What to do when you don’t have the experience for the job that you want

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People think of their resume as a collective of their education, skills and professional experience. Many employers rely on resumes as form of job applications for the open positions within their organizations. Thus it is very important that you have a well-written resume prepared when searching for jobs.

Creating a resume is not an easy task, even if you are a professional with years of experience and many skills. However, composing a resume when you are looking to completely change careers, or when you are fresh out of school is much more difficult, because you do not have any experience to highlight.

If you are changing careers, and nothing from your past professional experience qualifies you for the new job you are seeking, highlight those qualifications that can be transitioned along the various industries. For example, if you’ve managed people, no matter the type of business, you should highlight this under your experience. Rather than not highlighting your professional experience, even if it is not directly related to the job you are seeking, you should consider writing a professional profile, or summary at the start of your resume. The summary will allow you to address the career change by highlighting your skills and how they relate to your career objective. In addition, this is one situation where it is ok to reference any volunteer or community service work that you have done if it can help promote your qualifications for the job.

If you are fresh out of college, and don’t have much to bring to the table in terms of full time professional experience, don’t get discouraged in creating your resume. Focus on highlighting your skills and your education. Avoid using a professional profile, or summary. Rather, list your career objective and start the resume by listing your education. Make sure to mention any awards or honors you received while in school. Following your education, list all the skills that will qualify you for the job you are seeking. Make sure to mention any courses, such as project management or business communication that you have taken and can apply at work. Instead of listing any experience, title the section “Pre-professional Experience” and divide it into categories applicable to your career objective. For example, instead of say that you spent a summer working at the Gap, use a sub-heading of “Customer Relations” and list any responsibilities where you have provided customer service. Tap into any community service, volunteer, or school club positions you have held in order to highlight your abilities and showcase that you are the best candidate for the job.

Don’t be afraid of not having the right experience, or not having any professional experience to include in a resume. Focus on what you can do rather than what you don’t have the experience in doing and you will have a winning resume.