

# How's My Resume Quiz

## 10 ways to tell if your resume is lacking the visual cues recruiters look for.

Design matters. Yes, even on a resume. And the way to design a Word document is to use formatting cues to guide the reader's eyes. Here are some ideas on how to consider (or reconsider) what your resume looks like.

### 1. Where do you place your contact information?

- A. I start my resume with it at the top of every page.
- B. I place it in the footer so it's the last thing they remember.
- C. I only place it in the body of my e-mail to create a layer of privacy.

### 2. How does the resume begin?

- A. I start the resume with an objective that indicates what I want to do next in my career.
- B. I start with a headline so readers know what I have to offer — something like “Global Sales Manager.”
- C. I just start the resume with information on my most recent job. That is what people want to know about.

### 3. How dense are the paragraphs describing your job duties?

- A. I only use bullets, no paragraphs.
- B. The work I have done is complicated to describe, so I typically write a paragraph with eight to 10 lines.
- C. I keep the paragraphs to four to five lines for easy reading.

### 4. Do you have too many bullets?

- A. I have lots of career accomplishments, and I understand bullets are the best way to highlight these.
- B. I typically use between four and six bullets under each section.
- C. I don't like to use bullets because I would rather just include the information in general text.

### 5. How big are your fonts?

- A. I typically use a 10-point font for the text (or an 11-point font for Times New Roman). I might use a bigger font for my name or section heading.
- B. I have a lot of information to include, so I use a font that is smaller than 10 points so I can get it all in.
- C. I use a 12-point font so it is easy to read.

### 6. How wide are your margins for white space?

- A. One-quarter to one-half inch; I have a lot of information to include so I don't have a lot of space for wide margins.

- B. Whatever the default is; I don't know how to adjust the margins to properly create a two-page or a three-page resume.
- C. One-half to one inch; I know I need white space, so I make my margins wide.

**7 . How are you using text in bold, underlined or italics?**

- A. I never use these because I think they make the resume look too busy .
- B. I strategically use all of these to highlight the things I think are most important on the resume.
- C. I pick one of these formatting designs and use for all of the things I want to highlight.

**8 . How are your technical skills presented?**

- A. I only include technical skills in which I have recent experience and that I can use right away.
- B. I show all of my skills so it is clear that I have a long history of technical knowledge.
- C. I put this information at the top of the resume because these are skills I use all the time.

**9 . How is community leadership included?**

- A. I am most active in my church so I include that full information.
- B. I used to be active, but not recently, but I will still include the information.
- C. I will only include activities that show real leadership, commitment or use of business skills.

**10 . How do you format older work that is still pertinent?**

- A. I include full information of my work history so people understand everything I have done.
- B. I have to include older work because some of my best career accomplishments happened earlier.
- C. My most recent jobs have the most information, and the details become less important for the older jobs.

## Answers:

**1 - A.** The person who is reading your resume is also reading others. Don't take a chance that they will get mixed up.

**2 - B.** The reader needs to understand right away what you can do for them. This can be challenging if you have skills and experience in more than one area. An effective resume is focused.

**3 - C.** People tune out when there is too much text in a paragraph. The challenge is to get a clear summary of what you have done in just a few sentences. It is called "tight writing."

**4 - B.** If too many bullets are used, they lose their original purpose: to highlight specific facets of your professional background. Don't mix duties and accomplishments with the bullets.

**5 - A.** Choose font sizes carefully so the resume looks clean. A 10-point font is standard. If the font is smaller than that, it becomes difficult to read. A larger font does not give a very executive look.

**6 - C .** Margins should be set up so the format makes optimal use of the space. (For those who answered with B, here's how to adjust margins: In Microsoft Word, go to "File," then to "Page Setup." It will give you options for changing top, bottom, left and right margins. If the top and bottom margins are too small, you take a chance of printed text slipping off the page.)

**7 - C.** Design elements can strategically highlight certain words. You might bold and/or italicize your job titles so they stand out, such as ***Controller***. Or it might be better to highlight your industry experience with **Citibank**, **Wells Fargo** and **Bank of America**. When using these enhancements, less is more.

**8 - A.** Your next employer only cares about *current* technical skills. If you have expert-level skills you can include "Advanced Excel" or "Oracle Financial Module Power User." IT skills typically go to the bottom of the resume. If you are an IT executive, you will be hired because of your management skills, not your IT knowledge.

**9 - C.** Many people take on *leadership roles* such as member of a board of directors for a community organization. Leadership is more important than membership. Include these roles if they are current or recent. Do not include the actual name of your church or temple; that information is actually illegal for a recruiter to keep on a resume.

**10 - C.** Employers are most interested in your recent work experience. That information should be written in the most detail for your current job, then less detailed for older jobs. Sometimes it is appropriate just to show the company name and job title (without dates) as the foundation of your career. If some of notable career accomplishments occurred

earlier in your career, you can include them under “Selected Career Accomplishments” on the first page.

The most important part of developing a resume is to determine a writing strategy that matches how you want to be perceived. Make sure the content of the resume positions you properly, and then take time to focus on the formatting. It’s the best way to tie everything together.