



Webinar: Creating High-Quality Resumes

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Transcript

Introduction

Lauren Bowden: Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for joining today's training on creating high-quality resumes. This training is presented to you by Switchboard. Switchboard is a one-stop resource hub for refugee service providers in the United States.

Today's Speakers

LB: My name is Lauren Bowden, and it's a pleasure to be with you all today. I am a training officer of economic empowerment here at Switchboard. I also work as a technical advisor of economic empowerment at the International Rescue Committee. I worked in direct service, in workforce development specifically, for a number of years.

LB: I started off my career working as the job placement AmeriCorps at the IRC in Atlanta. I moved into career programs, and I managed and operated that program for some time before moving into a position at our headquarters office. In order to give this presentation to you today, I am relying upon years of making resumes for clients. I've created over 1,000 client resumes in my career and also trained a lot of staff and volunteers on how to do the same.

Learning Objectives

LB: Let's get started today. I want to talk to you all about our learning objectives. It's our hope that by the end of this session, you'll be able to first and foremost optimize the standard components of a resume for hiring managers and for the applicant tracking system. More on what that is in a second. You'll also be able to interpret international education, international work experience, and put that experience and education into the combination resume format. Then, finally, I am going to work with you so that you learn how to use resume templates, resume creation software, AI tools, et cetera, all of this technology to really improve the efficiency and the accuracy of the resume creation process.

1. Optimizing Resume Formatting and Components

LB: Let's start off here. Our first section is all about optimizing resume formatting and the various components of a resume. How do we take that resume and make it such that it is really going to get seen by a person?



Disclaimer

LB: Before we do that, though, I do have a quick disclaimer, and that is that obviously today we're going to talk all about resumes. That will be the entirety of today's training. However, I do not want to de-emphasize the importance of socializing resumes, working with our employer partners, our other community partners, to ensure that these resumes actually get in front of folks who are committed to hiring our clients. By far, we know that Americans get jobs on the basis of who they know, and for our newcomers, that is no different. Likely, it is more often the case that our newcomers are able to get jobs on the basis of professional networking. Make sure to not forget that piece, and we have some resources later in today's webinar that can help you do some of this employment engagement work.

Why do we optimize resumes?

LB: Awesome. Let's talk about why we optimize resumes. There are really three major reasons, and the first is that 75% of our resumes are never read by a human being. What happens to these resumes? Sometimes you can feel, when you are applying online, that these resumes are sent into the ether, you never see them again.

LB: That is somewhat true, in that most resumes are first scanned by something called the applicant tracking system, which is software that's designed to see if the various resumes and the various applications are a good fit for the target job description. Also, in addition, a lot of the resumes that we send in after the job posting was posted for 48 hours or so are just never read by a human being because they can get a flood of applications.

LB: The second reason is that hiring managers only spend about six to seven seconds viewing the average resume. Let's say it gets past this initial check by the applicant tracking system, and it winds up in front of a hiring manager. They are going to glance over it. These folks are often really busy, and they are looking to see a few things to make sure that the skills, the talents, the certifications, the job titles are in alignment with what they are looking for when they're hiring for this target job.

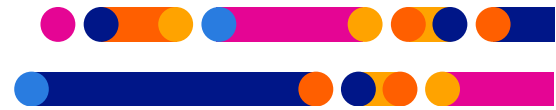
LB: Then the final reason is because resumes and CV conventions differ really wildly, depending on the industry that we are helping folks move into, but also they differ very strongly from one another. A lot of the clients we work with will come to us with CVs that they have made. Oftentimes they have really worked hard to write these CVs in English, despite that not being their first language. CVs are really comprehensive. They have every course a client has ever taken throughout their post-secondary career. They have lots and lots of details about every job. We are going to optimize our resumes here. Optimization, in this context, means shortening them, in many cases, and bringing out the specific qualifications that make your candidate the best fit for the job.

Discussion Question

LB: Let's move along now. I want to put it to you,

What are some tactics you rely on to help clients' resumes stand out to hiring managers?

LB: If you were to join the Slido, go to slido.com, and then enter the code 2698319, or you can scan the QR code on your screen and just think about it. What are some things that you rely on to make sure that your resumes are strong? Help your colleagues out today. Numerical achievements, 12-point fonts, keywords that match job description—all of these are things that we're going to touch on later today.



LB: Oh, open availability. That is not a part of today's webinar, but I love this idea. Making sure to communicate that the client is ready and able to actually join the job. Nice structure, font, and spacing. Yes. Achievements. Absolutely. Focusing on the accomplishments, the moments the clients are most proud of their work. Their star stories, as we like to call them in workforce development, is a really great way to make a resume stand out. One page, chronological order, contact information. Absolutely.

LB: Yes, a lot of you are saying that we need to look very closely at the job description when we are tailoring the resumes that we make for and with our clients, and that is absolutely the case. The best predictor of whether or not you're going to optimize that resume for the intended audience is how closely it matches the map that the employer has given you with the job description in hand.

LB: I see two more people are typing. No fancy colors and formats. That's really interesting. I think that that is generally true for the industries we often connect our clients into. In some cases, there is an industry standard that impresses upon the applicant to actually lean into some more graphic design, but generally, for our clients that are in early employment programs, that's definitely the case.

LB: No picture. Yes, so many resumes and CVs that I have gotten from clients on their first attempt have pictures. Often they have the religious affiliation the client has, et cetera. We want to take these things off. Awesome. In the interest of time, I'm going to move us along, but thank you so much for all these great ideas.

Resume Format Types

LB: The first thing that we want to do when we are optimizing our resume formats is figure out which format we want to use in the first place. I'm going to talk to you about the three major format types. The first is chronological.

LB: I saw somebody was in our Slido talking about putting work history in reverse chronological order. This is a style you see with the chronological resume format. Certainly, that is exactly what it looks like. This is really ideal when you have clients that walk in the door and they have had an entire career in one particular industry. It's really consistent, it's really strong work, and it's all been in the same industry. However, we know that a lot of clients do not fall into that set of circumstances, partially because of resettlement, humanitarian crisis, et cetera. For many clients, a functional resume is actually a better fit.

LB: That's our second type of resume format. This resume format focuses more on skills. It focuses more on the achievements that many of you were mentioning. It can be a really strong type if the client is transitioning from one industry into another or there's a large gap in employment. For example, the client was living in a refugee camp and unable to work.

LB: Today actually, though, we're going to focus on a third resume format type, and that is our combination resume or our hybrid resume. The reason we're going to focus on that is because I know that we have clients that fit into a number of different circumstances, categories, et cetera. Some of them have the strong work history, some of them have bounced around a little bit; that's very normal. I want to teach you to be able to do both. This combination resume format is going to blend a functional resume with a focus on skills with work history. I'm going to teach you to do all of it. This is really suitable for diverse skill sets and clients that have solid work history.



Standard Components of a Resume

LB: Let's talk about the standard components of that combination resume. The first component is name and contact information. By the way, I'm going to go over these in more detail. I'm going to run through them here. The second is professional summary. Thirdly, we have our experience. Then we typically have a section dedicated to education. Then finally, we have more of a catch-all category. For the sake of our webinar today, we're going to call that category "certifications, skills, and interests." Sometimes people have a category called accomplishments, but in general, this is more of the catch-all that allows you to document any kind of accomplishments, certifications, other things that make the client a great fit for the job that do not neatly fit into their work history or their education.

Meet Olga Mutamba

LB: Let's go through some of these components one by one. Before we do that, I want to make sure that we are grounding ourselves in a specific example. Today we're going to talk about how to make a resume for a very specific client. Her name is Olga Mutamba. She's 46 years old. She was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Olga worked as a former nurse child care worker. Remember that job title, because we're going to talk about it a little bit more. It's not a job title we have here in the United States. She also worked as the head cook at a Radisson Hotel prior to working as a nurse child care worker.

LB: Unfortunately, because of humanitarian crisis in the DRC, she was forced to relocate to Uganda to a refugee camp. Then she was resettled in the United States, specifically Atlanta, where she began working in poultry processing at Pilgrim's Pride Chicken Processing. While she was working in this new job, she was attending English class. She improved her English. She was able to return to a refugee resettlement agency and get some more assistance enrolling in vocational training. She was able to enroll at Atlanta Technical College and get her certification as a medical assistant.

LB: Now we're going to help Olga today make a resume. Olga is looking for a medical assistant job where she would be able to work in children's health care, preferably in a hospital setting.

Optimizing Name and Contact Information

LB: Let's first think about how we can optimize Olga's name and contact information, and how you could do that generally with your clients. The first thing that I would say to you is that I encourage you, instead of putting a client's full email or full address on the resume, instead, I would encourage you only to put city and state. The reason is that the applicant tracking system that I was talking to you about is sometimes programmed such that it is only trained to look for resumes that come from certain zip codes.

LB: Because of that, we don't want to prevent our clients from having the best chance possible getting a job. There's no reason to have all of that PPI on the resume. You can just put city-state. The second thing that we want to think about is we want to also provide a client phone number. As we do so, we want to do a little bit of career coaching with the client or job coaching with the client, where we're talking to the client about what happens when the employer actually calls you. Who will answer? Is this your phone number? What will you say when you talk to the employer partner? Throughout, this is just a great way to prepare your client for actual outreach by the employer partner.



LB: Similarly, we're going to talk to our client about which email address to use. Something that I like to do is create a new email address with clients and ask them for their permission that I am able to access that email address as well, to keep tabs on which employers have reached out to them, help them prepare, et cetera, for various jobs in case they missed this content.

LB: Also, if you create a brand new email address, you're able to make sure that the email address is professional. We really want to lean into Outlook email addresses and Gmail addresses, because these are used by much of the business community. We want to shy away from Yahoo, from MSN, from Hotmail, et cetera, because all of these are less commonly used and do not look as professional as a result. The example I have here is that you would use JohnSmith@gmail.com and not use JohntheSwan@hotmail.com. JohntheSwan is a little bit sillier, it has some numbers in there, it's a little distracting, and it takes away from the polish that the first option has.

LB: Then, finally, if your candidate has a LinkedIn, and I know a lot of our candidates are very new, they do not have LinkedIn addresses yet, but if they do, you want to go ahead and provide that link or online portfolio as it is available.

LB: Let's look at Olga's name and contact information now. We have her name here, we have that professional email address, a phone number that she is going to answer, and then we have her city and state and a LinkedIn link here.

Optimizing a Professional Summary

LB: Awesome. Moving right along, let's talk a little bit about a professional summary.

LB: What is a professional summary? That's the first thing we should talk about. A professional summary is going to be typically two or three sentences—sometimes people can do it as little as one sentence—that's really going to condense the candidate's strongest selling point for that target job, not for all possible jobs. In that professional summary, we want to provide the total length of relevant professional experience. We don't want to appeal to the heartstrings or highlight too much irrelevant experience. One other thing I want to say about the professional summary is that it's totally above board to also do something that you might have seen called a professional objective, which is one sentence that tells you what it is that the candidate is trying to accomplish next in their career. Professional summary is a little bit broader. As long as you are summarizing the client's strongest selling point, it can also add a bit of an objective statement.

LB: We're going to see that now in Olga's professional summary. Olga—the first thing I want to say though is, as this came on your screen, I wonder where your eyes first focused. For me, and I think for many of you, probably you first looked at this number nine. There's a reason for that. Our brains are able to read numbers much quicker than we are able to read words. As much as possible, as many of you mentioned when we first started this webinar with our Slido, using these metrics is a great way to draw the eye to specific pieces of information that we want to highlight to capture the hiring manager's attention.

LB: Olga is a dedicated nurse with over nine years of experience in pediatric community care in the DRC, seeking to leverage an extensive background in health care in a medical assistant role in the United States. We've given her summary. The other thing to note here is that we have intentionally provided a bit of an objective statement. We know that Olga, in many ways, is overqualified if she was looking for a medical



assistant role in her home country. She's worked as a nurse. That outranks the medical assistant, but here in the United States, we want to explain in Olga's own words, this is indeed what she's looking for.

LB: She has not yet become a licensed nurse in the United States. The second sentence here, she's aiming to utilize strong clinical skills and a recent CMA certification to improve patient outcomes. Why is this second sentence necessary? You could argue that it is not, but the reason it's included here is because we want the hiring manager to know that Olga is certified as a CMA. That way they know that they're able to bill insurance for Olga as an employee. They're able to legally hire these kinds of things that are very important for that role.

Optimizing Professional Experience

LB: Moving right along, I want to now talk to you all about optimizing professional experience. In general, throughout this resume creation process, I really want you to think about the fact that the resume itself is a piece of really vital real estate. We want to put the absolute most relevant, impressive accomplishments higher up on that document because, as I mentioned, people are going to scan through. They're going to make impressions up at the top about whether or not this candidate is a good fit. The other thing to note is, because this is a combination resume format, we don't have to stick to this chronological experience section.

LB: For Olga, she is now working in poultry processing. That job is not the most relevant or impressive, at least in terms of the eyes of someone who is hiring for a hospital position, because it has nothing to do with clinical work. Rather than have that way up at the top, instead we're going to opt to have a relevant experience section or relevant professional experience, in this case, over a chronological experience section. By the way, when you do this, you can also have yet another section that says "additional experience" where you could put in this poultry processing position.

LB: You want to simplify bullet points for less relevant jobs. You don't need a ton. That's how you really save the space, is you condense for these less relevant jobs. Usually, candidates will have one job that really is the thing that has best prepared them for this target position. We want to add more weight to that specific position, have more bullet points, have more metrics, spend more time on this section. We also want to begin each of our bullet points with an action verb that points the reader to the skill that we most want to highlight. I want to move us forward.

LB: Awesome. Here is an actual example of Olga's professional experience. Highlighted here is the fact that we have this relevant professional experience section. Then also, as we know, she's going after a position working in a hospital as a medical assistant working with children. That very first bullet has that she managed pediatric care for over 800 children annually.

LB: We've also pulled out some skills required by the target job description. Medical assistants, they have to give vaccinations, they have to do health assessments. When you go to the doctor, the first person that comes and talks to you, that person is often a medical assistant that is doing some initial assessments, getting records created before the doctor comes and sees you. We want to pull out that particular work because it's the most relevant to the job at hand.

Optimizing Education

LB: Moving forward now, I want to talk about optimizing education. In this section, we want to have these kinds of education. High school education, especially if the client has not completed post-secondary education. If



they have completed post-secondary education, you don't need to include high school. You want to have post-secondary education, as mentioned. You also want to have any trade schools or vocational training, specific courses that are relevant to the job at hand in this section. If you have candidates that do not have formal education, you can delete this section. There's nothing that says that you have to keep this section here.

LB: Moving on to Olga's education, we see here that Olga attended the University of Kinshasa, and she graduated with her state-recognized diploma in February of 2013. We also have that she then attended Atlanta Technical College and got her medical assistant course. We're not going to leave that out just because she also has a nursing education because, again, she's going after a medical assistant title.

LB: We're going to talk a little bit more about how to translate that work she's done at the University of Kinshasa for this audience. It's already done here, but I'll talk more about the choices in a later section.

Optimizing Certifications, Skills, Interests

LB: Moving forward to our last section of Olga's resume, we're going to talk about optimizing the certifications, skills, and interests section. In a functional resume, and for clients that may have less professional experience outside of the home or the domestic sphere, we want to highlight this section higher up in the resume. We would have name and contact information. We would still have a professional summary with a bit of an objective, and then we would put this section. We're going to reorganize things a little bit.

LB: In Olga's case, she does have professional history that relates really strongly to the job title, so we're going to put this lower to the bottom. We want to mention some skills and some language that is directly from the target job description in this section. This is just a great place if the client has some skills and it's hard to work them into their professional experience section, you can add them in here.

LB: You can also add in specific accomplishments. You want to mention all of the languages the clients speak. We don't want to forget that that absolutely is a really important skill set. Also, this is optional, but in general, we want our resumes to not have too much color and interest, and more just highlight accomplishments. We want them to fit really nicely with the target job description. However, this is a place where we can add a little bit of personality, a little bit of complexity of candidates. We can add a small interest section where we talk about some non-controversial interests that the client has as a way to help them connect with a hiring manager if there is to be an interview.

LB: I'm going to show you an example of this if it's a little confusing. For Olga, she has stackable credentials that she earned while she was completing her certified medical assistant certification. During that time, she also got a CNA. She got basic life support. Importantly, a certification related to supporting the life of pediatrics. We have some skills pulled from the job description, including medication administration, and patient and family health education. That's very important for medical assistant, the languages that she speaks. Then we have just a very small interest section at the bottom of the resume.

LB: Olga enjoys or is interested in Kuba cloth weaving, hiking, community dance, language exchange. This is optional. Some clients are not going to want to do this. Some people will feel like this is a little silly. The idea is that if this is in front of a hiring manager, they're doing an interview, it allows them to ask a question about something outside of professional experience that gives the candidate a chance to humanize themselves to their interviewer. There could be more of an emotional connection there that could help the person then get the job.



Optimizing Resumes for Applicant Tracking Systems

LB: I'm going to move us along and talk to you about general ways to optimize resumes for that applicant tracking system. After we've created all of these sections, we now want to make sure that the entirety of the resume is ready to be scanned by this system. The first thing I will tell you is it is so important to keep a resume to one page. Very often, I will see people who want to give me the entirety of every single skill, accomplishment, responsibility they ever had. Sometimes the problem is they are highlighting, yes, responsibilities they had that are super impressive, but then they are highlighting responsibilities that are less impressive and just obvious.

LB: If a person comes to me with an IT resume and they can code in all these languages, they don't really need to tell us that they know how to use Microsoft Word, for example. Also, the ATS system doesn't really like resumes that are longer than one page. That's something to note. The exception is if your candidate has more than 20 years of relevant job experience, then it's okay to expand to two pages.

LB: You want to keep the font between 10 and 12 point. It's okay to go a little bit smaller to keep it to one page. You don't want to go below 10; it's hard to read. You want to use one of these common font types: Arial, Cambria, Times New Roman, Garamond, easiest for the system to read. You do want to embed keywords from the job description, as I've mentioned several times now. You don't want to do this in a sneaky way. You don't want to put them in a header and footer and make the font white. I've heard people doing this. These systems will check for this kind of thing, and it could get the resume tossed out. Please don't do that.

LB: Now, this is important. Keep the resume to one column. Do not choose a template that has two or three columns. It's hard for the applicant tracking system to read. It reads left to right across the page. It can misinterpret the experience and you could get that resume thrown out. Just having that one column is best, even though sometimes it's really pretty to have multiple columns.

LB: You also want to have relatively normal margins to the extent that there is a normal margin of 0.5 to 1 inch. Again, it's okay to have this 0.5 inch if you are going to be able to fit that content into one page. You also don't want to make your margins 2 inches because there's less professional experience. In that case, you would want to rely on a template that has a little bit more of a flourish to it, to camouflage if there's less experience.

LB: Then we want to send Word or PDF format resumes only when we are submitting job applications with resumes attached because otherwise, the ATS system can't read it.

2. Interpreting International Experience

LB: Awesome. I'm going to move us along now to our second section, and that is really the bulk of today's presentation. How do you take all of the international work experience that we're getting, the global talent, all of the work, all of the education clients have from other countries, and how do you make that relevant to a hiring manager who likely has a particularly American lens and may not be familiar with this kind of work?

Considerations When Interpreting International Experience

LB: Let's get started today. Here are some considerations when interpreting international experience. The first is that all good resumes are going to require you to interpret relevant experience to the target context. Just prepare yourself no matter what, even if the candidate has done work in the United States and is now looking for another job. We are always tweaking our resumes for the target job description. This will get easier and



faster as you go along, but we always want to think about what the employer partner has in mind, think about what they need.

LB: We also want to presume that the client has really impressive relevant experience. Honestly, this is maybe one of the most important things you can do as an employment specialist or as someone who works in economic empowerment. We are not immune to the kinds of biases that our culture has about what kinds of work are important and valuable. We have a capitalist system that assigns value to all kinds of jobs. When we see that certain jobs are much more compensated, it's going to affect our brains and make us think that these jobs are a lot more important. If you contrast that with jobs that are unpaid, like jobs working as a homemaker, jobs taking care of animals, or taking care of a farm, these kinds of things are often not well compensated. Sometimes people are supported by trade, these kinds of things. We can unintentionally devalue the client's professional experience. We really don't want to do that. In order for us to dignify that work experience, we first have to get prepared by addressing any kind of biases we have.

LB: The final thing is in order to really pull out all of the client's really great professional experience, we really want to be ready to ask the client really good questions. That's the very final piece here. We want to be able to make sure that we are asking clients what it is that they have done previously. We want to be able to ask them what they enjoyed, what they didn't enjoy, times when they felt like they were really superstars.

LB: I just want to check and make sure that I'm not frozen. Did that third section come up for you, Rosalie? Awesome, okay, just making sure. These are the three considerations. I actually want to suggest to you to go ahead and prepare a long list of questions in advance when you're making resumes with people. It's a great thing to give to volunteers also because it's often hard for clients to articulate their previous responsibilities and skills. That requires a lot of technical English.

Interpreting Foreign Companies

LB: Moving along to our next slide, how do we interpret foreign companies for a Western audience? The first thing is we want to translate company names into English. In Olga's case, I said that she worked at Kinshasa General Hospital, but that is actually an interpretation of the institution where she worked. If you take the French name, which I'm not going to attempt here, and you translate it directly, you will get something that roughly translates to "total wellness center." Unfortunately, here in the United States, when we hear the term "wellness," we actually don't think of a clinical setting. We often think of alternative medicine, which is not the kind of imagery we want to conjure when we are talking to a hiring manager who works in a hospital setting.

LB: It is totally fine. Nobody is going to arrest you. It actually makes more sense to change the name, because there is no direct translation, to something like "Kinshasa General Hospital" that is much more accurate about the kind of work that is done in this setting. It would make more sense to a hiring manager.

LB: The other thing to note is that we know that employers don't know about other companies in other countries often unless they're giant, giant companies. We want to make sure that we are imbuing these companies, especially when they are large prestigious companies, with the respect that they deserve. Providing a one-sentence, high-level description of the company with some metrics to give the scope of their impact can be a great idea.

LB: The final thing is when we talk about where that company is located, we just want to use city, country format. We don't need to spend too much time talking about the exact province, the exact territory, et cetera,



because Americans often, unfortunately, are not very well-traveled and do not often have the geography to really be able to locate that. We want to simplify that a little bit.

Interpreted Professional Experience: Example: Employer Description

LB: Let's look back at Olga's resume, I believe, yes, awesome. Here we have Kinshasa General Hospital, as I mentioned. The little explainer for what this company is, is that it's a leading hospital providing comprehensive health care services with over 500 beds. If you ever worked in a hospital, you know 500 beds is a massive, massive hospital. We consider 250 beds in the United States as a relatively large hospital. This really showcases that Olga is able to work in a really high-volume environment at a company of note, a company of record in her home country. The other thing to note is we have this city, country format.

Interpreting Job Titles and Responsibilities

LB: Moving right along to interpreting job titles and responsibilities. Just like we're going to interpret the name of the company, we're also going to do the same thing with the job title. We're going to interpret it to the functional American equivalent. If you remember from earlier, I noted that Olga's job title was that of nurse child care worker. This job title in the United States does not invoke the idea of someone who works in a hospital setting necessarily. We do have the nurse there, but child care worker often makes us think of early childhood education or some kind of daycare, this kind of thing.

LB: We want to go ahead and change that to the functional equivalent. You'll see here in a second what we chose. We also want to rely on job descriptions and example resumes for specific professions to help a client articulate past experience. Literally, we are going to google example resumes for pediatric nurses, which is what we chose. Then we were going to rely strongly on metrics. Which metrics? I'm going to take us to the next slide, and then we'll actually see an example.

Metrics in Client Resumes

LB: The kinds of metrics we want to put in our resume, but specifically in the professional experience section, first and foremost, we want to put, to the extent that this is appropriate and relevant for your client, we don't have to have every single one of these metrics present, but one way to get at some metrics is to ask the client, "How many people did you oversee?" especially if they were a manager or, "How many people did you interact with on a day-to-day basis?" Maybe they worked in customer service, something like this.

LB: We also want to ask them some questions to get at the percentage of change. That is that second metric type here. We want to see what kind of accomplishment the client had. Were they able to really do something to make an impact on the company's day-to-day operations? Olga has some of these metrics you'll see here in a second. You also want to have number of transactions for some of the jobs clients had. Let's say, for example, the client was a mechanic. How many automobiles did they work on in a day or in a week? You want to choose the metrics that are the most impressive. Sometimes you'll hear the answer, and you're like, "Eh, we don't need to put this in the resume." Sometimes you're like, "Wow, that's a huge number. Let's include it."

LB: Size of workplace is our next metric type. That's a great way to get at the scope. Let's say the client worked on a farm. How many acres was the farm? That can help us get scope and scale. Number of products is our



next metric here. Let's say the client was self-employed and they sold apparel. How many units of inventory did they manage? How many products were they selling on a day-to-day basis?

LB: Then, finally, something about the scale of operation. I have here the example of a client working at an airport. A metric you could use to get at the scope of that airport is something like, how many passengers pass through that airport every day, how many planes were taking off, how many parcels of luggage, et cetera, et cetera.

Interpreted Professional Experience: Example: Job Responsibilities

LB: Let's go back to Olga's resume in particular. We've interpreted her professional experience here and changed her job title to pediatric nurse. We also have some metrics here.

LB: We know that Olga's hospital—she had a pretty large caseload as a nurse, or a patient load I think is probably more accurate to say. She was serving over 1,000 children annually. We also have that she actually worked with pediatricians to develop a plan to manage acute and chronic illnesses. That contributed to a 25% improvement in patient recovery rates. It's not always things that clients do alone that is worth mentioning. Things they've done as part of the team are absolutely fair game.

Interpreting Informal Work or Self-Employment

LB: We're going to keep moving here. I also want to have a quick note about interpreting informal work and self-employment.

LB: A lot of our clients have worked really incredible, backbreaking, difficult, impressive work in industries and in settings that we sometimes don't think of as work. I mentioned the example of someone who has worked as home manager or homemaker. Also, there are positions that our clients have had, often providing caretaking, taking care of children, taking care of animals, working in agricultural work. Maybe they had small business, hair braiding, et cetera. We want to really make sure that we're ready to dignify that experience and understand all of the labor involved in this so that we're able to put our clients in the best possible light. That's our job to be advocates for them. We can only expect our hiring managers to really dignify that work if we are first prepared to do that ourselves.

LB: Moving on to this next slide here, here's an example we have. In Olga's case, this is not a part of her resume, but I want to share it with you because I think it's often relevant. We actually have an entire blog post that is dedicated to helping create resumes with first-time job seekers that really goes into detail about how to do this work. It has a list of questions that you can ask the client to get them to articulate this work.

LB: Often clients feel ashamed when they're describing the fact that they haven't worked in a professional setting before, and we really want to make them comfortable and celebrate all the work that they've done. In this particular instance, the client was a homemaker or home manager. The kinds of skills they have are domestic management skills and organizational skills, more broadly. We have them categorized here in a few different categories, and then we have example bullet points with some metrics that you could actually pull and use in a resume.



LB: Starting off here with budget management skills, a bullet point could be, "Oversaw household budget, reducing expenses by 20% through strategic planning." That's a percentage of change metric that we talked about earlier.

LB: How many children were cared for? That could be a metric. How large was the family? And if the client was making meals, we could dignify that work with planning and preparing nutritious meals for a family of five, ensuring dietary balance and variety. When you think about it, so many organizational skills, so much thoughtfulness, so much planning has to go into creating meals for a family of five.

LB: Then finally, community engagement. This client could have organized and participated in community events, increasing participation by 30%. That is just a snapshot, but check out the blog if you're interested in learning more.

Interpreting International Education Institutions

LB: Going back to our combination resume format, we now want to talk about how to interpret international education. The first thing I would suggest is you opt for credential evaluation. That makes things easy. You can rely on a credential evaluation service offered by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services. That will tell you exactly what the American equivalency is of any kind of education that you send it.

LB: That's not always possible. A lot of times clients do not have their original documents. They can't get their credentials evaluated, and so sometimes we have to use our best judgment. In some cases, we have to briefly explain the education system if it is significantly different from the American system. For example, you could say the name of the credential and then explain they completed a five-year degree program in, let's say, nursing equivalent to a bachelor's and master's combined. Then highlight any relevant coursework, especially if the client is applying for a job that they are a bit overqualified for, to ensure that you are communicating that they know what they are getting themselves into, and they are prepared to use that education they had and apply that learning and teaching to this job.

Interpreting Foreign-Earned Education: Example

LB: Moving along here, we're back at Olga's education section, and we see here that Olga was able to get a credential evaluation of her state-recognized diploma in nurse child care work, and that was certified equivalent to a U.S. Bachelor of Science in nursing. We also have that she has specialized coursework in pediatric care and communicable disease management.

LB: Because she got a credential evaluation, we were able to list her GPA here. That's not always going to be possible. You don't have to do this and, honestly, you should not do this if the education happened more than 10 years ago. As you can see, this happened 11 years ago, so I might actually recommend taking this part off. I wanted to show this to you to see how to do it and incorporate it. You only want to do it if the client has a GPA that is the equivalent of 3.5 or higher.

3. Using Tools, Templates, and AI to Improve Resumes

LB: Moving along, we're going to spend some time now talking about how to use tools and templates and AI to improve our resumes. How do we use this technology and make it work for us?



Benefits of Using Technology in Resume Creation

LB: Moving along, there are a few benefits that we want to highlight in the resume creation process with technology, and the first is efficiency. What I mean by this—this makes our whole process much faster. All of the things I've talked to you about, about optimizing, we are able to do these relatively easily when we are using this technology. We can edit, tailor, et cetera.

LB: The second benefit, I just hinted at, but it is optimization. We can actually mimic the applicant tracking system with some of these tools so we can see what might make that resume get through to a hiring manager and what might not.

LB: The third benefit we have is a polished feel. This is great because we are able to make a resume that looks really pretty. A lot of the templates that we use can just give that extra polish. Again, this is the first impression that a hiring manager will have of you. We want them to think about our clients as being polished people who are able to put together really beautiful products. That's why we do this.

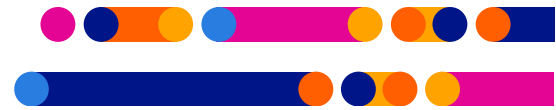
LB: Then finally, these tools are really great if we are working with English language learners because often they have trouble articulating their skills, their talents, in a way that makes a lot of sense to a hiring manager. It's often hard just to pull that technical English in the first place, and these tools can make that a lot easier.

Drawbacks of Using Technology in Resume Creation

LB: There are also drawbacks to using this technology. Moving us to the next slide, the first is privacy. Unfortunately, we do have to be conscious of the fact that if we are putting so much personal identifiable information into these systems, we don't know necessarily what is going to happen with it. If we're using, for example, an AI chatbot, and we're giving it all of the client's contact information, that could have negative consequences down the line. The client could be the victim of a phishing scheme or some kind of scam like this. My recommendation to you is just take that personal identifiable information off. You can still put the work experience and education, and you should be safe.

LB: The second drawback is generic resumes. We have to admit that sometimes using these tools can make our resumes feel a little bit bland and impersonal, so that's something to think about. The third drawback is really the fact that increasingly, there is AI detection software out there that employers have access to. We know our education institutions have gotten really wise to this AI phenomenon and are using these tools to see what content was written by AI. That is why we still need to make sure that we know how to optimize and interpret work experience and tailor it, because we want it to still have a lot of human input. It's okay to use these tools as a foundation, but we still want to make sure that we are editing things so that we don't accidentally get our client's resume put in a rejection pile before anyone sees it.

LB: Then, finally, just as it is a pro, there's also a downside. Yes, these tools make it easier for clients to articulate a lot of their accomplishments, skills, help them come up with these metrics, et cetera. However, we do want our clients to be able to have those [English language] skills because, best case scenario, they're going to get into an interview setting, and we want to make sure that they are able to do some of that articulation on their own, not knowing what kind of questions are going to be sent their way.



Types of Resume Tools

LB: I want to move us along to just a rundown of the types of resume tools. The first is a resume scanner. We're also going to talk about resume templates, and we actually have one for you all. We're going to spend some time talking about the tool I use the most, which is a resume creation software. Then AI chatbots is how we will close today.

Using Tools: Resume Scanners

LB: Starting off with our resume scanner. What is a resume scanner? A resume scanner is going to mimic the applicant tracking system, and it's going to scan a resume up against a job description. It is going to help us optimize for that ATS software. It's going to tell us what keywords we are missing. It's going to tell us if our verb choice is too weak. It's going to tell us if we have generic language. It will help us with spelling and grammar checks.

LB: Something to note, though, is that these tools are not completely free. You can often do a few scans for free, and then you have to move into paying for a subscription, although I will say not very expensive. You can often share a subscription among the office, or you can always do them for free. However, a lot of the premium features are locked behind a paywall, so something to note there.

Using Tools: Resume Templates

LB: Another tool I want to highlight is our resume template. Can you just move us to the next slide? Awesome. Thank you so much. A resume template, this is an older tool. This is probably the tool you're most familiar with, I would imagine. I want to suggest to you that you check out the downloadable, editable resume template that we have created for you all. It looks like this image on the right side of your screen. I will note that this image doesn't have the correct margins. That's just because we want to fit it on the page so that you all are able to see it. It does have correct margins when you download it.

LB: We also have Olga's resume that you can download and look at if you want to reflect on how to actually use this tool. The way you use it is relatively simple. You're going to want to actually delete the content and then add in your own, but each of the various bullet points is guiding you on what to put in that space. You want to match the template to the industry. I mentioned this up at the top, but certain industries have conventions. For example, if you were helping a client with a job in IT, they went through coding boot camps, something like this. There's often a section on top that lists various projects that a person had when they were coding, and you want to follow that.

LB: You don't want a two-column template. I've mentioned that. In general, we want to rely on space-saving options in our templates over those that have a lot of extra flourishes, unless the client has less professional experience or education, and we want to camouflage that a little bit.

Using Tools: Resume Creation Software

LB: Moving along to the next tool—this is a tool I mentioned is one of my favorites that I use most often, and that is the resume creation software. This software, it is exactly what it sounds like. It helps you create resumes and download them and be able to send them various places, et cetera. It does a few things we already



mentioned. It has scanning technology. It can mimic the ATS software. It also can provide templates for you to choose from, so that's nice.

LB: The thing that it does that is most helpful is that it will allow you to put in a job title, and it will generate a bunch of potential bullet points. Also, after you put in all the jobs, it has technology that will help you come up with a professional summary. This is very nice. It makes your work a lot faster. We don't know about every job in the sun. I can't tell you about how many clients that I've talked to that have done something that I know literally nothing about the industry. I had a client who was really good at the pan flute and that had been their entire career. I needed to rely on tools like this to be able to even know what responsibilities to draw in the first place and how to sort of put these metrics in.

LB: This kind of software will allow you to use a preview feature before you download it. Often when you're looking at the resume and editing it, it looks a little different than how it's going to look in its finalized shape, so please do that.

LB: Then my final suggestion to you is that if you use a software like this, provide the client with a Word version and a PDF version when you're done. The Word version they can edit, right, for each of these various jobs they're applying for, but a PDF version looks really nice for employer partners.

LB: I don't think that I mentioned this earlier, but it is important when you're saving the resumes to send to employers, make sure to save them in a way that is really simple. "First Name, Last Name Resume" is fine. You don't want to have additional flourishes, "first name, last name, resume, final, resume, manufacturing," something like this. It just doesn't look as professional.

Using Tools: AI Chatbots

LB: Let's go to our next slide. Our final tool today that we're going to talk about is the AI chatbot. These have really exploded into the scene over the last year, and they can do a lot of different things. Something that they can do just like the software I just talked to you about is that they can generate professional summaries. They can also create potential bullet points for you, and they can even use a resume that you upload and create an accompanying cover letter.

LB: Again, we want to be really careful here because just having it create everything for us and not doing any editing ourselves makes us liable to be caught by some AI detection software. It's nice to know that this exists, and then we can take that work and then make it our own, make it the client's own.

LB: This chatbot can also articulate how skills or work experience earned in one context translates really nicely into another. How is this person who's really proficient in the pan flute, how are they prepared to work in a manufacturing company? What is the overlap here? It might be a lot easier to use a tool to do that rather than you trying to agonize over that connection on your own.

LB: It can scan for potential spelling errors or grammatical errors, and also just give you general suggestions on how the resume can be improved. You can just ask it open-ended questions like this.



Potential Prompts for AI Chatbots

LB: Let's look at a few prompts to close today, and then I'm going to take some questions. The first prompt that you could use, and again, sky's the limit, that's the nice thing about these, is you could ask it to "Give me 10 job responsibilities that an Iraqi interpreter who worked alongside the U.S. Army might have had. Make sure to include potential metrics." It would generate these in a matter of seconds. If you hate all of them or they don't work, give it some feedback, and you could say, "Give me another 30 potential bullet points," right?

LB: Another prompt, "How does a job as a teacher in Honduras prepare someone to work at a food manufacturer in the United States?" Then you could, from there, ask it to generate bullet points as necessary.

LB: Then finally, you could say, "Read this job description and the resume, and tell me which skills and keywords are missing from the resume," and it would do that work. Be careful; these chatbots do hallucinate sometimes. They invent things that were never present on the resume. They give you inaccurate information sometimes, but generally speaking, this is a task they're pretty good at because they are scraping the Internet and looking at thousands and thousands of resumes and job descriptions.

Q&A

LB: That is the end of today's presentation, but I am going to take some questions. I see we have quite a few questions listed in the chat. I haven't had a chance to review those yet, so just give me one second. As I am doing that, feel free to type your question in the Q&A, and we will try to answer them.

LB: All right. The first question that I have here is,

[Do you] have any suggestions on how to run a resume workshop?

LB: I do have some suggestions for you all. If you are having all of your clients show up on one day to create a resume, the first thing I would suggest to you is that you don't do what I just did and just go over the various components and expect that your clients are ready to make a resume after that. In some cases, that will work, but it depends on the English level that the client has, whether or not you're able to do this. Many cases, clients, maybe they even have English level, but they don't have the digital literacy.

LB: I would really recommend making sure that you have devices in place and also having a call for volunteers. Every person sits with the volunteers. You do some initial training with volunteers. You provide them a list of questions to help really pull out some answers for clients. You can use resume software or one of these chatbots, et cetera, to help them in this work. I would also budget about two hours for this workshop. I know this is a long time. We don't always have this capacity. It does get faster as you go.

LB: Okay. Someone asked,

I'm curious about the success rate of the resumes that I've created. Did I mostly use Indeed or similar websites?

LB: That is a really good question. I would say that it completely depends, unfortunately, on how hungry that particular industry is for new employees. I will tell you, though, that again, the most success that I've had is



combining all of these tips and techniques also with a lot of job development work, a lot of conversations with employer partners.

LB: I mentioned this phrase, “socializing resumes,” and some people may or may not know what that means. In this particular context, what it means is before you're sending a resume, you're first meeting with an employer partner. You're talking about your organization. You're talking about your clients. You are really letting the employer partner know, “Hey, the candidates that I work with, they are work authorized. They are candidates who are very unlikely to not pass a background check or a drug screen. They have been vetted by seven different U.S. agencies. They are great candidates. They're just looking for a great opportunity, and it's my job to help them find that.”

LB: Something I also like to do is note that a lot of these employer partners are relying on staffing agencies to be able to find these candidates and find these resumes in the first place. You are able to do that work for free. Having one of these conversations first and asking, “Hey, is there someone on your team that I could send resumes to?” You want a point person. “Can I get an email address? I know you all get a lot of applications. All I'm asking is that you just—there's a person who looks at the resumes, and I'd love to get some feedback about these resumes. If you can, I could always pull some more candidates for you.” That way we know that those aren't going into this ATS system. They are going to a real person, and you haven't been too pushy, but you have asked that somebody actually spend the time to look at the resumes you sent.

LB: Okay.

Someone says that they've been told to avoid using words like “extensive” and “strong.” Show, not tell. What can you do instead of just saying, “I'm a good employee”?

LB: That's a good question. That's absolutely true. If you look online, you're going to get all kinds of do's and don'ts about resumes. I will tell you that experts disagree, partially because this work is so context specific, but there are some general guidelines. This question-asker is absolutely correct. Her name is Alona. That it's not great to just say like, “I'm a strong candidate,” right? That's pretty generic.

LB: Instead, it can be a lot more powerful to do a little bit of storytelling. When I would sit with my job seekers, my clients, I would ask them, “Is there something that you did at your job that you did really well, that you did better than other people?” That is often a good way to get them to tell you one of these stories about their exceptional work rather than thinking, like I said, that you need this comprehensive list of all the responsibilities they had. Instead, you want to look for these places where there are stories that, as you mentioned, really show rather than tell that this person made an impact at their particular company. Sometimes they were able to work faster. Sometimes they were able to sell more. Using these metric examples that I've given you and building some questions around it can really help you draw those out.

LB: Okay, here is another good question:

How do we understand if a candidate is overqualified for a job?

LB: I'm going to be completely honest with you all. Oftentimes, unfortunately, we have something called “brain waste” when we are working with our candidates. Brain waste is the phenomenon where we have candidates who are overqualified, who are working in roles that do not utilize the full expansive portfolio of their skills,



talents, education. They're being undercompensated. They could do a lot more. They could provide additional services, be better compensated, and also help employers more.

LB: Two things I want to say about this. The first thought is that in some cases, when people first arrive, even though they have really impressive credentials, they don't have the English to be able to express all of the talent that they have. Unfortunately, you are going to see some brain waste in many cases because of the timeline of the resettlement process and how quickly we need to get clients self-sufficient. Some of this is normal.

LB: What I want to suggest to you is that you really invest as an organization, and making sure you have really strong ESL education and specifically vocational ESL education, that we are training our clients on how to not just speak to the average English speaker, but also how to talk about the workplace, talk to their supervisor, talk to their manager, advocate for themselves, be able to talk about their skills in an interview. Then from there, having a scaffolded system where someone goes first into this first job, then there's some vocational ESL, and then they're able to come back for additional services is ideal. I know that that is contingent on funding, but that is something I want to say.

LB: The other thing is that another part of this, as I mentioned before, is going to be talking to your employer partners. If your employers are open and amenable to a conversation, you can explain to them the situation. Something I would like to say is, "We have candidates who have all different English levels that have all different professional backgrounds looking for jobs. In some cases, you may see some resumes and be a little bit nervous if the person is far too overqualified to work in this specific position. However, I want to reassure you that turnover," this is true by the way, "turnover is less for recent immigrants to the United States than it is for general employees, especially for entry-level positions. The reason is because these candidates are really trying to get their foot in the door. I'm not going to tell you that we're not going to support this candidate over the next few years to be able to return to their field of interest and their expertise. But what I will tell you is that it is going to take an X-long, often at least a year, maybe two years for that client to have the English skills to be able to return and get some vocational training and some additional support to be able to return to their industry of choice."

LB: Okay, let's see what time it is. All right. Someone asked,

[If these additional job experiences or irrelevant jobs are going to take up too much space, is it okay to just remove them completely?](#)

LB: I would say, yes, it is okay to remove them, especially sometimes you have candidates that you're working with, and they have done every job under the sun, and it makes them unfortunately look a little bit scattered. It's often not their fault. They have had to move from place to place to place. They're very resilient. They found a job in each context. They pick up skills and are able to do what they need to do to survive.

LB: The end result can be that a client has worked, I don't know, 10 different jobs in eight years. In that case, I would suggest trying to create a through line by highlighting certain jobs versus others using that relevant professional experience framing that I gave you. I think that can really help with this because then you've set the expectation with the employer partner. You're not getting my entire professional experience. I am intentionally giving you the jobs that are related to this particular job.

LB: Okay, let me see other questions. Someone says,



What do you recommend for general resumes as keywords, objective summary, if a case manager does not have the capacity to help clients make specialized resumes for different job postings?

LB: This is a good question. What I would suggest to you is if you have limited capacity, what you want to do is you want to read through a few job descriptions and you want to pull out some themes.

LB: If you are really helping the client apply to warehouse jobs, often what you're going to see is that there are groups of skills that [are mentioned] over and over again. Organizational skills, attention to detail, the ability to lift heavy things, these kinds of things, sometimes forklift certifications. You want to build a resume around the average, knowing that realistically, you're not going to have time to go through every single time and make some small tweaks.

LB: I know that your question is how to not make small tweaks, but I do want to tell you that you can make small tweaks in 10 minutes. The way that you would do that is just by going through that professional summary and just plugging in two or three keywords from the job description, and then doing the same with that skill section at the bottom. You can train your clients how to do this in some cases. Again, I know it's not always possible. If you have intern support, volunteer support, that's ideal, but if not, it's okay.

LB: I have also been in situations where you have a caseload of 200 people, so you're not able to do this tailoring. In these cases, sometimes I would make that general resume for the particular industry. I would train my clients on how to look for jobs that were posted within the last 48 hours on Indeed. Then I would teach them how to do the easy apply. They would have their professional profile on Indeed, they would have their resume there, and I would have them go through and be applying for jobs.

LB: When I did that, I made sure I'd made an email address with the client, because I really want to make sure that if the client is applying for all these jobs, I'm aware if they have an interview coming up, and I can prep them, make sure they have the right clothing for the interview, all of this. Same thing with LinkedIn. LinkedIn has an easy apply button. I'm saying all of this to you, and sometimes when you are applying for, especially, again, try to have those relationships there. It's a numbers game. You have to apply to quite a few jobs to be able to get a hit. Having that industry-specific resume is really useful.

LB: Someone asked,

Are there financial supports that you recommend to support clients in getting their credentials evaluated?

LB: That is a good question. Yes, there are. There are some credential evaluation services that are free. The first that I would recommend to you is the West Gateway Program. I will tell you, they've asked me to say this, they have more limited capacity than they did in previous years, but they are able to do a credential evaluation for clients for free if they are from one of seven target countries.

LB: I believe, and I'm not entirely sure if I'm correct. I'd have to check, but Afghanistan, I think, is almost definitely one of those countries, as is Ukraine, so some of our target populations. They also—the nice thing is, you don't have to have the client's original documents. I can't tell you how often clients will say, "I have a copy, but I don't have the original," and you're not able to send that to a credential evaluation service.



LB: ECE also has a program like this. I'm less familiar with it, and I don't know which countries, but I want to [say] that is also out there if it is the case that West has to limit their capacity and they can't do all these credential evaluations. Another nice thing about ECE and West, they do not require you to have original copies, and you can actually submit digital copies to get this credential evaluation.

LB: They can also train your staff to be able to do some of this credential evaluation work on your own and certify. That adds a little bit of capacity to them, and you can do it more on your timeline. That's very nice. Note, though, that if you're doing credential evaluations in this way and the employer requires a very specific evaluator, that is not going to work in most cases. You're going to have to advocate for that. The West Gateway program works or the ECE program works. If you're in that situation, please fill out a TA request. I'd love to talk to you. There's advocacy that we can do there to make sure. Often colleges are in this situation. They don't want to accept gateway credentials unfortunately.

LB: Oh, and the other thing is that I recommend if you are a person who does development work, if you are raising funds, putting aside a little bit of your scholarships for credential evaluations, writing in that this is one of the services you're going to do. It's often an easier service to complete with a client than some of our other services. It takes way less time than helping somebody get a job. It's way less expensive in terms of staff power. It can be a really good way to make sure that you have that funding in place.

LB: Okay. Someone had a question here:

What's the difference between professional summary and professional experience?

LB: That is a good question. You can think of the professional summary as a summary of the professional experience. The reason that we want to have both is, as I mentioned, often you will see very little time dedicated to actually reviewing the resume on the part of the hiring manager. If it's the case that they don't read anything about the professional experience for the client, hopefully they will at least read the two sentences where you have described the most impressive and relevant experience the client has as it relates to the target job or target industry, et cetera. That is how they're different.

LB: Okay, let's see. Okay, someone asked,

How many years of job experience should be listed on the resume? Should we only list the last two jobs?

LB: Okay, that's a really good question. In this example, I was really going over one piece of professional history for Olga, the work she did at Kinshasa General Hospital. No, you can definitely list more professional experience than just the last two jobs.

LB: Again, you want to highlight the most relevant jobs. You don't want to highlight all jobs, especially if you're running into an issue of space. As I mentioned earlier, it's okay for you to delete some of these jobs from the resume altogether if they are not relevant. You don't want to inadvertently make it seem that the client has giant gaps in the resume, but if it's just a short period of time, something less than a year, it's okay to take those off.

LB: Again, the other way that I would recommend doing this is you have the job that is the one that most prepared the client for success in a new role. You spend more time detailing in bullet points with metrics about



the various responsibilities and accomplishments of that job in particular. For all of the other remaining jobs, maybe you only use one, maybe two, maybe three at most bullet points, detailing the kinds of responsibilities and accomplishments. You can even only use one bullet point and only list a top accomplishment. If it's something that really makes the candidate shine, you just want to give a little bit of that experience.

LB: Okay, other questions coming down here to the bottom. Okay, someone asked,

Can you explain a little bit more about the applicant tracking system? Do you recommend using ATS? What percentage did pass or has trouble passing through?

LB: That's a good question. What is the point of it? You might have heard some commercials when you're listening to podcasts elsewhere for software that can help hiring managers easily connect to new employees, right? That is an advertisement in many cases for an applicant tracking system. I'm talking about it like it's one thing, but in reality, different employers are using different kinds of software to be able to locate the candidates they want to locate and invite them to apply for various jobs.

LB: What does this software do? It's supposed to save time for the employer. It is supposed to allow the employer to not have to do that initial screen and read through all of these applications and instead just look at the top applications.

LB: Often there is a group of applications that both the hiring manager, if they were doing this manually, and the applicant tracking system is going to say, these are the ones that we think are the best fit. It will also have some alternates and then it will have some that is like, "Don't even worry about these ones." That's what we're trying to avoid. We don't want to get slotted into that third category. We really don't even want our resumes slotted into the second category.

LB: As for what percentage get filtered through, that's a little bit hard to answer because, again, it depends upon the employer, how popular the employer is. If you're applying with a client for a job at Google, there are thousands of applications that go for every single job. The percentage that get through the applicant tracking system and are marked as "Please, hiring manager, read these; please, HR person, read these," is really small. It's something probably like 5%, maybe even smaller.

LB: For a smaller company, most of the companies that we are working with, it's much larger, probably something closer to 50% of those resumes are looked at. That is what it does. It helps the employer partner know which applications are really the ones to pay attention to and maybe call those candidates to set up interviews. The employer is able to set some parameters in the software. It's able to say, I only want people that live in these particular neighborhoods to be able to apply. Honestly, this could be a form of hiring discrimination, but that does not mean that is not happening, which is why I want you to be careful not to give too much of that address information.

LB: The other thing that they can sort of set parameters on is the kinds of job titles that people have had previously, which is why I walked you through that example of changing the job title of nurse child care worker to pediatric nurse, because the system probably doesn't know the term "nurse child care worker." It wouldn't know what to do with that and might send that resume to the "do not open" file.

LB: Other things it's looking for are certain keywords. It's definitely looking for how much experience a person has. A lot of these jobs, just like your job and your agency probably has a pay scale structure based on the



number of years of experience a person has before they enter the role. These jobs are the same, right? It's looking for a person, a candidate, who has at least X amount of years of experience.

LB: Okay, here's a great question. This question here is,

How should we create a resume that is also representative of the client's English level? It's understandable to keep it professional, but given some beginner levels, how do we represent that accurately for the employer so that we are making sure to accurately represent newly arrived individuals?

LB: Good question. How do we make sure that we are not providing such a polished picture that the employer partner is going to think, "Wow, this person has great English. Also, they have really strong digital skills." That's not something you mentioned, but that is sometimes a concern.

LB: What I would suggest to you is, remember I said in that final section we could put the languages that somebody speaks with that skill section? It is totally fine to list the various languages, and then in parentheses beside each language, list the level of fluency that the person has. If their native language, in the case of Olga, is Swahili and also French, we would put that she is fluent. Let's say that Olga was only intermediate in her English speaking, we would put that. That's just another thing. You can also say if a person has really good speaking skills but not as good literacy skills, you would put something like "intermediate" versus "fluent" to just clue the employer partner into this.

LB: I know that I sound like I'm continuing to beat this same drum. Another thing that you should really do is be talking to your employer partners to explain, "Hey, part of what we do, part of what we're paid to do by the funding that we receive often from ORR is to make resumes with our clients. We are with them every step of the way, and we'll be with you every step of the way. If there are some things that are a little bit confusing, maybe check in with us. We'd be happy to explain and give you more information about a candidate if you have questions." Something like this.

LB: Okay, somebody said,

When we're working with refugees, should we include references on our resumes? I thought it would help for clients who have little to no job experience.

LB: It's a good question. Typically, the industry standard right now is that we have moved away from putting references on resumes. That used to be the rage. Often also you would see "References available upon request." More and more now what we see is a lot of people feeling as though that's implied, right, that if you are a person who's ready for this job, you should be prepared to present references.

LB: I hear what you're saying. I do think there's a case to be made if there is very little professional experience, that you could at the very least provide something about professional references, say that they're available or even list one. Usually I would actually suggest against it. This can be a difficult part of the job application process, because so many job applications require you to submit references with the American phone number format and the address format of companies that assumes that the only companies there are in the world have an American city and state name. Drives me insane. I've actually been campaigning as much as I can when I talk to chambers of commerce, these kinds of things, when I do some advocacy to really try to get



states to change the system and make it such that people cannot have job applications that do not allow people to enter their particular work history because it is a form of country of origin hiring discrimination.

LB: While we are championing this good fight, I would suggest just pinging whichever point person you've been given at that employer partner saying it's hard for you to enter in this information into the application system. Yes, I do think that in these cases it can make sense to have that information listed on a resume just so that it's already provided when you can't actually put it into the application itself.

LB: Okay, someone asked,

Do employers in the U.S. contact employers abroad to verify employment?

LB: Sometimes, but usually they do not. Usually they don't want to go through the hassle. They don't want to go through having to think about time zones, but they do sometimes. Sometimes they legally have to in order to go through the hiring system. In that case, you really want to make sure that phone number is correct. You also want to talk to your client and tell them, "Hey, call your reference. Let them know that they're going to be hearing from this person. This is a convention of the hiring process in the United States, and they need to be able to vouch for you essentially."

LB: There are cases where there are not those professional references available because the client has never worked in a formal work institution or with a formal employer. In instances like these, if you are required to provide references, oftentimes what I see people do is provide the names of caseworkers that the client is working with, employment specialists they are working with, et cetera. ESL teachers in some cases. Again, this is going to go over much better if you have a good relationship with the employer and you can explain this is this person's professional history. "We work really closely with them. We can tell you the most up-to-date information about these candidates. That's why we're listed as references." Act like it's all a part of the plan, right? It's not that something went awry.

LB: I think we have time maybe for one more question, so I'm going to look here at the ones that have just come in.

What would you suggest that I put in a job summary for a client who wants any job and isn't looking for anything specific—they just are looking for a good job?

LB: It's a good question. I think in this instance, I would put the objective statement, I would phrase it something like, "Seeking to find first employment in the United States, seeking to start a career in the United States in a good job, open to many industries," something that just blankly says this.

LB: In most cases, you do still want to put some industries. If, for example, you're working with a few key employer partners, but they're in different industries, it is okay to say, "I'm looking for an entry-level job in X, Y, or Z industry," right? Maybe manufacturing, warehousing, hospitality, something like this. That is above board. Generally speaking, though, do try to tailor it for the employer partner. It's easy enough to put those three and then go back and just delete. If you're applying for a job at hotel, just keep the hospitality, right?

LB: Okay. I think that is all the time we have today. Oh, one more question I do want to answer. That is,

Do [you] have a sample of a U.S. standard resume?



LB: I do. Go to that link and you can pull that standard resume that we have created.

Conclusion

Reviewing Learning Objectives

LB: I hope that now all of you are able to do the following: The first is to optimize standard components of a resume for hiring managers and applicant tracking systems. The second is to interpret international experience and work education into that combination resume format we talked about today. The templates that we gave you, the resume example that is linked there, all of that is in a combination format style. Then finally, we want you to be able to use these various technologies that we've talked about today. Use the resume templates, resume creation software, and AI tools to improve the efficiency and accuracy of the resume creation process.

Feedback Survey

LB: Awesome. Moving us right along, we want to ask if you can help us help you. The last thing I ask of you today is if you would scan the QR code or the link in the chat, take a five-question survey about today's training to take you less than 60 seconds to complete. I'm going to give you that time now so you can go ahead and do it. Thanks so much.

Recommended Resources

LB: Thank you so much, Rosalie. We do have a list of recommended resources for you all, many of which I've talked about today. The first three of these resources are all about resume building in particular. We have a blog post all about resume building for first-time job seekers. It has a list of questions to ask candidates to get them to articulate their actual work experience, especially if they've never worked in a formal setting.

LB: The second is that we do have that tool and template we talked about many times, template you can edit, also an example resume using that template. We have a blog post about how to use this template. Many of the tactics that I've talked about today, but some with additional details, are in that FAQ. Some folks asked today, can we get the link to the West Credential Evaluation, ECE Credential Evaluation? Go look at that blog post. It is listed in there. Also listed are some tools to help you convert GPA, this kind of thing.

LB: As I mentioned over and over again, this is only going to be as successful as your employer partnerships are. We have a webinar and a guide all about establishing and maintaining employer partnerships. I recommend you check that out. Then finally, we have a tool, specifically a phone script and an email script. When we're first talking to our employer partners, what is it that we say? I gave you some language here, but it's also there and you can practice by yourself.

Stay Connected

LB: Awesome. Thank you all so much today. Finally, I just want to ask you to stay connected. For more training and technical assistance, stay connected with Switchboard. You can email us at Switchboard@Rescue.org, or visit us at www.SwitchboardTA.org, and follow us on social media at [SwitchboardTA](https://www.facebook.com/SwitchboardTA). On behalf of all of us at Switchboard, thank you so much for learning with us, and we really hope to see you again soon.



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