



RESUME CRITIQUE WORKSHEET

Intro

"Thanks for sending along your resume. My comments follow below. If we can be of additional assistance please let us know--keep in mind that the resume critique service is a one-time email response. For more personal assistance, visit our website at: www.spsbe.jhu.edu/careerservices for a number of online services, virtual assistance and career consulting/counseling information. Also be sure to sign up for our new e-Recruiting system if you haven't already! You can pick up a registration form at any of our centers or online at: <http://www.spsbe.jhu.edu/careerservices>"

Format

"Format: A resume must be in simple, easy to read format. The standard is to list a job title on one line, and the company, city and state underneath it. You should right justify dates worked. You should not use long paragraphs explaining what you did, but rather bullet points to list your experience. "

Readability

"Use font size, caps and bold to make resume readable. You want dates, positions and titles to stand out if a resume is scanned by the reader's eye. Don't let headers run into company names. Make sure there is differentiation."

Style

Don't go any smaller than 10pt font. 12 point is desirable. Don't make margins any smaller than .5. .75 or 1.0 is desirable. Use larger point fonts for headers etc. Don't use fancy fonts or graphics.

Justification

Don't use the tool that allows you to end-to-end justify your text (this is where paragraphs are even on either side and spacing is different in between words as in many newspapers). Right justify dates, left justify bullets and titles. You can center or left justify headers. Make it easy for the eye to see. Remember, resumes are read counter-clockwise, so the most important information (job title, company) should be on the left."

Underlining

Don't use underline or lines---resume management systems and scanners won't read them. Instead use bold, caps and different font sizes to make resume more readable and streamlined."

Length

A resume should never go over two pages and you should never have excess white space. If you can't fill two pages, stick to one. If you have 1.5 pages determine if you are too wordy or if you have room to expand."

Consistency

Make sure you are consistent with spacing, formatting etc. If you indent the job title in one section, make sure you indent all job titles. If you capitalize headers, make sure you capitalize all headers. If you have one space between sections, make sure you have only one space between all sections. If you are leading bullets with action words, make sure all bullets lead with action words."



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Bullets/Periods

Don't use periods after bullets, job titles or names of companies. Bullets are meant to be used so you don't have to write sentences, but short statements instead. Hence, no periods needed. If you have a bullet with multiple sentences, either break sentences into multiple bullets or use conjunctions to combine sentences."

Grammar

There are grammar errors on your resume. A resume must be completely free of all grammar and spelling errors before you submit it to a company or organization. Review your resume word for word to make sure grammar, spelling and spacing is correct. Make sure you use apostrophes correctly. Only use to show possession."

Tense

Don't lead with ""ing"" words and never use first or third person tense. A resume should never use ""I"" or ""we"" but instead, succinct statements. Lead each bullet with action words like ""managed"" or ""developed"" and be sure to focus on results and accomplishments. Make sure all previous jobs lead with past tense action words and all current jobs lead with present tense action words."

Capitalization

Make sure you ONLY capitalize formal titles. Functional areas such as education or marketing don't need to be capitalized unless they are part of a course title, publication title, or other formal title."

Jargon

Watch jargon -- make sure you spell out abbreviations and then put the acronym in parentheses the first time you use it--like this---Social Security Administration (SSA).

Education

Be formal--don't write sentences. List the degrees first--they are more important than where you got them (though that is important too so don't eliminate it.) Take the city and state, and list after the institution, and say ""MBA, Marketing"" and then right justify date and indicate ""Expected, July 2003."" An example: MBA, Johns Hopkins University (on one line). The next line: Major/concentration: finance and accounting, etc.) Make it easy for the reader to scan through and quickly see in seconds what degree you have and when you got it."

Profile

I would add a profile or qualifications summary to the beginning of your resume---take some of the text that leads your experience section and bump it up to the top. In this section, write a short paragraph about who you are, what you bring to the table and what you want to do. For example: ""experienced IT professional with MS in....looking for....""This is the key ""marketing"" part of your resume--you want to grab the reader's attention and make sure he/she keeps reading! Use this not to focus on one company but on your collective experiences. Don't use first person here."

Profile

Change your summary of qualifications to a profile--make sure it covers broad experience (you can reference specific experiences in the body of the resume) and make sure you tell me what you want to do--what type of position you seek.

Edit Profile

Make sure your profile tells the reader what you are looking for and provides a broad overview of your experience. Mention degrees or certifications only if crucial to what you are looking for. Don't indicate certifications unless attained already. If currently a degree candidate, make sure you say ""MBA candidate with ... skills andexperience... seeking...."" Make sure profile is tangible about they type of experience you have and clear hard and soft skills you bring to the table. Don't get personal!"

Shorten Profile

Recruiters are often turned off by long paragraphs. You're on the right track with your profile, but use one paragraph to give a broad overview and then bullet specific skills in two columns. This is your chance to grab the reader's attention and make the reader want to keep reading!"

Content

The goal of a resume is to sell you! Therefore, you need to go beyond a job description. Don't just tell the reader what you do/did. Instead tell the reader what accomplishments, results and improvements you had. If your resume is side-by-side another resume of someone with the same experience, why would the reader pick up yours??"

Professional Exp.

Professional Experience by position: I think you've done a great job of expanding content here, but you probably want to break it out by position. Since you have only worked at one company, list each position and then the bullets underneath explaining what you did and accomplishments. This way the reader sees the progression and promotion and sees the increased responsibility with each job. Depending on what types of jobs you are applying for, you may or may not want to break skills into sections. Remember, you should tailor your resume for EVERY job you apply for---so that the content matches what is asked for in the job description."

Content

You do a good job of expanding beyond a job description, but really try to take your content to the next level. Is there anywhere where the reader would think a bullet point is vague? Do you have actual examples or are you just using broad terms? You also have the option to include a few lines about what the overall job responsibilities entailed and then bullet point accomplishments. Think about who a project was done for and what the results of your project yielded for the organization. Make sure that you're not explaining projects in terms that only a seasoned professional in your field would understand. You've got to get past recruiters who have some knowledge of the field but not as in-depth. "

Recency Effect

You have a fair amount of content for your most recent position, but the content gets shorter and less descriptive as it gets older. Try to have as much detail and focus on older content as well as newer content. You never know what experience will catch the reader's eye."

Metrics

Whenever possible, use quantitative measures to explain your results and improvements. Tell the reader how many people were supervised, percentage money save, amount of cost reduction, total amount of budget managed etc. It gives the reader a true sense of scope of responsibility and span of control."

Connecting words

"Eliminate connecting words if not needed. For example, say ""BS, Economics"" instead of ""BS in Economics."" Say Member, XYZ Association"" instead of ""Member of XYZ Association.""

Word choice

Don't use flowery language or words that you can't back up with concrete examples. Avoid breathless language like ""great"" and ""fabulous."" Use hard words like ""motivated"" and ""high-growth."" It's easier to give an example of why someone is motivated than why a person is great."

Additional Sections

You may want to use a Professional Development Section to encompass all of the additional qualities you have INSTEAD of listing sections separately or not at all. Don't talk about personal qualities here (like interpersonal skills etc.)--put those in your profile. Instead, list like this: a PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT header and then list Technology skills, Languages, Training, Certification, Volunteer. Don't include hobbies or personal interests unless they pertain to the job (i.e., finance analyst who is Church Treasurer.)"

Orphans

Watch lines that have one word on them. It leaves a lot of white space and is distracting to the eye. Try to avoid this.

Technology

Make sure you don't just list ""Word"" as a technology skill but instead as ""Microsoft Word."" Same goes for all software and hardware programs. Use the right titles--power point should be PowerPoint. Don't assume reader knows an abbreviation. Break extensive skills into sections based on type of program."

Dollars/Numerals

"If using dollar amounts on your resume, they should be listed as such: \$56,000. Anything over \$999,999 should be listed as: \$1 million or \$3 billion; If using numerals on your resume, spell out one through nine and use the numeral (10, 11, 12 etc.) for 10 and above. "

Read and review

Even the smallest errors can disqualify you. Read and reread your resume dozens of times. Try reading it out loud and backward to catch awkward punctuation or misspelled words that spell checker doesn't pick up (I.e., form instead of from)"

Citizenship

Don't include this on a resume as an employer will ask on an employment application. If you're not a permanent resident then you have to ask up front if an employer would sponsor you anyway.

References

Don't include them or indicate they are available. You should always have them available and an employer will expect that you do.

Customization

It is good to start with a base resume that you could hand to someone on a moment's notice. But don't forget to customize your profile and resume content for every job to which you apply. Make sure you read the position description and then make sure you have bullet points that address each of the skills the descriptions lists. You should never mass mail the same resume to multiple positions.