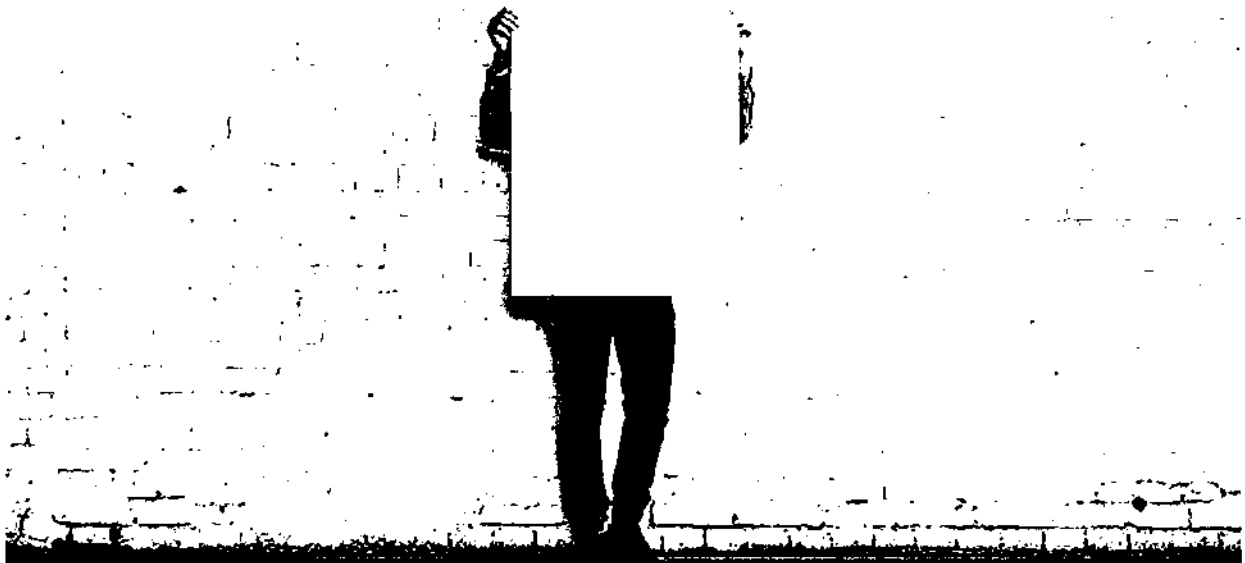


No Experience? 3 Ways to Show You're Right for the Job Anyway

Considering a new job?

EXPLORE POSITIONS

by
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HIRED

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If you're just out of college or embarking on a new career path, probably the most intimidating aspect of finding a job is coming up with relevant experience—because you don't have any.

The bad news is, I can't magically create experience to help you pad your resume and cover letter. But the good news is, you don't need magic—you just need to be creative. Follow these three tips to help beef up your application without making it sound like a bunch of bull.

1. Embrace Your Inexperience

I'll let you in on a little secret: When you're applying for an entry-level position, the hiring manager already knows you have little to no experience. So, why beat yourself up trying to manufacture something?

Instead, I suggest embracing your inexperience and leveraging that as motivation to learn. For instance, if you're applying to a PR firm, you might highlight how you became the star student in writing class when you self-motivated yourself from someone who couldn't finish a book report to writing a 50-page thesis. Sure, the experience itself isn't perfectly connected to the PR industry, but this accomplishment perfectly illustrates your dedication, curiosity, and commitment to learn and grow (not to mention your now-killer writing skills). And guess what? That's exactly what hiring managers are looking for from recent grads.

2. Get Personal

We've already established you haven't exactly been around the block yet, as far as work goes, but what you do have is life experience. So, don't be afraid to share some personal anecdotes that taught you a lesson or two that you carry with you now.

For example, maybe you studied abroad, and the experience opened your eyes to the amazing cultural differences across the globe. That personal experience shows maturity and understanding any hiring manager would want in an employee. Find those moments in your life that have changed you, write a brief

description on your resume or in your cover letter, then use them as talking points when you land the interview. Pro tip: Keep it classy—skip the full moon parties and stick to life lessons that can translate into good work ethics.

3. Find a Link

This one takes a bit more effort and must be customized for each application, but I promise you, you'll be glad you took the time.

If you're applying for a gig, even though you may not have specific experience in a particular field, chances are you're interested in the role and company for a reason, right? Do some research on the company, and find a way to tie your life and educational experiences in with something awesome it has done. For example, if you're applying to a movie studio, mention how you became obsessed with its films as a child in your cover letter. Perhaps you saved all your old DVDs and posters or once camped outside of a theater so you'd be sure to get opening day tickets—whatever it was, find a way to connect your passions and life experiences with the company, then explain how that will translate into you hitting the ground running once you're hired. You'll find that link is exactly the kind of experience employers are looking for from recent grads.

Whether you're applying for a job with a tech firm, fashion studio, or record label, chances are you won't have loads of direct experience to highlight on your resume right after school. But, remember, employers know you're just starting out, which means they'll be much more impressed with your interpretation of "experience" and how you use the lessons you've learned in life as a solid foundation to get started. Keep it professional, and keep it honest, and you'll fill your resume with real, valuable experience—without sounding like you're full of it.