

## Awards look good on the résumé

[By Nora Caley](#)

If you're a chef and you won an award, it's a good idea to put that on your résumé. But should you put it the top of your list of qualifications? How important is the award, compared to your education and experience, and for how many years can you bring up the topic of your winning the accolade?

"I think it's important in terms of showing an individual's commitment to their craft, but it's not hugely important for everybody," says Matt Jansen, owner of Mateo Restaurant Provencal and Radda Trattoria in Boulder, Colo. In a job search, he says, "accolades certainly help the cause, and I think they are a nice bonus and an added bit of appeal."

He says most job applicants list their awards in a section under "special skills" or "extra information." Sometimes it's under the same bullet points where the job seeker writes that he or she was an Eagle Scout or the valedictorian in high school.

Eric Goodwin, president of the recruiting firm Goodwin and Associates in Concord, N.H., agrees that awards are important.

"It is something that certainly catches the attention of hiring managers," he says. "Companies are looking for very tangible results, specific skills or accomplishments that will add value to their organization. An award illustrates distinguished achievement, pride in one's work, and the ability to shine and stand out."

He adds that employers do pay attention to awards, and it can help you get a job.

"In a sea of mediocre résumés that flood the desks of hiring companies, any spark or special recognition can oftentimes be the determining factor on whether or not a company picks up the phone to call you to initiate contact," he says. "Even with all things being equal in a competitive offer situation, someone who brings more credentials to the table, more historical success, may tip the scale in that person's favor."

Don't keep every award on your résumé forever, Jansen says.

"Personally I think it should have a statute of limitations, although we see examples of people frequently getting a lot of mileage out of something like that."

If you win a local cooking competition or if a magazine called you a "rising young star," you may keep that on your résumé for a few months. Other awards can stay on your résumé much longer.

"If you were on 'Iron Chef,' you can leave that on your résumé longer," he says, referring to the Food Network cooking competition and not local versions that some organizations occasionally hold for charity.

Few awards may stay on your résumé permanently.

"If you win a James Beard Award, that's a timeless category," he says.

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