



# Move On Up in 2025

## *Five ways to elevate your professional presence & land your dream leadership role*

Sarah was feeling burnt out in her career in claims, frustrated that her expertise in law wasn't being put to good use. She spent countless hours applying to jobs on LinkedIn, but all that effort led to nothing but wasted time and disappointment.

After Let's Eat, Grandma helped her optimize her resume and LinkedIn profile—and coached her through her career transition—things changed. Sarah found a more meaningful role and earned a \$55,000 pay raise.

Investing in your personal brand pays off—and this guide is here to help. We'll get straight to the most impactful tips to elevate your resume and LinkedIn profile.

As a Cornell alum, you have a world-class education and a powerful network at your disposal. However, if you don't take the time to directly invest in your professional presence, your career can stagnate. And you will miss out on incredible opportunities that you were meant for.

With these tips, you'll stand out in a competitive job market, even for top-tier leadership roles. Some tips will reinforce what you already know, while others may push you to think differently—because standing out often requires creativity.

Let's dive in and get you closer to landing your next leadership role.



## 1

### **Lead with a standout summary**

David Ogilvy, the legendary advertising pioneer, once said, “On the average, five times as many people read the headline as read the body copy. When you have written your headline, you have spent eighty cents out of your dollar.”

The same principle applies to your resume. First impressions are everything, and your summary is your first impression.

As you gain more leadership experience, the summary section becomes one of the most critical parts of your resume. What does this mean for you? Time spent tailoring this section to your target job description is never wasted.

As a rising leader, go beyond a generic, AI-generated summary to include keywords that directly target the role you're pursuing (e.g., VP of Business Development). But don't stop there; pull in your biggest achievements, bolster them with metrics, and align them with the target leadership role's requirements. For example:

- Proven history of generating up to \$10M in annual savings through spearheading process optimization, strategic sourcing, and cost-reduction initiatives.
- Track record of boosting NPS scores by up to 25%
- Experienced in leading multimillion-dollar projects and launching innovative fintech products in domestic and international markets.
- When targeting top positions, don't play too small.

Focus on big-picture elements like strategic planning, leading across multiple departments, or financial oversight, keeping the target job description at top of mind.

# 2

## Choose a resume design that commands attention

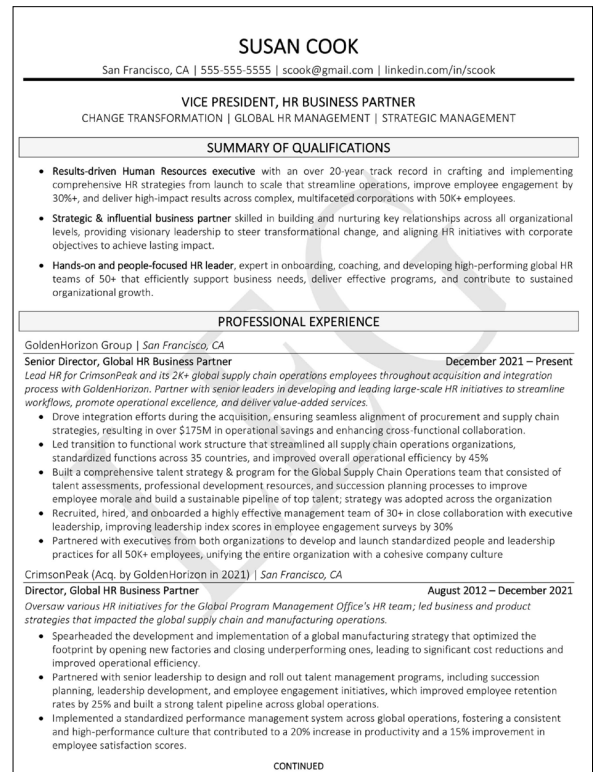
This tip might seem superficial, but the reality is that many leaders are sending the wrong message with their resume design. The result? They come across as too junior, or even sloppy.

Your resume should be easy to navigate, with a clean, professional layout. Use strategic bolding and all caps sparingly to draw attention to key sections.

Overall, keep it concise: two pages is ideal for most mid- to senior-level professionals (with a max of three if your career is truly like a blockbuster trilogy), with **about 500 words per page**.

Don't underestimate the power of white space—it enhances readability and keeps your resume from feeling cluttered. Most experienced professionals make the mistake of packing their resume too tight. Edit ruthlessly to ensure every word on your resume adds value.

The good news? When it comes to design, we've got you covered. Request our two free templates [here](#), and you'll have an ATS-friendly design that highlights your leadership while helping you stand out.



# 3

## Get a LinkedIn facelift

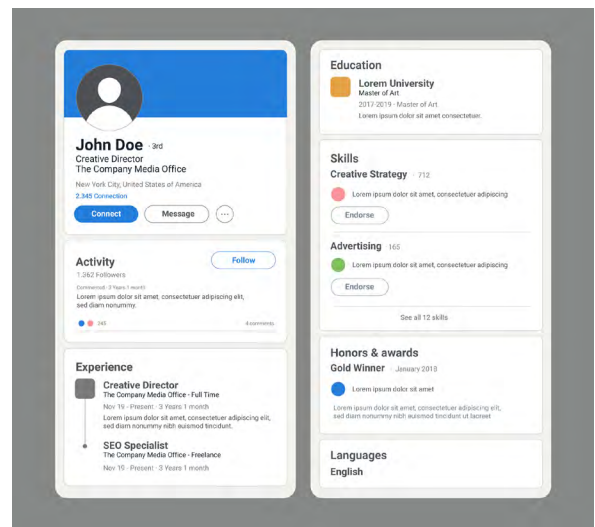
As your leadership responsibilities grow, so does the importance of your online presence, specifically LinkedIn.

It's imperative to align your LinkedIn profile with your resume. Inconsistencies between the two can decrease the impact of your profile on a recruiter or hiring manager, or worse, create unnecessary confusion.

This includes your headline. It should incorporate strong leadership keywords to capture attention and communicate your value to your field at a glance.

Another LinkedIn profile section that is often overlooked by leaders is the recommendations section. Strong, authentic endorsements from colleagues and collaborators can significantly boost your credibility.

Finally, don't be afraid to post. Commit to sharing something at least once a month, whether it's a professional insight, a team achievement, or an article that inspired you. It doesn't matter if you don't get likes—what matters is staying active and visible.



# 4

## Make it insanely obvious you're a perfect match for the role

Here's a secret strategy from one of our career coaching partners—something 99% of applicants aren't doing.

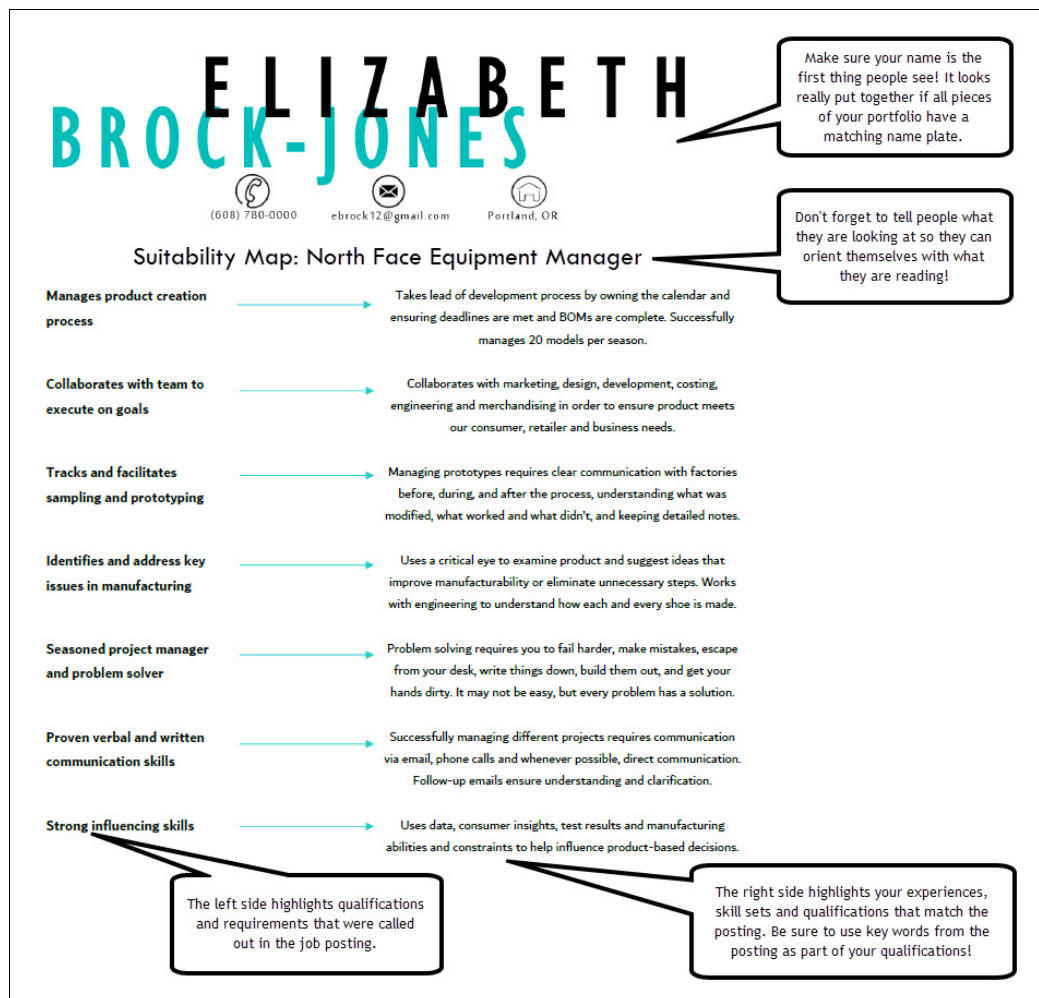
Merryn Roberts-Huntley, career coach and founder of Made to Hire, says, “A **suitability map** is the perfect way to visually demonstrate to a hiring manager how your skills and experience line up with the responsibilities listed in a job posting. It will instantly set you apart from other applicants.”

Here's how to create one:

- Make a simple two-column chart.
- On the left side, list the key responsibilities of the leadership role.
- On the right, connect each responsibility to your relevant experience or accomplishments.

This approach allows you to clearly “connect the dots” for the hiring manager, showing why you are the ideal candidate for the position.

Yes, it's an extra step, but it's worth it. We recommend using this strategy for interview stages with companies you're most excited about. It's a small investment of time for a big impact.



# 5

## Bring your soft skills to life

Soft skills are increasingly vital as you step into higher leadership roles. Leadership Consultant and author of *The First Time Manager: HR*, Paul Falcone, underscores their importance:

*“Soft skills are worth showcasing in a job application if you’re a leader because they’re so in sync with C-level priorities these days. CEO outlook surveys confirm that emotional intelligence, collaboration, and accountability are consistently among the top five priorities that CEOs value in senior leadership hires. The degree to which you can highlight your communication, teambuilding, and conflict resolution skills should definitely help your resume stand out as a complement to the technical skills and achievements that you display.”*

Soft skills are highly sought after but can be challenging to showcase on a resume and your LinkedIn profile. Instead of simply stating them, demonstrate these traits with concrete examples. For instance, if you want to highlight emotional intelligence as a leadership strength, provide metrics and outcomes that illustrate how your leadership style drove measurable results:

- Held monthly 1:1 meetings with team members to nurture individual strengths through personalized coaching and feedback, driving a 25% increase in productivity.
- Encouraged communication and mediated conflicts among cross-functional teams, resulting in a 20% improvement in collaboration and a more cohesive workplace culture.

## Conclusion

We hope these tips empower you to stand out in your job search and, more importantly, to truly recognize and embrace your strengths as a Cornellian.

Don’t overlook these strategies—they can make all the difference in landing your dream role. The time and effort you invest now will pay off when you’re stepping into the next exciting chapter of your career.

If you’re ready to take the next step, start by downloading our [free ATS-friendly templates here](#). And if you need expert help crafting a standout resume, we’re here to support you every step of the way.

Let’s make your leadership dreams a reality. I wish you the most amazing year ahead, and know you will succeed. **Go Big Red!**



Chris Villanueva is the CEO and Co-Founder of Let’s Eat, Grandma, an online resume service featured by The New York Post, The Balance, and Money.com. After graduating from the Cornell Nolan School of Hotel Administration, Chris decided to apply his passion for people and service to one of the most stressful areas of life: the job hunt. His company has helped 11,000+ paying clients with their resumes—and hundreds of thousands more through the Career Warrior Podcast. Chris decided to apply his passion for people and service to one of the most stressful areas of life: the job hunt. His philanthropic mission is to help the underprivileged in society, so that the homeless, underserved, and formerly incarcerated can reintegrate back into the workforce.