



Resumes for Social Workers

*Before you begin writing your resume, you need to learn these **10 strategies** that will help you create the most effective and successful marketing tool!*

10 Effective Strategies

1. **Know thyself**- your strengths, your skills, and your homerun stories.
2. Write your resume for the **job you want**, NOT the job you've had.
3. Be clear about your value- **"Sell your stories, don't tell your stories."**
4. Use **key phrases** and **key words** related to your profession.
5. **Think BIG!** Focus on how your work impacted the company, team, and mission.
6. Include relevant information only to **prompt curiosity and an interview!**
7. **Make it easy!** Format, align, and design for the best readability.
8. **Focus on Achievements**- connect your tasks/functions with evidence of accomplishment.
9. **Be honest!** You'll need evidence to demonstrate what you write.
10. **Be confident!** YOU are unique- focus on your special approach, passion, and experience.

#1 Know thyself

You know why you chose to study Social Work as an undergraduate or graduate but the field offers many career possibilities. Are you interested in counseling? Case management? Program development? Administration and Supervision? Non Profit management? What populations do you enjoy working with? Narrow your scope to narrow your search and target your resume. Also, ask yourself these questions:

1. How would my colleagues, friends, faculty and supervisors describe me?
2. What do I love about Social Work? What am I best at?
3. What is my typical role on a team? Leader? Supporter? Motivator? Initiator? Planner?
4. What am I proudest of? What top 5 stories exemplify my skills, passions, and strengths?
5. What energizes me?

The answers to these questions are part of your personal brand or in other words- the value that you bring to an employer or company. You can't sell (yourself) a product to anyone if you don't understand its value. You will not find the right job if you don't know yourself and why you are the best fit.

#2 Write for the job you want

Your resume is about the future NOT the past. Where do you want to land? If you don't know where you are headed then you MUST spend more time on Strategy #1! Your resume will lack focus if you lack focus. Don't just tell the employer who you WERE- tell them why your previous roles or functions prepared you for this next step- your future job! If you are changing careers, focus on the high level transferrable skills that you learned in a previous role that you can apply to this new field.

Example: Account Manager to Social Worker.

Account manager	Social Worker
Built trusted relationships with industry leaders, clients and team members.	Developed relationships and built rapport with a caseload of 10 weekly clients using active listening and client centered counseling techniques.
Ensured resources were available for teams to accomplish project goals.	Collaborated with treatment team to assess, diagnose, and develop an effective treatment plan for the client.
Delegated tasks within projects, and monitored work-flow across internal Client Service team.	Monitored client progress toward treatment goals to ensure appropriate clinical interventions and adjustments to overall plan.

#3 Sell your stories

It's simple. You strike up a conversation with someone at a party and they say, "I work at Catholic Charities- with kids. It's okay, keeps me busy." What do you think? Where can the conversation go from there? Is this person impressive? Do you walk away and immediately tell someone else about the sparkling person you just met? No. But....what if they said, "I work with teenagers who have struggled with some tough life situations. They chose to use alcohol and drugs to cope and now they're working with to learn how they can get back into life- find a passion- find some hope." What's your response now? SELL your stories!

#4 Key Words/Key Phrases

Whether you are a new grad with 1-3 years of experience, career changing into the field, or progressing with a new MSW, you need to talk the talk. Here are some common key words and phrases to know and insert into your resume. Remember, this is just a beginning! Review job descriptions and websites to add to this list and engage like a Social Worker!

Advocacy	Discharge planning	Mentored
Behavior Modification	DSM-V (diagnoses)	Patient centered
Case Management	Dual diagnosis	Plan of Care
Chronically/Terminally ill	Evidenced based practices	Populations (low income, at-risk, under-served)
Clinical intervention	Group Therapy	Psychosocial interventions
Community	High-risk families	Psychotherapy
Resources/Services	Intakes/Assessments	Strengths based approach
Counseling	Medicaid, Medicare, DCFS,	Trauma survivor
Crisis Management	HUD	Treatment planning
Diagnostician	Mental health counseling	



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#5 Think Big!

What was the result of your **overall role**? Did you **improve** a process? **Increase** retention of clients? How did you impact the company, employer, or overall BIG picture?

Sample: Increased client retention in the hospital's intensive outpatient program through initiating weekly "check-in chats" in addition to facilitating individual and group therapy sessions."

#6 Prompt your interviewer

Don't include every little detail- leave some room for the interviewer to ask you- How? Why? Or Tell me more!

Sample: Identified gaps in programming; designed 3 new therapy groups that increased client base by 25% and expanded practice into new area of specialty.

Follow up Question: What specialty? Tell me more about how you managed to break into a new area?

#7 Make it easy

There is no 1 way to format a resume. There are **several ways** to make it clean, visually appealing, and easy on the eyes. Think SIMPLE. Scan across the page and notice:

1. Can my eyes take a break between headings/ sections and positions?
2. Am I squinting to read the text?
3. Do I feel rushed? Cramped? Or like I'm floating through vast space?
4. Should I use bold, underline, italics, all caps, AND font style for emphasis? (NO!)
5. Have I reviewed samples online to see a variety of styles and formats to choose from?
6. Good thing I didn't use a template! (*never use one*)

#8 Focus on achievements

I DO want to know that you used your expertise in crisis management to approach a tough situation. **But what I REALLY want to know is how it all turned out.** What was the result? What did you accomplish by using your strengths and skills?

Sample 1: Facilitated developmentally appropriate psycho-educational groups for young mothers with the AIDS virus that resulted in increased adherence to treatment plans and adjunct service recommendations.

Sample 2: Aggregated previous forms and designed new client assessment that streamlined the intake process and resulted in a reduction in paperwork and improved services.

#9 Be honest

There is no need to exaggerate your skillset or create false numbers or statistics on your resume. After all, what does that say about your confidence? **You HAVE strengths and you HAVE the skills** and experience required for the position or you would not be applying right? Relationships of all sorts start with authentic connections.

#10 Be confident

Shine. Sparkle. Now that you KNOW your value- accurately convey it on your resume.

Dull: "Assisted the lead therapist in leading groups for clients with borderline traits."

Sparkling: "Developed diagnostically relevant exercises and co-facilitated 3 weekly therapy groups for clients with borderline personality disorder traits."

Linda S. Perking

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PROFILE

Recent MSW graduate with experience in client centered counseling, bio-psycho-social assessments, trauma informed care and LGBTQ affirmative models. Self-directed early career clinician interested in collaborating with a team of holistic psychotherapists. Strengths include:

- Facilitating strengths based assessments and clinical interventions
- Developing and leading process therapy groups for women trauma survivors
- Providing psycho-education on mind-body integration and mindfulness practices

EDUCATION

Loyola University Chicago, IL May 2014
Masters of Social Work (MSW)
Specialization: Mental Health Counseling

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI May 2011
Bachelor of Arts (BA), Psychology
Minor: Women and Gender Studies

SOCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE

HOWARD BROWN HEALTH CENTER, Chicago, IL Jan. 2014 - May 2014

Counseling Intern

- Provided weekly individual counseling sessions for LGBTQ youth ages 14-22 using person-centered, CBT, and psychodynamic approaches
- Developed and led successful new weekly process group for lesbian trauma survivors
- Ensured accurate case notes and confidential client files and coordinated team to submit timely insurance reimbursement forms

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES, Chicago, IL Aug. 2013 - Dec. 2014

Case Management Intern

- Managed caseload of 25 clients with dual diagnoses by providing housing, public assistance, and healthcare referrals
- Initiated new client record keeping process that decreased inefficiency and improved administrative operations for team of 32 staff

CHICAGO LAKESHORE HOSPITAL, Chicago, IL Summers 2010-2013

VALEO Volunteer

- Completed registration of new clients entering the VALEO Program that focuses on Gender/Sexual Identity Issues with Adults, Adolescents and Children
- Conducted extensive research and co-developed new department manual on LGBTQ Affirmative Models and patient care best practices

Rachel S. Stern

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EDUCATION	Master of Social Work Health Concentration <i>Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work/ Chicago</i>	May 2014
	BFA in Communication Design <i>Parsons, The New School for Design / New York</i>	May 1980
SOCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE	Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center Supportive Oncology Department Northwestern Memorial Hospital/Prentice Women's Hospital Oncology Intern	Sept. 2013- Present Chicago, IL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide individual counseling to adult patients coping with cancer, loss, family and end-of-life issues• Complete weekly case consultations to discuss patient care strategies including treatment recommendations, patient progress, and effective interventions• Co-facilitator of monthly "Caregivers' Networking" support group that focuses on self-care, survivors' guilt and coping skills for the caregiver• Facilitate weekly caregiver sessions for the Northwestern Brain Tumor Support Group that provided 15 members with resources and social-emotional support	
	Mercy Housing Lakefront Case Management Intern	May 2012- Dec. 2012 Chicago, IL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided vocational training, individual counseling, and referral assistance to formerly homeless adults, ages 25- 75 with mental illness, physical disabilities, and co-morbid disorders• Completed intake and psycho-social assessments for an average of 30 weekly clients entering the residential facility• Created and facilitated weekly art therapy group sessions to promote coping skills, emotional processing, and non-verbal expression• Developed the new "Feel Better Challenge" program that offered residents resources, training, and rewards for healthy eating, exercise, and mindfulness practices	
	Prentice Women's Hospital Oncology Volunteer	Jan. 2010- June 2013 Chicago, IL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided emotional support for patients and families during chemotherapy treatments• Created a nurturing, safe, and welcoming environment for new patients to minimize stress and increase treatment efficacy	
	Imerman Angels Cancer Support Mentor Angel	June 2005- Present Chicago, IL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offered emotional support, resource referrals, and psycho-education to an average of 6 weekly patients diagnosed with breast cancer	

Rachel S. Stern

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BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Blackbird Design

1994- Present

Creative Director/ Principal

Chicago, IL

- Provide consultation to non profit and for profit clients on annual reports, branding, marketing, and advertising: from concept and art direction to design.

Clients Included:

Anixter Center

Lynn Sage cancer Research Foundation

Boys & Girls Club of Chicago

Massachusetts 4-H Foundation

Casa Central

National Kidney Foundation of Illinois

Chicago Foundation for Women

OCHIN

Entertaining Company

Ounce of Prevention Fund

ESI Sports Marketing

Source of Style

The Field Museum

Weizmann Institute of Science

Greater Chicago Food Depository

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

Kathy Schaeffer & Associates

Chicago Portfolio School

Jan. 2010- Oct. 2010

Adjunct Faculty- “*Design Fundamentals*”

Chicago, IL

- Taught a 10 week post-graduate course on the foundation and principles of graphic design to 15 students
- Developed new syllabus to incorporate latest technology, trends, software and applications

East West Creative

Sept. 1984- Aug. 1993

Creative Director, Principal

Chicago, IL

- Directed branding, marketing, and advertising projects for non profit client projects
- Cultivated and increased client base by 30% through relationship management and consistent delivery of quality campaigns
- Hired, interviewed, and trained a staff of 4 designers and 2 administrative staff
- Coordinated with outside vendors that included illustrators, photographers, freelancers, copywriters, and printers to meet deadlines and deliverables

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

National Association of Social Workers, Member (NASW)

Aug. 2012- Present

Association of Oncology Social Workers, Member (AOSW)

Sept. 2013- Present

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

20 Hour Advanced Elder Care Mediation Training

Aug. 2013

Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL

40 Hour Basic Mediation Skills Certification

April 2013

Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL

20 Hour Relaxation Training for Cancer Survivors

Jan. 2013

Gilda’s Club, Chicago, IL