

In the White Spaces

Your resume. From about age seventeen, it was the official document that told the world who you are and what you've done. In fact, the year you last conducted a job search could be guessed, simply by looking at the aesthetics of your last resume: Personal objective at the top of the page? Nice photo? Hobbies listed, between commas, as the last bullet on the last page? One page or two?

Formats often changed for the Times Roman–fonted, sterile list of jobs and degrees, but one thing remains unchanged: what really matters are the stories that live in the white spaces of your resume—the stories that tell who you really are.

The years lived by three-dimensional people behind one-dimensional resumes are the true fabric of life. And one of the best parts of your post-primary-career season is the chance to honor your white-space

life stories—and let them enable what you do next.

Your story is complex and vibrant: Years well and less-well lived. Family members born and gone. Discoveries and disappointments in work. Young people you've mentored, and those with whom you've walked the exit pathway. Your own failings and learnings. Lives altered by your kindness. Support you provided for friends who became bereaved. Futures you enabled by paying for education. The many you comforted in the years on either side of the hyphens.

These people and situations helped you *live your life* . . . not just experience it.

These life events are what matter most—and thankfully, they are what we carry with us, irrespective of job titles or employment glory. Yes, you may have been a Supply Chain Manager . . . but what distinguished you most was the

way you mentored others, the way you solved complex problems—the “real you” behind “the job.”

Sure, you managed risk for a large, international bank—but even more impressively, you cared for your ailing wife who is no longer with us—and ensured she had comfort and love at the end. Now you want to ensure that other care-givers, balancing FT jobs, have access to tools and resources you never had.

It's impressive that you led a Business Unit, HR organization, or Finance—but even more impressive is how you coached and developed colleagues, and the ways you lifted them up and enabled them to succeed. These activities that define “you”—performed in the white spaces of your life—tell the world what matters most to you—who you are. And that is what goes with you into your next season.

So, file away that old resume. Pause, discern, and honor what matters most to you. Then, let the world know how you want to engage in new ways—because you can, now unencumbered and no longer defined by your past titles or employer. From the white spaces of your life, the “best you” is about to be born. Watch out, world!



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My Next Season helps companies and individuals with important career transitions, from early career to “retirement,” and ensures they happen well.

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