



RESUME CHECKLIST

*40+ Essential Questions So You
Stand Out for the Right Reasons*

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A comprehensive and well-crafted resume plays a crucial role in increasing your chances of securing an interview. It serves as your professional introduction to potential employers, providing them with an overview of your skills, experiences, and qualifications. Think of it as your friendly handshake and warm hello, but on paper.

Here are a few reasons why investing time and effort into creating a strong resume can make all the difference:



FIRST IMPRESSION

Your resume is often your first point of contact with a potential employer. It offers them a glimpse into your professional background and capabilities. A well-crafted resume helps you make a positive first impression, capturing attention of hiring managers.



HIGHLIGHTING RELEVANCE

Tailoring your resume to the specific job you're applying for allows you to emphasize the most relevant skills, experiences, and achievements that align with the job requirements. By showcasing your suitability for the role, you increase your chances of being shortlisted for an interview.



DEMONSTRATING PROFESSIONALISM

A comprehensive resume showcases your professionalism and attention to detail, demonstrating that you've taken the time to present your qualifications in a clear, organized, and polished format.



SHOWCASING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

It's an opportunity to highlight key accomplishments & the impact you've made in previous roles. By quantifying achievements and showcasing tangible results, you provide evidence of your ability to contribute value, helping to generate interest & curiosity.



OVERCOMING SCREENING FILTERS

Applicant tracking systems (ATS) manage & filter resumes. By using keywords & tailoring your resume to align with the job description, you increase the chances of your resume passing through these filters & reaching the hands of hiring managers.



SUPPORTING INTERVIEW DISCUSSIONS

A well-structured resume acts as a comprehensive reference during interviews, serving as a guide for discussing your experiences, skills, and qualifications in more depth, with coherence and clarity.

By investing time and effort into creating a strong resume, you position yourself as a strong candidate and increase the likelihood of progressing in the hiring process.

01

Is Your Contact Information Professional?

Things to Check:

- ☐ Have you ensured that your basic contact information (e.g. your name, email address, and phone number) is included at the top of your resume? It's not necessary to include your complete address (just the city is sufficient). If you believe that disclosing your current location could have a negative impact on your chances (for example, if you plan to relocate for the role but have not yet done so), it is acceptable to omit it. Note that a resume is not a legal document, so you can use a preferred or shortened name if you feel you may be discriminated against due to your legal name (as long as you provide your legal name when it comes time for a background check).
- ☐ Is your email address professional? For example, does it follow a format like name@gmail.com rather than something less formal like fizzybear95@gmail.com?
- ☐ Do the details on your resume align with the information on your LinkedIn profile? Hiring managers often review both to compare and verify information.
- ☐ Have you included relevant links to your social media profiles, portfolios, and personal website, if applicable?
- ☐ Have you conducted a thorough review of your social media profiles to ensure that there is no unprofessional content visible to the public?

02

Is Your Resume Written for the Industry?

Things to Check:

- ☐ Does your writing tone align with the company's culture and values to which you're applying? (For example, using a more informal tone when applying to a new tech startup compared to a traditional accounting firm, while still maintaining professionalism).
- ☐ Have you tailored your resume to specifically align with and address the requirements of the job you're applying for? Tie your work directly to the role qualifications (and don't forget to include data). Be specific about projects you've worked on or managed. Focus on relevant work experience and skills, rather than listing every job you've held.
- ☐ Is there a clear objective at the top of your resume that is company-oriented rather than self-focused? (While not mandatory, including a "Key Skills" section that summarizes your qualifications and what you can offer the company is recommended).
- ☐ Have you included both your accomplishments and responsibilities for each job? (Make it easy for the reader to quickly identify your achievements and daily tasks).
- ☐ Have you incorporated numbers and metrics where possible to demonstrate your success? Use the X-Y-Z formula suggested by Google recruiters: "Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y], by doing [Z]." Examples:

✗ *"Member of Leadership for Tomorrow Society."*

✓ *"Selected as one of 275 participants nationwide for this 12-month leadership program for high-achieving diverse talent based on leadership potential and performance history."*

✗ *"Won second place in hackathon."*

✓ *"Won second place out of 50 teams in hackathon at NJ Tech by working with two colleagues to develop an app that synchronizes mobile calendars."*

✗ *"Grew revenue for small and medium business clients."*

✓ *"Grew revenue for 15 small and medium business clients by 10% QoQ by mapping new software features as solutions to their business goals." [See more.](#)*

- ☐ Does your resume demonstrate career progression, showcasing promotions, increased responsibilities, or lateral job moves for skills development?
- ☐ Have you provided a brief description of each company, in addition to their names?
- ☐ Have you mentioned the duration of your employment at each company?
- ☐ Have you included relevant information about your education?
- ☐ Have you included any details that showcase your personality or interests outside of work?
- ☐ Does your unique value proposition come across clearly? (Highlighting what sets you apart from other candidates or emphasizing your unique qualifications for the position.)
- ☐ If applicable to the role, have you included links to your portfolio or samples of your work?
- ☐ Have you included reference names and their contact information?

BONUS: How to Refer to Your Soft Skills

A common misstep is to simply mention key skills without providing specifics about their meaning or the behaviors they reflect. Articulating your skills in a comprehensive way is important for several reasons:

1. **Clarity:** Offering an exhaustive description of your skills ensures a clear understanding of their scope. This enables potential employers to grasp the breadth of your abilities and how you apply them in real-world contexts.
2. **Emphasizing Impact:** Beyond merely stating the skill, you underscore how you use and apply it, substantiating your proficiency and adding to your credibility.
3. **Cross-Industry Applicability:** This allow you to display your transferable skills, serving to illustrate how your competencies could offer value to a potential employer, irrespective of their industry.

Examples of common soft skills	
SKILL	REPHRASED
Adaptable	<i>"Highly adaptable and excel at quickly adjusting to new challenges and shifting priorities, consistently delivering high-quality results with precision."</i>
Collaboration	<i>"Highly skilled collaborator, proficient at working effectively within a team framework, contributing valuable insights, and cooperating with others to meet shared objectives."</i>
Communication	<i>"Exceptional at both written and verbal communication, with the ability to convey information in a clear, concise, and comprehensible way."</i>
Detail-Oriented	<i>"Highly detail-oriented and focused with a meticulous ability to maintain precision and accuracy in all tasks."</i>
Customer Service	<i>"Exceptional customer service skills, ensuring customer needs are met and exceeded, leading to high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty [include NPS or feedback rating if applicable]."</i>
Initiative	<i>"I take initiative, identify opportunities for improvement and proactively implement strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness."</i>
Leadership	<i>"I demonstrate strong leadership skills and the ability to inspire and motivate team members to reach their highest potential and achieve shared objectives." [include reference to team performance if applicable]</i>

03

Is Your Resume Properly Formatted?

Things to Check:

- ☐ Have you used a resume template to ensure that your resume has an aesthetically pleasing layout and is easy to read?
- ☐ Is your resume design professional? While creativity can be appropriate for a creative position, ensure that your design remains simple enough to read easily. Consider saving elaborate designs for your portfolio instead.
- ☐ Have you chosen a clear and legible font with black text? Is your name prominently displayed at the top of the resume? It's a good practice to make your name slightly larger than the rest of the text to leave a memorable impression on employers who review numerous resumes.
- ☐ Have you followed common formatting conventions, such as using bullet points and header text, to enhance readability?
- ☐ Is the formatting consistent throughout your resume for all positions? For instance, if you have bolded job titles, ensure that all job titles are consistently bolded.
- ☐ Are the margins uniform and even on all sides of the document?
- ☐ Are all elements properly aligned? For example, if you have right-aligned dates, verify that they align consistently with each other.
- ☐ Have you made sure that any links you've included are clickable and functional?
- ☐ Have you converted your resume to a format, such as PDF, that allows all recipients to view it as intended without requiring them to download specific fonts or use special software? Using PDF format is recommended for compatibility purposes. That said, a .doc or .docx file is most easily parsed by an ATS (applicant tracking system, a software that manages the hiring process and scans the document for keywords).

04

Is your Resume thoroughly Edited and Polished?

Things to Check:

- ☐ Have you incorporated relevant keywords in your resume? If you're submitting it through an automated system (ATS), including these keywords can be crucial for passing initial filters. Ensure that your resume directly reflects the software and skills mentioned in the job description.
- ☐ Have you edited your resume for brevity? Try to keep it to approximately one page per 10 years of job experience, if possible.
- ☐ Have you removed any irrelevant job experiences (especially very early in your career, e.g. waitressing) that are not applicable to the position you're applying for?
- ☐ Is each section of your resume prioritized in a way that highlights your skills and what you can offer the employer? For example, if you're a recent graduate with internships in different fields, you might consider listing the most relevant experience at the top, rather than ordering everything solely by date.
- ☐ Have you replaced generic action verbs with more specific and impactful ones? For instance, opt for "managed" instead of simply "worked."
- ☐ Have you used a thesaurus to avoid repetitive language and add variety to your resume?
- ☐ Have you replaced unprofessional-sounding terms with more professional alternatives? For instance, consider using "coordinated" instead of "tasked with" to convey a proactive approach.
- ☐ Are your special skills truly unique and noteworthy? While mentioning proficiency in commonly expected skills like Microsoft Word or email may be redundant, focus on highlighting genuinely special abilities or qualifications.

- ☐ Have you eliminated any annoying jargon or business babble? Your resume should be written in clear and concise language that makes it easy for the hiring manager to understand your experiences and qualifications.
- ☐ Is everything on your resume completely true? If you claim fluency in a foreign language, be prepared to demonstrate it during an interview. Similarly, ensure that any hobbies or interests you mention are genuinely accurate and can be discussed further if asked.
- ☐ Have you performed thorough spelling and grammar checks?
- ☐ Lastly, have you asked a friend, family member or trusted mentor who hasn't reviewed your resume before to give it a final glance for errors, inconsistencies, or confusing phrasing?

If you've checked off all these points that apply to your resume, ***you should be well-prepared to submit your application!***

A meticulously crafted resume is your professional passport, helping you to rise above the competition in a bustling job market. It's your first chance to make a lasting, positive impression, effectively showcase your skills and experiences.

Consider this checklist as your compass, guiding you towards a polished, memorable resume. By investing time and effort into creating a compelling resume, you present yourself as a compelling candidate, enhancing your odds of moving forward in the recruitment process.

So, step forward confidently, armed with your finely-tuned resume, ready to navigate the job market. Your dream job isn't far off!

Cheering you on every step of the way!

Shadé



ABOUT SHADÉ:

Shadé Zahrai is an award-winning leadership strategist and peak performance educator to Fortune 500s. Through her courses, keynotes and popular professional development content, Shadé's action-focussed and research-based approach supports people to build a life and career they love.