

# Refresh Your Resume for Today's Job Market

**AARP Education & Outreach**

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# Welcome

**Deborah Russell, Director  
AARP Workforce Issues**



- Why AARP is doing this webinar
- Learning objectives for this webinar
- How to participate in this webinar



# Your Presenters



**Susan Ireland**



**Beth Brown**

# 7 Resume Tips

How to refresh your resume  
to succeed in today's job market



## Tip #1:

# Your Resume Is About Your Future, Not Your Past!

- This is marketing!
- Know your job objective
- Paint a word-picture of your objective with your:
  - Experience
  - Skills
  - Interests
  - Personality

## Tip #2: Pick the Right Format

- Chronological
- Functional
- Combination



# Chronological Format

- Remain in same field
- Vertical career move

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

20xx-pres. Job Title, Company Name, City, State

- An accomplishment from this job that supports your job objective.
- A problem you solved and the results.
- A time when you positively affected the organization and the bottom line.
- Awards, commendations, publications, etc. that relate to your objective.

20xx-xx Job Title, Company Name, City, State

- A project you are proud of that supports your job objective.
- Another accomplishment with quantifiable results.
- An occasion when someone "sat up and took notice" of your skill.

# Functional Format

- Highlight skills
- Downplay work history

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### MAJOR SKILL

- An accomplishment that shows you have this skill.
- A problem you solved using this skill.
- A time when you used your skill to positively affect the organization or the bottom line.
- Awards, commendations, publications, etc. you achieved that relate to your job objective.

### MAJOR SKILL

- A project from this job you are proud of that used this skill and supports your job objective.
- Another accomplishment with quantifiable results that point out your skill.
- An occasion when someone "sat up and took notice" of your skill.

## WORK HISTORY

20xx-pres., Job Title, Company Name, City, State  
20xx-xx, Job Title, Company Name, City, State  
20xx-xx, Job Title, Company Name, City, State  
20xx-xx, Job Title, Company Name, City, State

# Combination Format

- Career change
- Steep vertical career move

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

20xx-pres. Job Title, Company Name, City, State

### MAJOR SKILL

- An accomplishment from this job, which shows you have this skill.
- A problem you solved using this skill and the results.
- A time when you used your skill to positively affect the organization.

### MAJOR SKILL

- A project from this job you are proud of that used this skill.
- Another accomplishment with quantifiable results.
- An occasion when someone "sat up and took notice" of your skill.

20xx-xx Job Title, Company Name, City, State

- A project you are proud of that supports your job objective.
- Another accomplishment that shows you're good at this line of work.

## Tip #3: Include Keywords

- Know your job objective
- Make a list of keywords
- Incorporate keywords into resume statements
- List keywords in special sections
  - Skills
  - Technical Skills
  - Relevant Skills



## Tip #4: Use Dates Wisely

- Dates tell:
  - Your possible age
  - How much experience you have
  - How relevant you are
- You don't *have* to start at the beginning
- Create the image of the ideal age



# For Many Jobs Older Is Better

- Senior management
  - Teaching
  - Financial services
  - Business consultants
  - Social services
- 
- Find 50+ friendly employers:
    - AARP National Employer Team [www.aarp.org/employerteam](http://www.aarp.org/employerteam)



# Employer Thinks: $20 + \# \text{ Years Experience} = \text{Possible Age}$

- Assume job seeker started working at age 20
- Count number of years of experience on resume
- Guesstimate possible age



# Your Strategy:

Ideal Age Minus 20 = # Years on Resume

- Estimate the ideal age for your job objective
  - How much experience is required?
  - How much do they want to pay?
  - How much responsibility?
  - What's the company culture?
- Subtract 20 from the ideal age
- That's how many years of experience to show on resume
- Dates under Education are optional

# Extreme Example: Ideal Age Minus 20 = # Years on Resume

➤ You're 56 years old. You want a job as a tattoo artist.

**25** Ideal age for tattoo artist at Extreme HipHop

**-20** Subtract 20 (when you might have begun work)

**5** This is the number of years of experience to show on your resume

➤ Says you're **at least** 25 years old – that's not a lie!

## More on Using Dates

- Don't list dates under Education if it makes you look too old
- Can add "Additional Experience" section with no dates

### Example:

2008-pres. Graphic Artist, Riley's Printing, Oakland, CA

2005-2008 Sales Associate, High Records, Berkeley, CA

**Additional experience:** Package Designer, Grabbit, Inc.

## Tip #5: Conceal Unemployment

- List only years, not months

**2009-pres. Manager Joe's Burgers, New York, NY**

**2006-09 Manager Taco Bell, Woodmount, NY**

- List unpaid "job titles" that are relevant to job objective  
(volunteering, personal projects, professional development)

**2007-09 Classroom Assistant, Brio High School, Brio, NV**

# "Job Titles" That Show Good Character:

- Student
- Independent Study
- Full-time Parent
- Family Management
- Estate Management
- Caregiver
- Personal Travel



## Tip #6: Be Email Savvy

- Write a strong, concise cover email:
  - How you are connected
  - What you want
  - Why you should have it (one or two points from resume)
  - Say “thank you”
- Attach resume in Word 97-2003 version (.doc)
- Paste resume in body of email (optional)

## Tip #7: Get LinkedIn

- [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
- An online network for professionals
- Where recruiters search for job candidates
- Where YOU can network and get found!

# Your LinkedIn Profile Is Your Online Resume

- Create a strong headline
- Copy and paste from Word resume
- Bite-size pieces:
  - Insert bullet points
  - Add spaces
  - Use all CAPS to emphasize words -- don't overdo it
- Check the PDF version of your profile to be sure it's employer-ready

## Susan Ireland

Author of Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Resume and Ready-Made Resumes software (for individuals & organizations)

San Francisco Bay Area




- ➔ [Contact Susan Ireland](#)
- ➔ [Add Susan Ireland to your network](#)

**Current** ▶ **Author at The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Resume**  
▶ **Owner at Susan Ireland Resumes**

**Past** ▶ Sales Support Supervisor at Monster Cable

**Education** ▶ Antioch College

**Recommended**  **12** people have recommended Susan

**Connections**  **113** connections

**Industry** Internet

**Websites** ▶ [Susan Ireland's Resume Site](#)  
▶ [Susan Ireland's Job Lounge](#)  
▶ [Damn Good Resume](#)

Public profile powered by: **Linked** 

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### View Susan Ireland's full profile:

- See who you and **Susan Ireland** know in common
- Get introduced to **Susan Ireland**
- Contact **Susan Ireland** directly

[View Full Profile](#)

### Others named Susan Ireland:

**Susan Ireland**, Consulting Manager/Business Consultant at Prudential Real Estate  
Washington D.C. Metro Area

**Susan Ireland**, Managing Director at SPI Marketing Group and Owner, SPI Marketing Group

## Susan Ireland's Summary

▶ Author of 4 job search books, including The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Resume (now in its 5th edition).

# Susan Ireland's Experience

## Author

### **The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Resume**

(Publishing industry)

January 2010 — Present (6 months)

- The 5th edition of this book is now available online and in major bookstores.

## Owner

### **Susan Ireland Resumes**

(Writing and Editing industry)

January 1989 — Present (21 years 6 months)

- Trained by Yana Parker, author of The Damn Good Resume Guide.
- Built a strong resume writing business, which now includes a team of writers and a job search coach.
- Created job search tools (resume templates and workshop materials), which are sold to individual job seekers, and licensed by organizations such as the military, One-Stop career centers, and colleges.
- Currently author job search books, software, videos, and websites.
- Susan Ireland's Resume Site ranked as a top site on the US Department of Labor Tools for America's Job Seekers Challenge.



## Recap: 7 Resume Tips

1. Your Resume Is About Your Future, Not Your Past!
2. Pick the Right Format
3. Include Keywords
4. Use Dates Wisely
5. Conceal Unemployment
6. Be Email Savvy
7. Get LinkedIn

# Five Resume Pitfalls

- Five common pitfalls and how you can avoid them
- Create a fresh resume that opens doors to job interviews, and more...



**Beth Brown**

## Pitfall #1: Unclear Job Objective

Your resume already has  
an objective:

To help you get a job  
that you want!

An effective resume  
communicates that  
objective quickly.



# Your First Option: The Job Objective Statement

Use a Job Objective Statement when you are:

- Making a career change
- Seeking a higher level in the same field
- Broadening your options
- More than one objective? More than one resume!

# Job Objective Statement

- Helps you stay focused on your future!
- Lets the employer know what you want
- Is brief and to the point
- Should be focused on position, level, industry

# Sample Job Objective Statements

## Not this:

**Job Objective:** A challenging position in which I am challenged by challenges, and utilize my skills to meet those challenges.

## Better:

**Job Objective:** Position as Sales Manager within the Pharmaceutical industry

## Best:

**Job Objective:** Pharmaceutical Sales Manager

# Alternatives to the Job Objective Statement

- Professional title
- Credential next to your name
- Education first
- Start Summary with your professional title
- None of the above -- in special cases

## Use a Professional Title if:

- You're an expert in your field
- You're a consultant or independent contractor
- You've earned the right to say: I am...(not: I want to be...)
  - You've held that job title in the past
  - You have a degree or certificate
  - You have relevant unpaid experience

# Example of Professional Title

**Sally Palmieri**  
123 Pine Street  
Ogden, WY 12345  
123-555-1234

**Business Development Consultant**

# Example of Credential Next to Your Name

**Alejandro Hernandez, CPA**

123 Pine Street  
Chicago, IL 62345  
123-555-1234

# Example of Education First

**Angela B. Cheng**

123 Pine Street

Rockville, MD 23456

123-555-1234

## **Education**

J.D., Criminal Law, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY

# Example of Starting the Summary with Professional Title

## **Roger Wisnofsky**

123 Pine Street, San Francisco, CA 91234

123-555-1234

### **Summary**

**Marketing professional** with six years of experience in the luxury watch industry.

## None of the Above -- Special Cases

You can opt not to use any of the above options if and only if:

- You held the job title you seek for two or more of your most recent job titles
- Your work history pigeon-holes you into your job objective

## Pitfall #2: Uninviting to Read

As a marketing tool, your resume needs to be clear and easy to read.

Remember, an employer typically takes just 8 to 10 seconds to review your resume.

# What makes a resume hard to read?

- Too much information
  - Long, chunky paragraphs
  - Run-on sentences
- Not enough white space
- Narrow margins
- Small font size

## An Example of Pitfall #2

- Quality/results oriented Project Management Professional candidate with over 20 years of experience in the financial, legal, telecommunications, engineering, manufacturing, news, and information industries including mergers & acquisitions (M&A), financial, regulatory, customer relationship management, sales commissions, human capital management, payroll, helpdesk, field service tracking, order management, and purchasing.

# Another Example of Pitfall #2

- Maintain design configuration by making coding changes such as updating custom formularies, deductibles, and benefit maximums. Changes can also include the addition, modification, and termination of drug specific restrictions such as quantity limit, step care therapy requirement, or age requirement.
- Managed the full project management life cycle systems integration initiatives that impacted multiple business lines including the analysis of business problems to be solved through the development of automated business systems.
- Reviewed, evaluated and created curriculum independently and as part of a core team; assisted with and provided training; designed and provided oversight of credit tracking database.
- Processed all service orders including name changes, connect and disconnect orders, quoted deposits to thousands of residential and commercial customers.

## Solutions to Pitfall #2

- Keep paragraphs short, no more than 3 lines long
- Margins = 1" on each side, .75" top and bottom
- Font size = 11 pt. type (12 pt. for some fonts)
- Use bullet points to begin each statement
- Insert white space between points

## Sample Solutions to Pitfall #2

- Managed the relationship between IT and the Communications Test & Measurement Division to align IT initiatives with business strategy.
- Established the company's first paid insurance plan for salaried employees.
- Reported directly to senior management.

## Pitfall #3: Overused Words & Phrases

Your resume loses its power when:

- You use tired words and phrases like “responsible for” and “all aspects of”
- You write the same words and phrases over and over and over again
- Your language is vague, without detail, personality, or quantifiable results

## Solutions to Pitfall #3

Keep the language of your resume fresh, lively, and achievement-oriented:

- Use action verbs for each achievement statement
- Start each point with a different verb
- Be specific, paint a picture, and quantify results

## An Example of Pitfall #3

- Responsibilities include all aspects of operations
- Responsible for hiring of sales associates
- Responsible for tracking of project budget

Yawn ...



## Sample solutions to Pitfall #3

- Directed daily operations for \$30M manufacturing company; identified and implemented process improvements to support strategic business initiatives.
- Hired, trained and coached a 12-member team of Sales Associates.
- Developed and tracked project budget of \$56K.

## Pitfall #4: Inconsistency

On your resume, Consistency is King! This means:

- Dates to the right or left? You decide.
- 2002-2004 or 2002-04? You decide.
- Maryland or MD? You decide.
- Titles or company names in Bold? You decide.

Whatever you decide, keep it consistent throughout your resume.

## An Example of Pitfall #4

- 2004-2010 ABC Company, Chicago, Illinois  
**Project Manager**
- January 2002-Feb. 2004, XYZ Co., Chicago, IL  
*Project Manager*
- 03/99 to 01/02  
HIJ Company, Chicago  
**PROJECT MANAGER**

## Sample Solution to Pitfall #4

- 2004-10      ABC Company, Chicago, IL  
**Project Manager**
- 2002-04      XYZ Company, Chicago, IL  
**Project Manager**
- 1999-02      HIJ Company, Chicago, IL  
**Project Manager**

## Pitfall #5: Forgetting To Polish

Even one mistake can get your rresume tossed!

- Proofread and edit your resume for spelling, grammar, spacing, and consistency
- Watch for easy-to-miss errors, such as “though” vs. “through”
- A second pair of eyes is helpful – ask a friend or colleague to read through your resume, too.

# A Quick Recap of Pitfalls and Solutions

- Have a clear job objective
- Make your resume inviting to read
- Avoid overused words and phrases
- Consistency is King!
- Review and polish your resume before sending





# Where to Find Susan Ireland and Beth Brown

## Susan Ireland

- LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/susanireland](http://www.linkedin.com/in/susanireland)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/susanireland](http://www.twitter.com/susanireland)
- YouTube: [www.youtube.com/susanirelandresumes](http://www.youtube.com/susanirelandresumes)

## Beth Brown

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/pub/beth-brown/3/a35/656](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/beth-brown/3/a35/656)



# AARP Resources for Workers 50+

- [www.aarp.org/work](http://www.aarp.org/work) - news, resources and tools for workers 50+, plus information on AARP Career Fairs in 2010.
- [www.aarp.org/jobtips](http://www.aarp.org/jobtips) - tips and videos to help you succeed in your job search
- [www.aarp.org/jobwebinars](http://www.aarp.org/jobwebinars) - sign up for AARP webinars and view archived events
- [www.aarp.org/thewatercooler](http://www.aarp.org/thewatercooler) - online community where you can discuss topics related to work

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