Never put these 3 ‘outdated’ sections at the top of your resume, says career expert

Landing your dream job is all about making a good first impression, and much of that has to do with what you put at the very top of your resume. Unfortunately, too many job seekers don’t utilize this space to their best advantage.

One of the biggest mistakes job seekers make is starting their resumes with long-winded, boring and self-important paragraphs about how great they are. But guess what? Everyone applying for that position thinks they’re great and worthy of a recruiter’s time.

Here are three outdated resume techniques that no longer work with hiring managers:

1. **Summary statements**: The responsibilities and accomplishments listed in the job history section of your resume should already paint a picture of what you bring to the table, so there’s no need to amplify it with a long preface.
2. **Objective statements**: This doesn’t offer any new or useful information. What’s the point of spelling out the obvious fact that you’re interested in the position?
3. **What you’re looking for in a job**: Even if you’re a poach-worthy name in the industry, explaining what you want in a job just makes you look like an amateur. Your goal is to sell how *you* can help the *company*, not the other way around.

What to do instead...

The most effective way to convince employers to read your entire resume is to start with one sentence that broadly references your background and at least two of strongest skills.

It’s very simple: *[TITLE] with [X] years of experience in [X] and [X].*

Then, below that, insert a column of six to eight more specific skills that are measurable and can be validated in the experience section. This allows hiring managers to quickly scan your abilities and begin checking off the boxes of what they’re looking for in a candidate.

Here’s an example of what that looks like for someone applying to a social media marketing job:

Jane Sample
100 Ferry Road
Morrisville, PA 12345
555-555-5555
jane.sample@gmail.com

SKILLS

Digital marketing associate with three years of experience in online content management and running social media campaigns

- Market Analysis & Research
- Community & Brand Building
- Copywriting
- SEO
- Social Media Content Creatio
- Google Analytics
- Email Marketing
- Project Management

For the top section, I recommend including mostly hard skills. Picking a candidate who has enough *knowledge* to do the job without extensive training is a top priority for hiring managers.

Sure, soft skills are essential, but there will be room to talk about all that in the body of your resume (and in person if you get selected for an interview). Also, applicant tracking system (ATS) algorithms look for hard skills when ranking and filtering applications.

If you have too many skills that you think are relevant to the job and don't know which to highlight, go back to the job listing and pick the ones that best match your experience.

Remember, you have a finite amount of space on your resume (typically, it should be no more than one page), and you want everything you include to serve a purpose. Otherwise, you might lose your chances of landing an interview to someone else who is equally qualified.

J.T. O'Donnell *is the founder and CEO of Work It Daily, an online platform dedicated to helping people solve their biggest career problems. She has more than 15 years of experience in hiring, recruiting and career coaching.*