



Maricopa County Human Services Department

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRIDGING THE GAP

One of the most difficult items to address when you're writing your resume is not what information to include; it's what information to leave out. Since your resume is the tool that can determine whether or not you get the interview; you want to highlight all of the positive aspects of your career, not the negative. So how do you handle gaps in employment? Well, that depends upon the reason for the gap and the length of time. For example:

The gap. One of the first things you need to consider is whether the duration of time is significant. If you were unemployed for a short period of time, don't draw attention to the fact; however, be prepared to discuss it in an interview if the situation arises. If the gap occurred a long time ago, don't mention it. Employers aren't interested in information that is twenty years old.

Addressing the gap. Some of the most common reasons for gaps in employment on resumes include: raising a family, going back to school, illness, caring for a family member for an extended period of time, enrolling in the military, or incarceration. Whatever the reason, do not include the information on your resume. If you feel the need to address it, do it on your cover letter.

This task can be accomplished by including a brief one or two sentence explanation. Do not go into detail about the absence and highlight the fact that you are eager to return to the workforce. In addition, if you've been consulting, reading trade journals or taking classes related to your field, you'll want to include this information in your cover letter to show how you've kept up-to-date with changes in your industry.

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