How to write an effective and original objective statement

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A career objective, often listed as objective only on your resume, is a statement of your career goals. It sounds simple – you want to get a good job, utilize your experience and education, and get paid well. However, this is the most difficult part of the resume to compose, as you are limited to one to two sentences in which you are expected to convey your professional expertise, expectations from a job and an organization, as well as goals for your professional growth. Doesn't sound so easy now, does it?

The most common mistake people make is not listing an objective. Most people operate under the assumption that the objective is not necessary to include in a resume because it states the obvious – your objective is to get the job you are applying for. However, this is a big misconception. Employers are looking for an objective; they want to know what it is that you are looking for in order to determine whether or not you are a good match for their company.

The second most common mistake is including a career objective that doesn't actually express your goals and your qualification. For example, a statement like the one below is commonly used is resumes:

"To obtain a position where my experience and education can be utilized and expanded."

If you examine this statement, you will find it doesn't say anything specific about what you are looking for in terms of professional growth. Avoid using generic statements like this. They will hurt you more than help you in your job search, because your employer will be left with an impression that you don't have a set a goal in mind.

Now that you know what not to do, here are some helpful tips on creating a winning career objective that will get your resume noticed and get your foot in the door. First, make your career objective personal. Think of your whole resume as a sales tool; your career objective is your opening statement. You want your employer to know what you want, not just restate what other people want. Second, you want to state your commitment to your career goal. If you are unsure of what you want, how is your employer to believe that you really want the job at their organization and you are not just applying because you want to get out of your current work environment? Don't be afraid to state what you want from a job and from an organization. Third, while you want to state your commitment, you also want to show that you are willing to take action to achieve your goal. Indicate what direction or action you are willing to take in order to accomplish your career objective. Fourth and most important factor in a successful career objective is being specific about what you are looking for in a work situation. While you can say that you are looking for a "challenging" environment, this doesn't mean anything to your employer, as people define challenges in various ways. Avoid using generic and broad terms. Simply state what you want, and what you are willing to do to get it.

Keeping in mind these criteria, let’s revise the above career objective statement so that it effectively states what you want.

“To obtain a position of a sales representative in a health insurance industry, where I can utilize my management and customer relations skills, with the opportunity for performance-based advancement.”

This statement tells a potential employer that you know what kind of job you want, what experience you have in order to get the position, and what you are willing do to become a successful professional with the company. Thus, you have just created a winning career objective for your resume.