

PAY FORWARD COACHING

RESUME BEST PRACTICES

REGARDING AI:

Did you know Forbes found that:

- 80% of hiring managers dislike seeing AI-generated CVs and cover letters.
- 74% say they can spot when AI has been used in a job application.
- More than half (57%) are significantly less likely to hire an applicant who has used AI and may even dismiss the application instantly if they recognize it is AI-generated.
- Hiring managers prefer authentic, human-written applications because AI-generated ones often sound repetitive and generic and imply the applicant is lazy.

([source](#))

If you are using AI to write your resume, please understand that AI is a data collector, so it always defaults to the most-used language and the biggest possible vocabulary. This rarely reads as human to the hiring team and makes resumes look identical.

We at Pay Forward Coaching recommend using AI for initial thoughts and then editing the language to better reflect your personal experience. Also, make sure your AI prompts are very specific. Commanding an AI program to simply “Make my resume match this job” will more likely get your resume rejected and make your job search longer.

REGARDING APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS (ATS):

If you are applying online, your resume will most likely be scanned and parsed by an ATS – a software that works like a resume database where recruiters can quickly review and filter resumes.

Not all ATS's work the same way; some are able to handle graphics, tables, and templated features, while others do a better job of capturing your data when you keep your resume simple in format. Have you ever applied online by uploading your resume only to redo your work by filling in fields on the application, because the system didn't parse your information correctly? That indicates an old system that couldn't properly read your resume.

An ATS is supposed to review and parse that information, so our job is to make it easy on the software and the hiring team to make sure your data makes it into the recruiter's system as seamlessly as possible.

When applying online, avoid anything on your resume that could potentially disrupt the ATS; no pictures, graphics, charts, or creative fonts. The key is to avoid fancy visuals and keep formatting simple.

RESUME FORMAT

Choose a one-column resume format that contains the sections in this order:

Name/Contact Info

Job title

Summary

Skills

Experience

Education

The one-column format makes it easy for the hiring team to skim your resume from top to bottom.

READ THE JOB DESCRIPTION

Read the job description from top to bottom; do not simply judge the job description by the title alone. Make sure that you match the job with skills, tools, and experience at least 60%.

(Do not use LinkedIn EasyApply or any other online instant-application **unless** you have previously uploaded a tailored resume following the practices below.)

ADD THE TITLE

The title goes right below your contact information. Make it the title of the job you're applying for. Don't make the title what you think it should be. Don't make the title what you want it to be. Don't make the title what you think you deserve to be called.

Edit and change this title for every application.

ADD A SUMMARY

The summary should be 2-3 action statements about how you help companies based on what the company needs. This information is in the job description.

ADDING SKILLS (At the top of the resume)

Add SKILLS under the summary. Your skills section should reflect the specific skills and tools that the specific job requires. Also, pay attention to the secondary Requested and Nice to Have skills that are sometimes posted.

Edit this section for each job application. Make sure that your skills and keyword entries match exactly what the company needs for that position. Add them exactly as you see them.

Do not use these terms in your skills section:

- Passion
- Good communicator
- Innovative
- Transformational
- Entrepreneurial
- Computer skills
- Detail-oriented
- Organized
- Work well with others
- Dedicated: Put in long hours

EXPERIENCE SECTION

Your experience proves why the company should hire you.

In today's job market, you can't land a job with just skills and actions. You want to also state how your skills and actions made companies better. So add as much evidence as possible of how you made companies better.

You can use these questions to help you.

- How did I add/contribute to revenue?
- How did I improve a process or procedure?
- How did my work benefit a client? How did I make their life easier?
- How did my work save the company time and/or money?
- How did I develop/expand the business?
- How did I increase the customer base?
- How did I improve/enhance a project?
- How did I solve a problem?
- How did I enhance teamwork?
- How did I improve policy? Compliance?
- How did I influence someone to make a better decision?
- How did I use data or research to improve something or solve a problem?

EDUCATION

Put your education at the bottom in this order:

Degree, Focus/Specialty, School, City, State

Certifications

Other training