I've had lots of great jobs and I have no college degree and am not particularly skilled in my field. I'm great at thinking on my feet and talking to people, but that's not an asset until I get an interview. These are the tactics I've used to get dozens of interviews over the last 5 years in competitive fields, mostly for jobs with a listed degree requirement.  
\*Note that these guidelines are for crafting a custom resume for a specific position. If you are trying to send the same resume to several companies or upload it into a database all of this doesn't necessarily apply.

Goal: To convince a manager that you are a worthwhile interview candidate in less than 10 seconds with a Resume and Cover Letter. Of course obvious advice such as not having spelling or formatting mistakes is important, but these strategies can help you stand out of a pile of well-written resumes.  
1) Cover Letter (First-person)  
1a) First Sentence - The first sentence should be a snappy overview of what you do, your experience, and the assertion that you are excited about the position.  
E.g. "I am a front end web developer with more than 8 years of experience and I'd love to bring my skills and enthusiasm to your growing engineering team."  
1b) Address the cover letter to the hiring manager. This info should be easy to find online or with a phone call.  
1c) Body of cover letter - Go beyond the company's website and find out what the company's long term goals and challenges are. Address how you would use your skills to help the goals be met and the challenges overcome.  
1d) Tone - Match the tone to the organization. A goofy yet smart cover letter might get your foot in the door at a startup, but a formal letter would be more appropriate for a bank. Looking at how their web copy is written is a good indicator of this.  
2) Resume (3rd-person)  
2a) Objective - You must mention both a benefit to you and to the company as concisely as possible. Don't just say you want a position at X doing X.  
E.g. Objective: To obtain a position in data entry where skills in spreadsheet development and troubleshooting can improve efficiency and enhance value.  
2b) Key accomplishments and attributes - Not more than 3, maybe 4 bullet points. These are your selling points, make sure they are punchy and desirable.  
2c) The rest - Make sure it fits on one page and all relates to the position you are gunning for. Don't include "will furnish references upon request" or any other unnecessary clutter. Include multiple forms of contact information. Be specific. Don't use fluff words or phrases, especially in your objective and key accomplishments. Show, don't tell, .e.g. instead of saying "developed outstanding customer service skills" say "served a high volume of customers while offering impeccable service."