

A resume is a living document, a written representation of you that should be updated periodically while you are employed and tailored as necessary for each potential employer while you are looking for a job.

### **Keep it updated**

Even if you are currently employed, it is good practice to keep your resume updated. You should review it periodically, about every six months or so, to add information about significant accomplishments, new skills, or changes in responsibility. Even if you do not put this information into final polished form right away, keep a notes page where you can record draft statements that can be revised and polished at a later time if needed.

Keeping your resume updated while still at a job is not dishonest, it is a sign that you are organized and pay attention to details. A resume that is current and standing by to use will help you if another position becomes open within your company. In this situation, you will be able to quickly prepare whatever internal documents are necessary to apply for the new position and not spend time worrying about bringing your resume up to date.

Of course, no job is 100% secure, and you could find yourself unemployed for any number of reasons. Downsizing, mergers, acquisitions, reorganizations, budget cuts, etc. are all things that can and do happen to even the best of employees. An employer may or may not provide a severance package or outplacement services, so dealing with these situations is stressful and emotional at best.

When you keep your resume current, it makes you better prepared for the anxieties that come with sudden employment changes. The financial pressures alone can be extremely stressful, so if your resume is ready or near ready to use you will be in a better position to start your job search promptly.

### **Use it to aid career decisions**

Another reason to keep your resume updated is that it can help you tremendously when you are considering a career move or making a job decision that could affect your career standing. Keep your resume at the front of your mind so that you can consider the impact a career decision will have on how your resume will look.

Before making any career decision, one of the questions you should ask yourself is how will the results of that decision look on your resume? How will you explain it? What will a potential employer think when they see that information in a resume? Will they see it as a benefit or a detriment?

### **Stay current on resume trends**

The ins and outs of resumes have changed in the last few decades, and they continue to evolve as technology and the job market change as well. In the past, a job seeker needed only a strong printed

resume, but with the advent of e-mail and computer software to scan and input resumes, a job seeker now needs more than one type of resume.

A printed resume is still a must, but a scannable resume is now a must as well. A resume designed for scanning will have different formatting than a printed resume, and may have slightly different phrasing as well. If you are unfamiliar with formatting requirements of electronic or scannable resumes, it is a good idea to learn more about this newer resume type and take the time to create a version of your resume in this format.