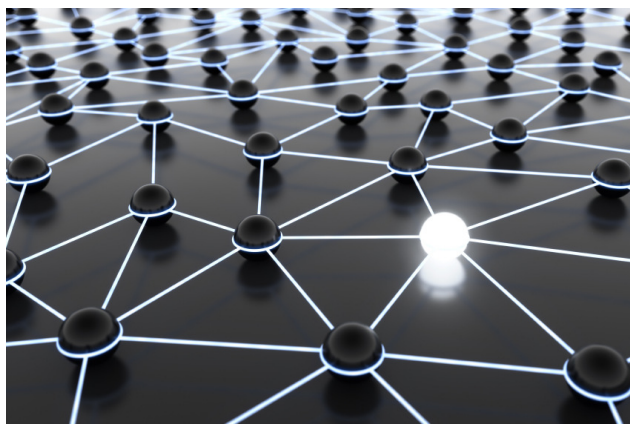




**SagePoint**  
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## **Evaluating Candidates & Reducing Risk**

**5 Reasons why resumes cost  
you time and money, and what  
you can do about it**

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## Part I: Introduction

### Why do you use resumes?

To answer a simple question:

### Is this right candidate to win the business and deliver the job?

Your organization may be focused on filling internal openings. You may focus on responding to your partners' requests, or requesting resources from your partners. Perhaps your business requires a mix of all of these.

**In every case, identifying the right candidate is always critical to success.**

**Selecting the wrong candidate always has the same result...*It wastes time and costs money.***

Unfortunately, the wrong candidate is often chosen because they look like the right candidate on paper, but turn out:

- Not to have the right match of experience and skills;
- To be unavailable;
- To be geographically undesirable;
- To not be as represented on the resume.

The cost of hiring the wrong candidate is significant and comes from multiple sources:

- Paying recruiters, outsourcers, or online services;
- Evaluating the candidate (internal or external);
- Onboarding and training the candidate;
- Paying consulting fees or salary and benefits,
- Lost productivity and opportunity costs;
- The cost of sourcing, evaluating, onboarding, and assigning the candidate ***you wish you'd found the first time.***

We rely on resumes as the first step in the critical and unavoidable candidate evaluation process.

Resumes are ubiquitous. Resumes are familiar.

**And resumes are fundamentally flawed for this purpose.**



Read on to discover five ways that resumes are putting your candidate evaluation process at risk, and some actions you can take to eliminate that risk.



## Part II:

### Five Fundamental Flaws of Resumes

You need to get the right resource to the right place at the right time. You can maximize results and minimize effort only by using the right tool for the job.

**Using resumes to evaluate resources is like driving in screws with a hammer.** You'll waste time, waste energy, and the results won't meet your (or your client's) expectations. Read on to learn the five main reasons why.



## **FLAW 1:**

### **Resumes are sales & marketing documents.**

**Resumes will result in you selecting candidates that are good at selling their skills. This is NOT the same as hiring the best candidate for the job.**

**Your goal:** objectively evaluate a candidate's skillset to inform a staffing decision, or a proposal to win business.

**Resume's purpose:** sell you on a candidate via calculated hyperbole and liberal use of industry-specific jargon.

### **There is a big disconnect here!**

Now, think about the last time you provided resumes to a partner or client for consideration.

- How long did it take them to evaluate it?
- How confident were you that the resume represented the resource accurately?
- How confident were you that you proposed the best possible resource?
- How confident were you the resource would deliver?
- **If you could drive a better decision, and get there faster...how much more work would you win?**



### **The Bottom Line:**

**Resumes delay and confuse critical resource decisions for both the vendor and the client.**



## **FLAW 2:**

### **Resumes are not standardized.**

**Using non-standardized tools, like resumes, makes comparing candidates extremely time consuming and challenging.**

Standards exist everywhere in business and commerce. We rely on standards to compare similar things to one another and make informed decisions.

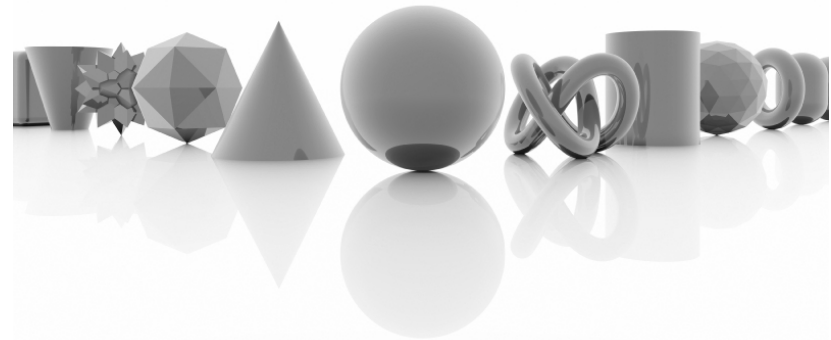
Now, consider using resumes to compare candidates. Each person communicates skills on their resume differently – some resumes are project-based, some are job-based, some are skills based, some use bulleted lists, some use long-format writing, and so on.

In fact, some people intentionally make their resumes unique to help them get noticed.

***This is the opposite of standardization!***

To further complicate matters, your project descriptions use **yet another** skill description methodology.

The lack of standardization is a major threat to your objective: quickly and accurately compare candidates' capabilities against your requirements in order to **win business and deliver for your customer.**



**The lack of a standardized method to compare resumes with requirements adds risk to every staffing decision and proposal response.**



### **FLAW 3:**

#### **Resumes contain obsolete information.**

All types of information change over time. Without exception, current and up-to-date information is a requirement for making good decisions...especially in technology-enabled business.

Would you select or propose a resource for a job if you knew they hadn't used the required skills in 6 months? 12 months? Longer?  
If the resume isn't up to date...how do you know?

**Information on resumes is not current. In fact, resume information can be months, or even years, out of date.**

Resources' resumes are updated only occasionally... usually when they're undergoing an active job search. Of course, this doesn't mean that people aren't constantly acquiring new skills and forgetting existing skills; it's just that these changes are not captured on their resumes.



**If you rely on resumes, the evolution of peoples' skills is invisible to you, your clients, and your partners.**



#### **FLAW 4:**

#### **Resumes require intense manual processing.**

Any candidate considered for an opening or a proposal will have his or her resume read by at least one person, and often by many people. The reviewers will spend time with the resume document and highlight, underline, make notes in margins, and compare it to similar resumes. They will also spend time outside of the document to seek information that is not included, such as the opinions of others, the quality of past experiences, or information from a database.

All this activity takes both calendar hours and effort hours away from other business tasks. **How much revenue does this activity generate? The answer is: zero.**

**Unfortunately**, that fact does not make these manual, mechanical candidate evaluation efforts any less essential if resumes are the evaluation tool.



#### **Resumes make this intense manual scrutiny unavoidable for several reasons:**

- **First**, the reviewer must evaluate all statements on the resume because, after all, the resume is a sales and marketing document (see [item #1](#)).
- **Second**, the reviewers must adjust themselves to each resume because each one is different (see [item #2](#)). This slows processing time and creates an opinionated and subjective scale of each candidate's actual competencies.
- **Third**, the reviewer must verify that all the information on the resume is current, and must also discover and factor in any new or omitted information that is not on the resume (see [item #3](#)).

**Good, Fast, and Cheap? Pick zero.**  
**Resume-based candidate evaluation is inaccurate, slow, and expensive.**



## **FLAW 5:**

### **Resumes do not capture essential information.**

When you're evaluating equipment, it's critical to have all the relevant information in one place: technical specifications, price, availability, guarantees, opinions and reviews, and so on. Having all the required information presented to you in a standardized fashion allows you not only to reach a decision quickly, but also to have confidence that you made the right choice.

Now, think about the last time you used a resume. Could it answer these essential questions efficiently, or at all?

- Is this candidate a better fit than our internal resources?
- What were the experiences of past managers?
- Have their prior experiences been vetted?
- What is this candidate's availability?
- Are they local? Will they travel? Will they relocate?
- This candidate may be a fit...but are they the best fit?

**Even with intense and competent manual processing, a resume will not provide enough information for you, your partner, or your client to make the best resource decision.**



**The Bottom Line:**  
**You can't make the right decision if you don't have the right tools.**





## **Part III:**

### **What You Can Do About It**

As items 1 through 5 have described, relying on resumes for candidate evaluation presents real risks to winning business and delivering for customers.

**Here are four things you can do to mitigate these risks and costs.**



## 1. Standardize

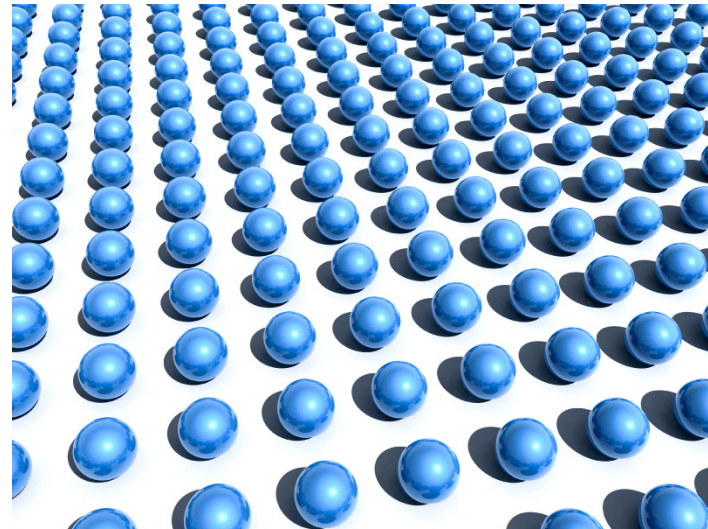
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Define a standardized set of skill descriptors, and empower candidates and managers to communicate through this standardized language. Managers will use this language to communicate project or job requirements. Candidates and existing resources will use this same language to identify and detail their skills and experience.

**A standardized lexicon enables candidate's skills to be identified, described, and compared with accuracy and consistency.**

**Tip #1:** Don't stop driving standardization at skill descriptors. For example, develop a standardized "Resource Profile" that utilizes the company lexicon, and have candidates create these profiles as part of the interview or application process.

**Tip #2:** A resource's skills and experience can be updated via this lexicon when projects and tasks are completed. The result will exponentially increase the value of that resource by exposing newly acquired skills.



**Standardization is essential to identifying the highest-probability candidate that will win business or deliver for a customer.**



## 2. Capture Context

Standardizing skills and requirements will make complex comparisons possible. It is necessary, but not sufficient.

To get the full value of this information, simple skill identification is not enough. You need context.

**Context provides critical insight into not only *what* skills a resource has, but also *how* those skills were used.**

Capturing context can be simple as simple as having candidates identify past assignments, and map their skills to those assignments.

## 3. Measure and Grade

Although there is value in basic skill identification, there is game-changing value in differentiating between experts, novices, and those somewhere in-between. Achieve this ability to differentiate by creating a rubric for objectively rating competencies.

**Consider:** a resource that is viewed as an expert in her local office may actually be of mid-level expertise when measured regionally, nationally, or globally.

Once again standardization is essential. What is an expert? Your rating rubric will enable you to define it. You can then consistently measure every candidate's experience against that definition.



**Your rating rubric should mirror a manager's thought process in making a hiring or assignment decision.**

The rubric should be simple. Base it on skill experience metrics that are easily measured, for example:

- The number of projects a skill was used on;
- How recently the skill was used;
- The length of time skill has been used;
- The intensity of skill use, indicated on a scale.

A simple tool to obtain this data is a survey filled out by resource that gets inspected by stakeholders, like the one provided with this eBook.

A better tool is an automated system that uniformly applies your grading rubric to a resource's experience profile.



## 4. Be a Steward of Data

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There are four dimensions to being a good steward of your resource data.

**Dimension 1: Maintain Data Currency.** Update resource profiles regularly by feeding newly acquired experience back into resource profiles. Updates can be time-based (every quarter), event-based (after each project or task is complete), trigger-based (applying for a promotion), or a combination of these. Like every other business decision, **timely and current data is essential – for you, your partners, and your clients.**

**Dimension 2: Present Complete Data.** Bundle and present all information required to make a hiring or allocation decision in a single, unified, standardized format. In addition to skills, this should include geographic information (distance from job or project location), billing rate or salary grade, availability (# hrs/week committed), industry and professional certifications, security clearances, education, and anecdotal information. Internal company testing (i.e. training, standards, and procedures) can be presented as well.

**Dimension 3: Capture Subjective Data.** As a resource completes work, your organization will accumulate tribal knowledge about that individual. This knowledge is unique to your organization, and can be **as critical in making the best candidate choice** as determining a good match between skills and requirements. Provide a way to capture this information and present it to others within the organization and, if appropriate, to partners and clients.

**Dimension 4: The Human Touch.** Tools, processes, and technology are essential for narrowing large candidate data sets to small, focused, high probability ones. The final evaluation should always be based on a personal evaluation and, if possible, interactions with the candidates. **Maximize the efficiency of this essential manual step by implementing standards, capturing context, measuring and grading, and being a data steward.**



## WANT HELP GETTING STARTED?

SagePoint Software offers a service to help you get maximum value from every resource and partner.

Don't take our word for it – let us show you with a [customized demonstration](#). We can provide this remotely, but if you're local to our New York or Boston offices, we'll bring cookies.

Let us help you get the most out of your workforce. Please [contact us](#) or call (855) 500-6005.



## About the Author

**Richard Wilner** has been leading project teams domestically and internationally for over a decade.

**His expertise** is executing critical technical projects in highly regulated environments. **His passion** is learning how to execute projects better, and helping others do the same. And, cookies.



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