

## Resume Tips 2: Top 8 Suggestions for Resume Content

Having a great looking resume does nothing if you don't wow the reader. You need to sell yourself and let the recruiter or hiring manager know what sets YOU apart from the hundreds of other candidates applying for a position. In Part 2 of our resume series, we review the top ideas for introducing yourself and getting people excited about you as a candidate.

1. **Tell me what you want... or not:** First things first, don't use an objective statement. Recruiters hate them! The problem with objectives is that they focus on what the applicant wants instead of what they offer, and give a tepid first impression, so they're best avoided. Information that might have gone in an objective is better off placed in the cover letter.
2. **Tell me who you are (and how you'll fit the culture):** Lead off with a Profile (up to a half page) that describes you in a nutshell. Start with a 3-4 line paragraph indicating your occupation, length of experience, specialties and industry background. Mention required or desired job-related qualifications, and highlight relevant personality traits (word list [here](#)). You can also add values, work priorities, and tasks you enjoy. Follow this up with a bulleted skill summary, showcasing your job-related competencies, experiences and accomplishments, including technical, soft and I.T. knowledge and skills.
3. **Avoid "resume jargon":** Use plain English. Rather than saying you have "excellent communication and organizational skills, are a team player, and goal- and deadline-focused" (everybody seems to say this), give concrete, quantified examples of your top skills and accomplishments from your previous jobs, education or volunteer experiences.
4. **Tailor, Tailor, Tailor:** Go through the job posting and highlight keywords and competencies. Make sure these make it into your resume, either in your profile or job descriptions. Edit your resume every time you apply for a position. Where possible use the exact terms found in the job posting as this will help get you selected by electronic screening systems.
5. **Don't go overboard on your education:** Unless you're a new graduate or are changing careers, details on course, institution and year of completion are all you need. If you're worried that your university graduation year will date you, leave it out. If you've completed college or university, don't include high school information. If you're short on related work experience, lead with education and course details (especially if the knowledge gained is job related), and then give information on your jobs. If you've been working for a while, put your schooling after your work experience.
6. **Don't oversell your technology skills:** Unless applying for an I.T. position, that is. While impressive, listing all the systems and applications you've used takes up space and can be off-putting for a non-technical person (like the recruiter screening your resume). Include PERTINENT I.T. skills – specific to the job for which you are applying – in your profile or within your job descriptions.
7. **Think carefully about hobbies and other activities:** Unless leisure activities help sell you, consider leaving them out. The fact you play soccer or collect stamps doesn't necessarily make you a better hire. That said, coordinating food shelter volunteers or managing a curling bonspiel does display teamwork, leadership and organizational skills. For companies with strong community focus, listing volunteer activities may set you apart as a well-rounded candidate and good organizational fit. You decide what is and isn't worth including.
8. **Proofread:** When you think you're all done, go back and examine your resume from start to finish. Have a friend or family member read it over. Get feedback from [Career Services](#) or the [ALIS e-Resume Review Service](#). Don't rely on spellcheck (especially for capitalized headings). Look it over again. Spelling errors, clumsy phrasing, misused words, and untidy or random formatting all show carelessness and poor attention to detail, and can eliminate you from a competition.

Now that you've sold yourself as a person and student, you need to convince your reader that you have what it takes to do the job. In our third installment, we'll look at the Top 7 Job Description Suggestions.