

Ten Things I Hate About Résumés

By Meg Bayer, IT Recruiter

Your résumé exists to get you an interview. Make it easy for a recruiter or manager to quickly identify any of your skills, experience, and accomplishments that are relevant for the job in question. Your goal is to get the interview, where you can truly sell your skills! Every recruiter and manager has different preferences for résumés, but here are few pet peeves that a lot of us share!

10. Personal information

Managers and recruiters have varying opinions about including hobbies. I prefer that you leave them out. Definitely omit personal details such as marital status and social security number. It is alright to state your eligibility to work in the United States.

9. Pictures

Unless you are a graphic designer applying for design-related positions, photographs and other images are a huge professional turn-off and completely unnecessary. In design and creative fields, images can be acceptable sometimes if you use them carefully.

8. Teeny-tiny or unreadable font

If nobody can read your résumé, no one will read your résumé. Select Times, Arial, or some other clear, crisp font. Use a font size of at least 10 points. If the font is too fancy or small, the manager is likely to convert it to something readable, which can mess up your formatting.

7. Too much information

Recruiters and hiring managers will not read a nine-page résumé. They don't have time, and your real strengths get lost in the wordiness. Keep your résumé to one or two pages. Senior-level job seekers can sometimes justify a longer résumé, but always keep it under five pages.

6. Too little information

Though we're strapped for time, we still want a comprehensive rundown of your skills. Sell yourself by letting us know what you can do!

5. Exaggerated information

If you haven't worked extensively with a technology, don't present yourself as an expert. It only backfires when the recruiter or manager realizes you do not have the skills you claim.

4. Limited or no contact information

Always put ALL of the best ways to contact you at the top of your résumé – at least one phone number and an email account that you check regularly. If an interviewer cannot reach you, you will lose the opportunity.

3. Tables and paragraphs

Personally, I hate tables in a résumé. I often make slight changes or adjustments to a résumé before I submit it to a client, and tables make the résumé hard for me to edit. Also, concise bullet lists are far superior to paragraphs when you list your experience and accomplishments. Start each bullet with an active verb.

2. Lack of consistency

A consistent and well executed résumé demonstrates your attention to detail and professionalism. Every component is important, not just your skill list. Make sure all dates are at the same tab stop, all titles are similarly formatted, fonts are the same throughout, etc.

1. Generic résumés

Whenever possible, tailor your résumé to highlight your skills and experience that are relevant for the specific job. This helps you get an interview but also shows the recruiter or manager that you are organized, detail-oriented, and proactive!