

Revamp Your Résumé

Your résumé is the first thing potential employers look at and it's important to make a great first impression. Some frequently asked questions, with answers provided by a top level Human Resource Manager, follow.

Q: If you've been recently laid off, do you note that on your resume? If so, what do you write?

A: List your last position the same way you do with any other positions, including start and end dates. Remember that you have a powerful tool in your cover letter and can use it to explain the reason you are looking for a new opportunity.

Q: What is the first thing you notice on a résumé?

A: The layout — is it clean and easy to read? Think of some basic questions a recruiter would ask while looking at a résumé. "Where did the candidate go to school?" "What job does the candidate currently hold?" Lay out your résumé in a way that the recruiter can easily jump around and answer these questions. If you need a magnifying glass to read the font or if everything bleeds together, it makes it harder to focus on the experience you have. Bullet points under each job that clearly outline your responsibilities in the role make it easy to quickly gauge your background and skills.

Q: What do candidates absolutely have to have on their résumés?

A: Your contact information. I know it sounds like a no-brainer, but you would be surprised how many people do not include their phone number or email address. Remember, your résumé may get separated from your cover letter. If you want the job you want the recruiter to be able to reach out to you.

Q: What should they leave out? What are some common mistakes you see on résumés?

A: Make sure you "dust off your résumé." What does that mean? Take off information that is no longer relevant. It is very impressive that you got a perfect SAT score, but if you've had several jobs since, it is time to take them off. The main focus is the work experience you have had and the job skills you can bring from one organization to another.

Q: Name five things candidates should keep in mind when writing their résumés.

A:

- Spell-check
- Have month/year on your employment history
- Include any additional job-related skills you have such as languages you speak or computer programs you are proficient in
- Move your work experience to the top of the resume
- Don't lie

Q: What are some common résumé myths?

A: When you apply for the position, you have to live in the city/state/zip code of the job. If you are a qualified candidate and you understand where the job is located we can work with you.

Q: What older rules no longer apply to résumé writing?

A: If you have applied to the position and you have written a great cover letter telling us why you are perfect for the position, you don't need to include an objective. We know what you want.

Q: Does the layout/design of a candidate's résumé have any effect on an employer?

A: Ask yourself this question — is my résumé professional? Recruiters have to pass your résumé (in whatever format it takes) along to a hiring manager who is also one of their colleagues. If your résumé glitters, we have a problem. Remember, your résumé is a representation of who you are professionally, so make sure you are putting your best "font" forward.

Source: FoxNews.com