



Refresh Your Resume

By Kim Isaacs, Monster Resume Expert

A resume refresher doesn't need to be painful. And your efforts could pay off with big dividends. Arm yourself with an updated, high-octane resume, and 2009 could be the year that you land a better job.

Now is a great time to reflect on your recent accomplishments and add them to your resume. Let these ideas guide you.

Find Your Passion

Make sure your resume instantly communicates your career target with a descriptive headline (e.g., "CPA Backed by Corporate Audit Experience") and adequately reflects your depth and breadth of experience in a brief, hard-hitting opening objective highlighting your top selling points.

If you're thinking about changing careers or industries, be sure you've clearly defined your goal. Your job search will be more successful if your resume targets a specific field instead of being a one-size-fits-all document. Research positions to gain a solid understanding of what you want to do as well as the qualifications employers are seeking. Once you identify your career target, assess your background and identify transferable skills and experience that will enable success. Add an opening objective that spells out your goals and shows the relevance of past experience. For example: "Award-winning educator seeking to leverage five years of teaching experience to transition into corporate training."

Add New Employment, Skills and Accomplishments

Refreshing your resume also means keeping it current. If you've changed jobs during the past year, earned a promotion or expanded responsibilities, your resume should reflect this. Even if you've remained in the same position, you've probably achieved noteworthy accomplishments in the last year.

Don't forget about your new skills, including technical and computer ones. Add your new skills to the Skills section on [Monster's Resume Builder](#). Survey your Skills section to ensure your proficiency level and years of experience are current.

Keep Keywords Up-to-Date

Industry-specific jargon, buzzwords and technology keep changing, and your resume should be rich with these keywords. [Study job postings on Monster](#) that match your career target, and note which keywords appear repeatedly. Incorporate those keywords that match your background into your resume.

Include New Professional Activities

Add professional-development activities you completed last year, including certificates, degrees, courses and in-service training. Also include organizations joined and industry conferences attended. List training programs you've begun, even if you haven't completed them. This shows your commitment to ongoing professional development.

Edit Ruthlessly

As you add new information to your resume, also consider the usefulness of older or less relevant experience. This will ensure your resume doesn't become unwieldy. Unless you want to return to a former career, decrease the amount of detail you provide for older experience. For job seekers with 10 years of experience or more, this may mean setting up an Early Career section, where you briefly summarize employers, job titles and employment dates. Other expendable items include obsolete technology and your high school diploma once you've earned a college degree.

Proofread your resume carefully to ensure it's error-free. Watch for information that needs to be updated from previous versions. For example, if your old resume included a summary that stated your years of experience, increase this number if necessary.

Start a Kudos File

Resolve to start a file for projects and successes you achieve during the year. Copy performance reviews and keep them in this file. Print out complimentary or congratulatory emails and file these away. List new committees you join. Jot down assignments you complete during the year. Include details of quantifiable results (e.g., percentages, dollar amounts, before/after comparisons) of your efforts while still fresh in your mind. Your kudos file will remind you where you excelled so you'll be ready to punch up your resume.

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You should refresh your resume throughout the year, not just at the beginning. You never know when opportunity may come knocking.

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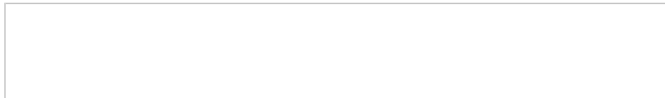
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