



Resumes are not an official document, a biography or a career obituary. They are simply marketing tools candidates use to secure a job interview. A well-written resume increases the chances of catching the attention of a potential employer.

First and foremost; *slow down*. This document is hugely important, and it requires careful attention. Here is a list of common mistakes job seekers make on their resumes:

- Typos or grammatical errors
  - Providing too much or too little information
  - Not listing achievements in former roles
  - Poor layout and/or design
- 1. The resume should be clean and inviting to read.** Make sure that the font size is easy to read and used consistently. Use bullets, bolding or lines to guide the readers' eyes. Allow for a good balance between text and white space. Make all margins even on all sides. Some find justified margins on the right a distraction.
  - 2. Spell check, spell check and spell check.** Typos on a resume are just plain bad. Run everything through a grammar and spell check on the computer, but don't rely solely on that. Proofread the resume again and again, and ask one or more people to read it over as well. Ask them to point out grammar and spelling errors, as well as, unclear phrases or sentences and irrelevant details. Also look out for inaccurate or missing dates and contact information.
  - 3. Student resumes should start with educational accomplishments.** Students should put their best foot forward. Recent graduates with only part-time or odd job experience should put their education first. Include the school, graduation month/year, and specific major. Also include the GPA in the major and the overall GPA.

- 4. Focus on accomplishments, not boring job duties.** Most people can perform basic job duties — so stress the accomplishments while doing the job. What were the results of these accomplishments and quantify them by using numbers, percentages, dollar amounts or other concrete measures of success.
- 5. Student resumes can usually be on a single sheet of paper.** Hiring managers say they don't want important accomplishments to be omitted for the sake of brevity. At the same time, they also don't want to endure long, rambling resumes chock full of irrelevant details. The guiding principle should be: "Will this nugget of information on my resume get me in the door for an interview?" If the answer is, "No," leave that detail out.
- 6. Know what not to include.** Avoid outlining irrelevant information such as age, height, weight, names of family members; detailed lists of hobbies or short courses taken (unless they're relevant to the position being sought). Do not include references to health, reasons for leaving past jobs or salary history.
- 7. Start each resume entry with strong verbs and action phrases.** Managed, directed, saved, completed, and so on.
- 8. There's no need to refer to those references.** Do not include the phrase "References available upon request." Hiring managers know that they can get references if they request them. Give all references a copy of the resume and a heads up that they might be contacted.
- 9. Follow instructions.** Submit materials exactly the way the employer wants to see them. If a company specifies that it only accepts hard copies of resumes, don't send via e-mail. If e-mail is preferred but attachments are not, don't send any attachments. If they want attachments, attach the resume, and also consider playing it safe by including a copy in the body of the e-mail message as well. Some attachments may never get opened because of compatibility issues or concerns about viruses.