

30-SECOND RESUME

Guest Recruiter Columnist: Nicole M. Cooke

How many times have you been to a party, seminar or networking group and someone asked you “What do you do?” or “Tell me about yourself?” How did you respond? Did you fumble for words or lose your listener attention with a long drawn out explanation involving technical words that they could not understand. The conversation could have gone much smoother if you had a short oral resume prepared that highlighted your background and job objective, and still kept your listeners attention.

Those of you who have read Steve Hines’ book “Atlanta Jobs” should already be familiar with the 30 second resume. Just like a written resume your objective is to relate just enough information to get your listener interested and possibly lead to further discussions. Then if your listeners would like to hear more you can go into detail. You will encounter many opportunities during your job search when you will be asked to relate your qualifications and objectives therefore you should always be prepared with a short synopsis of your background and career objectives. Remember that you only have a few minutes of your listener’s time and attention thus you need to respond with an answer that will stress the most important factors.

To begin constructing your 30-second resume start by separating the relevant information from information that can be discussed later. You can do this by asking yourself these two questions. 1) What are the requirements for the job that I am seeking? 2) What in my background fits those requirements?

Then plan how you will compose the most relevant information into a short 30-second resume. Keep it relevant to your job objective, saying just enough to show that you are qualified and to keep their attention. Remember you want to involve your listener in dialogue, you should keep it upbeat and non-technical. What would you want to hear if you were the listener? Most importantly prepare it well in advance and practice it with a friend. Here are some things to consider while constructing your 30-second resume.

Job Objective: In as few words as possible, explain the field or type of job you are seeking. This information can be used as your opener or as your ending to pull it all together.

Education and training: This includes degrees, familiarity with computer hardware and software and your proficiency with each, certification and career related seminars might also be added if they are well recognized.

Skills: Examples would be well organized, self-motivated, etc. Also be prepare to recall specific instances showing that you exemplify these characteristics.

Accomplishments and achievements: What in your career are you proudest of? Here is where you show what you have done for other companies, which in turn lets them know

what you can do for their company. You should stress any increase in revenue or decreases in expenses due to your efforts.

Prior Employment: If your goal is to advance your current career path then your current and past employment may be the most relevant information to stress. Condense it into a few sentences stating job or descriptive titles and responsibilities.

Other Experience: If your goal is to change careers, mention specific experiences that relate to your new field. Hines gives the following example: if outside sales is your objective stress your familiarity with the product line, through experience, academics etc.

I understand this is an enormous amount of information to put into 30 seconds, but it must be done. Need help narrowing down your information? Steve Hines suggests taking fifteen pieces of paper and write on each piece an item of information you would like to relay if you had all the time and attention you wanted from your listener. Then remove the four least important, then three more, two more, and then finally one more. The remaining five items should be the core of your oral resume.

You can also develop variations in your 30-second resume to fit certain situations. For example if you are talking to a person within your industry, you can be more technical in your description where as you would not be in a social gathering. You can also use it to market yourself when you contact companies for the first time by stressing your ability to reduce cost and increase profit. You can also use your 30-second resume in network meetings, or when you are asked the standard interview question “Tell me about yourself?” As you can see your 30-second resume can be used in a variety of situations so prepare it well.

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