

Basics of Writing a Resume updated on Jan 2025

Resume is what an employer looks at much before meeting you, it is the first interface you have with your employer. You have to make the most out of this opportunity. The employment market is changing all the while and so have resumes, evolving from a one-size-fits-all standard. Here are our tips to convert your resume into a catching one.

Follow These Basic Standards:

- * Don't overcrowd your resume; allow for plenty of white space.
- * Keep your resume to one page whenever possible.
- * Keep the number of fonts you use to a minimum -- two at the most.
- * Use a font that is easy to read. Times Roman works well.
- * Do not justify the lines of type on your resume. Allow the right side of the page to "rag."
- * Do not overuse capitalization, italics, underlines, or other emphasizing features.
- * Make sure your name, address, and a phone number appear on your resume and all correspondence, preferably at the top of the page.
- * Print your resume on white or cream paper using a good-quality printer.
- * Second- and third-generation photocopies must be avoided.
- * Print on one side of the paper only.

Common Mistakes to be avoided :Spelling Mistakes :

To avoid spelling mistakes:

- * Don't use words with which you aren't familiar.
- * Use a dictionary as you write.
- * Perform a spell check on your finished resume.
- * Carefully read every word in your resume.
- * Have a friend or two who proofs read your resume for you.

Punctuation Mistakes :

Things to look for:

- * Periods at the end of all full sentences.
- * Be consistent in your use of punctuation.
- * Always put periods and commas within quotation marks.
- * Avoid using exclamation points.

Grammatical Mistakes :

Grammar hang-ups to watch for :

- * Do not switch tenses within your resume.
- * The duties you currently perform should be in present tense (i.e., write reports)
- * Duties you may have performed at past jobs should be in past tense (i.e., wrote reports).
- * Capitalize all proper nouns.
- * When expressing numbers, write out all numbers between one and nine (i.e., one, five, seven),but use numerals for all numbers 10 and above (i.e., 10, 25, 108).

- * If you begin a sentence with a numeral, spell out that numeral (e.g. Eleven service awards won while employed.).
- * Make sure your date formats are consistent (i.e.11/22/01 or Nov. 22, 2001, or 11.22.01. Choose one and stick with it.).
- * Choose Your Words Carefully:
- * Phrase yourself well:
- * Be on the lookout for the following easily confused words:
- * Accept (to receive),except (to exclude)
- * All right (correct),alright (this is not a word)
- * Affect (to bring about change),effect (result)
- * personal (private),personnel (staff members)
- * role (a character assigned or a function),roll (to revolve).
- * Use action words (i.e., wrote reports, increased revenues, directed staff).

Stick To The Point:

Employers have a busy schedule, so don't expect them to read through a long resume. Ideally, resumes should be of one page, or of two pages only if absolutely necessary, to describe relevant experience.

Words Count

Use of language is extremely important; you need to sell yourself to an employer quickly and efficiently. Address your potential employer's needs with a clearly written, compelling resume. Avoid large paragraphs (five or six lines). If you provide small, digestible pieces of information, your resume will be read. Use action verbs. Verbs such as "developed", "managed", and "designed" emphasize your accomplishments. Don't use declarative sentences like "I developed the ..." or "I assisted in ...". Leave out the "I". Avoid passive constructions, such as "was responsible for managing". Just say, "managed": that sounds stronger and more active.

Make The Most of Your Experience

Employers need to know what you have accomplished to have an idea of what you can do for them. Don't be vague. Telling someone that you "improved the company's efficiency" doesn't say much. But if you say that you "cut overhead costs by 20 per cent and saved the company Rs 20 lakh during the last fiscal year", you are more specific.

Honesty is a Good Policy

Employers will feel more comfortable hiring you if they can verify your accomplishments. There is a difference between making the most of your experience and exaggerating or falsifying it. A falsified resume can cost you the job later.

Double-Check for Mistakes

Check your resume for correct grammar and spelling - evidence of good communication skills and attention to detail. Nothing can ruin your chances of getting a job faster than submitting a resume filled with preventable mistakes. Make your resume easy on the eye. Use normal margins (1" on the top and bottom, 1.25" on the

sides) and don't cram your text on the page. Allow for some space between the different sections. Avoid unusual or exotic fonts. Preferred fonts: Arial and Times Roman & Verdana.

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