

RESUMES: Be Yourself While Putting Your Best Foot Forward!

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***w/ applicable referenced content attached

- **Don't get stuck on 1 page vs. 2 and other small details that aren't "make or break"**
 - o No one has ever not gotten a job because of these small details
- **Don't list everything you've ever done (including projects, courses, experiences, etc)**
 - o This applies even to college students in certain situations- it's important to include relevant coursework and projects but do not include every class you've ever taken and every project you've ever done- pick the ones most applicable!
- **Start with the resume basics**
 - o Avoid spelling and grammar errors
 - o When a position was in the past, use past tense- if current, use present tense
 - o Avoid first person, it's already implied that you performed these tasks
 - o Label your resume file with your name, date, company applying to, etc.
 - o Format logically, chronological order isn't always necessary
 - o People read in an "F" pattern on a resume, so important content should be across the top, down the left side, and through the middle
 - o Keep formatting consistent and use italics, bolded text, and caps to emphasize
 - o Expand margins, adjust font style, minimize text size, reorganize, etc. to increase readability
 - Times New Roman is a classic, Garamond is a modern substitute, or stick with the Calibri default are all great options, or get creative
 - No smaller than 11-point font, make sure it's readable
 - o When creating titles for experiences include your role, the company/organization, and the dates/years you worked in that role
 - o Include a summary of your experiences and qualifications at the top
 - This should be a 1-3 sentence summary of what you bring to the table
 - Also known as your "unique value contribution" in this role & in past
- **Go into your resume with a storytelling mindset**
 - o How do your experiences fit together to show what type of professional you are and how you show up in the workplace? This is the time to think about what makes you different, what strengths you have, skills you've gained, your likes/interests/motivators, your personality, etc.
 - o Many companies are no longer requiring cover letters or references, so your resume will be your only document to share your story- make it count
- **Don't share only generic statements within bullet points about what you did**
 - o Use the "What, How, Why" method to boost your bullets
 - o What did you do? (task or action)... How did you do it? (skills or strategy or software used)... Why did you do it? (purpose or intended outcome and results)
- **Quantify, quantify, quantify (when possible)**
 - o Anyone can say they're amazing and produced results, use numbers/percentages/other data to show your actual impact

- **This is NOT the time to be humble**
 - Brag about yourself- you NEED TO BE your biggest advocate in this situation
 - If you have a connection to the organization, can name-drop someone who they may know, have gotten a raise/promotion in the past, or have prior elevated responsibilities within company leadership, this is the time to share those
 - Showcase your accomplishments to go beyond simply detailing responsibilities
- **Do deep-dive research about your industry standards & ATS**
 - If you're a graphic designer, more creativity in your resume works
 - If you're going into IT, it should be less creative and focus on highlighting your hard technical skills and experience
 - BEWARE of Applicant Tracking Software/Systems if they are in use at the company you're applying for- certain design elements will do you harm, while strategic keyword usage from the job description will push you forward
- **Think about the other people in this process and the company**
 - A real person is going to read your resume, so do what you can to entice them into reading more of your resume and employ strategies to keep it engaging
 - This could mean incorporating a "hook" in your summary, eliminating all bullet points and content that is not relevant to this specific position, make the recruiters job of selling you to their team an easier one, etc.
 - Pull key phrases from the job description and company website and incorporate them into your resume so you begin to understand and speak the "company language" and use these phrases to guide your storytelling
 - Make sure it's clear why you are the right person for this job through your background, skills, experiences, and why you are where you are today and why the role they're hiring for is your perfect next step
- **Save and upload a PDF version of your resume** for application submission
 - This ensures no formatting errors or others editing your materials

References:

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/20-basic-resume-writing-rules-thatll-put-you-ahead-of-the-competition>

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