



Tell Your Story — The Unique Value Of The Functional Resume

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THE FUNCTIONAL RESUME TELLS STORIES. It presents a lawyer's credentials under skill headings, rather than by the more conventional way of job task descriptions. It does this by illustrating these skills with an accomplishment story. In other words, it brings the human talent for storytelling into the job-search process and by means of a story focuses the reader's attention on a lawyer's competencies and expertise, not just on his or her work history. The functional resume communicates a person's skills through the vehicle of accomplishment storytelling.

Corporate executives were the first to discover the power of functionality when their resumes began to illustrate their skills by offering concrete, quantifiable examples of their accomplishments. Here is how an aerospace marketing executive, in the early '90s, used a story in her resume to illustrate her skills at new business development:

After the end of the Cold War, identified a commercial application (virtual reality computer games) for a defense-oriented technology (flight simulator) and created a corporate alliance for the development of a new commercial product with Walt Disney Imaging and SEGA. This development opened a new market potentially worth \$500 million annually.

The functional format can be useful for lawyers who desire to stress the scope of experience in their resumes and eliminate the monotonous repetition of similar job descriptions. "Responsibilities included . . ." etc., etc., etc.

By focusing attention on competencies and accomplishments, the **functional** resume is often used most successfully by lawyers who are moving outside the formal practice of law into another kind of work and desire to translate their skills into this new work area.

Here is an example of an accomplishment statement or story from the **functional** resume of a corporate counsel. The author, in-house counsel for a construction company, is seeking a lateral move to a similar situation with another corporation. His resume lists "Alternative Dispute Resolution" as a special skill that he then illustrates with this achievement statement:

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Negotiated contract between Radnor Hydro Development Corporation (RHDC) and the Kinvara Corporation for the construction of the \$500-million Schuylkill River hydroelectric facility. Upon default by RHDC, orchestrated project bailout and retained outside counsel for litigation, but personally resolved dispute through negotiations and binding arbitration. Obtained substantial award and payment for Kinvara.

Achievement statements, such as illustrated above, allow the lawyer to define his or her credentials by skills and accomplishments, rather than by work history. As a result, the functional resume will look something like Bradford Bunting's resume in the Sample Resumes in Chapter 4.