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Resume Reflection

Writing a resume is to create a document that effectively displays your qualifications, and I believe that my current resume satisfies that criteria. I had originally thought that content was the only thing that mattered on a resume, provided that the design has some kind of comprehensible structure. However, my current document definitely has a greater appeal than my first draft despite the first draft having more content on it. Therefore, the design principles that I applied has made a significant difference for my resume.

The organization of the content on my first draft was decent, and the vertical columns aligned, but there was one inconsistency. I did not want to place the content for my summary header on a new line so I used a semicolon for that header. I had not done this for my following headers. This inconsistency bothered me and I removed the summary section from my next draft. The reviewer of my first draft said that I should “show, not tell”, and I realized that was exactly what my summary was doing. I couldn’t think of how to show, so I opted for an objective instead.

My first draft seemed like a general-purpose resume and not one that targeted jobs in my field; it included irrelevant job experiences. I asked a friend for some advice and he told me that no one in the field cares about irrelevant job experience. He said to list more projects that I worked on, and that class projects were okay to add to my resume. He also linked me to a Facebook group called HH Websites and Resumes, where many other people in my field post their resumes for critique. I replaced my job experience section and high school education with two new sections that had the programming languages and tools/frameworks I’ve used.

My second draft looked satisfactory on my computer, but when I printed it, it looked horrendous. The font was too big and looked choppy, the spacing was too wide and I felt I overemphasized the two new sections I added. The font of my first draft was Times New Roman, which is a good font in my opinion, but research on fonts showed that it was too common and showed a lack of effort. I had changed it to Helvetica in my second draft, which looked horrible in print. I wondered how something that looked good on the computer looked so badly on paper, then I remembered the in-class discussion that reading on different platforms give off a different feeling. I wanted to design a document that looked nice to read on paper.

My last revision was purely design-oriented. I went to the Facebook group my friend linked me and studied several resumes. I looked for designs I liked and stood out. One example is the identifying information. I really liked how a few designs aligned their information to the right of the document. I tried placing it to the left for more vertical column alignment but it didn't look as great so I kept it to the right. I experimented with several fonts and settled with Garamond. I eliminated large spacing between the content of my headers and increased the spacing between the headers and the content. Finally, I moved my programming languages and tools/frameworks to a small section at the bottom called skills. They were important sections but simply lists that did not need to be overemphasized, they only needed to be easy to locate.

My final draft lacked a lot of content when compared to my first draft, but it was clear and concise. Content can be added in the future when I gain more experience, but I have a design I am comfortable with. There is still more to work on, and a resume should always be updated whenever possible. For example, I plan to remove the objective which I believe is unnecessary but I am keeping it on for now since I don't have a need for more space at the moment. I can confidently say I am satisfied with my current design and that it is a significant improvement from what I had to start with.