**Job Termination and Your Resume**

Your employer just let you go. You need to find another job, but how should you handle this termination on your resume?

The days when you signed-on with a company and stayed with it until retirement are gone. In today’s climate, employers are much more understanding when they see a less-than-perfect work chronology. Follow these tips regarding “losing your job” to ensure you’re creating the strongest resume to “up your chances” of getting an interview.

**Don’t Mention It**

No matter how sour your termination, do not explain the circumstances on your resume. You will have a much better chance of impressing hiring managers, if you deal with this question in face-to-face interviews.

**Be Honest**

If you were recently let go, resist the urge to keep your position listed as “to present” on your resume, giving the appearance that you’re still employed. You will have to explain yourself later on and potential employers might think you tried to mislead them.

**Laid Off? Use Your Cover Letter**

If your termination was due to a layoff rather than a performance-related issue, consider mentioning it in your cover letter. Employers are more forgiving of layoffs, so mentioning this might work in your favour. You could write something like this:

As you may have read, [Company] announced a round of layoffs and as such my position was eliminated. Although saddened to leave this company where my performance has consistently been rated as outstanding, I am looking forward to repeating the same record of success with my next employer…

**Focus on Your Accomplishments**

Your goal is to “wow” your potential employer by highlighting your accomplishments and skills on your resume. Even if hiring managers are wondering why you left a certain employer, your resume should be strong enough for you to receive invitations to interviews in which you can explain your situation, in-person.

**Assess Your Contributions**

When updating your resume, it can be difficult to put your emotions aside and write a strong description for the employer that let you go. But this is exactly what you need to do. If you’re stuck, seek the opinions of colleagues, who respected your work and ask them about your performance – they might remind you about contributions you’ve made that you took for granted or forgot about. Here are a few questions to ask yourself regarding your performance:

* Did you take on responsibilities outside your original position’s scope? Were you able to juggle multiple projects and duties, while maintaining the highest emphasis on quality?
* What were your key contributions to your employer? In what ways did you excel at your job and how did your employer benefit from having you on board? (Specific, measurable outcomes of your work have the strongest impact.)
* Did you go above and beyond the call of duty? How did you contribute to bottom-line results?
* What types of challenges did you face? What did you do to overcome these challenges? How did your performance benefit the company?
* Have you instated procedures that improved overall efficiency? Were you known for fast or accurate work output?
* Were you part of a team that was recognized with awards or accolades? Did you receive positive commendations by your supervisors (or clients, vendors, coworkers, etc)?

Source: Kim Isaacs

Note: These materials have been developed and adapted from a range of sources for the purpose of the Bruce County Job Search Club.