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Louise Fletcher is the President of Blue Sky Resumes, and author of The Complete Guide to Resume Writing. Louise is also Managing Editor of the preeminent careers blog, Career Hub. She is a Certified Professional Resume Writer and many of her resumes have been published in the JIST "Expert Resumes" series. She has contributed to many online publications including About.com, Monster.com, The Ladders, and Net Temps.

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## 10 TOP RESUME TIPS

### A professional resume writer shares 10 tips for a great resume

You know the feeling. You spend hours, or even days, creating a resume. You pore over every word of your cover letter and agonize over what to say in your email. Then you hit 'send' and wait. And wait. And wait. No one calls. No one writes. You don't know if anyone even saw your resume. When this happens, it's easy to get dejected and worry that employers are not interested in you. Don't! Remember, they haven't met you. They have only seen your resume and that may be the problem.

If you're not getting the response you want, try these 10 resume tips to get your resume working for you.

### Resume Tips #1. Is your resume the right length?

You may have heard that your resume should fit on one page. This is nonsense. Recruiter or hiring managers don't care if your resume is one or two pages long. But they do care whether it is easy to read and gives key information upfront. Your resume can be one, two, or (occasionally) even three pages. If in doubt follow the (very general) rule of thumb that less than 5 years experience probably only requires one page and more than that may need two.

### Resume Tips #2. Does your resume show you can meet the needs of the employer?

Think of a resume as an advertisement for a product, only this time the product is you. Positioning is everything. The person who receives your resume will scan it quickly – perhaps for no more than 20 seconds – to determine whether you can help the company. Your job is to say quickly, clearly and loudly that you can!

Don't just launch into a chronology of your career history. Instead spell out your message at the start of the resume in a 'profile' section which highlights your key strengths in an attractive, easy-to-read format.

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### Resume Tips #3. Does your resume begin with an objective?

Recruiters and hiring managers don't like resume objectives because they focus on the needs of the job seeker rather than the needs of the potential employer. Consider this objective statement:

"Seeking a software engineer position with a progressive employer where I can contribute to the development of new technologies and work with bright, committed people."

This may be honest but it is irrelevant to the reader, who does not care what you want and only cares what you have to offer. Instead of an objective, use a positioning statement that clearly and concisely explains what you have to offer:

"Senior Software Engineer with 10 years experience developing leading-edge technologies."

Now the reader can immediately see your value. (For even greater impact, tailor this statement for each position to highlight the match between the company's needs and your skills.)

### Resume Tips #4. Have you outlined achievements as well as responsibilities?

Most employers already know what the main responsibilities of your job were. They want to know what makes you different from all the other applicants. An effective resume summarizes job responsibilities in a few sentences and then focuses on providing information about quantifiable achievements.

### Resume Tips #5. Does your resume contain specifics?

Don't make vague assertions, such as "contributed to product design" as this tells nothing about your actual contribution. Instead be specific: "Conducted market analysis for (name of product) to determine design and mechanics and led changes to original specification. Received critical acclaim and sold over 4 million units." See the difference? This level of detail shows the reader the contributions you have made in the past (and therefore the contributions you can be expected to make in the future.)

### Resume Tips #6. Are there any typos?

Proofread your resume over and over. When you are sure it's perfect, have other people proof it! If even one word is misspelled the reader will assume that you didn't know how to spell the word (this is bad) or that you didn't care (this is even worse!)

### Resume Tips #7. Is the resume easy to read?

Design is crucial. A strong resume design will pull the eye through the document, making it easy to keep reading and will highlight your key strengths clearly. But if your resume is badly laid out, disorganized or hard to read, it will be discarded before the reader knows how qualified you are.

To see examples of how to lay out your resume, go to the library or bookstore and look in the career section. You will find collections of sample resumes. Take time to understand how the page has been laid out and then apply what you've learned to your resume.

### Resume Tips #8. Have you listed irrelevant information?

Don't list your hobbies unless they directly support your qualifications for the position. Never mention marital status or the number of children you have. Leave out non-professional affiliations such as political or religious volunteer work. However proud you are of personal achievements, you should not run the risk of alienating someone before you even have your foot in the door.

### Resume Tips #9. Don't be too modest.

Don't be scared to blow your own trumpet. While you should never lie, you should definitely take credit for the things you've accomplished. Some people prefer to explain their achievements in an interview, but if your resume doesn't spark interest,

10 Resume Tips – free resume tips from professional resume writer  
you may never get that opportunity.

### Resume Tips #10. Create an internet-ready version of resume.

If you are applying online, you will need a text-only resume since most online systems don't support formatting such as bold, italics, bullet points or lines.

#### Summary

Your resume must speak articulately on your behalf. It must make your sales pitch in a clear and compelling manner within 20 seconds. Invest the time to make it exceptional and you will see an immediate increase in the response rate.

**To get more tips like these, and learn how to completely transform your resume, sign up for my [free resume writing course](#). We promise never to send sales spam.**

*Louise Fletcher is the Managing Editor and Co-founder of the preeminent careers blog, Career Hub. She is a Certified Professional Resume Writer and many of her resumes have been published in the JIST "Expert Resumes" series. She has contributed to many online publications including About.com, Monster.com, The Ladders, and Net Temps.*



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