

RESUME 101

Resumes are a tricky thing, as there are many ways to write them, and every HR person or hiring manager has their own preferences. However, in order to be called for an interview, you must have one, and it needs to accurately convey your skills and experiences, while avoiding the most common resume pitfalls.

RESUME BASICS

- What makes a resume acceptable?
 - Font is easy to read
 - Free from pictures or clip art
 - Free from spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors
 - Free from personal information such as religion, marital or parental status
 - Contains a work appropriate email that is checked often
- All work experiences list:
 - Organization name, job title held, city, state, month and year employment started and month and year employment ended
- All jobs list:
 - Top 4-6 major job responsibilities, as well as anything that wouldn't be obvious by looking at the job title.
 - For example: A lab assistant who also taught or an administrative assistant that also did conference management
- The resume should be written in your voice; a polished version, but your voice nonetheless
 - Use terminology and phrases that you normally use
- Be cautious when copying and pasting that only relevant experiences are brought into the resume and the wording is adjusted to reflect your voice
- All relevant education is listed with name of credential received, and city and state of institution
- Do not list year of diploma, GED or credential received
 - But, if courses are in progress, list expected graduation date

COMMON MISTAKES

- Including an objective or summary that doesn't add value
 - Too vague
 - Not tailored to the specific job
 - Focuses on what you want, not what you can do for the employer
- Relying too much on spellchecker
- Overuse of "I"

- Using slang or text speak
- Basic grammatical problems (to vs. too etc...)
- Missing dates or locations of employment
- Failing to list relevant job duties
 - Especially if it's listed as a qualification in the job posting
- Listing year your diploma was earned
- Including your GPA
- Listing personal details
 - This includes religion and hobbies unless they directly relate to the position
- References generally do not belong on a resume
 - Exceptions if there are no work/volunteer experiences to list
- Listing why you left a job

WHAT ABOUT VISAS?

- F-1 visas generally allow for 12 months of work in the US
 - The practical training must be authorized first
 - That can be renewed for 3-6 years with an H-1B work visa
- So...should you list your visa status on your resume?
 - Yes, if your resume makes it obvious you are an international job seeker and you already have the legal ability to work in the US.
 - No, if you will require a visa petition or if your resume does not make it obvious you are an international job seeker
 - Maybe, depending on the employer. If you are applying with a company that often hires international workers, they will be familiar with the process. However, if you are applying with a company that does not often hire international job seekers, it might be best to discuss that once a job offer is in place.
- During an interview employers:
 - May ask you: if you have a legal ability to work in the US, if you would require sponsorship now or in the future, and what languages you read and/or write.
 - May NOT ask you: what visa type you currently have, your nationality, your birthplace, your citizenship or native language
 - This doesn't mean they won't ask these things, but if they do, and then the applicant is not hired, it opens them up to allegations of unfair hiring practices
- When discussing the H-1B visa with employers remember:
 - The cost of the visa is paid by the employer, it is illegal for an employer to ask you to pay that fee
 - This visa does not require the employer prove that no US citizens are qualified
 - However there is a numerical cap on the number of visas issued each year