

How to Avoid Laundry List Resumes

The process of writing a resume can be very tedious. There are often so many jobs and responsibilities to include that many people find themselves wanting to create the simplest one possible just to avoid the grunt work.

But while creating a resume that resembles a laundry list of previous jobs and duties can be tempting, it is strongly discouraged. This is because it only offers prospective employers a vague sense of what you've accomplished and how you can benefit their company. So how can you avoid creating this type of resume? Here are a few ideas ...

Refrain from Using Duty-Oriented Phrases

One practice that commonly leads people toward creating the laundry list resume is the use of duty-oriented phrases. Some of these phrases might include "responsible for" or "duties included." In your resume it is important that you give the prospective employer an understanding of what you've accomplished in the past, but by using duty-oriented phrases you only offer what you should/could have accomplished.

To avoid this issue, you can use more descriptive action words like assisted, collaborated, designed, launched, marketed, guided, edited, researched, and composed. Using these words helps to illustrate an accurate picture of your accomplishments; something the prospective employer needs to see in order to determine how qualified you are for the job.

Go Into More Depth - Focus on Your Achievements

Another great way to sidestep the laundry list resume is by taking time to focus more specifically on your achievements at previous jobs. This means not just mentioning that you were "responsible for organizing several marketing campaigns." This type of description doesn't tell the employer anything specific about your accomplishments. So instead, try going into more depth about those campaigns.

For example, you can say that you "developed and executed three marketing campaigns that included branding pharmaceutical products, creating ads, and coordinating a 15-member staff to participate in corporate trade shows over a 12-month period." This description offers specific details about your achievement and helps the prospective employer understand exactly how you can be an asset to their company.

Remember That You're Marketing Yourself

It's always a good idea to remember that your resume has a purpose, which is to market your skills in an effort to acquire a specific job. So if you had to put yourself in the shoes of the prospective employer, what would you want them to know about you? What might appeal to their interests and make them want to learn more?

You want to let this employer know that you are not just eager to acquire the job, but that you would truly be an asset to the company. Set aside some time to think about how you are qualified for the job. Then carefully illustrate them with your words so that your passion for the position is clearly recognized.

By veering away from the laundry list resume and digging deeper to focus on specific accomplishments, you can better market your skills and abilities. So take your time, think about how you can benefit the company you want to work for, and write a resume that will help you land the job of your dreams.

- Heather Eagar

Heather Eagar is a former professional resume writer who provides job seekers with current, reliable and effective job search tools and information.