

Five Defeating Mistakes We Make on our Resume

In these times of downsizing, rightsizing, layoffs and takeovers, it's important for the career savvy person to have a current, updated, well-written resume on hand. The problem is that all the other career savvy people have resumes also, so how do I get mine to stand out, be read and, more importantly, get me that interview?

Eliminating these five mistakes will help you create a resume that will get you the interview.

Mistake Number One: Including everything in your resume. Don't forget that *resume* literally means *summary* – to sum up. Don't allow your resume to suffer from terminal length. Admittedly, it's hard to boil down a lifetime to a page or two, but keep it short and concise. Look for extra words, phrases and sentences that can be cut out. Choose each word carefully. Start with a highly selective choice of content and then streamline each item.

Mistake Number Two: Having no clearly define objective or job choice. It's been said that if you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there? It's okay to not have an objective on your resume, however, you need to have a clear picture of what type of job you want so you can create the appropriate resume. Many job searchers want to keep their options open so they mistakenly obscure their intent by using excessive vagueness. If you don't use an objective then you should use a summary of qualifications that define areas of expertise. Don't expect an employer to dig through your resume to see if your qualifications match the job's requirements.

Mistake Number Three: Using the same resume for different jobs. One size does *not* fit all. Your resume should be targeted for a specific industry or job. The skills and qualifications you emphasize should match those the employer is looking for. How you position yourself on your resume will determine if you get the interview or not. You can't properly position yourself with a one-size-fits-all resume. The shotgun approach no longer works. Employers are looking for employees who will be successful on the job and who will be a good fit with their organization.

Mistake Number Four: A poorly organized resume. If your resume is tough to comprehend, a prospective employer loses interest before they finish reading it. You won't get the interview that way. Double-check your work for construction and focus. Open with either an objective statement or a summary of your qualifications. Headings should be distinct from one another. Enter each entry under the appropriate heading; don't mix items up. You don't want an employer to label you disorganized.

Mistake Number Five: Typos and grammatical oversights. Even the sharpest eyes sometimes miss mistakes. You really don't want any errors on your resume. Use spell-check. Proofread your work SLOWLY. Get a second opinion; another set of eyes always helps. Take a break from your work. Go back to it later and proofread again. We often

find mistakes we had previously missed when we set the work aside for a time and return later.

All resumes should be computer-generated, two-pages or less and have a professional appearance. It is helpful to have several variations of resumes, to include; scannable Word and Text formatted versions and a professional looking resume to present during face-to-face interviews. Don't forget the cover letter and always follow-up with hand written thank you notes to all who assisted in your job search.

Your resume is a marketing tool. You are selling yourself – don't give a prospective employer reason to believe that you are unprofessional or unskilled. By eliminating these five common resume mistakes, you present yourself in a more positive way. BY creating a focused, well-thought out and well-written resume, you improve your chances for an interview.

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