



WHY AN OBJECTIVE STATEMENT IN YOUR RESUMES CAN BE “RISKY BUSINESS”

This title might sound counterintuitive, but it’s important to understand the risks associated with using an objective statement in your resume. I base this observation upon countless hiring actions, interviews, and thousands of resume reviews over the past several years. Even the best written objective statement can detract from a resume and seldom will improve your chances of getting an interview or landing your dream job. Don’t believe me? Read on....

Why objective statements introduce risk:

At best, a well written objective statement tells the recruiter, HR department, or hiring manager that you understand something about the position and/or organization, are interested, and think that you might be qualified. This is the general assumption for every resume that HR receives, so what new information are you providing? The answer is typically “nothing new.” At worst, these statements tell us that you’re interested in a position yet have no idea what you might be doing, why you would do it, and who you might work with. If this wasn’t damaging enough, an ill prepared objective statement might also tell us that you’re not qualified for the position and may never be qualified. It might also tell us that you’re sending the same generic resume to all job openings and there’s nothing special about this position. In short, objective statements don’t tell us anything we don’t already know or won’t soon know about you after reviewing the full resume. These introduce greater risk to your application and seldom provide value that exceeds the level of risk introduced. As such, we recommend against their use in resumes. Not convinced yet?



These statements sound similar and meaningless:

Yes it’s true – objective statements tend to sound about the same in relation to the position of interest. Everyone uses vague and meaningless words such as: experienced, energetic, passionate, driven, focused, results oriented, proven, skilled, blah, blah, blah..... You’re trying to differentiate yourself in a positive manner from all other candidates in your resume, so why use the same words as everyone else when you have the reader’s undivided attention?

These statements can be confusing or contradictory:

Highlighting skills or experiences not fully demonstrated in the body of the resume or that contradict other parts of the resume can derail your chances of landing that dream job. Your definition of experienced, energetic, driven, proven, or results oriented might be vastly different from that of the hiring manager. Be careful since ‘self-assessments’ tend to be over-inflated and good hiring managers will look for inaccurate assessments. If you’re inflating your objective statement, they might assume the same inflation is occurring in your full resume.

Don’t take the risk of telling the reader something that might derail your chances of landing that dream job. Omit the objective statement and use the space to show the value you bring to their organization. This is always the best way to get invited to the job interview.

