



JACKSON RECRUITMENT SERVICES

What to include in your resume

There is no such thing as the 'perfect' resume. Every recruiter has individual preferences that will shape their perception of perfection. My go to example demonstrating different preferences is the placement of 'education and training' specifications on a resume. Personally I feel that seeing someone's education at the top of the resume allows for an initial judgment of whether the person is qualified for the job. I have spoken to many other recruiters however, who believe that education belongs at the bottom of a resume since an individual's work experience qualified as being of more importance. While I can empathise with that, it's not the way I prefer it. I concede that it doesn't really matter. I would by no means dump your resume because of the placement of your education. The point is that if your goal is to achieve the 'perfect' resume, you should drop it now. Here are a few of my tips to putting together a thorough, simple and attractive resume:

1. Ditch the "objective statement"

Recruiters will generally receive hundreds of applications for every job posting. This means that they will generally spend about 10 seconds looking at your resume. An objective statement is more often than not a regurgitation of the information that is implied in your work experience and achievements. If you are looking to make a sharp career change that is not in line with your work experience and skills, go ahead and include a summary statement. If you feel that it is necessary, make it short and succinct.

2. Make your contact details visible

Your contact details should be displayed clearly under your name at the top of your resume. It is your job to make sure that if a recruiter decides to contact you, that their job is as easy as possible. It also goes without saying that you should make sure to list methods of communication that you check regularly. If you list a mobile number, make sure you have a professional voicemail set up.

3. Fill in any gaps in your work experience

If there are gaps in your work experience, it is best to explain them in your resume. While you may have a perfectly legitimate reason for any breaks taken from the workforce, it is best to explain them. Doing so will make your resume appear more complete, with no big questions left to take away from your work experience or education.

4. Share your achievements as well as your rather than listing your responsibilities

It is important to list both your duties and achievements in past roles. While a recruiter must be aware of your past duties in order to understand the scope of your experience, listing your achievements is important to demonstrate that you are able to do more than merely fulfil your responsibilities.

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5. Cater your resume to the job you are applying for

There is no such thing as a one size fits all approach to writing a resume. Even if the jobs you are applying for are in the same field, employers want you to write a resume catered specifically for them. Your resume should go beyond giving a general overview of your experience; wherever possible, it should demonstrate how and why you will fit into a particular role at a particular organisation.

6. Get rid of the fluff

Every year there seems to be a group of about 10 'buzzwords' that are severely overused in resumes. Buzzwords such as "proactive", "innovative" and "global citizen" are likely to deter a recruiter, not impress them. There is no checklist of keywords, so say what you want to say without worrying about what boxes you are ticking.

7. Make sure you give thought to the format

Successful candidates are not always the ones with the most content heavy resume. While it is important to put adequate detail into your resume, it is equally important to make sure that your resume is visually appealing. You can make your resume is appealing by ensuring that you have appropriate headings and that it fits comfortably onto two A4 pages.

8. Triple check your resume before submitting it

You may have very impressive work experience, but if your resume is littered with grammatical errors and spelling mistakes it will more than likely end up in the recycling pile. Simple mistakes give the impression that you are careless and not dedicated to the job you are applying for.