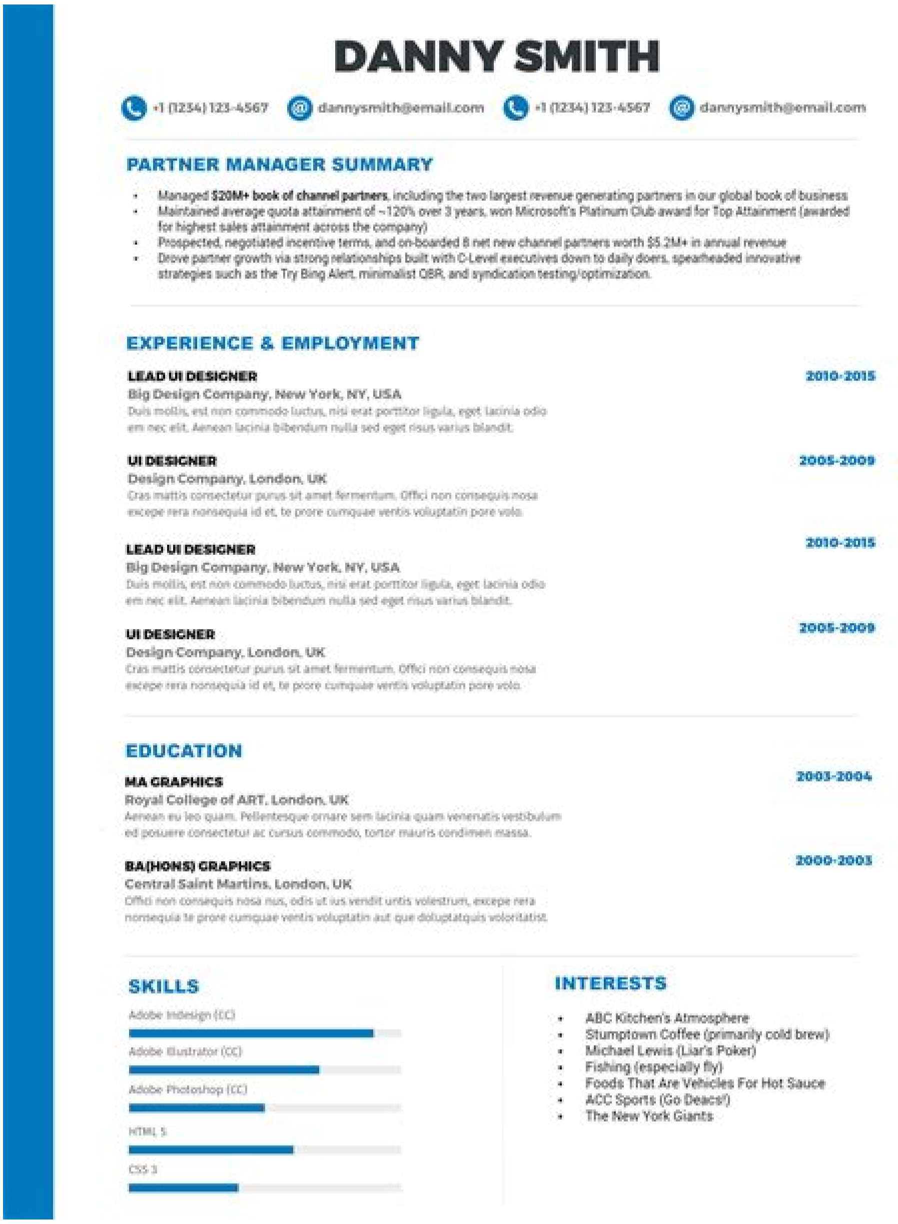
How Do I Make My Resume Stand Out



DANNY SMITH

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PARTNER MANAGER SUMMARY

- Managed **$20M+ book of channel partners**, including the two largest revenue generating partners in our global book of business
- Maintained average quota attainment of ~120% over 3 years, won Microsoft's Platinum Club award for Top Attainment (awarded for highest sales attainment across the company)
- Prospected, negotiated incentive terms, and on-boarded 8 net new channel partners worth $5.2M+ in annual revenue
- Drove partner growth via strong relationships built with C-Level executives down to daily doers, spearheaded innovative strategies such as the Try Bing Alert, minimalist QBR, and syndication testing/optimization.

EXPERIENCE & EMPLOYMENT

LEAD UI DESIGNER 2010-2015
Big Design Company, New York, NY, USA
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UI DESIGNER 2005-2009
Design Company, London, UK
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EDUCATION

MA GRAPHICS 2003-2004
Royal College of ART, London, UK
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BA(HONS) GRAPHICS 2000-2003
Central Saint Martins, London, UK
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SKILLS

Adobe Indesign (CC)
Adobe Illustrator (CC)
Adobe Photoshop (CC)
HTML 5
CSS 3

INTERESTS

- ABC Kitchen's Atmosphere
- Stumptown Coffee (primarily cold brew)
- Michael Lewis (Liar's Poker)
- Fishing (especially fly)
- Foods That Are Vehicles For Hot Sauce
- ACC Sports (Go Deacs!)
- The New York Giants

How do I make my resume stand out? In today's competitive job market, where countless applicants vie for the same position, having a resume that truly captures the attention of hiring managers is more important than ever. A standout resume not only highlights your qualifications but also showcases your personality and unique value proposition. This article will delve into various strategies and tips that can help you create a resume that not only stands out but also leaves a lasting impression.

Understanding the Basics of a Standout Resume

Before diving into the specifics of what makes a resume stand out, it's crucial to understand the fundamental components of a resume. A wellorganized resume should include:

- Contact Information
- Professional Summary or Objective
- Work Experience
- Education
- Skills
- Certifications and Additional Sections (if applicable)

Each of these sections plays a vital role in presenting your qualifications and experiences effectively.

Tailoring Your Resume to the Job Description

One of the most effective ways to make your resume stand out is to tailor it specifically to the job you are applying for. Here’s how you can accomplish this:

1. Analyze the Job Description

Carefully read the job description and highlight keywords and phrases that relate to the skills, experiences, and qualifications the employer is seeking. This will help you understand what to emphasize in your resume.

2. Customize Your Professional Summary

Your professional summary or objective should reflect the specific position you are applying for. Use the keywords identified in the job description to demonstrate that you have the relevant experience and skills.

3. Highlight Relevant Experience

When listing your work experience, focus on the roles and responsibilities that directly relate to the job. Use bullet points to make it easy for hiring managers to scan your resume quickly.

Choosing the Right Format

The format of your resume can greatly impact its effectiveness. Here are some popular formats to consider:

- **Chronological:** Lists work experience in reverse chronological order. Ideal for those with a solid work history.
- **Functional:** Focuses on skills and experience rather than chronological work history. Great for those with gaps in employment or changing careers.
- **Combination:** Merges elements of both chronological and functional formats, showcasing both your skills and work experience.

Choose a format that best highlights your strengths and aligns with the job you are pursuing.

Utilizing Action Verbs and Quantifiable Achievements

To make your resume more impactful, use strong action verbs and quantify your achievements where possible. Here’s how:

1. Strong Action Verbs

Start each bullet point in your work experience section with a strong action verb. Examples include:

- Achieved
- Developed
- Implemented
- Managed
- Designed

Using these verbs not only conveys your contributions more effectively but also adds a dynamic quality to your resume.

2. Quantify Your Achievements

Whenever possible, include numbers or statistics to demonstrate your accomplishments. For example, instead of saying "Improved sales," you could say "Increased sales by 30% within six months." Quantifiable achievements provide concrete evidence of your capabilities.

Incorporating Keywords for ATS Optimization

Many companies use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to filter resumes before they reach human eyes. To ensure your resume passes this initial screening, consider the following:

- Incorporate industry-specific keywords from the job description.
- Avoid using images or unusual fonts that may confuse ATS software.
- Use standard section headings (e.g., "Work Experience," "Education") to help the ATS categorize your information correctly.

By optimizing your resume for ATS, you increase the likelihood of it being seen by a hiring manager.

Design and Presentation Matter

A visually appealing resume can set you apart from the competition. Here are some design tips:

1. Keep It Simple and Professional

Use a clean, professional layout with plenty of white space. Avoid using excessive colors or graphics that can distract from the content.

2. Use Readable Fonts

Choose fonts that are easy to read, such as Arial, Calibri, or Times New

Roman. Ensure that the font size is appropriate (usually 10-12 points).

3. Consistent Formatting

Maintain consistent formatting throughout your resume. For example, if you bold your job titles in one section, do the same in all sections.

Adding Additional Sections to Showcase Unique Skills

Consider adding additional sections to your resume that can set you apart from other candidates. Some ideas include:

- **Volunteer Experience:** Showcase any relevant volunteer work, especially if it demonstrates skills applicable to the job.
- **Projects:** Include significant projects you've worked on, especially if they demonstrate relevant skills or knowledge.
- **Professional Affiliations:** List any memberships in professional organizations that are relevant to your field.
- **Publications:** If you have published articles or research, include a section for it, especially in academic or specialized fields.

These additional sections reinforce your qualifications and provide a more holistic view of your professional background.

Proofreading and Getting Feedback

Once your resume is complete, it’s essential to proofread it carefully. Here’s what to do:

1. Check for Errors

Look for spelling and grammatical errors. Even a small mistake can leave a negative impression.

2. Seek Feedback

Consider asking a friend, family member, or mentor to review your resume. Fresh eyes can catch errors you might have missed and provide valuable feedback.

Conclusion

In conclusion, making your resume stand out requires a combination of strategic tailoring, compelling content, effective formatting, and attention to detail. By understanding the basics, utilizing action verbs, optimizing for ATS, and ensuring a clean design, you can create a powerful resume that captures the attention of hiring managers. Remember, your resume is often your first impression—make it count! With these strategies in hand, you are well-equipped to take your resume to the next level and increase your chances of landing that dream job.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are some key elements to include in my resume to make it stand out?

Include a strong summary statement, relevant keywords from the job description, quantifiable achievements, and a clean, professional layout.

How can I tailor my resume for a specific job application?

Research the job description and company, then customize your resume by highlighting experiences and skills that align with the requirements and culture of the organization.

Should I use a resume template, and if so, how do I choose one?

Yes, using a template can help. Choose one that is visually appealing, easy to read, and allows you to showcase your information clearly without overwhelming the reader.

What types of skills should I emphasize on my resume?

Focus on both hard skills relevant to the job and soft skills that demonstrate your adaptability, teamwork, and communication abilities.

How important is formatting in making my resume stand out?

Very important; proper formatting enhances readability and professionalism. Use consistent font sizes, headers, and bullet points to organize information effectively.

Should I include volunteer work or side projects on my resume?

Yes, especially if they demonstrate relevant skills or experiences that can enhance your candidacy for the position you’re applying for.

What common mistakes should I avoid when creating my resume?

Avoid using generic language, including irrelevant information, having typos or grammatical errors, and making it too lengthy; aim for one page if possible.

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