

1. Know the purpose of your resume

The objective of your resume is to land an interview, and the interview will land you the job.

2. Back up your qualities and strengths

Instead of creating a long elaborate list with all your qualities and strengths try to connect them with real life and work experiences. In other words, you need to back these qualities and strengths up.

3. Proofread it

This can't be emphasised enough, one small typo and your chances of getting hired could slip. Proofreading it once is not enough, so do it twice, three times or get someone else to proof read it for you.

4. Use bullet points

Avoid using long paragraphs of text. Make sure, therefore, to use bullet points and short sentences to describe your experiences, educational background and professional objectives.

5. Put the most important information first

This point is valid both to the overall order of your resume, as well as individual sections. The majority of the time your recent work experience will be the most important part of the resume, so put it at the top. When recounting your experience and skillset, list the most important ones first.

6. Attention to the typography

Ensure that your fonts are big enough the smallest you should go is 11 points. Remember, capital letters implies you are yelling, so avoid over using them. Your goal is to communicate a message as fast and as clearly as possible.

7. Explain the benefits of your skills

Simply by stating you can do something will not catch the attention of the employer. If you explain how it will benefit the company or organisation, and connect it to work related results, then you will be demonstrating the benefits.

8. Achievements instead of responsibilities

Resumes that include a long list of "responsibilities included..." you may as well insert your previous positions descriptions. This is not an efficient way to sell yourself. Instead of listing responsibilities, outline your professional achievements.

9. No Photos

Unless you are applying for a job where the physical traits are very important (e.g., modelling, acting and so on), and unless the employer specifically requested it, you should avoid attaching your photo to the resume.

10. One resume per employer

The most common mistake made is to create a standard resume and submit it to all the jobs. Sure it may save you time, but it will also greatly decrease the chances of landing an interview (so in reality it could even represent a waste of time). Modify your resume for individual employers.

11. Analyse job ads

Analyse not only the job advertisement that you will be applying for, but also the position description and the job specific application. You should be able to identify what profile they are looking for and how the information should be presented.

12. Get someone else to review your resume

Even though you may think that your resume is looking great, it would be a good idea to get a second and third opinion. We generally become blind to our own mistakes or way of reasoning, so someone else with a fresh set of eyes, will be in a good position to evaluate the overall quality of your resume and make appropriate suggestions.

13. Lists all your positions

If you have worked a long time for the same company (over 10 years) it would be a good idea to outline the different positions and roles you had during this time. You would have developed different skillsets with each role.

14. Be careful with sample resume templates

There are numerous websites which offer free resume templates. Whilst these can assist you to get an idea of what you are looking for, ensure that you are completing all fields so that 'template' or 'insert name here' doesn't appear on your resume.

15. Use action verbs

Common advice to job seekers is to use action verbs. But what are they? Action verbs are essentially verbs, that will get noticed more easily, and that will clearly communicate what your experience and achievements are.