

Revamping Your Resume for Your Specialty

For many experienced registered dietitians (RDs) who are interested in seeking a new position after several years in the same job, reviewing and updating the resume is one of the first steps necessary in securing different employment. But one resume does not fit all. This article offers tips and suggestions on how to weave your specialized areas of practice into your resume and make sure it is tailored to fit your career path.

The American Dietetic Association offers several resources for those pursuing new employment, including networking opportunities on the local and national level, ADACareerLink, and *Job Descriptions: Models for Careers in Dietetics*, now in its second edition and full of job description models for RDs in clinical, business and consultation, research, management, and public health. Also, see "Getting that First Job: Search and Resume Tips" from the September 2006 issue of the *Journal* for sample resumes for a first-time job seeker and an RD with management-level experience. Experts interviewed for this article stress the importance of using such resources in addition to perfecting the resume. However, the resume is often what gets an applicant's foot in the door.

"Many people still get caught in the

trap of writing one resume and sending the same one out to all potential employers," says Susan Laramee, MS, RD, LDN, FADA, manager of clinical recruitment for Sodexo, Inc (Gaithersburg, MD). "Many resumes are very generic. If you don't address the skills the hiring manager is seeking, it is unlikely that you will be invited for an interview."

Laramee finds the traditional practice of listing an objective to be unnecessary but does believe it's important that credentials and contact information are at the top of the resume and easy to spot. Because many jobs now require applicants to apply online, Laramee says it is key to make sure your e-mail address is accurate and is hyperlinked, providing for easy use. Some of the stronger resumes Laramee has seen when recruiting for management positions have been those that have a bulleted summary of skills at the top of a resume, for example, "In-depth comprehension of principles of nutrition," "Demonstrated capability in customer service," and "Flexibility to work alone or as a team member" (see Figure 1).

BE SPECIFIC

"Job candidates should use strong verbs like generate, implement, enhance, and improve," says Laramee.

In addition to action verbs, specificity in language is also necessary, especially when tailoring your resume as all mid-career RD should do, say those interviewed for this article. Mary Jane Rogalski, MBA, RD, LDN, manager of clinical nutrition at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, MA, and the chair of the Clinical Nutrition Management dietetic practice group, looks for details that paint a clear picture of an RD's previous employment.

"Words like, *assessed patient needs* won't do much to describe the type of patient or the type of facility," says Rogalski. "In a clinical resume, I expect to see words that describe involvement with high nutrition risk patients, like

percentage tube feeding or *percentage total parenteral nutrition*. There needs to be a heavier emphasis on diagnostic skills" (see Figure 1). Clinicians in the inpatient environment should specify whether they have worked in a trauma center, teaching hospital, or community hospital as the level of patient nutrition acuity will vary by the type of institution, says Rogalski. And clinicians in the outpatient environment would be wise to include specific counseling skills, such as motivational interviewing, when working with clients outside the hospital environment.

Of course, specificity is not limited to clinical dietitians' resumes. Public health and community dietitians would want to provide specific demographics about the communities they have served in the past along with measurable achievements in those communities. A public health nutritionist would also want to include his or her knowledge and experience with population-based nutrition interventions, community organizing and mobilizing, breastfeeding education and promotion, and familiarity with government-sponsored programs such as WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children). An RD working in a school environment would need to list experience and familiarity with federal and state nutrition standards such as those set by the National School Lunch Program. School-based dietitians would also need to address potential responsibilities including participating in quality initiatives and gathering and analyzing data to evaluate and improve outcomes, developing and coordinating the efforts of the food-service staff in order to promote nutrition and healthy eating, and analyzing menus and recipes for nutritional adequacy. An RD working with information technology and developing health technologies would want to showcase his or her experience working with data management systems or knowledge of laws and regulations protecting health data security and privacy (Figure 2).

This article was written by Jennifer Mathieu, a freelance writer in Houston, TX. Mathieu is a former editorial assistant for the Journal and has journalism degree from Northwestern University. Mathieu's writing has appeared in The Washington Post, Houston Chronicle, Miami Herald, The Kansas City Star, and several other publications. While reporting for the Houston Press, she received awards from the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies, the Dallas Press Club, the State Bar of Texas, and the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.
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Skills Summary

- Critical thinking to integrate facts, informed opinions, active listening, and observations.
- Decision making, problem solving, and collaboration.
- Medical nutrition therapy counseling for individuals in adult and pediatric diabetes.
- Instructor for classes on diabetes self management for Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes.
- Strong interpersonal skills to establish productive working relationships with multidisciplinary team and support services.
- Communicate effectively in both written and verbal form to patients, public, medical staff, and physicians.

Professional Experience

11/2005 – Present *Clinical Dietitian/Diabetes Educator* *Medical Center, Somewhere, PA*

- Conduct nutrition assessment when warranted by a patient's needs or conditions. Review dietary intake for factors that affect health conditions and nutritional risk. Evaluate health and disease conditions for nutrition-related consequences.
- Interpret blood glucose results and recommend adjustments in food, insulin, or medication.
- Assess educational needs and provide nutrition counseling for diabetes patients and their families based on individual needs, including nutrient requirements, knowledge and abilities, and medical, economic, and social situation.
- Devise meal plans, teach carbohydrate counting and perform nutrition-related functions in addition to pattern management, insulin initiation and delivery, home glucose meter monitoring, ketone testing, and glucagon administration.
- Provide appropriate follow-up in accordance with the patient's treatment goals, referring patients for outpatient counseling and community or home health services as appropriate.
- Provide demonstrations and discussions and develop lesson plans and educational handouts on diabetes awareness.
- Conducted series of lectures to pharmacy students on nutrient and drug interactions.
- Facilitate diabetes support group, arranged speakers, and provide participants with nutritional information and support.

5/1999 – 11/2005 *Clinical Dietitian* *The Place for Health Care, Wheatburg, PA*

- Provided comprehensive nutritional care for various disease states across the lifespan.
- Nutrition assessment and education for 70–100 outpatients.
- Developed and implemented educational materials for lectures, in-services, poster boards, patients, staff, health fairs and the community on diabetes self-management.
- Assigned and directed the workload of dietetic technicians and diet clerks.

Certification/Licensure/Affiliations

- Registered Dietitian (RD)
- Board Certified Specialist in Renal Nutrition (CSR)
- Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE)
- Licensed Dietitian-Nutritionist (LDN) – Pennsylvania
- Certified Insulin Pump Trainer
- American Dietetic Association
- Pennsylvania Dietetic Association
- Diabetes Care and Education Dietetic Practice Group
- Renal Dietitians Dietetic Practice Group

Education

Masters of Public Health (2004)
University State, College Town, PA

Dietetic Internship (2000)
PA State Hospital, Someplace, PA

Didactic Program in Dietetics (1999)
Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ

Bachelor of Science (1996)
University State, College Town, PA

Figure 1. Sample resume: Clinical dietitian-diabetes specialist.

Jane Doe, MS, RD

100 S. Main Ave.
 Dewdrop River, Mountains, CO
 H: (112) 223-3334 C: (555) 111-0000
janetothedoe@net.net

SKILLS

Over 10 years of experience integrating nutrition training and expertise with clinical informatics for effective retrieval, organization, storage, and use of data and information.

- Ability to design, maintain, and extract data from Microsoft Access databases.
- Experienced in various programming languages: Java, C++, C, JavaScript, Perl, TurboPascal, Visual Basic, LISP, Prolog, Haskell, Microsoft Access (Visual Basic for Applications), SQL, HTML.
- Proficient with many operating systems: Windows 9x/ME/XP/2000/NT/Vista/2007, UNIX (all flavors), MS-DOS, MacOS.
- Experience with computer hardware installation and troubleshooting.

WORK EXPERIENCE**2005-Present: The 001 Corporation, Mountain Plains, CO—Director, Nutrition Information Systems**

- Manage information and data by providing information systems and data management for operations and performance improvement. This includes foodservice systems, clinical management systems, nutrient database systems, and electronic health record systems.
- Analyze, design, implement, and evaluate testing, education, and maintenance of applications.
- Developed nutrient database for personal health record application.

1999-2005: We Know Info, Big Mountain, CO—Nutrition Data Coordinator

- Developed and managed healthcare-related technologies to ensure that nutritional care and nutrition standardized language concepts were an integral part of electronic and personal health record software.
- Created and revised menus within personal digital assistant database for various diets using the most currently available nutrient database and recipe information. Worked closely with departmental staff to ensure menus are modified to reflect changing protocols, seasonal foods, changes in food availability, and modifications to menu format.

1995-1999: Hospital 123, Small Valley, CO—Clinical Dietitian

- Served as a liaison between the information technology department and foodservice department.
- Participated in information technology committees and teams for the implementation of systems.

EDUCATION/AFFILIATIONS

Graduate State, Valley Side, CO
 1998—Masters of Health Informatics

College State, Someplace, CA
 1995—Bachelor of Science in Dietetics

*Healthcare Information and Management
 Systems Society*

Colorado Dietetic Association

Commission on Dietetic Registration
 Registered Dietitian (RD)

American Dietetic Association
 Dietitians in Business and Communications DPG
 Nutrition Data Information Task Force (2007)

Figure 2. Sample resume: Nutrition informaticist.

John Smith, MPH, RD

111 Main Road, Washington, DC

Cell: 555-111-2233

Home: 111-222-3333

jd.diet@net.net

Knowledge/Skills

- Strong knowledge of local, state, and federal government operations.
- Awareness of politics and role of outside organizations in influencing policy.
- Communication, organization, and computer skills.
- Ability to organize multiple tasks, establish priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Ability to solve problems, generate ideas, and think creatively.
- Skill in delivering presentations to groups.
- Ability to develop, execute, and evaluate a business and marketing plan.

Experience Highlights

Policy Development, Analysis, and Evaluation

- Monitored government actions and proposed policies related to food and nutrition.
- Analyzed food and nutrition legislation and regulations to determine impact on individuals, organizations, and/or industry.
- Consulted with client (or employer) to develop key messages and responses to policies and regulations—proposed and enacted.

Advocacy and Lobbying

- Educated members of Congress and their staff via letter writing, phone calls, and personal meetings on nutrition topics and issues to positively influence positions, perspectives, and funding for policies related to food and nutrition.
- Provided guidance on effective advocacy, including developing a plan, understanding influencers, gathering best practices, and implementing actions and strategies to promote desired changes.

Technical Assistance and Speaking

- Utilized nutrition expertise to advise on development of guidance, best practices, testimony, and other materials to promote and advocate for strong nutrition policies and programs.
- Developed tools and materials to help implement programs and policies.
- Developed and delivered training for advocacy and lobbying.

Work History

2000-Present, Nutrition Policy Consultant, Advocacy in Law, Washington, DC

1991-99, Director, Government Relations, The Nutridensometer Group, Washington, DC

1987-91, Manager, Nutrition Policy, National Nutrient Academy, Bethesda, MD

1985-87, Nutrition Coordinator, Food and Nutrient Task Force, Sen. Gorn's Office, Washington, DC

Education/Certification/Affiliations

1988, Masters of Public Health, State University, Beachtown, MD

1985, Bachelor of Science, Dietetics, University State, Shoreline, MD

Registered Dietitian, Commission on Dietetic Registration

Maryland Dietetic Association

Legislative and Public Policy Committee (American Dietetic Association)

2005 Public Policy Workshop (American Dietetic Association), Speaker

National Organization of Men in Nutrition

Figure 3. Sample resume: Food and nutrition policy consultant.

Jill Doe, MBA, RD

444 Main Street, Evergreen, WA

Home: (123) 465-7891 Cell: (999) 000-1111

jdoe@net.net

Professional Experience

The Food Business, Rainytown, WA—Nutrition Consultant

June 2005 – Present

- Develop business plans, which may include business description and name, short- and long-term goals, competitive and market analysis, marketing plan, and financial forecasting.
- Educate owners on operating small businesses, including completing legal, financial, and tax forms, applications, and documentation, how to work with an accountant to establish and maintain the business.
- Obtain professional liability, and if needed, premise insurance and personal health and disability insurance.
- Establish branding initiatives and marketing strategies—stationary, brochures, and other materials to promote services as well as the use of social and professional networking (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) to promote and recruit a stable customer base.

Flavors, Caribou Mesa, WA—Consultant, Nutrition Services

May 1999 – June 2005

- Developed recipes based on specific nutrition guidelines and/or ingredients.
- Tested recipes to ensure accuracy of measurements and instructions, quality, flavor, yield, nutrition information, and other specified criteria.
- Analyzed menus and recipes for nutritional adequacy.
- Developed menus and/or meal plans to meet specific nutrition guidelines.
- Evaluated menus, recipes, staffing needs, equipment, kitchen design, for compliance with Joint Commission and food safety standards.
- Marketed products and/or services to clients, presented products at trade shows and expositions.

Custom Publications, Inc., Rockshore, WA—Food Writer/Editor

Sept. 1995 – April 1999

- Developed story ideas and content for nutrition-based food articles for various publications, including newspapers, magazines, newsletters, Web sites, and books.
- Provided content editing of recipes, head notes, nutrient analysis, and accompanying text.
- Developed and/or contributed recipes and copy for cookbooks and other publications, including food industry marketing materials (e.g., Web site, brochure).

Food School, Emerald Vista, WA—Culinary/Nutrition Instructor

Nov. 1990 – Sept. 1995

- Offered nutrition-based cooking classes and/or demonstrations with a health focus to professional and/or consumers.
- Provided nutrition education/counseling to individuals and groups.

Core Competencies

Ability to develop, execute, and evaluate a business and marketing plan. Self-motivation and ability to work independently. Strong communication and networking skills. Time management, organizational, and record-keeping skills. Ability to organize multiple tasks, establish priorities, and meet deadlines. Creativity, positive outlook, and forward focus. Competence with nutrient analysis, word processing, accounting, and presentation software (MS Word, MS PowerPoint, and QuickBooks).

Education/Affiliates

Master of Business Administration, Graduate College, Somewhere, WA (2002)

Bachelor of Science in Dietetics, College University, Somewhere, WA (1987)

Bachelor of Culinary Arts, Food Institution, Somewhere, WA (1990)

Member of the American Dietetic Association—Registered Dietitian (Commission on Dietetics Registration)

Member of the Food and Culinary Professionals Dietetic Practice Group

Member of the Dietitians in Business and Communications Dietetic Practice Group

Member of the Nutrition Entrepreneurs Dietetic Practice Group

Figure 4. Sample resume: Culinary nutrition consultant.

RDs applying for positions in consultation and business, such as corporate dietitians, food and nutrition policy consultants (Figure 3), and culinary nutrition consultants (Figure 4), would also want to show off a certain set of skills. A corporate dietitian may want to specify media events in which he or she served as a corporate spokesperson; a history of attending trade shows, conferences, and professional meetings; and brochures, Web sites, and promotional materials he or she helped create. A food and nutrition policy consultant would most likely want to include years of experience educating and lobbying members of Congress on nutrition topics, familiarity with legislation and regulation that impact the nutrition industry, and experience consulting with clients to develop targeted messages and responses to policies and regulations. A culinary nutrition consultant—whose primary responsibilities might include writing and editing cookbooks, public speaking, and offering personal chef services—would want to provide a publishing and

editing history, locations and class sizes of nutrition-based cooking classes and food demonstrations, and an understanding of Joint Commission and food safety standards.

Laramee also suggests that for mid-career RDs, each previous place of employment include fewer bullets of information, and RDs with many years of experience can probably omit entry-level positions or simply list them without providing additional details. While many RDs with lengthy careers need more than one page, a resume should never be more than two pages, Laramee advises.

“The resume itself shows your skills and qualifications in the way it’s organized and displayed,” she says. “If you put too much irrelevant information in your resume, you’re showing that you lack focus or have difficulty with decisions, and your resume will lack clarity.”

INCLUDE RELEVANT INFORMATION

As for education and work history, Laramee advises that RDs include only relevant material. Information about a high school diploma and courses taken in college are generally irrelevant. Be

prepared to briefly and clearly explain any gaps in work history, and if reentering the workforce after time off for family issues, be prepared to discuss how you have maintained your skills and kept up to date with new information during that gap.

RDs with extensive careers may want to skip dates that reveal age, such as the year a bachelor’s degree was earned, says Laramee. Simply listing the university and degree obtained is sufficient.

While certifications, registrations, professional involvement, and awards specific to the field are all important to include, outside activities or positions outside of dietetics should not be included unless they can somehow be tailored to fit the position applied for.

“I had one applicant who included information on her first career as a florist because she was able to discuss the customer service skills she had as a small business owner,” says Rogalski. “Those skills could be connected to the patient service skills she was going to have to take on.”

NAME	Mary Doe, PhD, RD
DEPARTMENT	Medical Affairs
LOCATION	Boston, MA, USA
EDUCATION 2004	<u>PhD, Nutritional Biochemistry and Human Metabolism</u> Tufts University Freidman School of Nutrition Science and Policy Boston, MA, USA
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE 2007 to Present	<u>Director, Endocrinology, Metabolic Disease and Cardiology</u> Acme Research Company
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Perform literature searches, write case studies, internal and external education, and support all efforts at bid defense meetings ■ Heavy involvement with operations groups as well as other business segments ■ Manage nutrition operations in the endocrinology and cardiology therapeutic area for this fast growing, medically focused and state of the art global CRO ■ Responsible for medical/clinical components of the following product/service areas: clinical research and data analysis, study feasibility, study design and protocol development, reporting and publishing, consulting, and overall service delivery ■ Serve as lead dietitian and nutritionist for the endocrinology and cardiology therapeutic business unit, and act as major “out front” person for the enterprise 	
LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION 2001 to Present	<u>Licensed Dietitian/Nutritionist</u> Board of Dietitians and Nutritionist Division of Professional Licensure Commonwealth of Massachusetts Boston, MA, USA
PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS 2000-2007	Ex-officio Member, General Clinical Research Center Scientific Advisory Committee Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
EDITORIAL BOARDS 2004 to Present	Ad hoc reviewer, Obesity Research
BIBLIOGRAPHY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are healthy diets that follow the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) associated with incident hip fracture risk in men and women? Doe, M. <i>Am J Q Nutr.</i> 2007; 21 abstract 235.8. 2. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Risk of Metabolic Syndrome. Doe, M. <i>Nutrition Q.</i> 2007 Oct; 86 (4):1193-1201. 3. Doe, M. Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Trial Comparison of Cetilistat (ATL-962) with Orlistat in Obese Subjects with Type 2 Diabetes. Annual Meeting of the Endocrine Society (ENDO), June 15-18, 2008, San Francisco, CA.
SUMMARY OF THERAPEUTIC EXPERIENCE	Cardiovascular disease, Crohn's disease, colitis, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, eating disorders, hyperlipidemia, in-born errors of metabolism, and metabolic syndrome.
TECHNICAL SKILLS	Creation of macro and micronutrient controlled diets, nutrition education, screening and assessment materials. Knowledge of various software packages, including; Pronutra and Nutrition Data System for Research (NDSR). Bioelectrical impedance analysis, caliper, waist circumference, and DEXA assessment of body composition. Metabolic testing, including; oxygen consumption, metabolic rate, and macronutrient utilization. Extensive experience with Food and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency regulatory filings.
AWARDS 2005	<u>Recipient, Travel Award, “Healthy Weight Wake Up Call”</u> New England Dairy Council Chicago, IL, USA
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Engaged in collaborative scientific efforts in a variety of disciplines, and provided expertise in nutrition and metabolism. Played an important role in the development of the nutrition aspects of studies, followed by study design, implementation, analysis of data, and interpretation of results. Taught on all levels at Harvard Medical School, Tufts University, and Simmons College. R01 Funding “The effect of Jelly Beans on Waist Circumference” 2002-2008 50% salary support provided by The National Jelly Bean Board.
AUTHENTICATION	The information contained in this document is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.
_____ Signature	_____ Date

Figure 5. Sample curriculum vitae for a research dietitian. (Note: Most curriculum vitas are two to three pages in length depending on experience. This sample has omitted some details for length.)

THE CV

According to Jeanene Fogli, PhD, RD, chair of the Research dietetic practice group, it's important to note that the research and education field may require a different type of resume—a curriculum vitae (known as a CV)—when applying for jobs. Whether applying to academic positions or for-profit research positions (such as working for a pharmaceutical company), interested applicants will most likely create a CV. Fogli, a director of medical and scientific affairs for i3 Research (Basking Ridge, NJ), says a CV will include educational and professional experience, but unlike a resume will also include a publishing history and a list of editorial boards the applicant is a member of (see [Figure 5](#) for a sample CV).

“A publication history is key,” says Fogli. “If you are applying to a for-profit company, they want to sell your expertise, and a publishing history is part of that.” Fogli adds that all applicants for research positions should include details on any exposure to clinical research and highlight any additional coursework in the sciences. A strong research dietitian's CV will also specify experience with regulatory filings for agencies like the Food and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency as well as familiarity with commonly used standardized research measures such as the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's iliac waist measurement. Fogli adds that potential employers are looking for future employees who will not need to be trained in specific differences between a phase I and phase III trial and who will not need to be educated in the use of common measurements.

Applicants should also include any funding they have received, such as listing a percentage of salary support for a particular study and identifying the funder. (For example, a CV may state 40% salary support for a study on the effect of jelly beans on the diet with funding coming from The National Jelly Bean Board.) According to Fogli, there is not one set standard for where in the CV this information should be included although it should appear prominently.

“You are expected to bring in research dollars,” says Fogli. “If you have a history of doing that, that's a bonus, so include it.”

ONLINE RESUMES

Many of the popular job and professional networking sites, such as Monster, Hot Jobs, or LinkedIn, as well as other niche Web sites or services like ADACareerLink, have you create a profile where you can upload a resume, or several, or have you create a resume using their resume form. Some job sites let you apply for positions by simply submitting your profile information. In these instances, you should edit your profile so that it specifically reflects the job for which you are posting. However, most job sites either provide contact information with an e-mail address where you should send your resume or provide a link directly to the employers Web site where contact information is provided or you have to fill out an online form.

In these cases, it's a good idea to create your resume in several formats: a print version, a scannable version, and a plain text version. A print version can contain italicized or underlined text, different fonts and sizes, bulleted lists, and other design elements. This copy should be used hand to contacts and interviewers or sent via mail. A scannable version, to send as an e-mail attachment or upload as a file to a Web site, should contain limited design elements as it is first viewed by a computer and then uploaded to a database where employers can search resumes based on keywords. Design elements and text formatting can interfere with the scan. For scannable resumes, use one common font (such as Times New Roman) throughout (1). Instead of increasing the size of the font, use spacing to break up sections (1). Also, avoid using bullets, tables, and visuals in a scannable resume; instead, use dashes, left-justified text, and simple spacing (1). A plain text version, or text-only copy, is a version you should have available to cut and paste into online forms or the body of an email. As the name implies a plain text version contains no design elements.

Whichever format is used, you want to create a resume specifically for the job you are applying for. Also, remember to update all the versions of your resume; otherwise, you may update your print version and accidentally send out a scannable version that wasn't updated.

ADAPT

Fogli adds that positions that include presenting to clients—research or otherwise—may require the applicant to supply a video of such a presentation, so the hiring company can see performance in action.

“One of the biggest mistakes applicants make is not finding out more about the position and its requirements beforehand and not tailoring their resume to the job,” says Laramee.

Whether an RD's interest is clinical, public health, research, or another area in dietetics, experts agree it is important to have a second or even third party review the finished resume or CV for spelling and grammar errors, say those interviewed for the article. And above all, be specific in what you create. Showcasing your specialty areas and how they apply to the position you are vying for could mean all the difference when looking for new opportunities and expanding your career.

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Reference

1. The OWL at Purdue. Resumes 4: Scannable Resumes. The OWL at Purdue Web site. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/547/01/>. Accessed January 4, 2010.