Three things to make your resume unique

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A resume is a one- to two-page document summarizing your career objectives, professional experiences and achievements, and educational background. To stand apart from other candidates, you should consider the information in your resume carefully and make sure that it is personal to you. Here are three tips on making your resume unique to you:

1. Customize your career objective. 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. 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. 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. Lastly, be 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.

2. Highlight the best elements of your experience. This is the most commonly missed aspect of writing a resume. The entire professional experience section on your resume is unique to you. Take advantage of that. Use power words to list your responsibilities, and make sure that you have a winning attitude in each of statement. Focus on those responsibilities that best describe the skills you acquired while in each job that make you the most qualified candidate for the position you are seeking. Quantify your responsibilities when possible to showcase to your potential employer that you are drive by results and are capable of exceeding goals. Don't be shy about promoting your qualifications – you earned them with your hard work and dedication.

3. Personalize your cover letter. The biggest mistake professionals make is not spending any time on their cover letter. Your cover letter should receive the same attention as your resume as they go hand-in-hand. Address your cover letter to the appropriate person at the company (contact info is typically listed in the job description). Make sure to mention what position you are applying for, and demonstrate how the information in your resume aligns well with the job requirements. Your cover letter also allows you to address any information in your resume that may raise questions – take the time to do so, as you don't want your resume discarded because you chose not to create a personalized cover letter. Overall make sure that your cover letter supports your resume and presents you as the most qualified candidate for the job.