

10 THINGS READERS HATE ABOUT YOUR SELF-WRITTEN RESUME

Looking for that next career move is just about as much fun as a root canal, but no pain-no gain. You're stressed out and more than likely, so are all the parties who will review your resume and interview you. Let's face it...in a bad economy everyone is doing more with less and that tends to fray human nerves just as much as a divorce or a death. That being said, there are some things you can do to lighten the load on your resume reviewer and make that person's task less of a chore. If you make it easy for them to visually scan and / or read your resume, it makes a better impression on them.

First and foremost you must put yourself in the place of the reviewer as you craft your document. While they may be nice to you or just plain ignore you, what they say and think behind your back can be disconcerting if you ever heard it.

Remember, they are looking at hundreds if not thousands of resumes a week and they don't do it out of compassion.

The reviewer is facing a lot of pressures. Ask yourself how you can make that person's job easier and at the same time better position yourself for serious consideration. Most importantly, consider the challenges normally presented to a reviewer in most resumes. Here's what reviewers choke on.

- 1) **Who are you? What can you do for my company?** Don't make me guess. Give me a clear target job title – or better yet – use the job title that I have the job opening for, and for which you are submitting your resume. That way I know why I got your resume. Give me a succinct summary that tells me what you can deliver and what your value is – and that I can read in less than 10 seconds. If you do that I may give your resume a deeper reading later.
- 2) **Don't tell me your life story.** All I want is the meaningful highlights. The rest can wait for the interview. Do not assume that because you spent hours on developing your resume that I will spend any more than 60 seconds reviewing it. I am not willing to wade through *War & Peace*; so KISS it - keep it short & simple – give me the eagle eye-view and not the mouse eye-view & PLEASE - no more than 2 pages. If you aren't a COO or CEO, don't go back more than 10 years in your work history.

- 3) **Don't deceive yourself on your presentation.** A 2 page resume with wall-to-wall print is no more effective than a 6 page resume, and in general anything over 2 nicely spaced pages is going to lose me even before I begin.
- 4) **Don't insult me with a lot of unnecessary bolding and visual gimmickry.** I'm looking for the cold, hard data that tells me you are a performer without resorting to garish printed fireworks. The document may look good to you but it clearly signals lack of substance to me.
- 5) **Get real about the relevancy of your achievements.** What you did 15 years ago has no bearing on what you can do now and there are plenty of individuals warming bar stools who can regale me with boring stories of glory days. What have you done lately? What can you bring to the table here and now?
- 6) **Spare me the positive personality traits.** They cannot be proven until you are on the job and a smart reference won't give me corroborating evidence of that kind anyways. If I want virtue, I'll hire a boy scout.
- 7) **Similarly forget about volunteering your references.** Only an idiot would give bad references and only an idiot would rely strictly on your references in today's market to determine your value. There are plenty of good 3rd party firms that will provide me with all the candid and factual detail in your background that you may not.
- 8) **Don't presume I know what your employers did** and don't think that providing a URL is a witty way to get around that. I won't take the time to click on the URL, and besides, it only tells me about the company and NOT what you did there. Tell me in a line or 2 what each company did so I can set your experience and achievements within the context of the company and the industry. I will not take the time to *Google* that information. I don't have it.
- 9) **Use words the average person can understand.** I am not looking to hire Faulkner or Hemingway, but I do need someone who can clearly convey ideas in a succinct delivery. If you can't do that on paper, I won't take the time to let you prove it in person. Don't bore me to death with personality character words and fluff words. I've seen them all. If you weren't "successful" at something, you wouldn't include it in your resume, would you? It's expected that every candidate is "results-oriented, talented, and honest." I'm not looking for a creative writer. I'm looking for quantifiable results and accomplishments that prove you can do the job.
- 10) **Show me that you value my time** and yours. How do you do that? Simply follow the above 9 points.