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Click to jump to: [Feature](#) [Offers](#) [Resources](#) [Tip](#) [WhereInTheWorld](#)

## *a MESSAGE from SYLVIA*

### **YOUR RESUME AS A MARKETING TOOL**

In my business as a career development specialist, you can imagine that I review a fair number of resumes. Clients often ask me to review and critique their resume as they consider or begin a job search. They expect me to provide guidance around content, format, style, and general appearance. They trust me to know what “state-of-the-art” looks like when it comes to such an important document.

That said, I find that most folks tend to focus on the details rather than the bigger picture. Remember: your resume is actually a major marketing tool for YOU. It is not an autobiography or dumping ground for everything you’ve done in your life. As a formal introduction of yourself to a prospective employer, it gives the reader an initial impression of you within thirty to sixty seconds. Be sure it is the impression you want to leave with that person. If it’s not, you probably won’t get invited for an interview. Pure and simple.

Questions clients usually ask me go something like this: What must I do to present myself in a way that proves I am an ideal match for the position the organization wants to fill? Or, How can I write a resume that ensures that the

reader will perceive me the way I want to be perceived? The feature article below answers essential questions such as these. Take a look—especially if you are planning a job change or career transition within the next six months.

*Sylvia*

[Back to Top](#)

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Critical Guidance for Revising Your Resume

While I support clients through the process of revising (and occasionally creating) their resumes, I don't write and polish people's resumes for them. I prepare them for doing the real work by educating them about what to include and how to say it. I pose ideas and supply tips. In essence, I prime the pump so they have a clear direction for moving forward on their own. Although it doesn't cover everything you need to know, this article can help you to approach the task of resume writing with less hesitation and anxiety.

**Decide which type of resume suits your education, experience, and skillset.**



Most resumes today are hybrids--a combination of the chronological and functional styles. Chronological resumes list your work experience in reverse order, beginning with the most recent. Functional resumes focus mostly on clusters of skills. In particular, the hybrid style is ideal for persons changing careers because it allows you to present your work history in a way that identifies your skills and then demonstrates how you acquired/utilized them along the path.

**Invest most of your time in creating an outstanding professional summary.**

Three to six sentences in length and placed at the top of your resume, this section clearly and succinctly articulates who you are and what you have accomplished over the course of your career to date. Think of it as the “sauce reduction” of your document—the paragraph that contains the richest, most valuable information you want to give to a prospective employer.

**Use relevant keywords.**

Generously peppering keywords relevant to your industry/job of interest throughout your resume can increase the chances of it being read. These keywords may include specific acronyms, jargon, catchphrases, technical terms, etc. If you will be uploading your resume to a certain online location, this is particularly important because special technology will search for keywords used in the original job posting.

**Showcase your education as it relates to the position you seek.**

In this section you want to list names and locations of schools, degrees earned, graduation dates, special training, licenses, and certifications. Where possible, make sure you show how all of this education has benefited you, strengthened your skill set, and impacted your employers.

**Highlight your work experience as it relates to the potential new job.**

Covering only the last ten to fifteen years of your career, list your job titles, names of employers, dates of employment, and the significant contributions you made to these organizations while working there. Today, persons in hiring positions often look for metrics that prove your value: percentages, dollars, ratios, numbers of any sort. Include these in bullet points wherever you can do so meaningfully and appropriately.

**Show evidence of continuing professional development.**

If you are currently enrolled in a college degree program, taking a focused training course, or studying a topic area online, state this boldly on your resume. Tie this information to the job you are seeking.

**Include community and professional affiliations.**

In this section list the names of organizations for whom you volunteer or with whom you actively participate, the dates of your involvement, and any offices you've held. Limit this list to the last three or four years.

**Name special accomplishments and/or awards.**

If you were formally recognized at work for exceeding expectations or making an outstanding contribution of some nature, include this information. Publication of articles or books, creation of products, and scholarships you won can all be part of this section.

**Add testimonials from supervisors, customers, and/or colleagues.**

This piece of guidance has gotten mixed reviews. Some folks love this idea; others resist it. But think about it: A couple of brief, powerful sentences from people other than you... words that tout your strengths or contributions... can make a huge difference for the resume reader.

**Leave plenty of white space.**

I need to be frank here: a cluttered page overwhelms the reader. A cluttered page is a turn off. Organize your resume so that it APPEALS to people. White space, strategically positioned, invites folks to dig deeper. After all, that's what you want, right?

[Back to Top](#)

## What Clients Say

*Coaching with Sylvia was a life changing experience for me. During the process of preparing for a job transition, I learned that I was stronger and more capable than I had given myself credit for. I realized that I was worth the time, money, and effort to rediscover my true self and embrace the many wonderful possibilities before me. Further, I learned to face life's*

*circumstances—and opportunities-- with less fear and trepidation with Sylvia's steady support and guidance. Eventually I landed another professional position that is growing my skill set and stretching me in new directions.*

--Rosemary Browne, Highmark Foundation

## Offers and Opportunities

### Interested in a Resume Review?

If you are interested in discussing your current resume with me and receiving some useful feedback and input, please sign up for this special offer that is valid ONLY through February 28, 2013. Go to my website at [www.launchinglives.biz](http://www.launchinglives.biz) and click on "1 hour focused coaching" under the "main menu". For just \$99 you and your resume will get my undivided attention for one hour by phone! Although your session may only take place in March, you must schedule it before the end of February. As soon as I am notified of your purchase, I will send you an email to set the date. I'm looking forward to serving you in this laser focused way.

## RESOURCES

### **Interested in hiring an expert to write your resume for you?**

Linda Spotts, President of Crosswinds Consultants in Harrisburg, PA, may be just the right person for you. Linda wrote my resume several years ago. Feel free to discuss your individual needs by contacting her at: 717-920-5250 or [crosswinds@pa.net](mailto:crosswinds@pa.net). Primarily a referral business, Crosswinds can handle the entire task for you.

***Expert Resumes For Career Changers*** by Wendy S. Enelow and Louise M. Kursmark is an excellent reference that provides writing secrets and tips from the pros. Published in 2010, this oversized book shows readers how to get started and offers a step by step process for winding up with an ideal product that serves you well. In addition to including dozens of sample resumes appropriate for a variety of industries and interests, it gives sound guidance around developing cover letters. Available on Amazon for \$11.00. Special



Note: In 2011 the authors published a similar book specifically for managers and executives—also available on Amazon.

[Back to Top](#)

## TIP

Locate your resume and review it carefully. Considering the guidance I shared in my feature article above, identify the gaps as well as unnecessary information in the current version of your document. Is your resume too wordy? Is there a section missing? Does it include too many detailed employment experiences? Does it look like everybody else's? Set aside at least an hour of your time within the next thirty days to make some revisions. My clients and I can tell you that the perfect job opportunity may come your way when you least expect it. Be sure you are ready to act on it!

[Back to Top](#)

## Where in the World is SYLVIA?

On February 19, 2013 at 12:00 PM EST Sylvia will conduct a FREE one hour teleseminar entitled: "Are You in the Right Job? 7 Telltale Signs of a GREAT Match". For more information and to register [click here](#).

On February 28, 2013 Sylvia will present a one hour workshop during the Harrisburg Chamber of Commerce's half day event entitled: "Making It Happen: Re-energize Your Business". She will share her ideas around strategic thinking and planning as it relates to growing a business.



Join Sylvia on these social networks!

[Back to Top](#)

## About This Ezine

This Ezine is 1) to provide readers with valuable FREE content which

contributes to both personal and professional growth and 2) to invite them to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

Back issues are [available here](#). Send email by [clicking here](#) to manage your free subscription. Sharing content with attribution is encouraged

*Launching Lives Ezine* is dedicated, above all, to “building people ... building businesses.” ©2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

## About SYLVIA

**Sylvia Hepler**, Owner and President of Launching Lives, LLC, specializes in career development for both corporate and nonprofit executives and managers. Based in South Central PA, she specifically supports clients as they upgrade their current job performance, seek a promotion, or plan/navigate a career transition. What makes her services unique is that Sylvia helps people to cope with change, loss, and grief as they work on developing their careers. Her professional background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, nonprofit community health program start-up, program evaluation, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A certified executive coach through The Rescue Institute in Colorado and a participant in extensive continuing education opportunities with several executive coaches of national notoriety, Sylvia offers individual and group coaching, assessments, teleseminars, workshops, keynote speeches, and retreats. She has also created products that augment her coaching services. For more information contact:

[Launching Lives Website](#)

[Click to contact Sylvia by Email](#)

Reach Sylvia by phone at 717-761-5457

[Back to Top](#)

## Launching Lives SERVICES

**Launching Lives, LLC** is a full service career development company for

executives located in South Central PA. Utilizing a holistic approach to service provision, Launching Lives focuses on supporting clients as they create the platinum level career they desire by upgrading their job performance, seeking a promotion, or planning/navigating a career transition

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching is the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

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