



The "How To'S" Of Telling Your Story With A Functional Resume

MANY LAWYERS POSSESS ATTRACTIVE RESUMES, know how to dress for success, and have well-rehearsed answers to all the interview questions. But when the time comes to make a career change, they may talk a lot, but few are really skilled at the subtle art of marketing themselves by weaving accomplishment stories into their resumes and their interviews.

Here's how. **First**, you start by identifying your job accomplishments. **Next**, you reframe these experiences into story form for resume writing and job interviews. **Finally**, you identify or name the skills that lie behind each one of these career accomplishments and loop these skills back into your resume.

Step One - Identify Your Accomplishments

Make a list of your accomplishments (whether on paper or in your head), and keep it with you for the next step.

Step Two - Write Your Stories

The importance of learning to write your story is paramount.

To enhance your Functional resume and prepare you for the job interview, go back over the accomplishments you identified in the previous exercise and then write a story about them, keeping in mind these three elements of a career anecdote:

1) The Situation: Paint a brief word picture of the situation or challenge you faced. Here's how Bradford Bunting would turn one of his accomplishments into a career anecdote:

Our company had a serious PCB spill in an area adjacent to nearby Darby Creek.

2) The Action: Tell what concrete steps you took to respond to the situation and solve the problem:

I immediately contracted for site remediation, coordinated our cleanup efforts with EPA and DER officials, and arranged for waste transport disposal and follow-up site monitoring.

3) The Results: Describe how your efforts successfully completed the task or overcame the challenge. If possible, quantify your results, using numbers and percentages to demonstrate the success of your actions:

As a result of these timely efforts, the environmental impact of the spill was minimized, and the company avoided both fines and litigation.

**Remember:**

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Situation → Action → Results

Another example. Consider Calista Kent's resume (shown previously). Calista desires to transfer her legal skills into an executive position with a social services agency. So she uses one of her *pro bono* activities to illustrate these skills:

At a time of general economic growth, community participation in the Greater Philadelphia Battered Women's Shelter annual fund-raising events had experienced an inexplicable decline. As Chair of the 2001 Battered Women's Shelter Committee, I personally recruited other Bryn Mawr alumnae within the Delaware Valley business community to publicize and support the Shelter's annual Association Ball. Also appeared on several local television and radio talk shows to explain the group's activities, designed a press information kit, and obtained extensive regional print media coverage. As a result of these efforts, I improved community participation in the Association's fund-raising undertakings by approximately 23% over the previous year.

Step Three - Name Your Skills

Each of the accomplishment stories that you identified in the previous exercise hint at certain skills you possess. Go down the list on the following page, and select the words or phrases that best

Note

The word "Skill" in the following list can mean either a particular technical expertise (e.g., Information Technology) or a personal human trait or characteristic (e.g., Team Leadership)

characterize the expertise in your own particular bundle of skills. Because the list is not exhaustive, add your own skills to the list.

Functional Skills

Alternative Dispute Resolution	Financial Services Mgmt.	Products Liability
Appellate Argument	Firm Marketing	Project Mgmt.
Associate Development	Healthcare	Risk Management
Business Planning	Human Resources	SEC Reporting
Business Transactions	Information Applications	Tax Governance
Civil Litigation	Information Technology	Team Leadership
Client Development	Insurance Defense	Toxic Torts
Commercial Litigation	Intellectual Property	Workers' Comp.
Community Relations	Litigation Management	
Contract Negotiations	Legal Research and Writing	
Cost Reduction Strategies	Medical Malpractice	



Crisis Management	Mergers and Acquisitions
Debt/Equity Offerings	Occupational Safety & Health
Diversity Management	Organizational Development
Domestic Relations	Outside Counsel Liaison
E-Commerce Ventures	Patent Agent
Event Planning	Patents and Trademarks
Financial Planning/Analysis	Personal Injury

After identifying your skills, you can now list them in your Corporate or Functional resume under the heading "Expertise."