

YOUR RESUME

This is the most important document you will work with during your job search. Your resume is simply a summary of your education, training, and experience, all laid out in a format that can quickly show an employer that you should be interviewed. It is your advertisement, your calling card, your main reference for completing job applications, and ideally your key to the door of the employer's interview room.

You should begin preparing your resume as soon as possible after beginning a job search. Preparing a good resume is a little complicated, so it is best to rely on a job counselor for advice on how to design the best one for your particular goal and background. A counselor can also give you some good examples to follow.

Although there is an ocean of resume advice online, much of it is unreliable. But you can find some good tips at GCF Learn Free – Resumes (gcflearnfree.org/resumewriting/), or by creating an account at NCWorks.gov and using the site's resume builder.

In addition to any other resume advice you receive, please try to avoid making the common mistakes below. And remember this: When one of the employer's human resources is looking through a fresh batch of resumes, they are NOT looking for good resumes. They are looking for bad resumes that they can throw out. Your first goal is to avoid having your resume end up in the wastebasket.

Mistake #1: Errors in spelling or grammar. Employers want to hire people who are careful, and they assume that you are never more careful than when you are preparing your resume. A misspelled word or a grammatical mistake could mean sudden death for your resume. Be careful, use a dictionary or grammar guide, and maybe have someone else proofread your resume before you give it to an employer.

Mistake #2: Missing contact information. Every resume needs to have a phone number and email plainly displayed near the top of the page. It doesn't matter how much an employer may want to interview you if they can't get in touch with you.

Mistake #3: Irrelevant content or flourishes. Don't include your age, sex, or other information that is not directly relevant to the job. And don't use colors, pictures, or fancy graphic elements, or print your resume on anything other than plain white paper. Many employers use electronic scanners to sort resumes, and anything other than black text on white paper may cause the scanner to reject you.

Mistake #4: Hard to skim. Employers do not read resumes. They SKIM them, at least when making the first cut. So rather than blocks of text, your resume should concisely list the main

points of your background and accomplishments in a way that will allow an employer to get some grasp of them in just a few seconds. For the same reason, your resume should ideally be only one page long, but certainly no more than two pages, and should use language that is clear, direct, and specific.

Mistake #5: Passive language. Employers are not especially interested in what positions you have held. They want to know about your skills and accomplishments. So rather than just listing your former employers, job titles, and responsibilities, it is important to use "action verbs" that emphasize what you actually did.

When you choose action verbs, keep in mind that most jobs involve combinations of five types of skills:

- Leadership and team skills, which involve making decisions and taking initiative. Incidentally, you don't have to be a supervisor or foreman to use these skills.
- Technical skills, which mostly involve working with your hands.
- Analytic skills, which involve making judgments and organizing information.
- Communication skills, which involve working with groups of people and with media.
- Helping skills, which involve working with individuals who are dealing with problems.

Below are some suggested action verbs that can be used in your resume to highlight your responsibilities and achievements. And here's a tip: Quantifying your achievements — using numbers to describe them — is often much more impressive than simply referring to them. So instead of saying "Increased production efficiency," consider saying something like "Increased annual production efficiency by 14%."

Suggested Action Verbs for Leadership and Team Skills:					
Accomplished	Cooperated	Directed	Increased	Planned	Reorganized
Achieved	Coordinated	Executed	Led	Prioritized	Scheduled
Administered	Delegated	Handled	Managed	Produced	Spearheaded
Assigned	Demonstrated	Headed	Motivated	Proposed	Strengthened
Consolidated	Developed	Improved	Oversaw	Provided	Supervised

Suggested Action Verbs for Technical Skills:					
Assembled	Constructed	Documented	Maintained	Redesigned	Standardized
Built	Debugged	Engineered	Operated	Remodeled	Streamlined
Calculated	Designed	Fabricated	Optimized	Repaired	Systemized
Calibrated	Devised	Identified	Overhauled	Replaced	Tested
Computed	Diagnosed	Installed	Programmed	Resolved	Upgraded

Suggested Action Verbs for Analytic Skills:

Analyzed	Constructed	Discovered	Forecast	Interviewed	Reviewed
Clarified	Derived	Drafted	Formulated	Investigated	Summarized
Collected	Designed	Evaluated	Identified	Modeled	Surveyed
Concluded	Determined	Examined	Inspected	Organized	Systemized
Conducted	Diagnosed	Extracted	Interpreted	Resolved	Tested

Suggested Action Verbs for Communication Skills:

Addressed	Corresponded	Drafted	Liaised	Presented	Reported
Arbitrated	Delivered	Edited	Mediated	Promoted	Rewrote
Arranged	Developed	Formulated	Moderated	Publicized	Spoke
Collaborated	Directed	Influenced	Negotiated	Reconciled	Translated
Convinced	Documented	Interpreted	Persuaded	Recruited	Wrote

Suggested Action Verbs for Helping Skills:

Advised	Coached	Enabled	Facilitated	Instructed	Referred
Assessed	Coordinated	Encouraged	Familiarized	Motivated	Served
Assisted	Counseled	Enhanced	Guided	Participated	Supported
Cared for	Demonstrated	Expedited	Helped	Proposed	Taught
Clarified	Educated	Explained	Informed	Provided	Trained

Level 9.3