

## SECTION TWO

### General Tips

- **Use the client's own words.** The number one mistake most résumé writers make is trying to “reinvent the wheel,” so as not to use the client's phrasing in the finished résumé. You don't have to rewrite everything. In fact, it's good to let your client's “voice” come through by using words and phrases captured in the client interview, in questionnaires, or an old résumé. Author of *“Résumé Magic”* Susan Whitcomb, NCRW, CPRW, CCM notes, “It is important to incorporate the client's language into the résumé to get their ‘voice.’”
- **Know your peak writing times.** There are certain times of the day when writing just comes a bit more naturally to you — so make sure you schedule yourself to capture some of the “most productive” time. Whether that's morning, midday, or evening, play your schedule accordingly.
- **Use your natural competitiveness.** Track how long it takes you write an “average” résumé. Then try to “beat your time” on the next one by five minutes. Then try to beat it by 10 minutes, etc.
- **No interruptions.** You'll find you finish faster if you can focus on the task at hand. Schedule some uninterrupted time to write. Turn the ringer off on the phone, lock the door, and hang up a “do not disturb” sign. An interruption forces you to review your work and “find your place” again before continuing. Research shows that it can take up to 45 minutes to re-engage in a task after it has been interrupted, so try to minimize (or eliminate) interruptions.
- **It can be easier to write what you know.** If writing faster and writing better are important to your business style, then specialize! The fewer industries you have to know, the faster you will be able to write. If you have to continually learn new acronyms and keywords, the research will slow you down.
- **Write in a comfortable setting.** You may find you're most productive sitting in front of your computer — or maybe when you're stretched out on the couch, notepad in hand, notes spread out in front of you. Whatever your preferences, create an environment that is most conducive to your writing style.
- **Have some motivation to write.** For example, collect your entire fee up front. Not only is this a sound business management practice, you will have incentive to finish the résumé faster, since at that point, you'll have “earned” the fee you collected. Plus, if you charge by the page, or by the project, the faster you write, the higher your “per hour” rate — and profit — will be.