



Here are ten tips on what makes an employer read (not discard) a resume` .

1. [List your achievements in terms of benefits and value you will add to your employer.](#)

Future employers want to know what contributions you have made or are capable of making in your career to the organisations you belonged and intending to belong to.

2. [Clearly corroborate by evidence and examples your achievements.](#)

The claims you make in your resume about your accomplishments and contributions are strengthened and have more credibility if you can provide examples and evidence.

3. [Indicate how you achieve what you did.](#)

It frustrates employers or recruitment consultants to read resumes where the method, approach or strategy adopted to get the result is not clear. This is important because employers will want to know whether your approach or style would suit their culture and way of doing things and whether you adopt strategies that seem sound and logical.

4. [Ensure that your key strengths are obvious and demonstrable.](#)

A resume is like a brochure. You are the product. This means that the benefits of inviting you to an interview must be obvious from the outset. An effective approach is to summarise your competencies, skills, areas of expertise - the "offer" - up front. The rest of the document should then corroborate and expand on your offer and provide examples to substantiate what you claim to be your key strengths.

5. [Link your strengths to your achievements.](#)

If you claim to be an effective leader, then your experience and achievements should verify this. In this case it would mean, at the very least, that you have had significant experience in being responsible for managing the performance of one or more teams during your recent past. At best, it would mean that you have improved the performance, morale, motivation and turnover rates of the teams you have led.

6. Compel your reader to read on.

There is a corporate myth that your resume will only get 30 seconds attention. This is not true. Some resumes only last 15 seconds before they reach the circular filing cabinet.

Therefore, ask yourself: "What is of interest to my reader in the first half page?" Most people ask the reader to read their home address, e-mail address, phone numbers, date of birth, marital status, name of their kids and dogs and all sorts of detail before they get to the heart of the matter. Put your contact details in the header or footer of the document. Many people start off with their qualifications and education. Why? This is of little interest to the reader at this point. If they don't like what you have to offer, they won't care where you live or how to contact you or that you have more degrees than a thermometer.

The first half page or so should be like a teaser. It should stimulate interest and arouse curiosity. You can achieve this by providing a brief career overview and setting out your offer up front.

7. Explain what you do beyond your job description.

You need to ask what you can tell the reader that they might not know and that will interest them. I am not saying that your responsibilities or duties should not be concisely summarised, but an effective resume will deliver more than this. The reader will want to know what you were accountable for ensuring or achieving, what value your current and previous jobs were designed to add to the business of the organisation, the level, nature and scope of your accountabilities, your decision making authority and the impact the job has or had on the organisation.

8. Structure your resume in an organised manner.

There should be a logical flow and structure to the resume.

9. Make it visually appealing.

Remember, you are probably going to send your resume by e-mail. Therefore, it should be created in Microsoft Word (saved as one version earlier than the current version, since organisations might not upgrade their version as soon as it comes out), only use fonts that come standard with Word and produce it in black and white, since most organisations will use a black and white laser printer and your efforts in selecting nice pastels will look a bit washed out. Clip art is cute, but cute is not usually what you want to sell.

10. Use simple language.

The most persuasive writing is typically the easiest to read and understand. People are impressed by resumes that express achievements and accountabilities in clear, concise, unambiguous, direct, active terms.