



YOUR RESUME IS SO LAST SEASON

Do you ever feel like the typical formula for getting a great job is falling apart?

When many of us graduated from high school, you could type up a resume, print it on marbled paper (spritzing it with perfume was optional but recommended, according to Elle Woods), write a cover letter, and start interviewing.

And I don't know about you, but those same old job search tools haven't done me a lot of good in the last couple years. I mean, I got my last job offer via Gchat.

These days, hiring managers have more pressure on them than ever, and often they don't even read your resume, let alone spend time with a printed copy. They're too busy sorting through hundreds of email applications, PDF attachments, LinkedIn profiles, and long, wordy cover letters.

But don't get too excited—that doesn't mean we can give up resumes entirely. It means we need to get smarter about writing resumes that end up in the right hands.

Resumes that stand out, float to the top of the pile, and end up on the desk of the person who will hire you.

And if you're anything like me, you're taking a long, hard look at that trusty old resume and thinking, I know I need to update this, but where do I start?



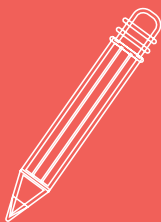
Tip:

See "[The Ultimate Guide to the Perfect Cover Letter](#)".

Or maybe you make changes to your resume all the time, but it just keeps growing and becoming more and more unwieldy. Well, in this fast-moving job market, and especially in tech, it's SUPER important to have a streamlined, polished resume in your back pocket.

IN THIS GUIDE, YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN:

- How to write a new resume in 15 minutes or less
- How to make your resume fit on one page (without losing your marbles)
- What to include in your resume (and what to delete)
- How to add the "secret sauce" to your resume, so it stands out from the crowd
- Exactly how to format and submit your resume so it gets read

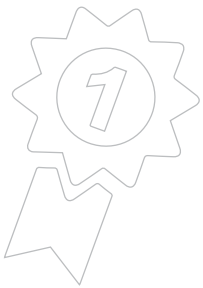


HOW TO WRITE A RESUME THAT GETS YOU HIRED

Before we dive into exactly what to include in your resume (and what to kick to the curb), let's talk about the basics—what should your resume look like?

KEEP IT SHORT

No matter what you've heard about how long your resume should be, hear me out: Your resume must fit easily on one page (and not with miniscule margins that no printer can handle). Why? Because hiring managers are busy, and I, for one, am not going to turn the page to see what made it onto the second page of a resume.



MAKE IT EASY TO SKIM

In that same vein, your one-pager shouldn't look like the Sunday paper. It should be uncluttered, and full of white space.

Pro tip: Use bullet points rather than paragraphs. It's easier for our eyes to track and skim bullet points!

SHOWCASE THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Many traditional resumes feature an "Education" section at the top, followed by a list of recent jobs. But hiring managers these days are much more concerned about where you worked last year than where you got your degree 5 (or 50!) years ago. Feature an "Experience" section at the top of your resume, and share your education below or in a side column.





WHAT NOT TO DO

EDUCATION:

University of Texas, Austin, TX

McCombs School of Business, MBA, High Technology Marketing, 2013

University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA

College of Arts and Sciences, BA, Art History, 2008

EXPERIENCE:

Internet Marketing Specialist, Zappos

Analyzed and documented audience profiles and behavior to grow marketing efforts throughout the funnel. Ran successful email retargeting campaigns that doubled revenue in one month, and grew customer engagement in 2 departments 3-fold.

Account Manager, Houghton-Mifflin

Built strong relationships with corporate clients, fostered long-term engagement and loyalty, interfaced with clients to boost sales. Grew 1 account value by 170% in 9 months, and a second by 230% in 13 months



WHAT TO DO

EXPERIENCE:

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EDUCATION:

University of Texas

McCombs School of Business, MBA, High Technology Marketing

University of California Irvine

College of Arts and Sciences, BA, Art History

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR RESUME

It should be simple, right? You make a record of all the work you've done, all your skills, and your educational background, and then you send it to employers! Right??

Wrong. The most important and hardest part of creating a resume is pruning it down to the most essential information. The best resumes actually DON'T include a record of your entire history—they highlight the most relevant information for the specific industry and role you're applying for.

Here's how to decide exactly what information to include:

ONLY INCLUDE RELEVANT CONTENT

What does an employer need to know about you for THIS job?

Instead of thinking of your resume as one document, think of it as a template that you tweak and cater to each role you apply for. That means you won't always feature the same work history or other information.

For example, if your resume is cluttered with information about your role as president of the Asian Studies Club in high school, or the job you had scooping ice cream for 3 months between graduate school and your current role, those details probably aren't relevant to the hiring manager who wants to know how well you can build an app using Ruby on a team of developers.

But your experience building freelance websites? The Ruby on Rails nonprofit you volunteer for? Those are great indicators of how well you'll do on the job.



TELL A CAREER STORY

What work experience is “relevant” varies based on how long you have been on (or off) the job market.

As a recent grad, you can feel free to include internships and school activities, but your high school job making lattes from 5 years ago is likely irrelevant to the job you want now.

However, if you’ve been in the workplace for a while, sometimes a resume can cover periods as far back as 15 years ago.

The key is to cut off your resume when the jobs stop telling a story. For example, the restaurant you opened 10 years ago before changing careers isn’t part of your “career story” today. If you want to bring up older work history, feel free to do so in the interview.

Another tip is not to include more than 4-5 past positions. Too much information can get unwieldy, and you’ll lose the hiring manager along the trail.

MIND THE GAPS

Sometimes slashing irrelevant information from your resume can reveal big, gaping intervals of empty time, a dilemma common to parents who took time out of the workplace to clock in with the kids. A few tips for handling empty gaps are:

- Use full years (2008–2010) rather than months (July 2008–January 2010), which most ignore anyway.
- List your work at home on your resume! More and more companies acknowledge your family commitments as legitimate experience (and you probably don’t want to work at a company that doesn’t).

- List “extracurriculars” during the time you were out of the economy.
- Include your volunteer roles and other projects. Work experience doesn’t have to be paid work experience!

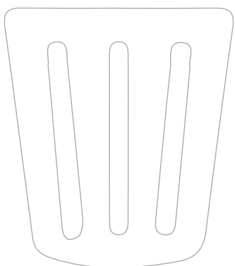
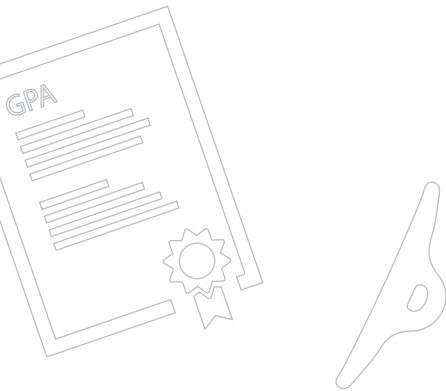
DITCH THE OLD SCHOOL STUFF

If you’re proud of your educational history, it can be hard to let go of those badges of honor like your sparkling GPA and that study abroad scholarship you won based on your Henry James essay.

And if you aren’t so proud of the GPA you got, or how long it took you to graduate, or the fact that you don’t have a computer science degree? Good news! Details like that clutter up a resume, and often have no bearing on how well you can perform a job. Unless they are specifically related to the job you want, drop the following academic detritus from your clunky resume, and breathe a sigh of relief!

- GPA
- Graduation year
- Academic honors and scholarships
- Clubs, organization, and other extracurriculars

If you’ve had recent training or gone back to school to get new skills, rather than showcasing the classes, emphasize the skills you learned.



CUT EXTRAS

When it comes down to it, a lot of what ends up on a resume is fluff. When streamlining your resume, cut back on:

- **Photos, images, and visuals**

It's easy to get carried away with modernizing your resume with fancy graphics and images. The good news? Modern resumes are actually pared down and minimalist—no visuals needed.

- **Words**

Extra words are the biggest culprit when it comes to overstocked resumes. Delete pointless phrases like "References upon request." The hiring manager knows she can ask about your references—that's a part of the hiring process that is simply understood. Besides, the language takes up valuable real-estate, and can make you come across as pretentious.

- **Outdated credentials**

10 years ago, "proficient in Microsoft Office" was an awesome addition to your resume. These days, many basic tech skills, like typing speed and word processing, are either expected or irrelevant. Listing those outdated skills gives the impression that YOU are out of touch with the current job market.

Instead, swap in new, in-demand tech skills, like HTML and CSS or WordPress. And if you have no idea how or where to get those skills, or even the best skills for your industry, check out our [Skillcrush Career Blueprints](#), where you'll learn the digital skills that will skyrocket your resume to the top and give you the tech knowhow you need to land that dream job.



CASE STUDY

Irma Ruiz is applying for a job as a junior web developer, but her resume needs some updating.

935 Sunflower Seed Street
irma.ruiz@memail.com
123-124-1234

irma-ruiz-design.com

Irma Ruiz Web Developer in Training and Accountant

SUMMARY

I'm a hard-working team-player looking to move into a new role at a tech company.

Irma is using tired language that doesn't grab the reader's attention.

EDUCATION

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

September 2004 - May 2008

College of Business, B.B.A., Accounting

GPA 3.78

Employers care more about work experience than education. Irma should move this section lower on the page.

Awards

Beta Alpha Psi, Member, Chapter Secretary

2005-2008

Academic Merit Scholarship

2005-2008

Distinguished Honors Program Graduate

2008

Dean's List

2005-2008

Education awards are only relevant if they relate to the job at hand.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Freelance Web Designer + Developer

February 2014-present

Designing and developing personal websites. WordPress, HTML & CSS, JavaScript & jQuery, Photoshop.

Account Manager

November 2010-December 2012

Fisher CPA Firm, Houston, TX

Worked with new corporate clients, welcomed new members and maintained steady communication throughout crucial financial seasons.

Irma left an unexplained gap in employment when she was taking care of her newborn son.

Junior Accountant

August 2008-September 2010

KPMG, Hartford, CT

Hard-working account manager for a wide range of clients, processed tax forms, oversaw client communication during tax season.

Summer Intern

J + B Accounting, Storrs, CT

May 2008-August 2008

Quality assurance on client files, processed W-4s, logged and stored client data.

This outdated work experience isn't relevant to hiring managers at tech agencies.

Bartender/Manager

Smokey O's, Storrs, CT

September 2005-May 2008

Managed front of house, scheduled and worked with wait staff and other bartenders, assisted with inventory and menu updates.

SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel

Typing Speed: 68

Ledger Accounting Software

HTML (advanced), CSS (advanced), JavaScript + jQuery (intermediate), WordPress/PHP (intermediate)

Irma included outdated tech skills that make her seem behind the times.

References Upon Request

Irma buried her impressive new skills at the bottom of her resume where they might never get noticed.

Irma is cluttering up the page with unnecessary words.



HOW TO WRITE A RESUME THAT SELLS

Great! You've conquered your behemoth resume and trimmed it down to the essentials. But just because your resume is easy to skim and digest doesn't mean you'll get noticed. You need to make yourself stand out.

Here are top tips for adding the "special sauce" to a resume so it floats to the top of the pile:

SHOW, DON'T TELL

Cut tired terms like "team-player" and "go-getter" and PROVE those qualities by giving examples. Demonstrate your commitment by including leadership and volunteer positions, and mention the size of the team you lead at your current position.

GIVE ME THE NUMBERS

Using hard and fast numbers to prove how effective you have been is a great way to stand out from the crowd. And changing numbers (five thousand) to numerals (5,000) makes them really pop.

For example, instead of saying you "earned revenue," say that you "increased revenue by 320% in 7 months." And instead of mentioning you "worked on open source code with a team," say that you "worked with a team of 7 developers to produce 4 plugins with 231,000 downloads to date."

WORD CHOICE MATTERS

- **Use aspirational language**

In the heading of your resume, and in your language throughout your application, for that matter, it's important to use aspirational language.



Instead of describing yourself as you are now, use words to describe what you want to be. If you can imagine yourself in a new role, it's much easier for hiring managers to do the same.

For example, instead of calling yourself a “web developer in training,” just call yourself a web developer. Or, if you're moving out of customer service and into marketing, call yourself a “marketing specialist” rather than a “customer service manager.”

- **Use action words**

We all know the go-to resume words, and we've heard them so many times they don't mean a thing.

Get rid of words and phrases like: Go-getter, Think outside of the box, Synergy, Go-to person, Results-driven, Team player, Hard worker, Strategic thinker, and Detail-oriented

And instead of using tired adjectives and nouns to describe yourself, use action words to emphasize the positive energy you bring to the table, and just how much you can set in motion.

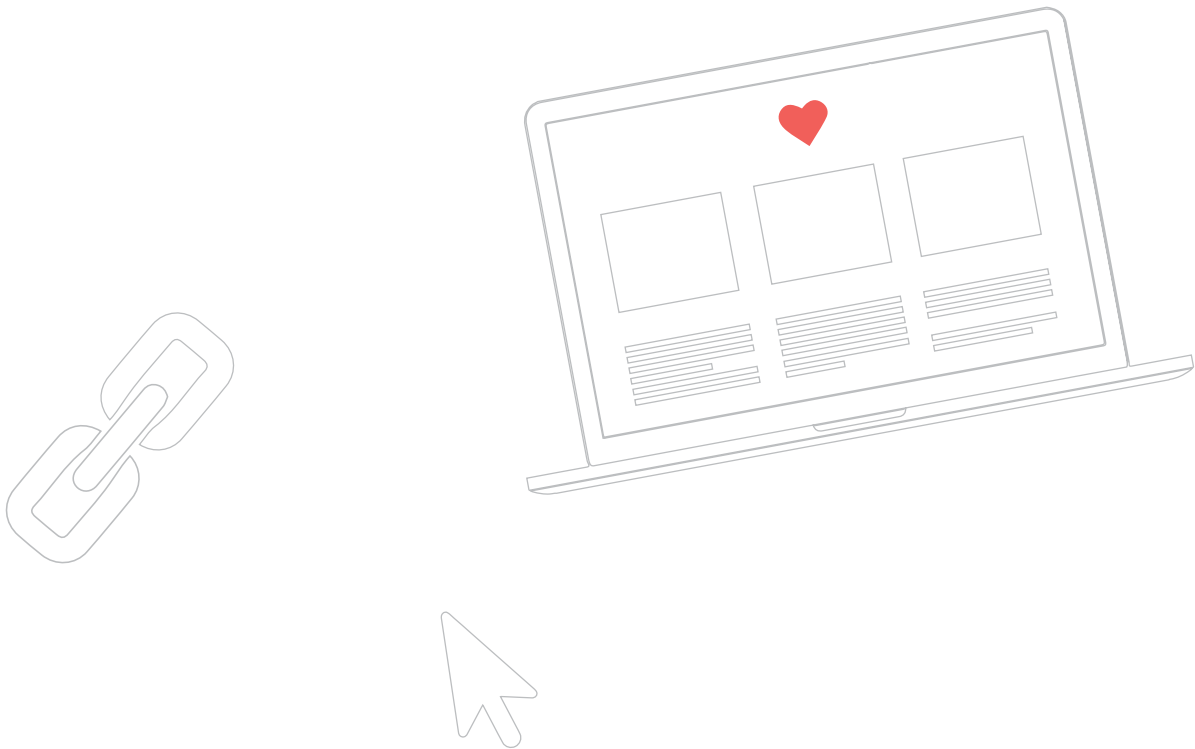
Try words and phrases like: Achieved, Improved, Trained/Mentored, Managed, Created, Influenced, Increased/Decreased, Negotiated, Launched, Under budget



MAKE IT INTERACTIVE

Rather than hoping a hiring manager makes the jump from looking at your resume to typing your name into Google, make sure to include actual hyperlinks to your personal website, any projects you want to brag about, and to social media accounts you use for work.

Since most people read resumes on a computer, they should be able to click the links from your resume to find out more about you!





HOW TO MAKE SURE YOUR RESUME GETS READ

FORMATTING

It's easy to let your resume formatting get a little out of hand (.05-inch margins and 10 pixel font, I'm looking at you.) But once you have your resume pared down to the essentials, it's much easier to make sure it's not just rock solid, but also visually pleasing.

A few pointers:

- Leave plenty of whitespace
- Emphasize headers
- Try using a right or left column

Check out the case study below for an awesome example of a visually pleasing resume.

POST IT ONLINE

If you're worried about putting all this time and energy into a resume that no one will ever see, I've got great news! YOU can make sure your resume gets eyes on it by posting it online. Include it in a link on your portfolio site, or reformat it for your site or LinkedIn. Or better yet, do all of the above!

PDFS, NOT DOCS

Make sure the resume you share online isn't editable — save it as a PDF instead of a .doc. Some people can't open .docs, and it's also more professional to share a PDF.



IRMA'S NEW RESUME

For her new and improved resume, Irma didn't just delete all the outdated aspects of her old resume - she added details that make her skills and experience stand out to busy hiring managers.

IRMA RUIZ Web Designer + Developer ← Irma uses aspirational language to describe herself using the job title she wants.

935 Sunflower Seed Street • Franklin, NY 11222
irma.ruiz@gmail.com | irma-ruiz-design.com

Irma listed her work history first, starting with her most relevant experience.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Freelance Web Designer + Developer

Irma Ruiz Design | Franklin, NY | 2014 - present

- Designing and developing personal, interactive websites.
- Comfortable installing and customize [JavaScript and jQuery plugins](#), building HTML & CSS sites from scratch, and building custom PHP themes on the WordPress platform.

Primary Caretaker

Company | Houston, TX | 2012 - 2014

- Primary caretaker for my newborn son.
- During this time I learned to build interactive websites from scratch, like [this one](#) and [this one](#).

Account Manager

Fisher CPA Firm | Houston, TX | 2008 - 2010

- Onboarded over 30 corporate clients in just 2 years, a company record. ← Irma used hard numbers to demonstrate her effectiveness.
- Maintained daily (and sometimes hourly) communication throughout crucial financial seasons

Junior Accountant

KPMG | Hartford, CT | 2008 - 2010 ← She deleted months to eliminated clutter.

- Managed accounts and build trust for a wide range of clients.
- Processed tax forms according to industry standards.
- Oversaw client communication during tax season.

1 SKILLS

- User Experience Design
- HTML & CSS
- FTP
- JavaScript & jQuery
- PHP & WordPress ← Irma gives extra detail about her most relevant work experience.

2 TRAINING

- Skillcrush Web Designer Blueprint
- Skillcrush WordPress Developer Blueprint

3 EDUCATION

- University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
- College of Business, B. B. A., Accounting

4 COMMUNITY

- GirlDevelopIt, Cofounder and Organizer of Local Chapter
- Code In Schools Volunteer, Hudson
- Award
- Houston Hearts Hackathon First Runner Up | September 2014

Irma accounted for a gap in her resume in a positive way.

She linked to examples of her work straight from her resume.

- 1 Irma makes her impressive skill set prominent.
- 2 She accounts for her relevant tech training.
- 3 Irma pares down her education history to the basics.
- 4 Irma showcases her involvement in the tech community.

HOW TO WRITE A RESUME IN 15 MINUTES OR LESS

Now, if all of this sounds like a HUGE time investment to you, I'm here to tell you that it doesn't have to be! In fact, I think you can have a totally workable resume to send out to ask your friends to review for you in just 15 minutes.

Before you dive in, make sure you have access to your current resume, data about your work history, and the case study above. Then start timing!

DELETE THE POINTLESS STUFF ⌚ 3 minutes

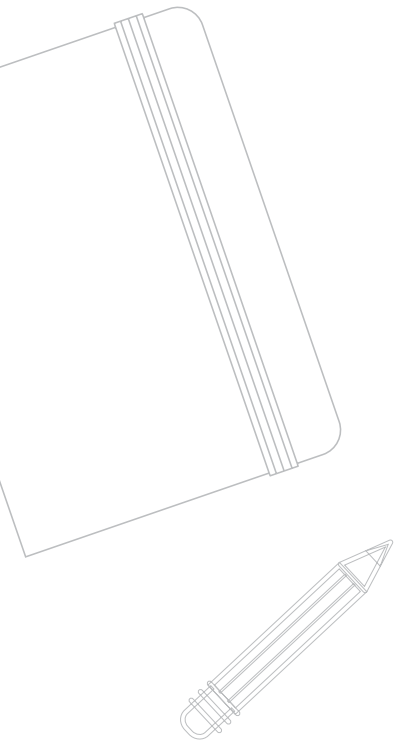
For your first step, use the tips from above to delete everything that's unnecessary, dated, inapplicable, or irrelevant. The faster you go, the more "ruthless" you can be. Slashing bits of your resume can feel self-sabotaging, so working quickly can help you to make objective decisions rather than questioning if maybe your WordPress supervisor WILL care that you're great at gluten-free baking...

ADD AND REWRITE ⌚ 5 minutes

Add any relevant work that's not already on your resume, and rewrite descriptions so they include action words.

ADD DETAILS TO SUPPORT ⌚ 5 minutes

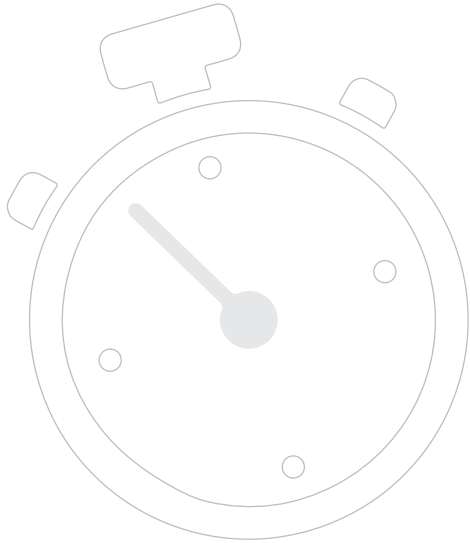
Using the tips above, add numbers, facts, and action-oriented descriptions to make your resume memorable. Update contact information and links.



REORGANIZE ⌚ 2 minutes

Reformat your resume so that your recent work and skillset are most prominent. Transform paragraphs into bullet points.

Awesome! At this point, you might not be ready to submit your resume to a hiring manager, but you can definitely email it to friends and family for an opinion and a proofread.



RESUME TEMPLATE

Download this template below and tweak it to make it work for you.

YOUR NAME

345 Your Address 2A • Town, NY 11222
your@gmail.com yoursite.com

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Job Title

Company | City, State | Dates

- Details
- Details
- Details

Job Title

Company | City, State | Dates

- Details
- Details
- Details

Job Title

Company | City, State | Dates

- Details
- Details
- Details

Job Title

Company | City, State | Dates

- Details
- Details
- Details

SKILLS

Skills

Skills

Skills

TRAINING

Relevant Tech Training

EDUCATION

University

College or School in Major

COMMUNITY

Volunteer Role

Detail | Date

Award

Detail | Date

↓ [DOWNLOAD THE FILE HERE](#)

RECYCLE THE TEMPLATE, UPDATE THE CONTENT

Remember, these days, just one resume won't cut it. Every time you start applying to different kinds of jobs across different industries, it's a good idea to pull out this guide and give your resume a onceover. You'd be surprised at how often you'll need to tweak your resume to make it the perfect sum-up a hiring manager needs to see so you can get that interview.

Feel free to keep using the same template, but make sure to update and rearrange the content based on the job you're applying for.

