

## SECTION SIX

# Better Questions Yield Better Résumés

The most effective résumés capture who the client is, what they want to do, and why they are qualified for the role — but getting the answers to those questions isn't easy. Collecting better information can help you write better résumés.

When collecting information from clients, asking the right questions can make a huge difference in the final product. Sometimes, the difference is asking as few as 3-4 more probing questions. But make sure you're asking the *right* questions — don't ask questions you're not going to use the information from.

Imagine yourself a little bit like Larry King, peering over his spectacles, leaning in close to his interview subject. He opens his mouth and his guest lights up and shares details you would never expect. And how exactly does Barbara Walters always get her interview subjects to cry? The answer is: Both of these interviewers are able to *connect with* the person they're interviewing — and that connection comes mainly from the questions they ask.

What are these “magic” questions that will get at the essence of your client's appeal as a job candidate? The key to a great interview is great questions. The same is true for a great résumé — the better the information you have to work with, the better the résumé will be.

One of the most frustrating things as a résumé writer is when you get “stuck” when you're writing a résumé. Often, the reason for getting stuck has to do with the information you get — or don't get — from your clients. Writer's block, when it happens, usually comes from three things:

1. Not having enough information
2. Having too much information
3. Not having the *right* information

Gathering better information from clients makes it easier to write great résumés. It all starts with a strong question strategy — and that's true whether you work via questionnaire, phone consultation, in-person, or a combination of these.

Even as technology changes the way that résumés are processed, it all still boils down to content. If you have good information in the résumé, it's going to do well in an applicant tracking system. And good information makes a good LinkedIn profile better, too.

Your information-gathering process also affects your revenue. If you don't gather enough information, you'll have to go back to the client to get it, which takes longer, and that will probably delay delivery of the résumé draft. If you collect too much information, you'll find yourself sifting through a mound of paperwork, which wastes time.