



Is My Resume Board-Ready?

Opinions on this topic vary widely, and WBL can't answer this question definitively. Instead, we've set out to create this document with the goal of compiling all of the best advice we've heard in one place.

We caution you against over-relying on the format or condition of your resume in being a successful board candidate. If you don't have the right experience, figure out how you can get it... that matters a lot more than what your resume says or how it looks. That said, we hope this advice is helpful!

Considerations when developing a board-ready resume:

- **Length:** Boards are busy, and don't have time to read your full employment history. We recommend a short bio with photo, highlighting your P&L responsibility, key areas of experience, and leaving them wanting to reach out to you for more information.
- **Contact information:** Is your contact information on your resume? Is the phone number you've included a phone number that will be answered professionally and has voice mail? Is the email address you've included one that you check often?
- **Non-business resumes:** If you have a very scientific or academic focused resume, make sure the reader can easily identify how you interface with the business world. Consider listing board service, past and current clients (either by name or type of firm), and how your bench experience has led to further business opportunities or interactions for the company.
- **Consultants, accountants, lawyers and other service providers:** If you are a consultant, accountant, lawyer or another type of service provider, be sure your resume demonstrates why having you on a board brings added value when compared with just hiring you for these professional services. Do you play a leadership or management role in your firm? Does your professional work expose you to a broad range of people in business that could be relevant to the company?
- **Current board service:** Include a mention of major boards you previously or currently sit on. If the company is public, include the stock ticker symbol.
- **Location:** Consider any location-related questions likely to be asked. Why do you want to be on a board in California when you are based in Atlanta? Some boards have specifications as to location; if you do not clearly meet those qualifications – explain why or how you would be able to serve on the board despite the location requirements. This kind of information is easily included in a cover email if you replying to a posting.
- **Committee skills:** Are you a financial expert? Are you experienced in succession planning? Include activities that prove your governance literacy.
- **Format:** Make sure your resume will look the same on the reader's computer as it does on yours. PDF your resume before it goes to readers. If you have to send it in Word format, be sure you turn off the track changes.
- **Quantify everything.** If you managed a large division, be sure the reader knows how large. Otherwise, the reader does not know what "scale" you qualify for, and may just stop reading.