

Ask the Career Coach: Resume for a Dream Job?

When you're asked to update your resume, what do you do?

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

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Dear Career Coach Lisa,

A search firm presents an opportunity that sounds like a dream job. They request an "updated" resume. Should I update my resume and submit it even though I am not actively looking?

R.J.
Short Hills

If this job sounds like a dream and a job that you would want, then take the time to update your resume. Updating your resume is a good review of what you have done lately in terms of accomplishments. It will enable you to think through your marketing angle, what makes you unique and stand out in this job market. Refreshing your resume will force you to know your selling points.

Check out the search firm if you do not have a relationship with them. You can look in the Directory of Executive Recruiters, more commonly known as the Red Book published by Kennedy Publications. The directory lists search firms, what they specialize in, where they are located and how long they have been in business. Many recruiters have their own websites where you can determine the area in which they specialize.

Online, try searching by category such as "legal or law headhunter." Use LinkedIn.com, where you can identify recruiters and learn about how long they have been recruiting, what they specialize in, and to read their recommendations from both clients and job seekers.

Remember a resume is a "living document" that is always in a constant state of revisions/updates/etc. Your resume must identify what value you bring to the table and what can you achieve for the company. Think of it as strategic and forward selling.

As a career coach and a former Head of Human Resources, there are many ways to create a resume—it is stylistic to the individual and to the industry they are marketing to. Your written resume is only one version—the other is your online presence. This is as much your resume as the one you submit or bring with you to an interview.

Recently, a client was contacted directly by a corporation and was invited in for an interview based on their LinkedIn profile. Only after the interview did the hiring manager ask for the candidate's resume. So be aware of your reputation and keep an eye on your online reputation/resume.

Resume guidelines:

- Always check for spelling errors;
- Have a few friends read over the final draft—ensure at least one proofer doesn't work in the same function/industry so they can question the appropriate use of jargon.

If you are venturing into a new industry, your experience may not be understandable to that recruiter/hiring manager. Ask someone you know in the new industry to review your resume as well. Ask this person for selected key words that are typically valued within their industry so you can incorporate them into your document.

"Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com.

Lisa Chenofsky Singer is a Millburn-Short Hills resident and the founder of Chenofsky Singer & Associates LLC. She offers Executive and Career Management Coaching and Human Resources Consulting, writes and speaks on job search and career-related topics. Her web site is www.ChenofskySinger.com.