Rule of Three For Résumés

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The **Rule of Three**, or **Power of Three**, suggests that things that come in threes are *more **satisfying***, *more **effective***, and *more **memorable*** than other numbers of things. Hence, in listing examples of things, **three** are usually provided. This is particularly effective where effective written communication is important to the writer, like the number résumé bullets, or examples of accomplishments to secure a personal job interview.

The **Rule of Three** is a writing principle that suggests that a trio of events, characters or terms is more satisfying, or effective than other numbers. The audience of this form of text is also thereby **more likely to remember** the information conveyed because **having three entities combines both brevity and rhythm with having the smallest amount of information to create a pattern**. It makes the author or speaker appear knowledgeable while being both simple and catchy.

Slogans, film titles and other things have been structured in threes, a tradition that grew out of oral storytelling. Examples: *Three Little Pigs*, and *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. Similarly, adjectives are often grouped in threes to emphasize an idea: *"A creative, powerful and effective storyteller."*

The Latin phrase *"omne trium perfectum"* (everything that comes in threes is *perfect* or *complete*) conveys the same idea as the "rule of three."

Why did Jefferson choose three "rights" instead of twelve? … "*Life*, *Liberty* and the *Pursuit of Happiness*." Jefferson was a very skilled writer and his famous phrase reflects a rhetorical technique dating back to ancient Greece. A figure of speech using three words to express one idea is powerful. As a coach, I recommend using the 'Rule of Three' in several areas of communications: *résumés, interviewing, and networking.*

Specifically for résumés, I suggest a max of ***three bullets*** under each job listed, conveying a maximum of ***three accomplishments*** in that job, each bullet having a maximum length of ***two to three lines*** of text, … the result: **Brief, Powerful, & Memorable!**