

Make sure every line counts

making every line count

Raymond Valentino had managed hotels or hotel food and beverage departments for Hilton since 1983. When his position was eliminated at the end of 2008, he took some time off and then started serious job hunting this year.

“It's the first time I had really touched a resume in 25 years,” says Valentino, who explains that he had a basic resume for promotion purposes, but it was more like an internal resume for Hilton.

For his makeover submission, Valentino submitted a two-page resume. At the top was a lengthy section called Executive Profile, followed by job title and job duties for each of his positions in chronological order, with most recent first.

Although Valentino has decades of experience, his resume didn't sell him effectively. Descriptions were vague and too many details were missing, says Barry Shiflett, who directs career management services at Florida International University's College of Business.

For instance, missing were some consulting projects Valentino did this year -- and those were added. He was also missing dates on his FIU hospitality degree. Valentino originally left that off because he didn't want to give away his age, but it's better to be upfront, Shiflett says.

The original Executive Profile section listed qualifications such as “Self motivated, team oriented, ambitious and goal driven.” The problem here is that it's not specific, Shiflett says. What results came from it?

There were six other bulleted items in that section. One said “Recipient of AAA Four Diamond Award for 14 consecutive years.”

“The hotel won the award. This should be included only if he supervised a group that directly made this possible,” Shiflett explains.

Instead of all that, Valentino's new summary turned into this:

Highly qualified professional with extensive background and proven achievements in hotel service operations, including Food & Beverage, Revenue Maximization, Guest Services, Sales & Marketing and Cost Containment. Proven experience in overseeing extensive hotel-wide renovation projects.

Then with three bullets it lists major awards he had a significant role in winning.

Next on the new resume came the Experience section. Shiflett listed Valentino's positions chronologically, starting with his most recent job. Under each position, such as Hotel Manager, was a list of accomplishments, and Shiflett again worked with Valentino to get specific. Key

words like supervised, implemented, compiled, led and guided are great to use -- as long as they include a specific result, Shiflett says.

For instance, an original bullet that read, ``Compiled 5 year Capital Budget requirements," was revised to ``Compiled 5 Year Capital Budget requirements, ensuring that all future renovation plans were priced, detailed and compiled, while retaining the hotel's competitive edge in the marketplace."

And by asking Valentino for more information, bullets were added about charity events he organized for the employer, a guest service program he implemented that was later adopted in all properties, and awards he had a direct role in winning.

Because Valentino's experience was so extensive, Shiflett left off his earliest two positions, listing his experience back to 1989. Valentino wondered about that, but Shiflett explained that you don't have to list experience back to college if it goes back more than 12 years. Experience 25 years ago is out of date.

Another line left off: References available upon request. That's just not done anymore, Shiflett says. And would anybody provide a less than glowing reference? It all goes back to making every line count.

Shiflett also added computer skills and community affiliations sections.

``It was a great experience and I am sure it will help me in future applications," Valentino says. ``There were a lot of things that I had done in my career that were not exposed in my previous resume. It made me go back and think about previous experience and accomplishments."