

Common Resume Blunders

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Make sure your resume is in top-notch shape by avoiding the top 10 resume blunders:

1. Being Too Focused on Job Duties

Your resume should not be a boring list of job duties and responsibilities. One of the most basic resume tips is to go beyond showing what was required and demonstrate how you made a difference at each company, providing specific examples. When developing your achievements, ask yourself:

- How did you perform the job better than others?
- What were the problems or challenges faced? How did you overcome them? What were the results? How did the company benefit from your performance?
- Did you receive any awards, special recognitions or promotions as a result?

2. Using a Flowery or General Objective Statement

Many candidates lose their readers in the beginning. Statements such as "a challenging position enabling me to contribute to organizational goals while offering an opportunity for growth and advancement" are overused, too general and waste valuable space. If you're on a career track, replace the resume objective with a tagline stating what you do or your expertise.

3. Making Your Resume Too Short or Too Long

Many people try to squeeze their experiences onto one page, because they've heard resumes shouldn't be longer. By doing so, job seekers may delete impressive achievements. Other candidates ramble on about irrelevant or redundant experiences. There is no rule about appropriate resume length. When writing your resume, ask yourself, "Will this statement help me land an interview?" Every word should sell you, so include only the information that elicits a "yes."

4. Using Personal Pronouns and Articles

A resume is a form of business communication, so it should be concise and written in a telegraphic style. There should be no mentions of "I" or "me," and only minimal use of articles. For example:

I developed a new product that added \$2 million in sales and increased the market segment's gross margin by 12%.

Should be changed to:

Developed new product that added \$2 million in sales and increased market segment's gross margin by 12%.

5. Listing Irrelevant Information

Many people include their interests, but they should include only those relating to the job. For example, if a candidate is applying for a position as a ski instructor, he should list cross-country skiing as a hobby.

Personal information, such as date of birth, marital status, height and weight, normally should not be on the resume unless you're an entertainment professional or job seeker outside the US.

6. Using a Functional Resume When You Have a Good Career History

It irks hiring managers not to see the career progression and impact you made at each position. Unless you have an emergency situation, such as virtually no work history or excessive job-hopping, avoid the functional resume format.

The modified chronological format, or combination resume, is often the most effective. Here's the basic layout:

- Header (name, address, email address, phone number).
- Lead with a strong profile section detailing the scope of your experience and areas of proficiency.
- Reverse chronological employment history emphasizing achievements over the past 10 to 15 years.
- Education (new grads may put this at the top).

7. Not Including a Summary Section That Makes an Initial Hard Sell

This is one of the job seeker's greatest tools. Candidates who have done their homework will know the skills and competencies important to the position. The career summary should demonstrate the skill level and experiences directly related to the position being sought.

As part of your resume preparation, peruse job openings to determine what's important to employers. Next, write a list of your matching skills, experience and education. Incorporate these points into your summary.

8. Not Including Keywords

With so many companies using technology to store resumes, job seekers should sprinkle relevant keywords throughout their resumes. Determine keywords by reading job descriptions that interest you, and include the words you see repeatedly in your resume.

9. Referring to Your References

Employers know you have professional references. Use this statement only to signal the end of a long resume or to round out the resume layout.

10. Typos

One typo can land your resume in the garbage. Proofread and show your resume to several friends to have them proofread it as well. This document is a reflection of you and should be perfect.

Source: www.monster.com