

Name: _____

READING

THE ETHICS OF RESUME WRITING

The ethics of résumé writing

It's never OK to lie on a résumé. But what about stretching the truth?

by Clinton D. Korver

How much can you “dress up” your résumé to make yourself as strong a candidate as possible without crossing the ethical line of deception? Consider a few conflicting thoughts:

- Over 50% of people lie on their résumé.
- A Monster.com blog about the dangers of lying on your résumé elicited 60 comments from job seekers recommending lying and only 46 discouraging it. Recommenders justified lying by claiming: everyone else is doing it, companies lie about job requirements, and it's hard to get a good job.
- Executives caught lying on their résumés often lose their jobs.

If you are reading this blog, you probably are not tempted by dishonesty. But what about the following:

- Claiming a degree that was not earned because you did most of the work and were only a few credits short.
- Creating a more impressive job title because you were already doing all of the work of that position.
- Claiming a team's contributions as your own, because other members did not carry their weight.
- Inflating the number of people or range of functions for which you had direct responsibility because you really did have a great deal of influence over them.

These are called rationalizations—constructing a justification for a decision you suspect is really wrong. You create a story that sounds believable but doesn't pass close examination. You begin to fool yourself. You develop habits of distorted thinking.

So where is the line? You need to decide that for yourself. Here are some tests to keep your thinking clear:

- Other-shoe test: How would you feel if the shoe were on the other foot and you were the hiring manager looking at this résumé? What assumptions would you draw and would they be accurate?
- Front-page test: Would you think the same way if the accomplishment in question were reported on the front page of the Wall Street Journal? Or your prior employer's internal newsletter?

But wait, you say. My résumé doesn't quite pass these tests, but there is something real underneath my claims, and I do not want to sell myself short.

When in doubt, ask an old boss. While asking an old boss may be difficult, it has many benefits. Precisely because it is difficult, it forces you to think clearly and sometimes creatively. Asking also checks the accuracy of your claims, trains your old boss in how to represent you during reference checks, and sometimes your old boss may give you better ways to represent yourself.



Answer this question.

Is there ever a time when is OK to lie on a résumé (Vitae Curriculum)

Your answer: _____



Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What reasons are given for not being totally honest on your CV?

- ☐ Everyone else does it
- ☐ It's the new age.
- ☐ Companies lies about job requirement
- ☐ Companies don't check the information
- ☐ It's easier to find a job this way.
- ☐ It's hard to get a job

2. What can happen to senior managers who lie on their CVs?

They can be promoted

They can lose their jobs

3. Which of the four rationalizations do you think is the most serious? Why?

Your answer: _____

4. What happens to you when you start using rationalizations?

Nothing happens, your life continues normally.

You begin to fool yourself and develop habits of distorted

5. What are the advantages of asking an old boss?

- ☐ It forces you to think clearly and creativity
- ☐ Company's policies
- ☐ It checks the accuracy of your claims
- ☐ It trains your old boss in how to represent you during reference checks
- ☐ Personal satisfaction
- ☐ Your old boss may give you better ways to represent yours

D Discuss **one** of the two situations and decide what you would do in that case.

1. You discover that one of the top employees, who has done an excellent job for the last 15 years, lied about their qualifications when she joined the company.
2. One of your employees, who is not a good worker, has asked you to give him a good reference. You would be happy if this employee left the company.

Your answer: _____

LISTENING

HELPING THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

A David Hillyard, Director of Programs at EarthWatch, is describing his organization. Listen to the first part of the interview and complete the gaps.

EarthWatch is an _____ research and _____ and _____ organization, and we have over _____ field research projects around the _____. That involves, er, _____ looking at how animals and _____ are coping in their natural _____.

B Listen again and answer the questions.

1. Where does EarthWatch have offices?

_____, _____, _____, _____,
_____, _____

2. **True or False.** Members of the public, company employees, teachers, young people and young scientists can join Earth Watch's field researchers in the field as field assistants and collect real data that contributes to understanding what is happening.

TRUE

FALSE

C Listen to the second part of the interview and answer the questions.

1. Why do business need to change the way they operate?

To help to reduce the
environment impact of
their operations

To educate people to know
how to reduce the
environment impact

2. What opportunity do companies have with respect to the environment?

To educate and engage
people to do something in
their own communities
with respect to the
environment

To educate and engage
their employees inspired
and motivated to do
something in their own
communities or in their
workplace with respect to
the environment

D Listen to the final part and complete three sentences about the collaboration with HSBC.

1. EarthWatch is working with HSBC, _____

2. This research is about how _____

3. This is a way of involving employees and getting them _____
