

# Résumé & Cover Letter Writing For The Modern Market

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# THE BCS TEAM

- ▶ Barde Career Solutions was founded in 2007
- ▶ Barbara Barde is a Certified Professional Coach and has enjoyed a diverse career working in HR, PM, and recruitment roles within the Customer Service, Transportation, and Hi Tech industries
- ▶ Our practice is dedicated to helping career professionals identify their career passions and connecting them to organizations who seek their talents
- ▶ We (Dave Andrews, Maria Montoya, and Barbara) have over 40 years combined experience
- ▶ We service professionals and business organizations locally, nationally, and internationally

# OUTLINE & OVERVIEW

- ▶ Stats & Facts: What is our current and future employment outlook?
- ▶ True or False: Determining fact from fiction regarding résumés
- ▶ Mastering the Critical Parts: The step by step process
- ▶ The Cover Letter: What is important to know
- ▶ Prepare & Practice: Writing your professional summary – worksheet
- ▶ Recommended Reading: Knowledge is power!
- ▶ Q & A: Your success matters to us

# STATS & FACTS

- ▶ According to the U.S Bureau of Labor, Oregon's unemployment rate as of July 2011 is 9.5 to 9.6% – seasonally adjusted
- ▶ The current U.S. unemployment rate is 9.1%
- ▶ As of this time last year, Oregon's unemployment rate was 10.7%
- ▶ Nevada currently outranks OR with the highest unemployment rate in the country at 12.9%, North Dakota at the lowest rate at 3.3%

**What is this information telling us?**

# TRUE OR FALSE

- ▶ Writing an effective résumé today is easy to do?
- ▶ Résumé objective statements are still used today?
- ▶ Employers are using ATS (Applicant Tracking Software) to screen candidates?
- ▶ A chronological résumé is still preferred by employers?
- ▶ A résumé should be contained to one page only?
- ▶ A résumé should focus on quantifiable information only?
- ▶ A cover letter is still an important tool and should accompany a résumé?

# MASTERING THE CRITICAL PARTS

**Step#1: Take Inventory of skill set. Who are you? What are your talents? What is unique about what you have to offer?**

- Build professional summary in résumé to support.
- Clearly identify areas of expertise and/or proficiencies.
- Consider the value-added skills. Think holistically.
- Develop clear language and express info throughout résumé and job related bullets.

**Step#2: Review career occupational information or job postings that match or support skill set:**

- Determine how you align and fit role – apples to apples.
- Confirm all required and qualifying skills and education.
- Pull out pieces and language that are repetitive.
- Integrate key and critical information into résumé.

# MASTERING THE CRITICAL PARTS

## Step #3: Reevaluate skills and consider interests, career passions, and criteria. What matters to you?

- Determine the positions you can truly see yourself in/doing based on interest and passion.
- Clearly identify your core career criteria – top 10 considerations.
- Narrow scope to work you would love to do versus have to do.
- Develop spreadsheet of positions and/or companies that support your career needs, goals, aspirations and long-term vision.

## Step #4: Determine the RIGHT Résumé format to support goal(s).

- Consider the best format based on role and desired goals. The (4) main types of résumé formats are: **Chronological, Combination, Functional, and Targeted.**
- Review current résumé material or information before you attempt to write résumé. Customization is key!
- Consider engaging a professional résumé writer – Investment in you and your career – critical.

# MASTERING THE CRITICAL PARTS

## Step #5: Build résumé to support role and job description information.

- Build and customize professional summary to support skill set, talents, and unique abilities.
- Consider all holistic pieces and skills, abilities, and capabilities that directly match and that also separate you from the competition.
- Develop areas of expertise and rank according to job description.
- Review bullets and determine changes/modifications to include job description language and positioning.

## Step #6: Put résumé into action. Follow process accurately.

- Once submitted, begin (3) step process: Confirm received, send thank you note, determine follow-up contact.
- Goal to avoid résumé black hole and get seen – land the interview.

# THE COVER LETTER

- ▶ Should be written as a business letter – not email
- ▶ Must work in sync/harmony with résumé
- ▶ Should identify the role you are applying to
- ▶ Quickly identify you as the candidate contender. Alignment of role – Why you?
- ▶ Kept short and simple with a clear/concise perspective and approach
- ▶ Be able to stand alone as its own document – supportive of you – the candidate!

# PREPARE & PRACTICE

- ▶ **Let's practice writing a compelling professional summary:** Please take a moment to consider the following before you begin:
  - What are your skills, unique abilities, and/or innate talents?
  - What is important for others to know about you?
  - Why should an employer hire you?
  - What separates you from your competition?

***\*\*Avoid writing in the first person\*\****

# RECOMMENDED READING

- ▶ **Quick Résumé & Cover Letter Book: Write and Use an Effective Résumé in Just One Day, Michael Farr & JIST Editors**
- ▶ **The Résumé and Cover Letter Phrase Book: What to Write to Get the Job That's Right, Nancy Schuman and Burton Jay Nadler**
- ▶ **The Résumé Handbook: How to Write Outstanding Résumés and Cover Letters for Every Situation, Arthur D. Rosenberg**