

Resume Tips

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The following information is tips regarding what I look for in a resume. As a Quality Assurance manager I have gone through the hiring process several times and find it a difficult process in today's market given the number of people out there searching. However, it can be easy to eliminate resumes when seeing typos, bad or inconsistent formatting, or lengthy resumes that seem to just repeat the same tasks over and over.

I found in my own job search, talking with managers, and from my own resume reading experiences that a short but to the point cover letter and a simple resume with a summary at the beginning, with a nice flow and crisp separation of the details of your experience are the easiest resumes to read. As long as someone can see your experience and how it applies to what they are looking for quickly and easily they will want to read further and will help to get you closer to the 'Call back' pile.

Resume Tips

Spacing

Keep a resume to two pages and put it in 11-point font. If the resume gets passed around through email, faxed, or copied it will be easier to read with the larger font, especially if faxed to someone.

Don't waste the space on an address. If a company is interested in you they will contact you by phone or at least through email and not by mail.

Be aware of every word in your resume. It is amazing how you can find wordy sentences or things you can condense which would cut back on the size of the resume and give your resume a more crisp look.

Save space in your resume by putting bullets on the detailed items instead of spaces between each line.

Save space and shorten your resume by, for instance, not double spacing between sections and only listing a company name once but list each job title under the first iteration.

Compare each of your job responsibilities and consider whether you can condense some of the same type of accomplishments or drop some of the same things and focus on others that are a bit different to make sure they see your range of experiences.

If you have been working for many years you might condense your resume by not listing jobs after a certain number of years but make a statement to the effect that other job experience provided on request. Hiring staff are more than likely interested in current experience unless some experience in the distant past might be related to what you are looking for today.

Formatting

Move your technical skills right after the summary to reinforce your skills. Be specific about your qualifications but be careful about dating yourself with OS's, products, or technologies that are old and outdated.

Get feedback from several sources on your feedback. Take the best of the suggestions you get back and use them as you find appropriate.

Tailor your resume to each job posting putting a summary of your talents that fit the posting up front. People reading resumes have so many in front of them they are more likely to put yours in the 'Call back' pile if they can make that decision sooner rather than later.

Make part of your summary the comments specified in the details of the resume. For instance, as a manager, you are assumed to be responsible for staff. You might be able to summarize some of that in the beginning and leave either more room for other specifics in the detail or allow you to condense your resume a bit.

You may not need to mention the products you worked on unless they are major industry standard products that someone recognizes or is looking for in their posting. You should instead list what the product did to show that your experience fits with what the company is looking for.

In the summary of qualifications put the most important things the job posting is looking for first. Less important but experience that contributes to your overall value can be listed last.

If you have been working as a contractor be sure to note that on your resume for any of the positions listed. If you do not note it, a person looking at the resume might take short stays at a company as your inability to stay in one place for very long and will eliminate you for it.

Under the section of Education and Professional Affiliations list dates of when you accomplished your education or the length of association in an organization. Reaffirm current involvement and lasting involvement in the organizations that will show your commitment.

Submitting resumes

Some of the websites that post resumes will include a list of experiences, technologies, etc. that are included in one long paragraph at the end of your posted resume with the items you specified as having used in your career noted in bold face type. If that resume is forwarded to someone that bolding will not appear. The next person reading the resume will not know what you highlighted. It is always safer to specify in a Technical Proficiencies area at the top of the resume what those proficiencies are. Another option is to specify what technologies you may have used in each of your job descriptions in your resume however, I find having them grouped makes it easier to understand what a person has had experience in.

It doesn't hurt to post a resume through a website but also follow up with an email with your resume. It reinforces your desire to talk to someone about the job and you will be sending them a formatted resume as you wrote it as opposed to one posted on a website that can change the formatting in some cases.

Interview tips

Be able to talk to your resume. Be prepared to answer any question the interviewer might have regarding anything you listed. It will be a red light to an interviewer if you can't answer a question.

Take your time to answer questions. A thoughtful answer after a short delay is better than a bad answer.

Be able to answer any question or topic on the resume.

Decide whether you process things and interact better with people in the morning or afternoon then set interview times for your best performance.