

10 Ways Your Résumé Irks Hiring Managers

By Mary Lorenz, CareerBuilder.com writer

Fashion designer Coco Chanel had a personal rule: Before she left the house, the style icon always removed one piece of her ensemble to avoid the faux-pas of wearing too many accessories. Were Chanel alive today and working as a hiring manager, she would likely offer similar advice to job seekers: You don't have to include everything.

Job seekers do themselves a disservice when they send out résumés with more information than they need. Most employers don't have the time or patience to sift through the irrelevant details. Here are 10 things your résumé could do without:

1. Spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

"If you are careless enough to send out this most important document with a mistake...I immediately assume you'll never care enough about the work you send out representing my company," says Jose Bandujo, president of New York-based Bandujo Advertising. He recalls one candidate who misspelled Manhattan, despite having worked in the city for a decade and another whose great educational background didn't compensate for the fact that he couldn't spell "education."

2. Opening objectives.

"These are generic...They do nothing to differentiate one candidate from another," says Donna Flagg, president of The Krysalis Group, a human resource and management consulting firm in New York.

3. Personal attributes.

Listing personal information such as height, weight and age and providing photographs is a pet peeve for Heather Mayfield, vice president of training and operations for Snelling Staffing Services. "It is amazing that we still see this on the résumés of today, but they are out there."

4. Interests and hobbies.

If these points of information don't pertain to the job in question, there's no need to include them. "Create a mystery and save these kinds of data points when you start the job," advises Roy Blitzer, author of "Hire Me, Inc.: Résumés and Cover Letters that Get Results."

5. Details of every task you've ever performed in every job you've ever had.

"It's too much information. Managers and recruiters need to know at-a-glance what makes a candidate special," Flagg says. Focus on those details that pertain to the job for which you're applying.

6. Excessive bragging.

Stating one's accomplishments can be helpful, but when it's overdone, the candidate can come across as narcissistic, a huge turnoff for employers, Flagg says.

7. Outdated information.

Leave off the activities that you did in high school if graduation was a few years ago and omit jobs you held 10 or more years ago, as the information is probably irrelevant to the position you're trying for now.

8. False information.

“Putting [that you have] a B.S. on a résumé when you do not have one is ‘BS,’” jokes Stephen Viscusi, author of “On the Job: How to Make it in the Real World of Work.” Not only is lying on a résumé unfair and dishonest, it’s also not very intelligent. “Companies verify dates of employment – often after you start. If you have lied, they fire you...Nobody wants to hire a liar. Nobody.”

9. Unexplained gaps in work history.

While job seekers should account for these gaps, they should be careful with their wording. “One of the weirdest things that I ever saw on a résumé...was a candidate who explained a 10-year lapse in work experience as being in jail during those years for killing her husband,” recalls Linda Goodspeed, marketing recruiting manager at VistaPrint. In such a situation, she says, the best thing to write would be “left work for personal reasons,” and the candidate would be able to explain the criminal record later.

10. A lack of professionalism.

Colored paper, cutesy fonts, links to personal websites and childish e-mail addresses all scream unprofessional and are a turn off to hiring managers. One otherwise qualified applicant didn't get an interview at Bandujo's firm solely because of the name in her email address: “weird2themax.” “I recognize the advertising industry is full of talented, interesting 'characters',” Bandujo says, “but did I really want one who thought she was weird to the max?” No, he decided, he did not.

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