

5 Things to Tweak on Every Resume You Send

by Amy Levin-Epstein | January 9, 2013

(MoneyWatch) Do you feel like you're constantly sending your resume into a black hole? With so many of today's job applications being submitted through large databases, it can sure feel like that. But an old-school rule that still applies, perhaps now more than ever, is personalizing your resume to each particular job. Gone are the days when you could print out a stack of CVs and paper the town. Every single time you press send, make sure you've made these five tweaks first – they may not guarantee you get the job, but they can certainly get you in the door for an interview.

Highlight your most relevant achievements.

Part of preparing well for a job interview is planning how you'll link your experience to the job at hand. "For a typical job you may come up with 12 bullet points – but on the resume you send you should only select 6 or 7 that are most important," says Brad Karsh, president of JB Training Solutions, a Chicago-based leadership consulting firm. Use the job description as a guide. "If the job calls for someone who can do sales, move any of your sales-related bullet points to the top of the list," says Karsh.

Take out all jobs that don't apply.

You can keep a "master" resume on file, that is long and includes every job you've had, or you can keep several versions of resumes that are relevant to different types of jobs you'll be applying for. But never send a resume with extraneous information. "Your potential employer doesn't need to see that job you held in college for three months," says Rusty Rueff, the Glassdoor.com Career & Workplace Expert. Ditto for any prestigious awards or internships that are a source of pride for you, but will mean nothing to the recruiter.

Show you can help with the company's core needs.

In addition to reading and responding to the job description with resume tweaks, you should research the company's needs and address those in your resume, if possible. "Write your accomplishments through the lens of what the potential employer is most concerned about. For example, for an employer interested in improving engagement and morale, include 'Gained 20 percent improvement in net profit through focus on team-building, employee engagement, and productivity innovations,'" says Susan Whitcomb, author of "Resume Magic."

Change your address.

If you're relocating (or considering it) you might want to take your current address off your resume to avoid dissuading recruiters from passing your resume on. "Or, change your address to a friend's address in that new area, or simply eliminate a street address and just put the city and state on the address line," says Kimberly Schneiderman, founder of City Career Services, a New York City-based career consulting firm.

Mention a personal hobby that you share.

If you know who will be reading your resume, do a little research. If you have anything in common, try to mention it in an appropriate place on your resume, says Rueff: "Having something in common like enjoying running or membership to the same extracurricular organization can help get your resume noticed.

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