

Treena Elliott

RÉSUMÉ TRANSFORMATIONS

COMMON RESUME MISTAKES

1. GENERIC OBJECTIVES

This common resume mistake is as prevalent today as it was when I started recruiting in 2005. Objectives should be left off your resume altogether. Instead, opt for a career summary, professional highlights, or 3 sentences that describe you and what you're seeking. Be specific. I commonly see something like this on resumes:

Looking for an opportunity with a progressive organization to utilize my skills and knowledge and dynamically work towards the growth of the organization and help me gain experience.

This kind of statement is a waste of valuable real estate at the top of a resume.

2. TOO LONG

In 99% of instances, your resume should not exceed 3 pages, and 95% of the time 2 pages is plenty. I have ONE client whose resume is over 3 pages. And it is simply because they produce events and use their resume as an informational CV that highlights all their work. I work with a lot of engineers and what I do for them is create a projects list that complements their resume. Less is more.

3. TOO MANY BUZZWORDS

Highlight your accomplishment for what they are without adding unnecessary adjectives. Think twice before using words driven, dynamic, motivated, superior, dedicated, self-motivated, multitasker, team player, and track record. They are frequently overused. I realize this is a challenge because many job postings use these words and we want to appear qualified for a job.

4. PASTED JOB DESCRIPTION

Sometimes, when I read a resume, I feel like someone just copied and pasted their job description into their resume. You don't need a laundry list of your tasks and responsibilities. Don't even look at your job description when you write your resume. Talk about where you made an impact. Talk about where you spent most of your time.

5. FORGETTING TO PROOFREAD

Ask someone to proofread your resume for you. Get the free version of Grammarly.

6. INCONSISTENT FORMAT, INCONSISTENT TENSE

I am amazed by the number of resumes I see that are inconsistent. The alignment of each list should be the same. Headers should all be the same size and font. How you lay out each position should look the same. For all previous jobs you should use a past tense (e.g., Executed, Maintained, Directed). For your current position, use the present tense (e.g., Execute, Direct, Maintain).

7. INCLUDING REFERENCES

It is assumed that when the time comes, you'll be able to provide references when requested so you don't need to add that line to your resume. And you don't need to include your references' contact information on your resume.

8. NOT EXPLAINING LOCATION

If you are applying for a role that has not been listed as remote and you live in another city, province, or country you should mention that you're aware of this. If you aren't legally able to work in the country, then you will be up against a hurdle. If you aren't clear here your resume may just get tossed as soon as the hiring manager sees you aren't local.