

TIP SHEET

COMMON COMPLAINTS ABOUT RESUMES

- 1. Unclear what the person has to offer**

The bottom line for an employer is what can you do for me. If you can deliver this information without a lot of fluff, they will appreciate it.
- 2. Objectives or meaningless introductions**

Avoid the stock objective like, "I want to work for a progressive company where I can use my people skills."
- 3. Important information is buried (too hard to find quickly)**

Put relevant stuff at top or at least highlight it in some way with formatting.
- 4. Too duty oriented- skills and accomplishments not highlighted**

Saying what you were responsible for and what your activities were is not enough. What they want to know is how well you performed those duties. In other words what did you accomplish for the employer.
- 5. Sloppy and unprofessional. Spelling or punctuation errors. Poorly formatted**

Use spell check, use grammar check, have someone review it.
- 6. Not receiving it electronically**

Busy managers misplace paper, and if they have an electronic version of your resume they can reprint it instead of hiring the next person on the list. They can also forward it quickly to anyone else participating in the hiring decision.
- 7. Too long, too much information, too crowded**

The resume should not be a tell all. It's goal is to get you an interview, so give them enough to be interested, so they want to meet you and find out more. Don't write an autobiography.
- 8. Long, involved sentences**

Use bullets, simplify, cut out extra words. Eliminate most articles such as "a," and "the." Avoid passive voice, if possible. Recruiters and HR staff don't have time to read paragraphs. They are expert at grasping job descriptions and employment information. Use bulleted lists. You have 20 seconds to make your point.
- 9. Unprofessional e-mail address**

For heaven's sake get a professional email address, and save your "bikerchik@email.com" or "hardrocker@email.com" address for personal correspondence.
- 10. Written in either 1st or 3rd person. Rather than complete sentences, use bullets without the pronoun.**

Say, "Drove tractor-trailer for 18 years without accident." "Managed successful application development project using C++ programming in the Unix environment."
- 11. Vague, confusing wording**

Have someone else (like your career counselor) review your resume. You are too close to it. What seems clear to you may be unfamiliar to a hiring manager.
- 12. Personal information not relevant to the job**

When you have a good work history, you no longer need to include that you volunteer at the pet rescue shelter, unless of course it is somehow relevant to the job.
- 13. Gaps in employment**

Tell them something about the gap, so it doesn't look like you are hiding anything.
- 14. Too many exaggerations**

You have a right to be proud of what you have accomplished, and perhaps you can exaggerate a little, but be careful. It can come across as arrogance. If you say you "saved millions through process improvement," you better have worked for a very large corporation and be able to back it up.
- 15. All CAPS**

VERY ANNOYING TO READ A LOT OF CAPITALIZED TEXT. READS LIKE SHOUTING!