

Resume Tips

Tips For A Professional Resume

Considering that employers scan hundreds of resumes a day, it is imperative that you convey important information quickly and completely. Your resume will get about 30-seconds from which the employer has to determine your experience and qualifications. Professionalism is most impressive to employers when reviewing a resume. No gimmicks and nothing fancy – just a well-written, visually pleasing resume that reads clearly and easily.

The following guidelines will help you to develop a resume that projects a professional image.

- Keep your resume clear and concise. The majority of your resume should be your education and experience. Additional categories may include honors, activities, technical experience, etc. Include your GPA only if it is higher than 3.0. Avoid personal pronouns such as “I” or “my.” Do not put “References available upon request” on the bottom.
- Emphasize what you did. A common mistake in a resume is not giving enough detail in the description of your duties, responsibilities and experience. Include any internship that you have done within your education section. List your qualifications/ experience in order of relevance and quantify your experience wherever possible. Make a list of your 2, 3, and 4 strongest skills, abilities or knowledge. Then describe accomplishments in these areas with simple, powerful, action statements that emphasize the results.
- Use action words and sentence fragments. When describing your duties, responsibilities and experience refrain from using entire sentences. Use sentence fragments and start each one with an action verb in the past tense. Think in terms of accomplishments (i.e., “Implemented new reporting system...”) and avoid listing job duties (i.e. “Responsible for...”). Use job-specific key words such as industry terms, buzzwords, jargon and hard skills. [Click here to view a list of action verbs.](#)
- Keep the layout simple. Another common mistake in resumes is too much formatting. Use bolding, underlining, and italics sparingly. Use text only; do not use graphics, borders, shading etc. Choose a popular, common font (such as Arial, Times, or Helvetica). The size should be 10-14 points.
- Use white space appropriately. Use the full page, allowing for about a one-inch margin all the way around. Do the “arm’s length” test: the text in your resume should look balanced all the way around the page when held away from you at an arm’s length. Do not use columns and tables.
- Spell check and edit, then spell check and edit again. Your resume is a representation of your best work so it is expected to be perfect. Computer spell checks do not catch all mistakes such as typos that spell another word and grammatical errors. Ask other people to review your resume as well.

- Use quality reproduction. Print your resume on a laser printer. Use light-colored paper (white is best) that is at least 20-lb. weight. Avoid designer papers or paper that contains dark speckles.
- Include references on a separate page. It is not suggested to give your references with your resume. Names, addresses and phone numbers of your references are information that is only to be distributed upon request.
- Keep your resume to 1-2 pages. A graduating college student should keep their resume to one page. One page resumes are not a “rule,” however stretching a resume to two pages is usually obvious. Two pages are acceptable for professionals; however, make sure to put your name on both pages.
- Keep the content on job-related characteristics. Employers have to follow EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) guidelines. As a result, they do not want photographs, marital status, height, weight, health or any other information that might interfere with a fair hiring process.