

Resume Advice

Suggestions for your resume:

Sequence: Education First? Or Experience? - If you don't have a major that recruiters are actively looking for (e.g., English, sociology, philosophy), list it later. Don't give recruiters a chance to make hasty assumptions about what you're able to do for them based on generalizations and misunderstandings (like how well humanities majors are suited for jobs in teaching and nothing else).

Summarize Your Qualifications - Summarize your qualifications at the top of your résumé—modestly and creatively. For example: "Experienced researcher, voracious reader, quick learner, astute discerner of quality." Or "Literate, responsible self-starter; fluent in Chinese; broad and deep knowledge of Asian culture." No more than three or four lines, a bullet list of your highlights. How would you quickly tell someone what you have to offer?

"Excellent Communication Skills"—Really? - Don't say you're an "excellent communicator." *Demonstrate* it. "My communication skills include writing for audience, conducting research, organizing qualitative information, writing efficiently, and optimizing both written deliverables and presentation materials." People who are "excellent" communicators know what goes into being one. People who aren't don't. Also, your résumé itself demonstrates your abilities as a communicator. Make sure it reflects all you claim.

Length - Keep it short. If you're under 30 and you have less than five years of work experience, your résumé shouldn't be longer than a page.

Online Résumé Parsers - Your résumé is going to be decomposed by online job application systems, so make sure you include the exact vocabulary (keywords) in the job posting. If it says it's required to "have experience in event planning" say you have "experience in event planning." (Unless you don't. No lying!)

Font Size - Occasionally (rarely), someone will actually see your printed résumé—not an uploaded version that's lost all the artistry you thought you were including. So make sure the font you use isn't too small, not a page of densely packed words in 10 point sans serif. Remember, too, that the hiring manager or recruiter who's reading your résumé might not have the great eyesight you have.

Experience - Don't just say what you did—Responsible for this.... Duties included.... Yeah, so what? Say also what good came of the work you did. What were the results? "Implemented a new online document organizing system *that resulted in faster retrieval times.*"

More Than One Version? - Yes, you should have several versions of your résumé. All of them should list your jobs and education, each in slightly different language, helping prospective managers see your abilities in different ways, depending on the job you're applying for.

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