

Think Résumé

By Nancy Egan, FSMPS, and Marjanne Pearson

More than 20 years ago, Tom Peters wrote, *Think Résumé or You're Not Thinking*.¹ That's eons ago for trendy business literature, but his advice is as valid today as it was then. Peters' premise is that your résumé should reveal more than just the list of responsibilities you've had. Instead of fact-stacking—an automatic response to the question “what do you do?”—Peters tells us to talk about contribution and impact.

This advice for the job seeker is equally valuable for any of us who take our careers seriously. And because it's 2015 and not 1992, we have the opportunity to keep our résumés current and readily available to our network of friends and colleagues. It's called LinkedIn.

How would you answer these questions?

<i>What is it that I do?</i>	Describe the scope of your responsibilities within the context of your business.
<i>What have I actually done?</i>	Enumerate a handful of specific projects.
<i>How do I know I've really done it?</i>	Describe (in detail) the benefits you delivered.
<i>Why did it matter?</i>	Provide the metrics that affect business or organizational performance.
<i>Who among my customers will confirm it?</i>	Offer an impressive list of witnesses (clients or colleagues) who would attest to it all.
<i>What evidence proves that my skills are state of the art?</i>	Explain what you've learned and how you'd be a more valuable employee going forward.
<i>What does your profile tell your audience?</i>	Become the storyteller for your own career. Instead of that ubiquitous paragraph at the top of your résumé or LinkedIn profile, create a storyboard—typically, an illustration of a sequence of events—but in this case, the characteristics, experience, and expertise that make you distinctive.
<i>How can you improve it?</i>	
<i>What makes you different from all other marketers?</i>	

Weave a story about your ability to ...

- Support and strengthen the vision, values, and culture of your firm
- Foster creativity and a commitment to design excellence
- Promote curiosity, enthusiasm, and confidence
- Shift from individual performance to collaborative teamwork
- Engage clients, so yours is the company they want to keep
- Conceptualize quickly or set priorities for multiple tasks amid changing needs and demands
- Listen and actively collaborate with others
- Incorporate your keen desire to learn and grow with your engaging sense of humor
- Make a list of why a potential employer (or client) needs you²

We know how to do this for our firms in proposals, marketing collateral, websites, and social media. We can do it for ourselves, too. Create a compelling opening statement then reinforce it with evidence and testimonials. What have you got to lose?

¹ <http://bit.ly/think-resume>

² Not sure where to start? Howard Wolff, FSMPS, and a recipient of the Weld Cox Marketing Achievement Award, leads the way with his well-crafted website—<http://howardwolff.com>.

