



# 27 TIPS TO HELP YOU ROCK THAT RESUME!

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Note to Reader: some of these tips may seem obvious, but my intent with this guide is to offer something to everyone. Some people might not have done a resume in years as they've been with the same company, most of their career. Others are following old models such as keeping resumes to one page. And others may have spent so much time over-analyzing and asking all their friends their opinions—that their resumes became unwieldy.

One thing I know for sure—resumes must be easy to read, breathe, tell a story and emphasize the points *you* want to make. Your resume is *yours and yours alone*. The result should be something you love and are proud to send out. May it give you the confidence to reflect all that you are 'on paper.'



**Perfect spelling**, grammar and punctuation. Regardless of how many times you have proofed your resume, have two other people proof it. Recruiters have told me they have discarded a potentially good candidate because of misspelled words.

Be particularly careful of **tenses**. Everything should be past tense unless you are currently employed. **Don't use periods** at the end of each line. These are bullet points, not complete sentences.

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Resumes should be **2 pages** – unless you have recently graduated. The old adage of keeping it to one page no longer applies since all resumes are read online and you just scroll down. Three pages is acceptable in rare cases where you've changed jobs a lot and have done many different things or if you are in production—and listing all the shows you worked on.

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**Fonts**. Don't use Arial or Times New Roman—the 'default' fonts. My faves are **Calibri or Helvetica**. These are both very readable and will make your resume stand out from the others. And don't make the point size too small. Assume the recruiter is going through lots of resumes, so make yours easy on the eyes.



**Don't use your middle name or initial** in your name, unless this is how people know you or there are others with your exact name. Hiring Managers have told me that the middle name appears to be pretentious. Remember you are being 'judged' by this online document, so you want to make yourself appear accessible and friendly.

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**Never put your home address** at the top of your resume—for 3 reasons:

- a.) For security reasons. **NOBODY** needs to know where you live.
  - b.) People make snap decisions when they see certain locations. If it's between 2 candidates and one lives in Beverly Hills, the person hiring may think, you don't need the job as much as the other person.
  - c.) If you put Santa Clarita and the job is in Culver City, the person hiring may think you live too far away and offer the job to another candidate. Just put the city at the top. No zip code.
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Don't attach your photo. But know that recruiters want to know what you look like—so they will be checking you out on your social media. Be sure that you have a good **professional-looking picture** (not a headshot) of yourself on Facebook and LinkedIn.



Resumes must be easy to read. **Use bullet points.** Nobody has time to read full sentences anymore. So, make it easy on the recruiter. **Just the facts.**

List what you did chronologically. Don't list a bunch of key accomplishments out of order—recruiters want to see the trajectory of your career.

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Be sure your dates match. **Don't have gaps** or years in between with nothing listed. If you were between jobs, then consider listing yourself as a consultant so it shows you did *something* during that time.

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**Don't write a long summary or paragraph** at the top saying you're a team player, work well in a fast-paced environment and have a strong work ethic. When you write glowing adjectives about yourself at the top, it means nothing. Rather, use that precious space at the top to describe in **4-6 key words** what you do. Utilize search engine optimization – the computer doesn't 'read' long paragraphs, it wants to match key words on your resume with the job description from the recruiter.

For example: Content Producer—Social Media Expert—Awards Strategy—Paralegal—Screenwriter—Production Executive—Marketing and Publicity.

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Begin each bullet point with a verb. And **never use 'I'** or your own first name in your resume. Avoid flowery adjectives, stick to the facts. Your resume is a list of what you've done, the responsibilities you had and the impact you made. Rank your bullet points in order of importance.

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**Don't go back more than 10 years.** This obviously will vary upon one's experience. You want to show the job chronology and advancement. The key is to not be redundant with your work experience. At the bottom of your resume, you can include additional or related experience with the name of the company, your title and 1 or 2 bullets describing what you did. And do not repeat the exact same language in your bullet points.

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If you've been with one company but were promoted to various jobs within the same area, it is perfectly acceptable to **stack titles** and list the various job responsibilities. But, if for example, you worked in publicity, then in promotions, then in social media—list them separately—as the jobs themselves are different enough to warrant their own section.

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**Either italicize or use capital letters** for films, TV shows or publications. A lot of quotation marks are hard to read.

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**Don't put a bunch of links** or handles to Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn or your website at the top. However, if you are in the creative field, then you would want to include a link to your website or portfolio of work.

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If you are consulting until you find your next gig, **name your company**. It looks more professional. And include your clients and a description of what you are doing for them. If you are just launching your company, then describe what you will be doing in a couple sentences.

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When starting your own company, **get a separate email**.

firstname@firstnamelastname.com

If you are still holding on to your Hotmail or God forbid, an Earthlink address—keep that for your personal email.



Include a section called **Affiliations**. Feel free to mention you're a member of the Television Academy, AMPAS (list the branch), Film Independent, your Guild or other organizations.

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Toward the bottom of the resume, have a **Special Skills** section. This would include, for example, if you speak another language, are exceptionally proficient with a particular kind of software program, social media platform or database.

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Include an **Awards & Achievements section**. List the organization, the actual name of the award or honor and the year you received it. Nothing more than 8 years ago. This is where you would also include speaking engagements, a book you wrote – anything that was over and above the job you were doing at the time.



Under **Education** – don't be afraid to list the year you graduated unless you are uncomfortable with it. Some recruiters say when they don't see a year then they know the person is too young or too old. Keep in mind that although there is ageism, many people are at 'prime hiring age' but may not know it. List what you majored in and if you didn't graduate, list the college or university, just not the year.

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Always put **References Available Upon Request** at the very end of the resume. It signifies the end of the resume. If someone prints your resume, it simply insures they don't miss any pages.

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**Do not list actual references** on the resume itself. Have them on a separate page and provide when asked. Always provide 6 names which gives you a couple extras as a cushion. Include name/title/company/how you know the person/preferred number – work OR cell, not both/email. Include various jobs (both current and past) and don't include personal references (like a relative).





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**Do not list hobbies**, special interests or a long list of charities that you support. If you are currently or were previously on the Board of any non-profits, do include that. And list the years as well. No more than 3. And nothing more than 5 years ago.

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**Don't try too hard** to impress the reader. Some resume books will have you intersperse year on year revenue numbers, percentages and other measurements. If this makes sense do it, but if not, then don't force it. Instead, show how (for example) you significantly increased awareness, extended the brand or tripled online engagement.

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When you send out your resume, **send as a PDF attachment** (not in Word or Pages). This way if you are going from a Mac to a PC (or vice versa), the spacing stays intact—especially since you are using bullet points. And when you send the PDF, **minimize it to 75%** so when the reader opens it, it is not huge on the screen.

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It's not necessary to put your name and page two as a header on the second page. The reader is **scrolling down**, so this is not necessary. This is a carry-over from when you would bring or send a printed copy of your resume.

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If it's time to re-invent or change course or if the field you were in has dried up, then it is important that you **emphasize what you want to do**. The resume is simply a tool to tell a story, *your story*. Think about other things you've done tangentially and emphasize and move those bullet points to the top. Lead with your strongest skill set while the attention of the reader is at the highest.



# SAMPLE RESUME

**NAME**  
**CELL, CITY, EMAIL**

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**Keyword 1 • Keyword 2 • Keyword 3 • Keyword 4**

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Job 1 (most current)—City & State                      Years  
Approx. 6-7 bullet points

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Job 2—City & State    Years  
Approx. 5-6 bullet points

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Job 3—City & State    Years  
Approx. 3-4 bullet points

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Job 4—City & State    Years  
Approx. 3-4 bullet points

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## AFFILIATIONS

## AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## SPECIAL SKILLS

## EDUCATION

**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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**MADLYN HAMMOND**