

# Build a Better Resume

## Tips for Success

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If you are new to crafting a resume or need to dust off an older version, below are tips to use as your guide for getting noticed by a hiring manager.

While there are a few commonly used resume styles, your resume should reflect your education, experience, and relevant skills. Here are a few key resume writing tips that will help you organize and design your resume.

### **1. Use a professional font**

Hiring managers have a minimal amount of time to review your resume to see if you would be a valuable fit for their organization. So, readability is key. Make your resume clear and simple to read using a basic, clean font like Arial or Times New Roman. The font size should be set at 12 points; using slightly larger font size for your name in the header is the only exception. Selecting a clear, readable font will help make your resume appear more professional.

### **2. Choose appropriate margins**

Typically you should use a one-inch margin size on all sides of your resume with single spaces between the lines. If you have too much white space, you might consider making your lines spaced by 1.15 or 1.5. You can also increase your margins if you find it is difficult to fill your resume, but margins should stay below two inches.

### **3. Add your value**

Your resume has a short window, about 5-7 seconds, to make an impression. When a hiring manager is scanning your skills and experience, it is important to choose words that will communicate the value you have added in your current and previous roles.

Hiring managers want clear evidence of how you are different from other applicants. Choose action verbs and power words to show, rather than tell, why you would bring value to their team. Keep in mind, do not overuse them, and make sure it makes sense in how words are used.

### **Examples of [Action Verbs](#)**

- Achieved
- Created
- Developed
- Established
- Ideas
- Improved

- Increased/Decreased
- Influenced
- Launched
- Managed
- Negotiated
- Resolved
- Revenue/Profits
- Trained/Mentored
- Under budget
- Volunteered

### Examples of Power Words

- Advocate
- Assist
- Build
- Chair
- Collaborate
- Counsel
- Delegate
- Deliver
- Demonstrate
- Direct
- Educate
- Enable
- Enforce
- Enhance
- Evaluate
- Foster
- Found
- Generate
- Guide
- Head
- Implement
- Initiate
- Lead
- Maximize
- Mentor
- Monitor
- Motivate
- Oversee
- Orchestrate
- Perform
- Persuade
- Review
- Run

- Supervise
- Sustain
- Teach
- Transform
- Troubleshoot
- Unite
- Visualize
- Write

#### **4. Avoid cliches, jargons, and traps**

Using common business terms like “wheelhouse” or “go-to person” can seem like the best way to get your qualities across efficiently. However, words like these have become so overused that they have lost meaning and will not help you stand out from other applicants. Remember, using plain, clear language that explains how you have delivered value is much more effective.

#### **Examples of Business Jargon to Avoid**

- Bottom line
- Buy-in
- Core-competency
- Ecosystem
- Move the needle
- Rubber meets the road
- Synergy
- Thought leadership
- Value-added
- Wheelhouse

Though your resume is a space to showcase your skills and abilities, broad terms, and phrases to explain your value can be ineffective. Self-promoting and general phrases are wasted and do not specifically explain why or how you bring value to the position applying for.

#### **Examples of Self-Promotion to Avoid**

- Active Listener
- Detail-oriented
- Go-getter
- Go-to-person
- Planner
- Proactive
- Think outside the box
- Results-driven
- Self-starter
- Strategic thinker

- Team Player
- Think outside the box

## **5. Tell your story**

While you might have extensive work or educational experience, it is important to keep your resume as brief as possible without leaving out key information. Try to keep your resume to one page, two pages max. If your resume includes old or irrelevant information, such as jobs held over 10 years ago, it will distract from key information.

Include work experience, education, achievements, and skills that are most relevant to the position you are applying for. You can find the most relevant attributes a company needs by closely reading the job posting. You should prioritize important information higher on your resume to draw attention to key skills and achievements; this is called "above the fold". Make sure you have at least 3 bullet point statements for each place of employment.

When possible, include metrics (numbers) that measure your success for a particular goal or achievement within your work experience. Hiring managers are highly responsive to measurable proven value. Numbers allow them to better understand the value you may bring to the position.

If you have it and space allows, you can include volunteer experience. Including volunteer work on your resume not only demonstrates you have the required skills, it shows that you are passionate, have a positive attitude, are motivated, and that you are willing to help others, which can be attractive attributes for hiring managers.

## **6. Proofread and Edit**

Before sending your resume, you should undergo several rounds of proofreading to ensure there are no spelling or grammar errors. While there are several proofreading programs and tools you can use, it is also helpful to ask trusted friends or colleagues to review your resume. It is helpful for an objective third party to look at your resume as an employer might find ways you can correct or improve it.

Your resume is often the first step to getting an interview with an employer. Make sure your resume is simple and easy to read; summarize your accomplishments and skills and highlight relevant experience. Include the most relevant information on your resume, organize it to highlight the most important information, and carefully review for errors. Once your resume is polished and finalized, it should help you get more callbacks, interviews, and job offers.