

How To Address An Employment Gap In Your Resume



You made it to the interview, but you know there's a glaring employment gap on your resume. Here's how to talk about it the right way.

Don't be sorry about your story

This isn't a good idea.

Kim Isaacs, Resume Writing Services Director and Resume Writer at Resume Power and former Monster Resume Expert, writes on the Monster site about why this is important to keep in mind.

"If you've been out of work because you raised a family, continued your education, cared for a sick family member, or recovered from an injury, be sure your tone is not apologetic. There's nothing wrong with being out of work for whatever reason, and a negative attitude might affect your resume's quality," she writes.

How to talk about taking time off to travel

Be sure to focus on the right things.

Sjoerd Gehring, the Global Head of Recruiting at Johnson & Johnson, writes in The Muse about how to talk about a gap caused by you resigning to backpack around the world.

"The key with this one is to focus on how traveling contributed to your personal development, rather than how much fun you had schlepping around the world with nothing but a backpack and a smile. If you took on any paid or volunteer work during this time, concentrate your response on the additional personal and professional skills it's given you," he writes.

Don't badmouth a former workplace

This is never a good idea.

Bronwen Hann, President and Senior Partner at Argentus Supply Chain Recruiting, writes on LinkedIn that you need to "keep it positive when talking about why you left your job before the gap."

"Explanations that scream: 'I didn't like my previous employer' don't look good. Hiring managers might just ask why you didn't wait to find a new job before quitting your old one, especially because it's easier to find a new job when you're already working," she writes.

Make sure you're super prepared to talk about your strengths

If you don't, who will?

Alison Doyle, a career expert, author and founder and CEO of CareerToolBelt.com, writes about this in The Balance.

“In all instances where you need to account for a gap, you should share as much concrete evidence of your success in the jobs prior to the gap and after you resumed employment. Itemize your accomplishments by referring to situations where you intervened, specific actions you took and the results you generated,” she writes. “Emphasize how your company benefited from your role. If possible, secure recommendations from supervisors to support the explanation you plan to give during the interview.”

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