

## Are You Making These 10 Mistakes On Your Résumé?

Are you making these mistakes on your résumé? Chances are, you're making at least one or two — if not more! Go through this checklist and mark which mistakes you're currently making — and then follow the suggestions to learn how improve your resume and get that interview call!

- [ ] **Being Unclear About Your Job Target.** Have a goal in mind for what job you're pursuing and be ruthless about what you choose to include on your résumé. For each position you're interested in, before you submit your résumé, review it and make sure everything listed relates to the role you're pursuing.
- [ ] **Confusing Your Résumé With a Career History.** A résumé is not a "career obituary" listing everything you've ever done. You can keep a master career document that includes all of your education, experience, certifications, accomplishments, etc. — but excerpt that content to create a marketing document that is focused specifically on the job target you're pursuing. The résumé needs to tell a story of your career journey while also demonstrating to the employer how you can be a valuable asset to their team.
- [ ] **Using the Same Résumé for Every Job Application.** Don't try to use the same résumé for very different job targets. A customized document demonstrates the alignment between what the company wants in their next hire and the skills, experience, and education you have to offer. First, save a copy of the file. At a minimum, you will want to customize it with the desired job title and company name at the top of the résumé. You can also analyze the job posting and make sure you've addressed all the key requirements.
- [ ] **Forgetting the Keywords.** Most career documents are "read" by computers first, not humans. To make it out of the automated screening process, you need to make sure you are including the most important keywords. Analyze job postings to optimize your résumé for the specific keywords that will be queried in the applicant tracking system software.
- [ ] **Using a Dated Format.** Do you have an objective on your résumé? Is the phrase "References available upon request" on your document? Both of these are signs of a "dated" résumé. Functional résumé formats should also be used only with careful consideration. Even a straight chronological format can be dated if it doesn't include a section at the top that identifies the type of position being targeted and the key qualifications offered (that will be further detailed in the rest of the document). Newer formats focus on accomplishments,



not simply experience. In addition, some modern résumés only include a phone number, email address, and LinkedIn URL, not a physical address.

- [ ] **Forgetting the Accomplishments.** This is one of the biggest mistakes made when writing your own résumé. Jobseekers can feel uncomfortable highlighting their contributions, but it's important to “toot your own horn” by documenting specific accomplishments that demonstrate the value you offer to your next employer — quantified with numbers, dollars, and percentages whenever possible.
- [ ] **“Setting It and Forgetting It.”** Your résumé should be updated regularly. At a minimum, review it at least once a year to add new accomplishments, trainings, and certifications. Being ready to apply for a great opportunity right away — or send a résumé to be considered for an unadvertised opportunity — is an advantage.
- [ ] **Taking Résumé Advice from Family and Friends.** Everyone has an opinion about résumés — but the only one that matters is the hiring manager for the specific job you're pursuing. So, while you can solicit input on your career documents, remember that most of the feedback you'll get is an opinion, not a fact. Well-meaning friends and family can often give you outdated advice (“Your résumé should only be one page”) because they don't keep up with current research on the job search. When working with a résumé writer, ask questions, but remember that you've hired a professional for a reason. Trust their judgment.
- [ ] **Not Making It Easy to Get Ahold of You.** Be sure to include your best phone number to be reached on the résumé. (Usually this is a cell phone, not a home number.) Make sure your voice mail is set up (a personal message is better than a recording of the number or “this caller is unavailable”) and make sure there is space available to leave a message. (One big pet peeve of recruiters and hiring managers is calling an applicant and not being able to leave a message.) Include a good email (not your current work email or a “cutesy” email.) If necessary, set up a free Gmail account for your job search specifically. Include your social media handles on your résumé (but make sure you've scrubbed them of anything controversial). And include a link to your LinkedIn profile URL.
- [ ] **Relying on the Résumé Alone.** The résumé is just one tool in your job search arsenal. Other career documents you should have include: an updated LinkedIn profile, a cover letter template (that you can customize for the specific position you're targeting), a networking letter, a list of your references, a thank you letter template, a biography, and a 30-60-90-day template. And, have a job search plan to guide your daily and weekly actions!

Of course, one of the best ways to avoid making mistakes on your résumé is working with a professional résumé writer on your résumé, career documents, and overall job search!