

Your resume is your personal representative to a potential employer. You need it to clearly communicate the skills and attributes you have that make you a good fit for the position you want. Remember, though, that the purpose of a resume is to generate interest in you as a job candidate so that the employer will want to meet you in person and conduct an interview.

In other words, your resume should not contain every piece of information you want the employer to know about you. It only needs to contain the pieces of information necessary to convince them that you should receive an interview.

The right information

So what is the right information? The answer to that depends on the job position and the employer. Look through the posting very carefully to determine exactly what skills and attributes are required and what skills and attributes are desired. These are the key points you need to include in your resume.

Do not use the same resume over and over for different jobs. You must tailor the resume to fit the specific position of interest so that the employer can see at a glance that you are a good candidate.

The right format

The format you use to present your key information points will depend on several things. If you have a great deal of experience in the same field as the potential job, a straightforward chronological resume is usually sufficient to effectively communicate your qualifications to the employer. If you are changing job fields, have gaps in your work history, or otherwise would not appear as qualified with a chronological format, opt instead for a combination format.

The right length

In most cases, your resume should not exceed two pages, and one page is usually even better. This does not mean using narrow margins and a small font size to get as many words on the page as possible. This does mean, however, editing and polishing your words to be concise and precise so that you can convey information with maximum impact and minimum number of words

The right follow up

As nice as it would be to just send your resume and wait for the phone to ring, in the real world that rarely happens. Even the best resume needs to be accompanied by appropriate follow up from you. Make a point of contacting the recipient in a timely fashion to ensure your materials were received, and make a personal connection that leaves a positive impression with the potential employer.