

6 Easy Ways to Shorten Your Resume and Make It Stand Out

Do you include everything but the kitchen sink in your resume? If you do, it's time to stop. Include the best parts and get rid of the rest. The more information you put on your resume, the more difficult it will be for the reader to see the highlights of your career. Allow your successes to shine.

What you decide to leave off of your resume does not have to go to waste. Use this information to add value later and throughout the hiring process. You can mention additional information in your cover letter, an interview or a follow up email.

When it comes to your resume, less is more. Here are six easy ways to shorten your resume and make it stand out:

1. List contact information that is useful, not just for formality sake.

For privacy reasons, do not include your street number and street name. No one needs to know exactly where you live. Potential employers will most likely communicate with you by email and phone.

If you are considering opportunities within the geographic region you are currently located, list your city and state. If you live in Georgia and are looking for opportunities in California, consider leaving the city and state off your resume. You want to eliminate the potential concern of whether you are serious about moving. (If the reader of your resume wants to know where you are located, they can look for where your current position is located.)

2. Keep your objective statement objective and short.

Most objective statements are too long. Consider using what I like to call an "executive phrase" - two or three lines that capture your experience and how your experience and skills translate into what you want to do next. Connect the dots for the reader.

The executive phrase is your opportunity to tell the reader who you are. If you provide too much information here, the reader may lose sight of your value and, in turn, may not know where to place you. Tell people what you want them to know most about you.

Also, be objective. Stay away from using words like "assertively" or "critical" in your executive phrase. These descriptors take up space and, contrary to belief, undermine your experience and skills. You are putting words in the reader's mouth and trying too hard. The more objective you are, the more impressive you will look.

3. Focus on accomplishments, not job descriptions.

Many times, the experience section is filled with job descriptions, which can be exhaustive and lengthy. Focus on what you accomplished in your role, not everything that the role entails. Here's the test: If a bullet point can be put on someone else's resume, it is a job description (something that anyone in your position can do) and not an accomplishment specific to you.

4. Use bullet points.

Information in paragraph form can be difficult to digest, especially when readers review your resume in a matter of seconds. Bullet points make information easy to digest.

Think of a department store. It can be overwhelming to see so many products. You do not know where to start and sometimes skip it all together. Don't run the risk of scaring off the reader by not making your resume reader friendly. Make it easy for the reader to digest the information.

5. Show me the numbers.

Numbers help the reader of your resume to better understand your impact. It is an illustrative and efficient way to convey your accomplishments. Instead of saying, for example, that you "consistently exceeded annual sales goals through strong client management and excellent opportunity identification," you could say, "Completed 2016 at 113% of annual goal." Numbers can help your accomplishment speak for itself and are more effective than using tons of words to describe what you did.

6. Don't mention Microsoft Office.

Do not include your proficiency in technical or computer programs like Microsoft Office. For better or worse, you are assumed to know how to navigate common programs. Share technical skills and proficiencies that are less common and more specific to your role.

When it comes to your resume, less is more. Resist the urge to cram tons of information into the document. Let the reader appreciate the best parts about you. And don't worry if you leave pieces of information out. Use this information later to continue adding value and keep the conversations fresh.

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