

18 Resume Presentation Tips

By James North

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1. Do print your resume and covering letter- simply not everyone's writing is a joy to read. Make sure that the recruiter will at the very least attempt to read your application.
2. Only use a laser or bubble jet printer to make copies. Never use a dot matrix printer, copier or a fax.
3. A Times Roman font works seems to work best for paper based resumes and Courier, Monaco, Arial or Verdana fonts work well for electronic resumes
4. Although changing font size for headings is okay, never change fonts themselves.
5. A general font size of 10 to 12 point for the body and 11 to 14 point for headings is generally used. The best tip here is to get the body and header font size in proportion; i.e. don't use a point 10 font for the body and a point 14 for the headers. A 10 font for the body and a point 12 for the headers is fine. Also remember, the font size you may see on screen is not the same as on the resume when printed out (and vice-versa).
6. Use bold for headings
7. Use black or dark blue ink throughout your application. Usually, companies will make copies of your resume for distribution among human resources and relevant line managers. Darker ink colours display the best in the event of your application being photocopied.
8. Ideally white paper (or ivory) with a matching envelope. Remember the darker your paper the more difficult it is to photocopy (which recruiters tend to do) and circulate within a company as we have just said. The paper and the ink must contrast.
9. Use normal margins (1" on the top and bottom, 1.25" on the sides) and don't cram your text onto the page.
10. No fingerprints, rogue pen marks or coffee stains.
11. Keep the paper clean and crisp.
12. Avoid italics and underlining, which are not good for scanning resumes onto databases.

13. Again use bullet points sparingly. Note that optical software is not efficient for scanning bullet points.

14. Keep paragraphs short.

15. Mix long and short sentences.

16. Make use of white space. Try and keep 3 carriage returns between sections. Allow for some breathing room between the different sections. :-)

17. Either post or email your resume. Only fax as a last resort. Apart from not being confidential, fax quality is usually poor and the paper quality on the receiving end may not be the best. Keep control of your application.

18. Should I align headings to the "centre", "left" or "right?" Well it's completely up to you. Most resumes align headers to the left or centre, which is generally accepted.

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"If you really want something in life, you have to work for it. Now quiet! They're about to announce the lottery numbers." - Homer J. Simpson

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