

Solutions to Common Résumé Problems

CRITICAL ELIMINATORS:

Document Type	Use a MS Word Doc always ... never a PDF ... unless instructed to do so.
ATS Problems	Do not use lines, borders, hyperlinks, tables, headers, footers, photos, graphics, or images.
Street Address	Always show full street address ... City only, or PO Box is unacceptable by most employers.
Employment Dates	Must use month and year (Sept 2013 - Jan 2017 or 09/13 - 01/17 for all employment dates.
Functional Resume	Never use the functional resume style, it always is perceived as you are hiding something.

STYLE:

Margins	Use 1 - 1 ¼ inch margin on all sides (top, bottom, right and left)
Font	Use common fonts: Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, Tahoma
Font Size	Use a min. of 11-12 point throughout the body, bullets, etc. Exceptions: use 14-16 for your name; use 14 for Section Headers
White Space	Short statements, blank lines between statements, extras space between bulleted statements. More “white space” makes the résumé more readable.
Bolding	Limit the use of bolding . It should be used to emphasize key words (your name, job titles, handles, section headers, degrees attained). Too many bolded words dilute their impact. Do not bold employment dates, or bullets.
Italics	Use “ <i>sparingly</i> ”... Key words in the body may be italicized when <i>emphasis</i> is needed.
Bullets	No more than three or four for any job. Use bullets for <i>accomplishments</i> , not <i>duties</i> . Avoid the use of “cute” bullets like pointing fingers, stars, check marks, etc.

CONTENT:

Job Target Title	Use a job title as the first section header after name/contact info – i.e., the job you seek. Use a second line, not bolded, upper/lower case, to provide further clarification. <i>Example:</i> SENIOR SOFTWARE ENGINEER Designer and Developer of International Products
Accomplishments	Quantify whenever possible. Make a list of every major accomplishment in which you take pride. Rank all in order of significance (1-25) and applicability to the job you are seeking.
Emphasize	Use top 3 - 4 most significant accomplishments at the top of your résumé; each max 3 lines. The remaining (lessor) accomplishments will be listed under the positions held section.
Handles	Handles should be adjectives & nouns. Create your “handles.” ie “you are known as an <i>Effective Leader...Relationship Builder...Innovative Designer...Team Builder ... Turnaround Expert...Etc.</i> ” Match a handle to each accomplishment – The “one-two punch.”
Length	Total doc 2-3 pages. For each job 2-3 bullets max; bullets 2-3 lines max; Follow the “rule of three” - it makes the resume more desirable to read. Be brief to be powerful!