- Did you help achieve merger or acquisition integration success?
- Did you produce outstanding results despite major organizational changes?

As is often the case in your career and life in general, it's not what happens to you that matters as much as how you respond to it. You want your resume to reflect that you have reacted well to whatever adversity you've faced in your career.