

JOC TENS – In the Know

10 Ways to Keep Your Resume Out of the Trash and Get an Interview



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1. The “Wow” Factor. You have approximately 10 seconds to wow the company with your resume, so make them count. Your resume should be 75 percent about your accomplishments and 25 percent about your job description. Avoid using “we” — this is about you!
2. Doormat Format. Yes, the fancy “Introduction/Goals” and heavy functional resume format your professionally hired resume writer created looks pretty, but it doesn’t tell your whole story fast enough. Don’t keep your prospective employer guessing what you did, when and where. Use a traditional chronologically formatted resume. If you aren’t specific, the delete button is!
3. One Page Wonder — may keep them wondering! One page isn’t enough no matter what your college guidance counselor said! If your career is well developed, it may take two or three pages, but be sure to focus on your recent career. Everyone wants to know what you’ve done recently.
4. Truth or Dare. Make sure your resume is accurate. Don’t fib on the degree, don’t fib on dates of employment (sometimes indicating dates in years works better than months), because companies will check — maybe now, maybe later. It’s not worth a dare!
5. Don’t Date Yourself. Keep graduation dates off other than for your highest degree. Keep dates off older irrelevant jobs.
6. Mystery Novel. Now isn’t the time to try your hand at writing a novel. Make your resume easy to read — bullet points are best. No one likes the hiring process, and rummaging through resumes is the hardest part for the Human Resources Department and the hiring manager. How often have you wanted to read someone else’s resume? Short and simple, yet informative is best. Include the buzzwords, especially those appearing in the job description. The theme here is to make it easy for someone reading your resume to see how well you match their job description — i.e. the Fit Factor.
7. Work, Work, Work! So you like to belly dance on the weekends — too much information! Who cares about hobbies? Get rid of them. This goes for unrelated achievements and awards, too. Sorry, no one cares if you made head cheerleader or president of the Chess Club.
8. Dress Up Your E-mail Address. Don’t ever use your work e-mail address for job applications or correspondence. A hiring company may perceive this as using company time to do something personal. Don’t even think about what would happen if your boss or those IT spies saw your e-mail; it could be the end of your current job. And make sure your e-mail address isn’t too cutesy. That may be fine for your Facebook pals, but ipartyhardyatlunch@yahoo.com may give the wrong impression to your potential employer.
9. Job Hopping. A company will likely ask you about your career moves if you have made a few in short span of time or if you have a pattern of changing jobs as often as movie stars change wives. Be prepared to provide short, convincing explanations. No one expects a perfect resume, companies want to make a hire, so make it easy for them. Consider a brief blurb next to each job title explaining what happened — “Company filed Chapter 11” or “My dog bit my boss,” for example.
10. Consulting. If your resume shows you are currently consulting, be prepared to back it up. It’s easy to say you are a consultant if you recently left your last job and are out of work, and it sounds good, too! However, companies are now asking for names of clients and details, so make sure you have a prepared list of your consulting clients, type, length of assignment and compensation. Make sure you’re not just consulting the Yellow Pages!

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