

HOW TO WRITE A PROFILE PARAGRAPH

Your profile provides a overview of your experience, special background and personal characteristics that set you apart from other candidates.

What can I put in my profile paragraph?

- Number of years in workforce
- Number of years in your field
- Special knowledge/training you have
(*Students: look at course objectives on syllabi*)
- Project experience (include school/volunteer)
- Key talents/skills (see **Feedback Exercise**)
- Industries you've worked in
- Personality traits (see **Feedback Exercise**)

TIP: Key profile paragraph off the job description. Make qualifications in your profile *relevant*.

What if I've done something but haven't gotten paid for it?

It is still experience! You still have the skill you gained doing it. Here are my volunteer jobs:

- "Experience managing blood drives, fundraising and tutoring."

What if I haven't done it but I know about it?

Use phrases like:

- "Possess knowledge of..."
- "Capable of..."

TIP: Only put things that you could defend in a job interview. "I know I could teach myself X software because I taught myself Y software."

TIP: Try writing a bulleted list of sentences first, then weave it into a paragraph.

FEEDBACK EXERCISE: Send these questions to 3-5 colleagues, bosses, ex-bosses, friends:

1. What are my personality strengths?
2. What major skills do I bring to a job?
3. In what environment do I work most effectively?
4. What is my unique contribution to a team?

TIP: Consider the profile paragraph a commercial for you. It's all about what *you offer*, not about what you want. Don't put in what your objective is. Don't use the word "I" or "my." See example in next column.

TIP: Consider yourself a product and employer is buyer. Profile paragraph describes your features.

ACCOUNTANT / BOOKKEEPER

Resourceful, tenacious, ethical business professional experienced in general ledger accounting for both service- and product-oriented enterprises; competent to set up Quick-books systems for new/ongoing businesses and prepare reports for a variety of audiences. Over 15 years in workforce including positions as full charge bookkeeper, tax preparer and purchasing manager. Particular talent for catching errors and anomalies. Strong attention to detail with ability to plan, organize and implement procedures and systems; superb analytical skills; self-starter who can take initiative and achieve performance goals.

A template to get you going:

____ years of increasingly responsible ____.
Skill sets in __, __, and __. Solid working knowledge of __, __, and __. Able to take initiative with __, __ and deliver accordingly. Can work either as team member or execute tasks independently.
Industry experience in __, __ and __. __ oriented. Highly __. Excellent __. Multi-tasker. ____, ____, __.

Phrases to introduce things you've done:

- Demonstrated ability to...
- Adept at...
- Hands-on experienced with...
- Background in...
- Performed a wide variety of...

Phrases to introduce things you know about:

- Possess knowledge of...
- Familiar with...
- Background in...
- Solid working knowledge of...

TURNING DUTIES INTO ACHIEVEMENT STATEMENTS

Original: Responsible for graphics

Begin with action verb, add detail, quantify:

Maintained database of over 1,000 graphic assets

Add results, why it was valuable to company:

Maintained database of over 1,000 graphic assets, allowing easy access for licensees, translators and course developers

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Expert Resumes series or Knock 'em Dead series
The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Resume
Cool Careers for Dummies