

Resume checklist

Check the following points before sending out your resume. Remember, content is king!

Content:

- When you've finished your resume, have someone who knows you well read it and ask him if it fairly reflects who you are.
- Does your Employment Objective clearly identify the position, industry, size of company you're interested in, and where you want to work?
- Have you prioritized your skills and achievements, showing the most important first?
- Are your skills and achievements relevant to the position you're seeking?
- Have you avoided the use of traits and characteristics?
- Do your achievement stories demonstrate your skills?
- Have you avoided the use of any jargon, clichés, colloquialisms, unfamiliar acronyms and hyperbole?
- Have you excluded non-occupational information, such as marital status, hobbies, religious associations and personal interests that aren't relevant to consideration for employment?
- Did you include awards or certificates that exhibit exceptional performance or commendations?
- Have you included other information, such as foreign language skills, involvement on boards, or other activities or interests that might be of interest to a potential employer?
- Did you omit names and contact details of references? (When employers want that information, they'll ask for it.)
- Does your resume clearly answer the six basic questions: Who and where are you? What job do you want? What skills and experience can you bring to the table? What have you achieved? Where did you do it? What else do I need to know about you that you consider important?
- When you read your resume, can you say, "This is me, and others who know me will agree?"

Structure:

- Have you used a very simple layout for your resume? Using tables, boxes and unusual symbols doesn't always translate well to different versions of word-processing software or even different versions of the same software.
- Did you use bullets and short phrases to describe your skills and achievements and limit them to no more than three each?
- Are all sentences short and to-the-point?
- Have others who don't know you very well read your statements and clearly understood what you meant?
- Have you avoided introducing more than one thought in each sentence?
- Have you avoided ALL references to **I**, **me** or **my**?

Appearance:

- Did you limit your resume to no more than two pages?
- Did you use a serif font (like Times Roman), type size preferably 12-point, but no less than 11-point? Serif type fonts are warm; sans serif fonts (like Arial) are cold.
- Have you left one-inch margins around the paper?
- Did you single space?
- Have you used **bold** only for major captions, like section headings, names of employers and job titles?
- Have you avoided *italics*? Italics may not scan accurately, and it may not translate well when converted to different word processors or versions of the same one.
- HAVE YOU AVOIDED USING EXCESSIVE CAPITALIZATION, AS IT IS HARD FOR OTHERS TO READ?

Other considerations:

1. If you mail your resume, use a good smooth white or off-white bond paper and matching envelope. Avoid using linen or other rough-textured paper since the printed images often smear when mailed.
2. If you mail your resume, enclose a cover letter and use a standard #10 letter envelope. Fold your letter and your resume together so when they're unfolded, the resume is behind the letter.
3. When creating an electronic version of your resume, use Microsoft Word document format (used by most recruiters and employers) or rtf (rich text format). Be cautious when using the latest version of software as companies are often slow to upgrade.