

 Search[Cover Letter Writing](#)[Resume Writing](#)[Tools to Find a Job](#)[Interview Tips & Tools](#)[Cover Letter Writing](#) | [Resume Writing](#) | [Resume Distribution](#) | [Tricks to Get an Interview](#) | [Thank You Letter Tips](#)

## Free Resume Writing Tips

Lets get one thing out in the open - writing a resume is intimidating for everyone, so don't worry, you're not alone. What makes resume writing difficult is identifying what to include, what not to, what to highlight, what to de-emphasize, etc. HR professionals and hiring managers receive hundreds (if not thousands) of resumes for any given position; therefore, the bottom line is that they will spend about 10-30 seconds on yours. Organizing information incorrectly could cost you a shot at an interview, unfortunately it's a very common mistake made by job seekers. We've designed this site to flow – therefore, if you just arrived in the tips section, you should start by reviewing our [cover letter tips](#).

Below I have outlined our tips for composing your resume. Before moving on, we will note that we grew up being a skeptic of paying to have my resume written. However, we've changed our beliefs - reason being - Prices for resume writing services these days are fairly reasonable (\$90 - \$200). These are professionals that do this for a living, and study how to position a person's skills for a particular industry. Therefore, for a few hundred dollars you will be given the edge to get a position that pays a few thousand more per year. Therefore, it's a cost of the job hunt process worth paying. In closing, while the free resume writing tips below will assist you in the preparation of your resume, I would recommend using a [resume writing service](#) from the beginning, or using one of the companies that provides a free resume critique after you have completed a final draft of your resume..

Enough said, onto the resume writing tips....

Before putting your pen to paper (or fingers to the keys), begin by **determining your objective** (do this prior to writing the resume). You should clearly state what sort of a job you want, and know what kinds of skills and experiences are needed to do well in that job. Even if you decide to change your job objective later, it is very important that you decide on a temporary objective for now. After your objective is determined, you can structure the content of your resume around that objective. As noted above, you have a very small window of time to get the interest of a hiring manager, therefore being general and scattered will insure that your resume is filed in the "circular file" - i.e. - the trash can. Therefore, it is essential that you take the time before you start your resume to form a clear and targeted objective.

Now that you have your

objective, you're on your way. Now let's begin the resume writing process. Keep in mind, the single and most important goal of a resume is to obtain an interview. It's a marketing tool to get you in the company and in front of your potential boss – that's it. Once in, you will need to do the sales pitch, and close the deal.

With that said, you do not want to go into detail about every accomplishment in your resume. **Strive to be clear and concise**, as the sole purpose is to have a potential employer contact you for an interview. Bottom line – you should put yourself in the shoes of the resume reader - when looking at the job qualifications needed for the position; what would you be looking for in a candidate - Obviously, that is what you should include in your resume.

In the body of your resume, **use bullet points** with short sentences rather than lengthy paragraphs. As noted above, resumes are read quickly (usually 10-30 seconds). Therefore, having key phrases standing alone and bulleted will help the reader see the important information at a glance - while at the same time absorbing the most important information. Again, don't worry about the specifics; you will go into the details during the interview.

**Use action words** - words like prepared, managed, developed, monitored, and presented will cause your resume to stand out.

In addition to standing out to a reader - you are also insuring that if your resume is scanned, the computer will pick up on the words. You read correctly, some companies now scan in your resume, and have computers pick the resumes to be looked at. The computers are looking for one thing – they're looking for keywords that have been picked by the hiring manager. These are action key words that relate to the position; therefore not including them could mean your resume is disregarded as a "non-match". I've devoted a section to resume format, and will deal with how to format your resume for computer scanners. We've compiled a list of action words to include [here](#).

You should always use **%s, \$s and #s**. Percentages, dollar totals, and numbers stand out in the body of a resume. I've included an example below of a job duty described with them (correct), and without (incorrect). As is obvious with the below examples, being specific does not mean being lengthy.

Example

*Incorrect: Sold advertising to 15 companies*

*Correct: Closed 15 strategic accounts billing in excess of \$20M annually*

**Highlight your strengths**, and what is most relevant to the potential employer. Due to the fact that most resumes are typically reviewed in 10-30 seconds, put forth the effort and determine which bullets most strongly support your job search objective. Put the strong and most relevant points first where they are more apt to be read. Doing this will hook the reader, and the rest of your resume will reel them in.

**Match the needs of the hiring company** - Review job postings online and in the newspapers for positions that interest you. Each listing will almost always have a brief blurb about the company and the position available. Read the job description closely, and use the key words listed in these ads, and match them to the bullet points in your resume.

Chances are that you have some of these as key points already, however if you have missed any, be sure to add them to your resume. It sounds obvious, but its worth mentioning that using a custom resume instead of a generic one will greatly increase your chances of an interview, as you will be a better match in the eyes of the reader – how can you not be? – you’ve tailored your resume to the position.

Above all in your resume and interview - you must **be positive**. Therefore, avoid including negative and irrelevant points. If you feel your graduation date will subject you to age discrimination, leave it off your resume. If you do some duties in your current job that don't support your job search objective, do not include them. Focus on the duties that do support your objective, and leave off irrelevant personal information like your race, weight, and height.

Have you taken an advertising class? Let me give you one tidbit from my studies that will improve the appearance of your resume. **White space** is the open area of an ad, and white space is important to your resume. Open up the newspaper, and take note of which ads first catch your eye. Are they the ads that are jammed full of text and pictures, or are they ads that have a large amount of unused space ("white space"). This is done to grab your attention, as you are always attracted to open areas. For this reason, don't worry if you are having a hard time filling the page with text; increase your line spacing to compensate – this will increase the white space – and really, that's a good thing.

How long should my resume be? What size font should I use? - The font size should be no smaller than 10 point, and the length of your resume should be 1-2 pages. Yes, you read correctly; you can use more than one page. But remember, keep it concise. It's ok to use 2 pages for your resume, however it's not necessary.

Ask a friend, and get an **outside opinion** on your resume before sending it off. You should always have a 3<sup>rd</sup> party or [resume critique service](#) review your resume. You are so close to your situation, it can be difficult for you to note all your high points and clearly convey all your accomplishments. Having someone besides you review your resume will allow you to note how others will view your marketing

materials - would your resume impress them? If not, why? Don't settle for - "it's good". You must encourage the 3<sup>rd</sup> party to give you feedback and ask questions. These questions from the reader can help you to discover items you inadvertently left off your resume. Take their comments into consideration, and revise your resume to include these items. In addition to adding in missed items, their questions can also point to items on your resume that are confusing to the reader. This valuable input will allow you to clarify your resume based on this input.

OK, you're ready to start applying for positions – When submitting your resume, you should apply for some jobs that appear to be above your qualifications, apply to positions that are a match, and apply to positions which may be beneath you. Why? Perhaps the position beneath will turn out to be more than it appeared once you interview for them. Or perhaps once you have your foot in the door you can learn of other opportunities. If nothing else, interviewing more and more will increase your interviewing skills. Like anything else, repetition will decrease your nervousness, and increase your skills at attacking the tough questions.

**Still Stuck? Try a [Resume Writing Service](#) or [Free Resume Builder](#)**

*Mission of [How To Write A Resume.org](#) - The mission of How To Write A Resume.org is to assist a job seeker with how to write a resume and cover letter, distributing a resume to hiring managers, and assistance for composing a thank you letter. How To Write A Resume.org was designed for everyone from the novice job hunter to the HR professional. Please enjoy How To Write A Resume.org, and e-mail us by clicking on "contact us" below if you have any question or comments on how to make a resume.*

[contact us](#) | [cover letter writing](#) | [how to write a resume](#) | [resume distribution](#) | [thank you letter tips](#) | [top 7 tips for getting an interview](#)

© 2010 [How to Write A Resume.org](#). All Rights Reserved.