

CV Help to get that job interview

Contributed by David Noel-Davies

Here is a brief sample of the common resume mistakes, as highlighted by employers, which could be costing you an interview. but as always, the Golden Rule, Taylor your CV to the Position your applying for!

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Profile

Forget the section labelled "Career Objective" - this is no longer the "in thing". Latest survey results were very surprising indeed, with 82% of employers rating a "Profile" as high, as opposed to 25% for a career objective. The survey also revealed that your profile (or something similarly named) needs to contain the right mix of information, combining the profile with a career objective.

Page Length

Over 82% of employers prefer (in fact demand) a resume of 3 to 4 pages in length (and expect up to 6 pages for senior roles). However, when it comes to IT related resumes, it is not unusual for our clients to have 5 pages!

To quote one employer "usually any less than 3-4 pages does not give a clear picture of past experience and skills".

Date of Birth

There is no legal requirement for you to supply date of birth. In fact, most websites will advise against this.

Less than 2% of employers stated that they didn't wish to see your date of birth.

To quote an employer:

"If applicants don't supply their DOB most employers assume they are "hiding" something negative" and "Sometimes it IS important to assess the age of the applicant in relation to their level of experience. Eg: have the applicants achievements occurred over a short or long period of time".

Phone Referees

If your resume states "references available upon request" or similar, your prospective employer will immediately be wary.

Only 5% stated "provide at interview". (Note: employers should not be contacting your referees without prior permission - usually obtained at interview. However, you must also be aware that this isn't a perfect world!)

Most government positions require a list of three phone referees, on application.

To quote an employer: "Not have referees listed - makes you ask why - and you don't have time to waste. If you have to make a choice between someone who has given the list and another who has not - you are making the interviewer work - when you should be showing how you can work for them."

Graphics & Borders

Unless you're in a position which requires a great deal of creative flair such as: website designer; graphic artist; photographer; etc - stay away from graphics, photos and fancy borders, no matter how desperate you are in gaining the hiring manager's attention! This was one area specifically commented on, time and time again. (This also applies to IT applicants who insert Microsoft logos.) Refer to the employer comments below regarding this issue.

Enlightening Employer Comments

"Having just received over 200 applications for a part time IT support job, addressing the selection criteria in the covering letter was of paramount importance. If I had to wade through each CV to find the details, I was immediately put off."

"In the recently advertised position, we received over 350 resumes. The resumes that were automatically excluded were the ones that had spelling mistakes, unprofessional email addresses, any that had an inappropriate photo attached, anywhere they had used Monster or Seek resume services."

Spelling is critical.

"I often shortlist people who can spell liaison / liaise correctly. Everyone seems to use this word but so many spell it incorrectly. To me it demonstrates an attention to detail. Also, if I receive a resume without a covering letter I don't even respond to it."