

Physician Executives: A Resumé Can Make the Difference

By **Stephen C. Davis, Consultant**

I have participated in many physician CEO and physician executive recruitments recently, and quite often applicants who relied on a traditional CV to communicate their qualifications for the position didn't come across as physician leaders. Though we receive many robust and impressive CVs detailing a candidate's education, administrative titles and clinical, research and teaching credentials, we aren't always able to determine what leadership impact—to market share, operations, quality, clinical outcomes and financials—the candidate had made throughout his or her career.

These experiences confirm my long-held belief that aspiring physician leaders need to take a lesson from the business world and fortify their CVs with executive resumé when they compete for healthcare leadership positions.

How a Resumé Differs from a CV

A CV typically includes only a chronology of a candidate's vital statistics. It is a list of accomplishments, without context or quantification. It assumes the reader will know the complexity in size and scope of the organizations where the candidate worked previously, and will understand the responsibilities held by the candidate based on the job titles listed.

A resumé doesn't make the same assumptions about the reader. It includes details about a candidate's career and the responsibilities held throughout. It is written to convince the reader that a candidate is able to perform the duties of a position and, more important, solve the specific problems or meet the challenges the hiring organization faces. The resumé is the document that most organizations will rely upon to discern what a candidate can do for them.

Why it's Important to Have a Resumé

Enhancing a CV with a carefully constructed resumé is becoming increasingly important as ambulatory and outpatient arenas grow in importance for healthcare organizations, and physicians are sought to fill leadership positions in these institutions. To capitalize on the growing demand for physician leaders throughout healthcare, physicians should be ready to interview for leadership positions, and that begins with knowing how to prepare a strong executive resumé.

Best Practices to Follow

An effective executive resumé should “sell” the leadership, strategy and operational experience of a physician executive. The structure of the resumé is important, and generally includes the following sections:

- The **Professional Summary** highlights the candidate’s qualifications for the job. In a short paragraph, it provides the reader a synopsis of the candidate’s professional qualifications. The professional summary often includes a list of a candidate’s core competencies related to the position sought. For example:

Accomplished Medical Executive

A collaborative, strategic Chief Medical Officer of an integrated healthcare system, with superior business skills and experience. Committed to safe, high-quality healthcare and champion of XYZ’s pursuit of a High Reliability Organization (HRO). Built and managed a highly successful practice with 13 physicians and 26 CRNA’s. Effective contract negotiation skills have resulted in over \$20MM savings to XYZ. Board certified in both Internal Medicine and Anesthesiology with 30 years of clinical experience.

Core Competencies

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2
- Bullet 3

- **Professional Experience** details the work history of the candidate. Each entry includes (1) the organization name, location and a brief description of organization size and scope, (2) title, dates held and brief summary of roles and responsibilities, (3) bulleted list of operational and strategic accomplishments. Continuing the example above:

XYZ Healthcare, City, State

XYZ is an integrated healthcare system with 2 acute care hospitals, a heart institute, home care and long term care. XYZ, in city, state, is a 310-bed facility and XYZ, in city, state, is a 146-bed hospital.

Chief Medical Officer, 2013-Present

Paragraph on roles and responsibilities of the position.

- Accomplishment 1
- Accomplishment 2
- Accomplishment 3

Be sure to use real numbers and statistics to quantify your accomplishments, including the details about the size of departments and teams you managed, the budget you controlled, the savings you created, your P&L contribution and changes in rankings you influenced. These details improve the strength of your resumé.

- **Educational & Board Certification** provides a list of degrees granted and certifications awarded, as illustrated below.

Degree, University, City, State, Date

Certification, Certified date

These are some of the basics. Though very important, a resumé doesn't eliminate the need for a CV. A CV should still be a part of a candidate's presentation package, but the addition of a carefully written resumé will boost an aspiring physician executive to the next level.

About the Author

Stephen C. Davis is a consultant in the Healthcare practice at Witt/Kieffer.

For more information, contact: sdavis@wittkieffer.com.

About Witt/Kieffer

Witt/Kieffer is the preeminent executive search firm that identifies outstanding leadership solutions for organizations committed to improving the quality of life.

Visit wittkieffer.com for more information.