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Do I Need a Resume If I am Not Looking for a Job?

By Robbie Miller Kaplan
From JobsInTheMoney.com

Ask the Expert: *"I'm a manager in the finance department of a mid-sized, private firm and haven't had a resume since college. One of my colleagues says I should have one. I'm not looking for a job, so why would this be important?"*

While resumes are considered a primary job search tool, they also play a key role in all phases of career development. The self-assessment process involved in writing a resume helps you plan and prepare for each job move you might consider. And, as you research career opportunities and learn the essential requirements for jobs that interest you, the process helps you evaluate your value as a candidate.

What's the advantage of this? Once you've identified your credentials, you can determine the skills, training, certifications, or key experiences you lack. Then you can then create a plan to acquire the essential requirements and position yourself for the next job opportunity.

More than Your Next Job

A resume is more than a job search and career-planning tool. It's an effective way to chart your progress and communicate your talents. In navigating the day-to-day routine of your job, it's easy to forget finished projects and achievements. To make sure you don't lose sight of your accomplishments, maintain a folder with information of your current and completed projects, along with detailed descriptions of what you've done, how you did it, what problems you solved, and the obstacles you addressed. Use this information to update your resume annually, and let it toot your horn for performance evaluations, promotions, professional affiliations and speaking engagements.

Don't stop there: Use your resume to help you secure board appointments and professional leadership opportunities.

Along with all this professional growth, you'll need a biography. Your resume will help you craft that too.

Think of your resume as career tool, and let it help guide your way.

Robbie Miller Kaplan, a nationally-recognized expert on career communications, is the author of "How to Say It In Your Job Search" and "How to Say It When You Don't Know What to Say: The Right Words for Difficult Times," published by Prentice Hall