



## What Am I All About?

There is one particular type of written communication that seems, sadly, to be receiving some serious attention in 2009 – the “CV” or “Resume”. And it is not just those looking for work that should review their resume. Resumes are important for internal appointments and form a valuable starting point when being introduced to a business forum or when speaking at a conference. (As an aside, I have heard of a CEO who asks his team to bring their CV to their annual performance review meeting. If it hasn’t developed at all...well, let’s just say that it doesn’t reflect well on their year in review).

So, if our resume is our written summary of our personal value proposition, why are most of the resumes that I have seen so plain? After all, this is a document about our favourite subject!

I would propose the following assumptions:

1. It is a competitive labour environment and so our resume needs to differentiate us from our competition
2. The employer/recruitment firm will receive many applications and the initial short list will be made on the basis of the written resumes
3. Potential employers are busy people and are unlikely to read the full resume unless we give them a good reason to do so
4. Employers are more interested in results and outcomes than tasks and activities

If you accept these assumptions then I believe that our resume needs to be visually appealing, highlights our talents and emphasises our specific achievements – with an easy to read summary page at the start.

It also follows that our individual resume must be aligned with our individual personality. Now there is a challenge here in finding the right balance. We don’t know how our style will be perceived by the reader so let’s do our best to appear genuine rather than “canned” – remembering that there are no guarantees about how it will be interpreted. In any event, if it is all about us, then it is important to be clear in our own mind about our talents so that we can effectively communicate them to another person.

The final test, one that applies for any important communication, involves putting ourselves in the reader’s shoes. What do we want them to know and feel about us? Does our resume deliver that?

Remember, it has to be about the real you if you are going to be appointed to a great job.