

## Lesson 9 Worksheet: Your Alternative Résumé

This worksheet will help you dream up an alternative résumé (a.k.a. CV) that will complement or even replace your conventional résumé, by demonstrating your ability and helping to build your reputation.

If you're an employee, your alternative résumé will help you stand out from the crowd as someone with initiative and creativity. If you're a freelancer or creative entrepreneur, your alternative résumé is more than a nice-to-have – it's your calling card to let the world at large, letting people know what you have to offer.

## 1. Your website

You need a website. Even if you don't have a company. (If you have a company, I'm assuming you have a website for that. This one is extra.) Your website is like a bookmark where people can find you on the internet. It's also a central hub connecting your profiles on other sites, such as social networks.

Your ideal web address is [www.yourname.com](http://www.yourname.com). If that is still available, then register it *right now*, before you complete the rest of this worksheet. If you can't get the .com then .net or .org are also good. And .co is a newer domain extension which may give you more chance of snagging your name.

The site does not need to be spectacularly impressive, interactive or expensive. The least you need is a clean-looking single page, including:

- your name
- a portrait photograph
- a brief summary of your professional experience and qualifications
- the kind of opportunities you are looking for
- your contact details

It's also a good idea to include:

- links to the websites of companies you have worked for
- client names and testimonials
- links to websites and other projects you have worked on
- links to your social networking profiles (the ones you use for business)

For a good example of a professional profile website have a look at <http://ginatrapani.org>. Gina Trapani is the founding editor of the successful Lifehacker blog and the author of the book *Upgrade Your Life*. She has more popular and interactive websites elsewhere, but this one serves as an online résumé.

Gina's site also means she appears in search engines when people search for her name. Prospective employers, clients and business partners are very likely to search for your name when they first encounter you – so it makes a great impression if your personal site is the first or second thing they find.

You can add more features and content to the site, but this is the minimum you need to get started.

You'll need to pay to have the site hosted, but it will only be a few dollars a month, especially if you don't have many visitors to start with – and this is your professional reputation, so it's worth paying to secure it. Having your own site at your own domain instantly looks more professional than a social networking profile, useful as that is.

## **2. Your networked portfolio**

Now that you have a website, make sure you link to it wherever you have a professional presence – on social networking profiles, on your business card, your presentation slides, your physical portfolio, etc.

We going to look at using social networks to build your reputation later in the course, but for now I want to focus on a couple of sites you can use to create prominent and professional-looking online portfolios, without spending any money or much time.

### **(i) LinkedIn**

LinkedIn.com is a business networking site that is deliberately conservative. It's a place for business people to display their professional qualifications and achievements, and manage their professional relationships. It's not as sexy or addictive as Twitter Facebook or Instagram - and that's the point.

You probably won't spend a lot of time on LinkedIn, but it's worth spending a couple of hours to fill in the profile and add your professional contacts. Once you've done this, people will be able to find you easily and review your qualifications and experience. Your LinkedIn profile will also rank highly on search engines, and help you dominate that all-important first page of search results for your name.

### **(ii) Creative portfolio sites**

Besides LinkedIn, there are several profile/portfolio sites designed for creatives. It doesn't take long to set up profiles here and depending on your industry, they could be valuable sources of new connections:

- Behance.net
- CreativeGuild.com
- CreativePool.com
- The-Dots.com

### 3. Your alternative résumé

Now for the jewel in your crown – a flagship project that will convince the right people they should make *every effort* to persuade you to work with them.

At this point, we run out of ‘how-to’ steps. Your alternative résumé needs three qualities:

- spectacularly creative and impressive
- relevant to the work you want to do
- easily accessible online

But beyond this, I can’t tell you what to do. I can suggest some options, but by definition it needs to be something original and arresting. Here are a few ideas:

- a book, blog, ebook or other written document
- a video / film
- a live performance\*
- leading a team to succeed at a significant project\*
- an album, podcast, radio show or other audio recording
- an exhibition or other public event\*
- an artwork or artefact made of physical materials\*
- a marketing, PR or social media campaign\*

Options marked with an asterisk required two levels of creativity – first to execute the project, secondly to record it in a format suitable for the internet. This is important, because not everyone will be able to visit your studio/come to your show/sit in on the meetings where you made a difference to your team.

You may already have your alternative résumé, in which case all you need to do is join the dots by presenting it prominently on your website and other profiles. If you don’t already have one, then it’s time to get creative! You may want to go back and review the lessons on creativity to get you started...