

RESUME CHECKLIST

The following items represent the most common ways to improve your resume. Review the list to see which ones you can implement to enhance your message and presentation. To ensure that you are being truly thorough in making your resume as strong as possible, check off each item once you've either fully implemented it or at least carefully considered it.

Contact Info

- Traditionally, resumes include full contact info, and this is still acceptable. But it is increasingly common to simply include name, email address, and phone, especially if you are a remote candidate and would prefer not to highlight that fact.
- Be sure your email address is simple, professional, and includes using some version of your full name so that employers can readily identify it. You may want to create an email address just for job search that will keep your important job-search emails separate from personal/family items.
- You may want to add the address of your LinkedIn profile once it's fully market-ready.

Opening Statement

- It's a good idea to start your resume with a summary statement that includes all of your top selling points. So, if you don't have one, it's strongly recommended that you add one. Consider what you enjoy most about your work – these are often your strengths and will differentiate you from the competition.
- If you already have a summary statement, might there be other key selling points to offer?

Experience

- Might include brief company descriptions if they would be either informative or impressive. These typically include the company's products/services, size (\$/employees), and market standing.
- Might add brief job-overview statements that describe the scope of your responsibilities, before listing specific accomplishments in the bullets. Especially helpful for managers where they typically include size of staff/budget and to whom you reported, if impressive.
- One of the most effective ways to strengthen a resume is to keep/shift the focus from tasks to RESULTS. How did your actions help someone or something? Asking yourself "so what?" after each bullet will help you to quickly identify results.
- If you have already included results – bravo! But a bit about how you achieved them can be worthwhile, too.
- Where you have/add results, best to put them upfront in each bullet for immediate impact.
- Use numbers where you can to quantify not only the results but the extent of your efforts.

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- Consider what may have been noteworthy about what you did, how you did it, or facing what challenges, to put items into more meaningful context.
- Give thought to what you want a particular item to convey about you and be sure you are expressing it clearly and directly.
- Use additional descriptive words (adverbs/adjectives) to more fully convey what you did and how/how well you did it.
- Start your descriptive bullets with active, past-tense verbs.
- Vary your wording so descriptions don't sound repetitive.
- How far back do you need to go to sell yourself well? Are your older jobs adding something worthwhile to your message that isn't already here? If not, they probably can be eliminated. If so, there are several options of how best to display this info: described in full detail, listed with limited detail, or summarized in a single statement that emphasizes whatever aspects of your previous experience you want to highlight.

Education

- You can delete the year you graduated if it was quite some time ago and you do not want to advertise your age.

Additional Information

- Any relevant:
 - Professional development/training
 - Professional/trade association memberships
 - Volunteer service/board participation
 - Computer/technical skills?

General Advice

- Beware of long sentences. Is all the information adding value to your message? Can some word/phrases be eliminated while still retaining the key points of the message? Or might you break the bullet into two sentences? Some details are useful to attract the reader, but some might be better shared in an interview.
- Be sure your bullets (and all undated info) are in order of importance: best, first.
- Delete months.
- Don't overuse capitalization. Typically, reserve it for proper names.
- It's optional to use a comma before an "and" in a series, but it often helps and never hurts. But whatever you decide, do it consistently.
- If you still have statement about references on your resume, delete it. It will be assumed that you have them, so you don't need to state that you do.