

## Title:

13 Resume Mistakes That Can Cost You The Interview

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## Summary:

1. A BLAND OR GENERIC OBJECTIVE: If your objective could be applied to a marketing resume as easily as a resume for an accounting position, then your objective says nothing and will get you nowhere. An objective is NOT some required paragraph at the top of the page that is an exercise in 5 lines of job speak. It's an actual and real description of your skills as they're related to who you are and what you want. It should vary with the type of job for which you are applying.

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## Keywords:

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## Article Body:

1. A BLAND OR GENERIC OBJECTIVE: If your objective could be applied to a marketing resume as easily as a resume for an accounting position, then your objective says nothing and will get you nowhere. An objective is NOT some required paragraph at the top of the page that is an exercise in 5 lines of job speak. It's an actual and real description of your skills as they're related to who you are and what you want. It should vary with the type of job for which you are applying.

2. BLAND JOB DETAILS: "Responsibilities included overseeing construction of 4 Hilton Hotels in Tri-City Metro Area, each 50 floors in height." Yeah? So what? That doesn't say if they went up on schedule or if you brought the projects in under budget. It doesn't say if you took all four from site work up or if the guy handling two of the four hotels was fired and you were promoted to overseeing all four. Differentiate yourself from the others coming in to interview. If you don't tell the hiring company how you will be an asset to them, how will they know?

3. WHO'S THE MYSTERY COMPANY?: Don't assume the name and purpose of your company is common knowledge. If it's a competitor, it might be, and if it's in the same industry and located nearby, it might be. To be on the safe side, provide a sentence or two about the focus of your company's products or services.

4. ANOTHER JOB, ANOTHER PARAGRAPH: Don't keep adding on to your resume job after job, year after year. By the time you're in your 40s, you need to have weeded out some of the earlier stuff. You don't need all the college activities, just your degree. You don't need ALL 5 bullets for each of your first two jobs.

5. REFERENCES: Shouldn't be listed on your resume. "References available on request" is the proper phrase. You present them separately when they're requested. This isn't about protocol. This is about protecting your references so they aren't called until you and the company are serious about each other.

6. IT'S NOT A STORY!: Don't - whatever you do, DON'T - write your resume in the third person!

7. SKIP THE PERSONAL INFO: You might think your weekend baseball coaching or your church choir participation shows you're an interesting and well-rounded person, but they're irrelevant. If the interviewer wants to know who you are as a person, aside from the job interview and your qualifications, he'll ask.

8. DEGREE DATE: No matter how old you are, don't leave the date of when you were graduated off your resume. It looks like you're hiding something (well, you are, aren't you?), and then everyone counts the years backwards and tries to figure out how old you are. Sometimes you can be ruled out - just for leaving the date off. If you're trying to hide your age by not stating the date, what else might you not be forthcoming about?

9. SPELL CHECK, SPELL CHECK, SPELL CHECK: Spell checking visually by you AND someone else, any fewer than three times, isn't enough. And don't forget to check your punctuation.

10. GETTING YOUR RESUME OUT THERE - part one: Don't use one of those resume blaster things. Half those sites aren't even valid. You don't know how it will come out on the other end. You don't even know where it's going or if the landing targets are employment related. It's bad form and just....NOT the way to find your perfect job. Finding your perfect job takes focus, attention, detail, individuality, tailoring, specifics. Resume blasting is about as far from that as you can get.

11. GETTING YOUR RESUME OUT THERE - part two: If it's an ad, you probably have instructions as to how to send it. If it says email, cut and paste it in the form, AND attach it. You never know what it can look like on the other end because of the variety of settings available to each user. Quite frankly, you're better off not emailing it at all, because it usually just goes into cyber

space, and then it's all about the hiring company - but unfortunately, besides not sending it at all, sometimes that's your only choice. Emailing your resume takes any option for further participation right out of your hands, because often there's not even a name given for a follow up contact. You've no other option than to wait and wonder. (And half the time it's going to HR or an admin department to be scanned into an electronic database.)

12. GETTING YOUR RESUME OUT THERE - part three: If you know the company, call and ask if they prefer email, fax, or snail mail. I know a recruiter who never even opened his email. Because he was listed in The Kennedy Guide to Executive Recruiters, he received so many resumes emailed to him cold (so NOT pro-active) that he just did a mass delete every morning. Candidates contacted for a specific search were requested to snail mail their resume to him. How about that? I'll bet less than 10% of those who emailed their resumes even bothered to follow up to see if it was received (this isn't a numbers game).

13. RESUME VISUALS: Ivory paper. Black ink. Individual pages. No plastic, 7th grade, science report cover with the plastic slider or metal push down tabs. Your name centered at the top, not on a cover page that says "Introducing Clifton Lewis Montgomery III". No exceptions. Your resume is a professional document, not a school book report or an art project. Until every resume is done this way, yours will still stand out in the crowd.

You are the product, and your resume is the marketing piece. To find your perfect job you must differentiate yourself from the other people who will be interviewed.

Your resume must be specific, individualized, easy to skim so it invites a closer reading, and focused on the differences you've made with your previous companies, as well as the accomplishments you've achieved with - and for - them. This tells the hiring company what you can do for them - and it IS about the hiring company, not you.

Of course this assumes you meet the requirements for the job - otherwise it doesn't matter how good your resume is! The resume is what gets you in the door. If your resume is poorly written, looks sloppy, is difficult to read, is cryptic in any way, or necessitates being slogged through to learn your information (they won't bother), you won't even get in the door. And how can you decide whether you like the company, if they've already decided they don't like you?