6 Small Résumé Changes That Have a Big Impact

Minor tweaks to the text could result in a significant change in your job search. **Alison Green**

If you're sending out résumés and not getting many [calls to interview](#), there's a good chance that your résumé is the problem. If you're like most people, your résumé could use some work – and like most people, you're probably not sure where to start.

But you probably don't need to start from scratch. You can often significantly improve your résumé by just making a handful of changes. Here are six small changes you can make that will have a big impact.

1. Get rid of the objective. [Résumé objectives](#) never help and often hurt. Not only do they feel outdated at this point, but they're all about what you want, rather than what the employer wants, which is what this stage of the hiring process is all about. Your résumé should be focused on your showing your experience, skills and accomplishments. It's not the place to talk about what you're seeking in your next job.

2. Add a profile section to the top of your résumé. Profile sections or summaries have replaced objectives at the top of current-day résumés. A profile is just a quick list of the highlights of your strengths and experience, summing up in just a few sentences or bullet points who you are as a candidate and what you have to offer. A well-written profile or summary can provide an overall framing of your candidacy, [preparing the hiring manager](#) for the rest of your résumé through that lens.

3. Focus on work accomplishments, not job duties. If you're like most job seekers, your résumé lists what you were responsible for at each job you held, but doesn't explain what you actually achieved there. Rewriting to focus on accomplishments will make it far more effective and more likely to catch a hiring manager's eye. For instance, get rid of lines like "managed email list" and replace them with lines like "increased email subscribers by 20 percent in six months" – in other words, something that explains how you performed, not just what your job was.

4. Get rid of big blocks of text. If your résumé is filled with [large blocks of text](#) – as opposed to bullet points – there's a good chance that you're putting hiring managers to sleep. They want to quickly skim the first time they look at your résumé, and big blocks of text make that difficult and make most hiring managers' eyes glaze over. They'll pay more attention and absorb more information about you if your résumé is arranged in bullet points rather than paragraphs.

5. Shorten it. If your résumé is multiple pages, you might be diluting the impact of its contents. With a shorter résumé, you'll ensure that in an initial quick scan, the hiring manager's eyes fall on the most important things. Plus, long résumés can make you come across as someone who can't edit and doesn't know what information is essential and what's less important. As a general rule, your résumé shouldn't be longer than two pages, maximum. (And if you're a recent grad, it should only be one page, because you haven't yet had enough work experience to justify a second one.)

6. Give yourself permission to remove things that don't strengthen your candidacy. You don't need three lines explaining boring, [basic job duties](#) – especially if these responsibilities are going to be implied by your title. Similarly, you don't need to include that summer job from eight years ago, that job you did for three weeks that didn't work out or every skill you can think of. Your résumé is a marketing document, not a comprehensive listing of everything about you; include the things that strengthen your candidacy and pare down the rest.