

Nikola's Story on the Importance of Résumés

In spring 2003, I attended a career fair at the University of Maryland, College Park. Over the course of two days, about 140 different employers recruited college students and graduates for part time and full time positions. At the time, I was searching for co-op positions in the field of electrical and computer engineering.

I was interested in speaking to Northrop Grumman recruiters. Prior to talking with them, I prepared my résumé, a small introductory statement, and several questions regarding the company's goals and employment opportunities. Considering this company's popularity, I was not surprised to see a line of students waiting to speak to the representatives. However, instead of seeing several enthusiastic recruiters speaking to the students, I was surprised to see only one older gentleman in a blue shirt with the Northrop Grumman logo sitting on the edge of a table carefully examining students' résumés without speaking to anyone. Not only did he examine the résumés, but he also used his pen to make corrections to the résumés. Then he handed the résumés back to the students.

Much like the other students before me, I tried to make conversation while he corrected my résumé, but he was more interested in my résumé's grammar, bullet points, and page organization than in what I had to say. After he made corrections to my résumé, he handed it back to me and thanked me for my interest in Northrop Grumman. To my surprise, the long line of students waiting to get their résumés corrected remained in front of the Northrop Grumman table throughout the rest of that day. I am not sure if Northrop Grumman hired any students that day, but I am sure that every student who visited Northrop's booth received some pointers on how to fix their résumés.

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