

Welcome to another edition of the CareerKiller's News Letter !!

March 20, 2005

THE RIGHT RESUME – A THIRD PARTY RECRUITER'S VIEW POINT !

Resumes, CVs, Bio Datas, Career History - many names are put to this Document which is – supposedly – the starting point for anyone looking for a “ Better Career ” than his / her present one .

And there are several websites , consultants and softwares claiming to deliver THAT resume which will get you YOUR Dream Job ! Some of them are free – except for your time – and some of them cost you a fair amount of money !

But MOST of them do NOT consider what could be a critical link in your Job Search – the Third Party Recruiter (TPR) !! When you think about it, this gap is glaring since many positions are filled ONLY via TPRs ! More so when you are considering middle/senior level technical / Managerial positions.

During my several interactions with other TPRs and also based upon my experience I feel that many candidates fall short in this area. More than 90 % of the Resumes for any position are screened out by the Third Party Recruiter just on the basis of what is written therein and the “feel” it gives of the Candidate who wrote it. You may be the BEST candidate but you may STILL get screened out ! And sadly, most candidates do NOT seem to even realize this ! And then they wonder why their tremendous efforts, mass mailings, follow-ups etc are not leading to even a reply by the TPR !

Firstly, is very important for all to realize that the Third Party Recruiter is an independent business entity. He gets paid NOT to read/ evaluate CVs but to place candidates ! So, reading / evaluating is the means but not the end . Also, generally the TPR is in a race with others to propose the right candidates first. So, ANYTHING which makes his task more difficult / time consuming has that less a chance of making the grade. Perhaps this is tough for most candidates to realize. But this is the truth !!

And – bluntly – the SOLE purpose of your CV is to ensure that you do NOT get screened out and proceed to the next stage - the INTERVIEW – for the Opportunity you have applied for !! Else all your efforts for applying to that position/ consultant are wasted.

So here is what we look for :

- a) **FOCUS** : Has the candidate applied for a position the TPR is presently handing or is this simply a mass-mailing with a call to “ contact me for suitable opportunities with you ” ? The latter has simply very little chance of being read in time in the present era when even a small consultancy is getting about 200-300 E-mails on a daily basis !!

We make it VERY easy for candidates to demonstrate this focus. EACH position we handle carries a Unique Job reference (generally starting with JX) and we repeatedly tell candidates to mention the same in ALL correspondence with us.

Still , many don' t .. this never fails to surprise me but this is a fact. To a TPR it means simply that the candidate does not know what he is doing . Such a CV may be deleted without even being read !!

- b) **FIT** : Does the CV establish quickly and clearly a close fit with the position's responsibilities ? What this means is that your “Standard One Size Fit All ” CV is not worth the paper / mail it is sent on ! It also means is that **BEFORE** you send in your CV you have to do a cold and through analysis of if at all you fit in ! And then draft a Custom Made CV EACH time if required !

Tough isn't it ? But efforts are what will set you apart.

The BEST Example of establishing Fit that I have seen a candidate do is by means of a “ Compliance Statement “ kind of format. Simply stated, you put the Job requirements in one column and your reasoning as to why you are the BEST person to accomplish the same opposite that. It brings out very clearly all the attributes that a Recruiter simply LOVES in a candidate : Very Keen DESIRE to get the Job, Clear ABILITY to do the Job and the ability to WALK THE EXTRA MILE to get the job.

At the risk of some repetition, hereunder is an example I have quoted in the past .

QUOTE

I take this opportunity to furnish my incumbency for the position of **General Manager/ VP Finance** as advertised on the website for Delhi (Vacancy Code JXMMP/03) .

I have detailed my relevant qualifications, work experience, and personal information in my Curriculum Vitae highlighting some of my achievements with each employer.

However to assist you in identifying my compatibility to your job description, I have taken time to list your specific requirements and my applicable skills & experience in those areas.

Your Requirement	My Applicable Skills & Relevance
CA (ESSENTIAL) w/10-20 yr. PQE in large Manufacturing Companies.	I am a Chartered Accountant with the required experience and my membership detail is XXXX. I have overall more than 15 years of experience in Manufacturing companies.
Must be thorough in all areas e.g. Costing, Accounting, Budgeting, Taxation, MIS, Funds Mobilisation, Treasury etc	For past at least ten years , I have been responsible not only for handling but also for value addition to the functions of corporate finance/ accounts / treasury / budgeting, MIS, Taxation and have been successfully heading the functions in large reputed listed companies in India & abroad. CV highlights those with each employer.
KRA is optimum procurement and utilisation of funds, while maximising Share Value.	Optimisation of the financing cost has been amongst the top KRA for me & I have always leveraged the same for interest cost minimisation, best deals, for ST/LT loans eventually consciously achieving the objective of maximising the Shareholders value. Debt restructures, roll over, swap, currency swaps etc are the tools that I use to achieve the same. The CV articulates those with each employer. I have the credential for it.
To head the Finance Function of a Rs. 150 Crore Multi-location Company	I have headed the finance functions of larger corporate all listed and prominent companies / leader in its field. All were/ are bigger than 150 crore today, the largest being close to Rs 500 Crores equivalent. Most of them were multi-location operation & manufacturing base.

I trust the above information assists you in making an informed decision. I assure you that on furthering the subject, you would explore me to be more versatile and conducive.

UNQUOTE

Do you think this will get an Employer's/Consultant's attention ? Well, if someone ignores such a strong pitch frankly he must be blind !!

Note that the Candidate also clearly provides the VACANCY CODE against which he is applying (also provided by him in the Subject of the E-mail as is required by us)

You must also consider the very real possibility that your CV might be read / screened out by a person much less experienced in the Corporate World / your specific job functions. So (s)he will simply not have the ability to read between the lines and establish your fitment ! Since you are making the efforts, it is much better to make them as well as you can rather than be slipshod about it and “ hope for the best ”.

- c) **LANGUAGE** : It is simply astounding how many people – and senior ones at that – seem to ignore this basic of communication. If there are spelling mistakes in your CV, the sentences / words do not seem to be grammatically correct / making sense, there are too many abbreviations given – a Recruiter is getting a VERY clear message – you are simply NOT thorough ! And if you

are not through in your CV – the best and ONLY instrument you have at your disposal at the moment to demonstrate your abilities to a Recruiter, how will you ACTUALLY be in your Job ??

I simply can not recommend it strongly enough – read, read and read again your CV before you mail it out. If you are not confident of your English abilities (or even otherwise) have someone else read it. And start working HARD on improving your English / communication abilities ! Do NOT depend on the PC to correct your spelling / grammatical mistakes . Sometimes it can have hilarious results – I have forgotten count of the number of times I have seen “Marital Status” become “ Martial Status ” , “ region” become “resign ” and “ career ” become “ carrier ” !!

- d) **Contact Points** : Given the fast paced “ Just In Time ” process that recruitment has now become it is imperative that you are contactable when required. What this means is that your E-mail id, phone numbers and present / permanent address must be clearly mentioned. And if your permanent address is NOT the same as your present one, the two should be clearly and separately indicated. For reasons best known to them, many candidates give one or the other, or give none ! This simply adds on to the efforts the Recruiter has to make to get to you. And rather than do that, many would simply prefer to move on since they have to win the race they are in !!

Sometimes this puts the candidate at a clear disadvantage which can be avoided. Suppose your Present Address is of Bangalore but you apply for a job in Delhi, giving your Permanent Address in Delhi. Your CV is forwarded and shortlisted for an interview “ tomorrow ” . It is extremely improbable you will be able to make it. On the other hand, if the Recruiter was aware of this fact, he’d prepare the client and the interview schedule accordingly. Of course a thorough Recruiter will check this out if he has any doubts on this score. But that takes time - while other candidates are being proposed, shortlisted and interviewed !!

I have a sneaky feeling (which may well be true !) that many candidates resort to this since they feel otherwise they will be screened out initially itself . This may be quite correct. But then they will be screened out anyway at a later stage if this is a critical factor in the process !! On the other hand, being thorough and correct increases their chances of being able to attend the interview if shortlisted !!

- e) **Present Salary , Expectations and Locational Constraints if any** :

These are some of the MOST ignored aspects in most CVs. And from a TPRs’s viewpoint the most important ones !!

Best is if you can demonstrate that you know the Position Parameters on these angles and have accepted them. And how do you find them ? Well, simply READ the Job Description CAREFULLY and then call the TPR if need be even BEFORE sending in your CV !!!

- f) **References** : Again, an oft ignored aspect. And something that any TPR appreciates. Giving good references in your CV immediately enhances your Credibility. Goes without saying, of course, that your References should be contactable when needed !!
- g) **Know E-mail Pitfalls !!** : Actually this has NOTHING to do with your CV . However, it is becoming SO important as to the effectiveness of it that I have put it here.

You have covered all the bases in your CV, having made serious efforts in the process. You have mailed it out to a position which seems to be tailor made for you .

And then you sit it out waiting for the Recruiter's call !!

This behavior never ceases to amaze me – despite seeing plenty of it !! You have sent your CV via E-mail and you expect the Recruiter to read it . Are you even sure the Recruiter got it ? And is it not possible that he recruiter has also chosen your own communication mode and already sent to an E-mail ?

It is important here to remember two points :

a) E-mail is an unreliable communication tool : There is NO surety that your mail has reached the Recruiter ! So how does one make sure ? Well, CALL the Recruiter even BEFORE mailing your CV ! If you and the Recruiter can quickly establish a Good Fit, probably the Recruiter has some systems in place to take care of this angle !!

b) Expect communication over E-mail!! : Even if unreliable, E-mail is the MOST frequently practiced mode of contact now by Recruiters ever hard pressed for time !! So keep your E-mail id correct and check the same frequently !!

Finally my friends, please realize you are in a market “ Selling ” your skills. The Employer is the “Buyer”. And the TPR is firmly on the Buyer's side since it is the Buyer who (normally) pays the TPR and not the “ Seller”. Unless you have some extremely unique skill sets, you the Seller are in competition with many others. And in the Global World of today , the “ Seller Pool” has indeed expanded tremendously. I am sure in your own experiences as a Buyer of any Product / Service you have noticed the same in the last few years. So, as a Seller you HAVE to aggressively and intelligently communicate with the Buyers and their Intermediaries the Third party Recruiters. Otherwise you will just loose out to the other Sellers !!

I hope the above gives you some food for thought when applying for your Next Dream Position !

Best of Luck !

Everyone, Have an EXCELLENT Career !

Best Regards

Hardeep Sodhi

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About Me !



Hardeep manages M M M Incorporated and is an Electrical Engineer (Delhi College of Engineering, 1981) and an MBA (Faculty of Management Studies, 1983) Graduate with strong Corporate experience both in India and abroad in diverse sectors such as Office Automation, Power, Air Conditioning , Environmental Engineering, Automotive Engineering etc.

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M M M Inc. is a Founder Member of National Association of Executive Search Consultants (NAESCON) – an Association of Professional Executive Search Consultants . NAESCON aims to develop Professional Executive Search Practices amongst TPRs across India.

Following very stringent and transparent practices, M M M Inc. has established itself as a Consultancy with exceptional strengths in sectors such as Automotive, Telecom, Construction, Heavy Engineering etc.

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Like it ? Hate it ? Can improve it ? True ? False ? Anything to add/subtract /multiply/divide ?
Let me hear it ! Send it to :

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Will be VERY grateful for all your comments !!

VERY NICE QUOTE

Three rules of work:

Out of clutter, find simplicity

From discord, find harmony

In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity

(sent in by a reader who doesn't wish to be acknowledged !)

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