

Reasons Recruiters Say They'll Toss Your Resume in the Trash

Most professionals nowadays know that a clear (and proofread) resume can help them move along during the job application process. But what if you think you submitted the most perfectly edited resume with loads of experience and you still don't make the cut?

It turns out that there are plenty of smaller mistakes that make recruiters reconsider adding you to the "yes" pile. Six of them weighed in on the problems they see with resumes all the time that keep applicants from getting ahead.

1. It's way too long

Lyssa Barber, the former head of recruitment at UBS Asset & Wealth Management, says that one of the largest issues she sees with job applicants is that they'll submit a resume that "indulges the candidate, but [doesn't] entice the hiring manager."

"Even if you're the CEO, you don't need a five-page RESUME," she notes. "I've received eight to 10-page efforts, and they just go straight into the reject pile. [Doing so] suggests an inability to condense information for a time-poor audience." Barber also says to steer clear of half-page personal statements; go for a clear, three-line objective instead.

2. It's over-styled

Trevor Collins, a recruiter at KVH Industries, says that while he focuses on skills and experience, style issues can make it more challenging to read a resume quickly.

He says some of the biggest mistakes he sees are people who:

- Use multiple fonts

- Include broken hyperlinks

- Use buzzwords or overly formal speech

- Are too long-winded

Just because your resume doesn't have any typos doesn't mean that other style problems aren't turning off a hiring manager. Skip the out-there fonts, double-check your hyperlinks and keep the language simple.

3. It doesn't include keywords

Candidates need to make it easy for recruiters to find what they're looking for, especially since they're scanning hundreds of resumes every day.

"When I look at a RESUME I immediately look for words that relate to the role I am working on," says Sarah Rawcliffe, a talent manager at Get My First Job. "For example, for a childcare role I would want to

see a placement [at a] nursery, work experience in primary school or even babysitting for a family friend, anything that shows some kind of interest in the industry they have applied for.”

Don't make it hard for recruiters to connect the dots as to why you're a good fit for the role. They may give up and look elsewhere.

4. It has the wrong tone

“Some candidates are giving great thought to the editing of their resume – checking for typos, verb tenses, and verbiage – but not considering tone,” explains Laura Mazzullo, founder of East Side Staffing. “I would recommend reading the resume aloud keeping personal brand at the forefront of your consideration. ‘Does this resume reflect my values and perspective? Is this how I want to come across to potential employers?’”

Mazzullo once received a resume that said, “I am the BEST...” with all-caps included. Unsurprisingly, she says that's a huge no-no.

5. It's not ordered by level of relevance or impact

In keeping with the theme of making it easy for hiring managers and recruiters, make sure you put the most important or relevant information at the top of your resume and throughout each position.

“Your resume should highlight your most prized accomplishments in the first bullets and day-to-day towards the bottom,” says recruiter Taylor Carrington. “Structure the resume [from] greatest to least impactful for each position you held.”

6. It doesn't tell a story

If a recruiter looks at your resume and can't tell what your career “story” is and generally where you're hoping to go, that could lead to a “no.”

“No matter the level of the candidate, [from] someone just out of college or a very senior executive, it's okay if someone works in various industries and jumps around a bit and gains different experiences,” says Eva Freidan, a product leadership recruiter at Facebook. “But at the end of the day, what is the common thread throughout this person's career?”

Freidan recommend taking some time to write a paragraph or two explaining your overall career arc. If it's not clear to you, it certain won't be clear to a recruiter who's scanning your resume quickly.

When it comes to resume writing, the most important thing is to think about what'll make the hiring manager want to move your resume into the “yes” pile. They're rooting for you (their jobs depend on it), so the easier you make it for them, the more likely they are move you to the next round.

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