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## How to Explain Two Jobs In a Year on a Resume

*In this economy, it's more common than you might think, but you can avoid being seen as a job-hopper.*

By **ELIZABETH GARONE**

**Q:** *In April of this year the company I was working for as a program manager was experiencing an extreme downturn, so they had a major reduction in force. Each manager had to cut one employee, and unfortunately, I was last in, first out. It took me five months to find a job as a director of product marketing. Within six weeks of my joining the company, they ran out of money and laid us all off. My resume shows two jobs in 2008, which could lead companies to think I'm a flake who jumps around a lot, but it's not true. What is the best way to show this?*

While multiple jobs in a short period of time is often deemed a red flag when it comes to hiring, companies have been forced to become more understanding of this trend during the current economic downturn.

"Short-term employment has become more of the norm rather than the exception these days, especially during the past 18 months," says Sherri Thomas, president of Career Coaching 360. "Hiring managers understand that many companies are laying off good employees purely for financial reasons."

One of your resume goals should be to show that this is was the case where you worked, suggests Fred Coon, chairman and CEO of Stewart, Cooper & Coon, an executive-search firm. An easy way to do this is to note after the company name that it is no longer in business. "Doing so will place the blame on the company, not you," says Mr. Coon. "Any accomplishments can be stated as you would in any resume."

Another approach is to move away from a chronological format into a functional, skills-based format. By doing this, your resume will focus on the results you delivered rather than the dates you worked a particular job. "This style allows you to showcase your top three strengths and the results you achieved in each area," says Ms. Thomas. "The focus is on your career skill set and accomplishments as a whole, without breaking it down into specific performance for each company where you worked."

For those who are wedded to the idea of a chronological format, there are still

tricks to employ. Add a section called "Consulting, Freelancing, and Short Term Assignments," suggests Ms. Thomas. "This is a great way to list any short-term employment without calling attention to an abrupt ending with an employer."

While there is quite a bit of flexibility in what you do and don't include on a resume, filling out an employment application is another story. "Include any employment, even if it's only for six weeks," says Ms. Thomas. "If you omit employment on an application, it's considered lying."

After two layoffs in quick succession, it can be hard to stay positive. But, it's important to keep your head up, says Mr. Coon. Rather than worry that people think you are a "flake," realize that some things are simply beyond your control and not your fault. "One of the worst killers of a good job search is attitude. People can sense 'attitude' and nobody who interviews you will tell you what they sense from you," says Mr. Coon. "It is up to you to be positive and leave that impression."

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