

Resume Tips

Don't use a pre-made template.

Templates often aren't constructed very well, which can make them hard to alter. They're also usually gaudy, trashy, tasteless, or just plain ugly. You want a clean, professional representation of your abilities that is symmetrical, balanced, un-crowded, and entirely under your control.

Make all your design elements absolutely parallel.

This means perfect uniformity and consistency in your use of bold, italics, underlining, capitalization, typeface, margins, and spacing.

Eliminate all mistakes.

You can't have any errors in typography, spelling, grammar, punctuation, or syntax.

Use action verbs.

For every bulleted phrase, begin it with the most impressive active verb you can think of that's still accurate.

Use the simplest and most direct sentence structure you can.

Specify.

Avoid words like all, any, every, most, many, less, etc. Use actual numbers in favor of these words whenever possible (which is most of the time).

Left-justify your body text.

We read English left to right. Any other justification is harder to scan.

Avoid turning verbs into nouns whenever possible.

Words that end in "-tion" (and some other suffixes, but "-tion" is the common culprit) are just the noun versions of verbs. A phrase like "Experience in the creation of budgets" is not as clear and direct as "Created seasonal budgets for six regional sales trips, lowering travelling expenses and overhead by 65%." Bottom line: shun -tion wherever you can in your resume.

Remember that it's a process.

Give yourself time to plan, draft, and revise your resume. Giving yourself this time is giving yourself permission to make mistakes because you will make them: everyone does. Therefore, make your resume in stages.

- Plan it, draft it, and get feedback on it from your career advisor.
- Once you have a resume to work with, set it aside for a bit.
- When you're ready, pick it up again to revise it. That's when you start the ruthless pursuit of perfection. Pursue.
- Now, set it aside. Do something else.
- Come back to it. Get more feedback from your career advisor. Revise it again.

Did we mention that you can get advice and feedback at any point in this process from your career advisor? You can.