



How To: Optimize Your IT Resume

In nearly four decades of IT career services, our recruiters have seen many a job search undermined by poorly constructed resumes. Even the most accomplished architects and developers can fall short at distilling their work history to a cogent narrative.

Research shows that hiring managers spend an average of six seconds before making a decision on a single resume. To maximize this window of opportunity, Howard Systems' senior technology recruiters have compiled their collective wisdom into these IT Resume Essentials:

Format

- Create the resume in Word, which can easily convert to plain text when requested.
- Choose a single, legible font throughout, preferably Times New Roman or Arial in 11-12 point size.
- Incorporate white space for greater visual clarity.
- Avoid graphics or logos.
- Highlight accomplishments with bullet points, which are easier to skim than paragraphs.

Content

Always assume a hiring manager is going to skim the resume quickly to seek out relevant skill sets. Recruiter Kevin Mocci advises candidates to keep important points to the top of their resume and to the top of each job breakdown. Further:

- Research the company and role. Reference and integrate the specific skills-based words and phrases from the job description that are consistent with your experience.
- Contextualize keywords with descriptive content that demonstrates how your skills helped to advance corporate strategy or maximize value for an IT investment.
- The Summary should highlight strengths that are specific to the job requirements and that offer
 value to the prospective employer's business needs. Be sure to address both technical and soft
 needs cited in the job description.
- Follow with a Technical Skills Summary, highlighting skills in which you have at least an intermediate degree of mastery. List all professional certifications here as well.

- In listing Work History, use universally-understood versions of job titles. Follow with a brief summary of the role/project, your responsibilities, and the challenges you faced.
- Customize bullet points accordingly, placing the most relevant and vital at the top.
 Accomplishment bullets should begin with an action verb. (i.e. "designed," "migrated," "implemented.")
- Include links to live work samples, professional blog posts, articles and profiles on industry networking sites.
- Numbers, statistics and percentages are powerful value statements, (i.e. "Increased profit by 28%. Came under budget by 30%. Increased bandwidth by 25%.")
- At 15+ years of experience, descriptions should get progressively shorter. Work history more than a decade old can be summarized in a line or two.

Finally, edit ruthlessly and proofread line by line. Solicit feedback from a trusted peer or recruiter, particularly one familiar with your target industry or role.

For more career insights or learn about current IT opportunities, call (800) 326-4860 or visit careers.howardsystems.com



