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WRITE YOUR PERFECT RESUME SECTION 1

I. THE RIGHT RESUME

Ledgent Search Group's guide to writing a resume

Your resume is the principal tool a potential employer uses to decide whether or not it is worth their time to interview you. Since it starts by being selected for an interview, your resume should be error free and stand out from the others. The goal of your resume is to beat out the competition in obtaining that first interview. Are you "Resume Ready?"

HERE ARE THE TOP 10 DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- Format your resume into recommended categories: Professional Experience, Education & Certifications, and Associations.
- 2. Utilize a Skills Summary at the top of the resume, not an objective statement.
- 3. List professional experience for the past 10 years.
- 4. Include one or two sentences describing the company, industry, size and relevant factors.
- 5. Create a short paragraph highlighting each position's scope of responsibilities.
- 6. Use bullet points to highlight accomplishments, not tasks.
- 7. Clearly identify measurable results and accomplishments: dollars saved, percentage increases or decreases, time it took to accomplish the goals, etc...
- 8. Use action verbs: initiated, established, analyzed, executed, organized, etc...
- 9. List Education, Certifications and Associations last, unless you have less than 10 years of experience.
- 10. Keep your resume to 2 pages and print on white or off-white paper with basic fonts of 10 -12 points.

DO NOT:

- Add personal information (height, personal descriptions, etc.), hobbies, or taglines (like "References Upon Request").
- 2. Advertise negative and unnecessary information: laid off, fired, reasons for leaving, or previous salaries.
- 3. Write in the first person "I", "me", "my".
- 4. Embellish or stretch the truth regarding dates of employment, duties, accomplishments, or experience.
- 5. Allow spelling mistakes or grammatical errors on your resume, which shows a lack of attention to detail.
- 6. Use long, in-depth paragraphs to describe experiences.
- 7. Make your experience read like job descriptions do not simply list tasks and duties.
- 8. Use passive language that lacks action.
- 9. Complicate your resume with overly creative organization and formatting.
- 10. Use poor or flashy resume paper or MSWord background graphics.



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QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

Summaries are a highly effective way to highlight.

- Strategic planning, budgeting, and forecasting
- Change and turnaround management
- Sarbanes-Oxley 404 implementation
- Project accounting
- SEC & GAAP reporting
- Process improvement

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NUTS & BOLTS TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

A \$400 million publicly traded technology company, with locations throughout the worl supplier of wing-dings and do-dads for the whatchamacallit industry.

Start with your Professional Experience if you have 5+ years of on-the-job e leading experience; otherwise, start with your Education. 1999 – Present

Vice President of Finance

Responsibilities

Expertly managed all financial dut project accounting, contract mana of over 100 accountants, and effici

Focus should be on your title, not your time frame. cial repo Note that the gement dates should be 5 key tl on the right.

Company Description should be one or two sentences, including industry, size, and other relevant factors.

recasting, general accounting, rersight. Project managed an in-house staff

rich in number

Major Achievements

- Implemented worldwide Sarbanes-Oxley 404, which was completed 44 days ahead of schedule, saving Approximately \$145,000 in ft
- Keep your Achievements concise, Developed Stra company-wide efficiencies and red and highlight your measurable \$7.5 million ov Note that all bullet accomplishments.
- Consolidated s es into one centralized location in the points are only one saving sentence and are \$800,000 in payroll and processing charges.
- Successful integration of more than 15 acquisitions, smoothly expanding company revenu and recognized
- Re-engineered accounting management procedures that reduced turnover by 28% in 3
- acronyms. GAAP report documentation and optimization; third party consultant would have cha analysis.
- Seamlessly implemented AMEX program, PeopleSoft Modules, and Taxware, thereby transforming infrastructure of accounting department; error reduction 34% first year alone.

SILICON PEAKS & VALLEYS, INC.

A \$150 million dollar NASDAQ-listed technology company, specializing in thingamajigs and electro-nicknacks for the computer industry.

Director of Finance, Strategic Planning, and Administration

1995 - 1999

ly \$35 million.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities should Single-handedly man accentuate your specific MIS, and financial hun contributions.

ponsible for all corporate finance, strategic planning, accounting, contracts, orted directly to the CEO.

Major Achievements

- Successfully facilitated ISO 9001 certification; new accreditation allowed fresh revenue stream, increasing business by \$5.5 million in first 2 years.
- Developed business model used to restructure and reorganize operations, resulting in an annual cost savings of 35%.
- Developed Five-Year Strategic Plan linking the industry and company value chains to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, resulting in a dramatic 200+% growth rate.

Finance Manager
Responsibilities

Managed 22 direct reports, sm

If you've had more than one title in the company, list additional ones like this. Notice the dates are still on the *right*.

1993 – 1995

unctions of accounting department.

Major Achievements

- Implemented processes to improve cash flow and lower DSO, freeing an estimated \$2.5 million in capital per quarter.
- Revamped SEC retained to the second second
- Facilitated new mar with an action verb. countants to fill top positions.

AUDITS R US, LLC

A "Big Four" CPA firm, specializing in major technology industry clients.

Senior Auditor
List your Experiences going

KNEE DEEP, INC. back further than a decade this way. Note that details are not

A major lending company, servir necessary. Provide a very brief ted States.

General Accounting Manager company description, job title, and dates.

THE PIGGY BANK

A regional banking company, serving the West Coast and Hawaii.

Financial Analyst / Accountant

CERTIFICATIONS AND AFFILIATIONS

Certified Public Accountant, *State of Certification*American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

EDUCATION

For Education,
list your degree
first, then your
academic
institution, unless
the school is noteworthy, such as
Harvard, Stanford,
or any lvy League
college.

Master of Business Administration F & A University

1989

1987

The year you graduated is important.

Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting

Figures College



Jane Doe

9876 Accural Way, Month End, MO 45678 • h: (555) 456-7890

SUMMARY

Certified Public Accountant, MBA in Finance with 16 years of diversified experience in financial and operational management seeking executive or top senior level position. Specific responsibilities have included successful:

- Financial Planning & Analysis
- Budgeting & Forecasting
- Customer Service
- Investor Relations

- Accounting Management
- Treasurer Responsibility
- Customer Training
- IT Implementation

- SEC Reporting
- Legal Consulting
- Web Operations
- Office Management

Proven accomplishments include:

- Cost savings of more than \$2.7 million
- Chief financial advisor on M&As totaling more than \$1.8 billion
- Reduced expenses by an average of 11%, headcount by 17%
- Created relationships with investment banking firms, raising more than \$200 million in capital

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Kazoo! Corporation (a Fortune 500 media company)

Vice President of Finance

2002 – Present Note exact tasks.

Responsible for directing all financial and IT functions including oversight of budgeting, planning and analysis, and financial policy administration. Work directly with the CEO on strategic planning and corporate direction. Significant accomplishments include:

- 14% reduction in S, G & A expenses
- 17% reduction in headcount
- Implementation of Sarbanes-Oxley with no identified weaknesses
- Development of automated software revenue recognition system

Don't Do, Teach Company (an educational content company)

2000 - 2002

Corporate Controller

Responsible for directing all financial and IT functions including oversight of budgeting, planning and analysis, and financial policy administration. Work directly with the CEO on strategic planning and corporate direction. Significant accomplishments include:

Increased profitability of the customer training function by 1000%

Note exact figures and percentages.

- Developed strategic plan for sale of business, including long-range forecast
- Negotiated sale of the business (formerly known as Alphabet Company) to S&P small cap 600 company
- Created relationships with tier I and tier II investment banking firms
- Raised over \$200 million capital from several tier I venture capital firms
- Establishing multiple lines of credit through nationwide commercial banks



Sarbanes Costly (a Big Four CPA firm)

1998 - 2000

Senior Audit Manager

Responsible for managing audit and business advisory services to clients in the software, e-business, and other high-tech industries. Recognized clients included XYZ Software Inc., ABC Corp, Any Company Inc., and AAA International, Inc. Significant accomplishments include:

- Assisted companies with public offerings and spin-offs
- Consulted on mergers & acquisitions strategies
- Public speaking on revenue recognition, the SEC, and the process of going-public
- Board presentations on audit and technical accounting issues

Knee Deep, Inc. (a nationwide mortgage banking company)

1994 - 1998

Controller

Responsible for directing accounting, finance, treasury, tax compliance and cost accounting functions. Significant accomplishments include:

- Increased profitability of the customer training function by 1000%
- Developed strategic plan for sale of business, including long-range forecast
- Negotiated sale of the business (formerly known as Alphabet Company) to S&P small cap 600 company
- Created relationships with tier I and tier II investment banking firms
- Raised over \$200 million capital from several tier I venture capital firms
- Establishing multiple lines of credit through nationwide commercial banks

Audits R Us, LLC (a Big Four CPA firm)

1990 - 1994

Audit Manager

EDUCATION

Masters in Business Administration with emphasis in Finance, San Quentin University.
 Graduated first in class.

1996

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with Distinction in Accounting, Milquetoast College.

1990

AFFILIATIONS/CERTIFICATIONS

- Certified Public Accountant, State of California
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- California Society of Certified Public Accountants

Try to keep everything under 2 pages.





INTERVIEW READY SECTION 2



II. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Ledgent Search Group's guide to the interview process

Congratulations! Your resume stood out and you have been invited to a job interview where you will have the opportunity to convey your interest in the position and company, and to present the skills you could bring to the company. The resume tells the employer what you have done; the interview enables you to tell the employer what you have achieved with your responsibilities. Now it's your turn. It is your opportunity to interview the company as well. It is a chance for both to assess the "fit."

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Know your resume and prepare yourself

- · Think about your skills, interests, and values
- Understand your strengths & practice articulating them
- Be able to discuss your weaknesses & what you and the company can do to strengthen them
- · Identify accomplishments you are proud of and things you might have done differently
- Speak to examples that demonstrate your strengths and accomplishments
- Articulate why you are interested in this field/company/position
- Define your short and long term goals

Research the employer and the field

- Research the company, the position, and the industry using your recruiter, the Internet, and various media
- Match your skills and experience to the responsibilities of the position
- Read current periodicals and trade journals to learn about current trends in the employer's industry & relevant company news
- Be familiar with the company's competitors
- Understand the company's organizational structure and where the position fits into that structure

Practice for the interview

- Meet with your Executive Recruiter to review your interview strategy
- Utilize Ledgent Search Group's VideoSelect[™] technology to record a mock interview, which will help assess
 your presentation and interviewing skills
- Cite examples of your achievements and successes and how they transfer to this opportunity
- Confirm date, time, place and directions of the interview; consider parking and traffic conditions; leave plenty of time

Behavior-based interviews

More employers are now conducting job interviews that focus on experiences, behaviors and dimensions that are job related. Behavior-based interviewing rests on the premise that past behavior (performance) is the best indicator for future behavior (performance). Your answer to a behavior-based question must tell a story by giving a specific example of a situation you handled. To prepare for a behavior-based interview, analyze both your skills and those sought by the employer, and identify from your previous employment where you have successfully demonstrated those skills.

Sample behavior-based questions the employer might ask

- What are the most important qualities you look for in a company, position and/or manager? And why are they important to you?
- Tell me about the short and long term goals you have set for yourself.
- Do you trust people until they prove otherwise or do people have to earn your trust?
- Tell me about a time you out performed others at work and how you did it?
- Do you prefer to work from a plan or go with the flow? And why?
- How do you organize your typical day?
- · Do you prefer a slow, medium or fast paced environment? And why?
- · Do you usually make decisions based on facts or intuition?
- All things being equal would you rather be part of a group or lead it?
- When is it acceptable not to follow up?
- Provide me an example of a time when you had to deal with conflict or opposition.

Sample work related questions the employer might ask

- · Why are you currently seeking a change in employment?
- Describe one of your greatest accomplishments in a previous position.
- How would previous co-workers describe your strengths and weaknesses?
- In your current/previous position, describe how you rank among your peers?
- Describe a time when you were in a rapidly changing work environment.
- What professional skills are you currently working to improve?
- · Describe your management style.
- Describe how you organize yourself to meet deadlines & goals.
- · What are the key ingredients to maintaining successful business relationships?
- What has been your biggest challenge in a previous position?
- · What is missing from your current employer?

Sample questions you might ask the employer

COMPANY FOCUSED

- How would you describe the culture of the company?
- Please share with me what the company is doing to stay ahead of the competition? (new products, technology, training, etc...)
- · What was it about this company that made you want to work here?
- What are the pros and cons of this company?

DEPARTMENT FOCUSED

- Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
- What concerns are facing this department currently?
- Whom would this position interact with most and what are those individuals like?
- · What is the culture of the department and what types of personalities work well within it?
- How would you describe your management style?



POSITION FOCUSED

- What should I expect during a typical day?
- What characteristics would the ideal candidate for this position possess?
- What performance goals have been set for the first year?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the person who held the position most recently?
- Who has been the best at this position and why?
- How is performance measured in this position?
- What areas of my background can I further clarify for you?
- How do you feel my experience and personality would fit for this position?
- What is the next step going forward?

THE INTERVIEW

Interview etiquette

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early
- Turn off your cell phone, or better yet, leave your phone in your car along with your briefcase or purse
- Introduce yourself to the receptionist
- · Obtain a business card from each interviewer and clarify names that are difficult to pronounce
- Carry only your portfolio with copies of your resume and the prepared interview questions you want to ask, along with your list of references

Non-verbal communication skills

- First impressions matter; dress professionally yet conservatively, avoid flashy accessories, and keep make-up, cologne & perfume to a minimum if at all
- · Greet the interviewer with a firm hand shake
- Maintain eye contact but avoid staring
- Use positive vocal qualities and facial expressions
- Sit still, lean slightly forward and demonstrate your interest and enthusiasm
- Be prepared to take notes on the most important information

Verbal communication skills

- Correctly pronounce the name of the interviewers
- Listen carefully to what is being asked and answer in a clear and concise manner usually a direct answer followed by a brief example of your answer
- Pay attention to clues the interviewer may give you and adjust accordingly as to not appear overly confident or too reserved
- Use proper grammar, avoid using slang
- · Be specific and refer to concrete experiences that illustrate your skills
- Be the solution uncover the company "pain" and position yourself as a possible solution
- · Never bad-mouth former employers or co-workers
- Thank each interviewer for their time and express your interest in the company and this opportunity





POST-INTERVIEW FOLLOW UP **SECTION 3**

III. THE FOLLOW-UP

Post-Interview

Self-assessment

- How did the interview go?
- · What were my strengths in the interview?
- · Was the position described as I had envisioned it?
- What would I do differently next time?
- · What questions did I not get answered?
- How would I rank my interest level in this opportunity?
- What specifically did I like about the company, people, and position?
- · What concerns do I have at this time?
- How did I interview the company?
- · How does the opportunity compare to others I am looking at?

Follow-up

- Call your recruiter and supply your feedback based on your self assessment
- Send a thank you note, letter or email to each interviewer within 24 hours of your interview

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTERS

SAMPLE 1: HEAVY ON THE THANKS, LIGHT ON THE SELF-MARKETING

DATE

INTERVIEWER NAME INTERVIEWER TITLE COMPANY ADDRESS CITY, ST ZIP

RE: Interview Follow Up

Dear INTERVIEWER NAME:

I realize your day must be extremely busy, so please allow me a few more moments of your time in order to thank you for my interview on DAY, MONTH and YEAR.

I sincerely appreciate having been given the opportunity to interview at COMPANY NAME and specifically with you. I learned a great deal about the company during our time together, and remain deeply impressed by your organization's goals, culture, and opportunities.

Should you have any additional questions for me, I will be pleased to answer them as I look forward to speaking with you again.

Lastly, thank you for the privilege of learning more about COMPANY NAME, the POSITION TITLE opportunity and you.

Sincerest regards,

YOUR NAME



SAMPLE 2: A BALANCE OF THANKS AND SELF-MARKETING

DATE

INTERVIEWER NAME INTERVIEWER TITLE COMPANY ADDRESS CITY, ST ZIP

RE: Interview Follow Up

Dear INTERVIEWER NAME:

Please allow me to thank you for my interview on DAY, MONTH and YEAR.

During my interview I discovered COMPANY NAME's unique mission, culture, and impressive accomplishments. I feel privileged to have had this opportunity to be considered, and look forward to learning even more about COMPANY NAME, the POSITION TITLE opportunity and you.

Given my unique experience and qualifications, I am excited about the prospect of a career at COMPANY NAME. If I can facilitate your decision-making process with additional information, then I would certainly welcome the opportunity to meet with you again.

Many thanks and sincerest regards,

YOUR NAME

SAMPLE 3: LIGHT ON THE THANKS, HEAVY ON THE SELF-MARKETING

DATE

INTERVIEWER NAME INTERVIEWER TITLE COMPANY ADDRESS CITY, ST ZIP

RE: Interview Follow Up

Dear INTERVIEWER NAME:

Please allow me to thank you for my interview on DAY, MONTH YEAR.

Given my unique experience and qualifications, I am excited about the prospect of a career at COMPANY NAME. Having learned even more about your organizations mission, culture, and accomplishments, we seem like an ideal match. I am eager to be offered the privilege of proving that to you.

If I can facilitate your decision-making process with additional information, then I would certainly welcome the opportunity to meet with you again.

Sincerest regards,

YOUR NAME





ACCEPTING THE OFFER **SECTION 4**

IV. ACCEPTING THE OFFER

You've just verbally accepted your new position – Congratulations! Now is the time to follow through on your decision, demonstrate your commitment and professionalism and ensure a smooth transition.

What it means to accept an offer:

- Prepare a written Letter of Resignation. This should be a brief letter expressing gratitude for the opportunity, a clear indication of your decision to move forward in your career and a definitive date of employment. Your LSG Candidate Toolkit has three sample letters for your reference.
- 2. The Truth Behind Employer's Counter Offers. Does more money, a new title, and/or different responsibilities truly resolve the reasons you're resigning? Statistics say NO. Consider the motives of an employer who discounts your career decision to move on by applying pressure to stay. Read Countering the Counter Offer on page 21 for more on this.
- 3. Notify your additional resources that you are officially off the market. This is an excellent opportunity to thank them for their time and assistance. It's important to deliver a clear message that you have made a definitive decision about the direction of your career and thus have finalized your search activities.
- 4. Remove your resume from the Internet. This sends a direct message to the marketplace and your new employer that your decision is final and your search is complete. You want to avoid sending unintentional mixed messages to your new employer and other resources by leaving your resume on any resume/career board.
- 5. Contact your Human Resources Department. We recommend you confirm your benefits grace periods, continuation provisions and your COBRA rights. With this information you can make the most informed decisions on transitioning the necessary coverage to your new employer's plan.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF RESIGNING

DO:

- Write a professional resignation letter and hand deliver it to your immediate supervisor, with a copy given to the human resources manager
- · Resign from your current position gracefully & professionally
- Give proper notice typically two weeks
- Make the transition as easy and smooth as possible
- Offer to help in finding/training your replacement, if appropriate
- · Finalize or transition all major assignments and leave a detailed progress report for your supervisor or successor
- Stay productive during your notice period
- · Leave on good terms with your co-workers & supervisors whenever possible

DON'T:

- · Burn any bridges by making any statements or express any opinions that you might regret later
- Say anything negative about your supervisor or co-workers, even in an exit interview
- "Check out" during your notice period missing work, tardy, uninterested, etc...
- Feel guilty about leaving focus on the fact that you are leaving to accept a great career opportunity
- Provide details of your new company and new opportunity
- Consider a counter offer to stay statistics show that the 90% of employees ultimately leave the employer within 1 year of accepting a counter offer to stay, usually for the same reason they resigned in the first place

Basic Resignation Letter Outline

First Paragraph: State your intention of resigning your position and leaving the company.

Optional Second Paragraph: State your reason for resigning and your appreciation for the opportunities you have had with this employer.

Closing Paragraph: Thank your supervisor and the company and end the letter on a positive note.

SAMPLE 1: FRIENDLY & COURTEOUS RESIGNATION LETTER

DATE

RECIPIENT'S NAME COMPANY NAME ADDRESS ADDRESS

Dear [Recipient's name]:

Please accept this letter as my formal notice of resignation from [Company name], effective [date, two weeks from date above]. The associations I've made during my employment here will truly be memorable for years to come.

I trust the traditional two week notice is sufficient to transition my responsibilities and commence the process of identifying a replacement. I am happy to assist in the training and transition of my replacement.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to work here.

Sincerely,

[Sign here]
[Your name, title]

cc [Names for copies]



SAMPLE 2: FORMAL & GRATEFUL RESIGNATION LETTER

DATE

RECIPIENT'S NAME COMPANY NAME ADDRESS ADDRESS

Dear [Recipient's name]:

Please accept this letter as my notice of resignation, effective [date].

This was not an easy decision, as I am grateful for the rewarding employment I've had with [Company name]. Yet following many days of careful consideration, my decision is final and I appreciate your support in this career move.

Sincere thanks and best wishes for the future,

[Sign here]
[Your name, title]

cc [Names for copies]

SAMPLE 3: PROFESSIONAL

DATE

RECIPIENT'S NAME COMPANY NAME ADDRESS ADDRESS

Dear [Recipient's name]:

Please accept this letter as my formal resignation from [Company name].

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for helping to make this a rewarding and educational experience. I very much appreciated your support and encouragement during my time at [Company name].

Please understand that I have made my decision after considerable thought. An exceptional opportunity presented itself that will significantly enhance my career and assist me in achieving my goals.

I am therefore resigning from [Company name] effective two weeks from today. In the interim, it will be a pleasure to work with you and the team to provide a smooth transfer of my duties.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to work and grow here at [Company name]. I wish you and the company continued success.

Sincerely,

[Sign here] [Your name, title]

cc [Names for copies]

COUNTERING THE COUNTER OFFER

The Truth Behind Counter Offers

Consider what is at stake when your present employer begs you to stay and bribes you with money, titles, and/or different responsibilities.

Most Important: You should know that statistics compiled by the National Employment Association claim that over 80% of those people who elected to accept a counter offer with their present employer are no longer with their employer six months later, and nearly 90% of people leave within twelve months.

If they entice you with MONEY...

First, ask yourself: If I were worth a certain salary yesterday, then why am I suddenly worth more now, after I have given two weeks notice? Did my value to the company suddenly increase overnight? Perhaps it is not your worth that's the issue, but that it is cheaper to give you a raise than it is to replace you immediately.

Consider that your present employer could be merely "buying time" with a raise until they can locate your replacement. Suppose you were given an annual raise as a counter offer of \$12,000, then 60 days later they find your replacement. The actual cost to them is only \$2000 and they saved the cost of a temporary employee or consultant and the added training cost of that person.

The raise they are offering you now could simply be the increase you are scheduled to get with your next review. You should really ask yourself, is money the #1 reason I am

looking for a new job/career in the first place? If it is not your #1 reason for making a change, then focus on what is. Money follows top performance, and top performance follows the right opportunity.

REPERCUSSIONS of accepting a counter offer...

Do not become a statistic! Does a counter offer really offset the advantages of the new opportunity that looked so favorable when you accepted it? You could become a statistic.

Although they would never tell you this, employers often feel as though they have been betrayed or even blackmailed, and that their only recourse is to offer you a raise and/or additional responsibilities when you announced your decision to leave. Understand that now your every move will now be scrutinized as their trust level in you has changed. You are out of the inner circle now. The possibility of promotion is now limited as a company is less likely to risk giving significant responsibility to someone who was previously committed to leaving.

Should the company experience an economic down turn, do not be surprised to be one of the first to be downsized. You indicated your intention to leave, so it is only natural that you or your position would be eliminated first. By accepting a counter offer, you are indirectly showing your peers and your own staff that you can get what you want by simply resigning, or as they see it... threatening to leave.

The largest repercussion for accepting a counter offer and going back on your word and written agreement is that you have effectively smeared your name and trust with those involved in your search. Everyone will remember that you went against your word and written agreement. Additionally, you lose a valuable career resource in your Recruiter, and those you interviewed with.

We strongly urge you to carefully think about all the hidden truths surrounding counter offers. It is your career – your livelihood – your relationships. One imprudent mistake at this time could be very costly in anyone's career and turn you into a statistic.

