

Top 15 Things You Should Leave Off Your Resume

Here are the top fifteen things which should not be included on a resume.

Leave them off and keep your resume sharply focused on your skills and qualifications for the job for which you're applying.

1. Long paragraphs without bullets. Employers might gloss over sections of your resume and miss key evidence of your qualifications if paragraphs are too dense with text. Review these tips for writing a resume experience section.
2. Statements in your objective or summary which point to what you want to gain from the job. Your focus should be on what you can provide to the employer. Here's what to include in a resume summary statement.
3. General descriptions of duties without reference to how you added value. Employers don't want to see your job description, they want to learn about the skills and assets you utilized to achieve real results.
4. Phrases like Responsibilities or Duties Included. Make your resume about what you actually accomplished, not what you were supposed to do in the job. Here's how to include your accomplishments on your resume.
5. Starting phrases with I. Start your statements with skill, action or accomplishment words like analyzed, created or reduced, for example, to engage the reader instead of nouns or pronouns.
6. Irrelevant experiences, especially from the distant past. Every statement on your resume should lead the employer to the conclusion that you have the right qualifications for the job. Your goal is for the recruiter to spend their time on your most significant relevant experiences. The same holds true for skills. Be sure the skills you include are current and relevant to the job, otherwise leave them off your resume.
7. Empty or flowery language such as exquisite, outstanding or interesting. Every phrase on your resume should point to a specific skill or accomplishment. Otherwise it is just a distraction. Stick to the facts.
8. Misspellings or grammatical errors. Your resume serves as a sample of your writing skills and evidence of whether or not you are detail oriented. Check out these proofreading tips before you use your resume to apply for jobs.
9. Personal information like height, weight, birth date, age, sex, religion, political affiliation, or place of birth. Employers shouldn't make employment decisions based on these factors and may resent the fact that you are confronting them with the temptation to do so. Keep your resume focused on the facts.
10. Hobbies or interests which do not point to desirable workplace skills or bear any relevance to the job.

Candidates, especially experienced individuals, should have more compelling information to share in the limited space of their resume. Instead, consider a resume skills section with your skills that are most closely related to the job.

11. Weak assertions about academic achievements like GPAs below 3.0 or mentions of Dean's list for only a semester or two. Don't bring academic achievement to the recruiter's attention unless it is an area of strength. There's no point in trying to impress a hiring manager with something that's not impressive. Here's when to include a GPA on a resume.

12. Photographs, unless you are applying for a modeling or acting job. Employers don't want to be drawn into allegations of discrimination. Provide the URL of your LinkedIn profile if you think your appearance is an asset. Here's information on whether you should include a photo on your resume.

13. Reasons for leaving your previous employers. There is no need to justify your career moves, and this can seem like you are making excuses.

14. Names and contact information of former supervisors. Furnish a separate list of your references when requested. Give those individuals a heads up when they might be contacted by an employer, so they are prepared.

15. Space fillers like References Available Upon Request. They take up precious space and may cause you to leave off more relevant information. It goes without saying that you will furnish references if requested.

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