

8 Key Resume-Building Tips

1. BUILD YOUR RESUME TO TARGET YOUR SPECIFIC GOAL.

A resume is not a one-size-fits-all document; it can and should be molded and tweaked to speak to the specific position or academic program for which you're applying. Take care to include details in your experience and education sections that speak directly to your goal, and emphasize your accomplishments in these areas with as precise information as possible.

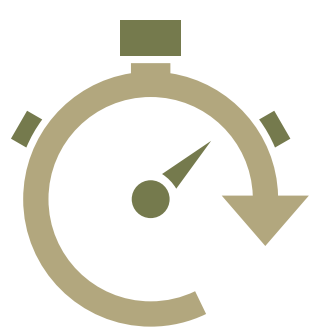


2. UPDATE YOUR RESUME REGULARLY.

The best resumes demonstrate constant self-improvement and personal growth. For that reason, your resume should present your job experiences in an engaging and logical way that takes your readers up to the present day. This is true even if your most recent role isn't directly related to the one you're applying; your potential employer or admissions committee will still want to see that you are acquiring useful skills in your present position.

3. BE READY TO ACCOUNT FOR ANY GAPS IN TIME.

Life can be unpredictable, and time off work can become a reality for anyone. Everyone needs a break sometimes, and gaps between positions can be crucial to help you recharge and focus your energy for successful work. If you've taken time off, be sure that you're able to discuss it clearly with potential interviewers, and try to frame it in a way that emphasizes your personal growth and progress along your professional journey.



4. INCLUDE RELEVANT OUTSIDE INTERESTS.

The experiences that have shaped you into the person you are today aren't limited to those that occurred in an office or classroom. List activities that you've taken part in which can demonstrate your investment in a meaningful cause or showcase your leadership skills. Have you organized a rally or event? Volunteered at a homeless shelter? Contributed to adult education classes at the local community college? Items like these can help your resume stand out from the pack by showcasing your unique sense of social contribution.

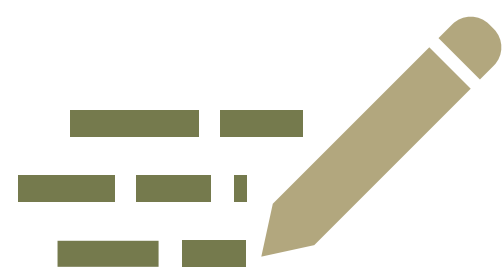
5. USE A STRIKING BUT LEGIBLE FORMAT.

The first impression that your resume makes on a reader is a visual one, and you want it to be as pleasing and memorable as possible. Choose a professional, contemporary font and clearly delineate section headers, subheads, and details with appropriate stylization (bold, italics, small caps, etc.). Optimize the white space in your document by left-aligning all items to allow for ease of reading and to ensure your content stands out where appropriate. A well-organized resume can go a long way toward demonstrating your ability to work thoughtfully and meticulously as an employee or student.



6. DO NOT EXCEED ONE PAGE.

Overachieving is not a virtue when designing your resume. Failing to limit yourself to one page of content can signal to your readers that you have trouble determining priorities or editing your own work; even worse, it can be read as a sign of arrogance. Respect your readers' time and energy by carefully curating your resume content to limit it to the key details.



7. DON'T FRET ABOUT THE OBJECTIVE STATEMENT.

The objective statement describing the role you seek is quickly becoming a thing of the past. A personal summary is more in vogue today, which can serve as a self-branding opportunity that lets you present yourself in an appealing light with some brief, punchy prose. Don't feel that even the personal summary is essential; with space at a premium in a one-page resume, it may make sense to skip the introduction and dive directly into the meat of your document.

8. PROOFREAD, REVISE, AND REQUEST FEEDBACK FROM A FRIEND OR AN ADVISOR.

Once you've spent a significant amount of time crafting the perfect resume, the last thing you want to do is submit it with typos, grammatical errors, or other oversights. Step away from your document for several hours or even a day and return to it with fresh eyes to edit it for any mistakes. Don't be afraid to read it out loud to help you assess your own writing. Then, hand it over to a trusted reader like a friend, colleague, or advisor to give it a final look over and seal of approval.

