

Hiring Managers Share Top 12 Wackiest Resume Blunders in New CareerBuilder.com Survey

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You've used all your creative juices to build a resume that stands out in the crowd -- but have you gone overboard? Hiring managers and human resource professionals nationwide shared the most unusual resume blunders they came across in a recent CareerBuilder.com survey:

1. Candidate included that he spent summers on his family's yacht in Grand Cayman.
2. Candidate attached a letter from her mother.
3. Candidate used pale blue paper with teddy bears around the border.
4. Candidate explained a gap in employment by saying it was because he was getting over the death of his cat for three months.
5. Candidate specified that his availability was limited because Friday, Saturday and Sunday was "drinking time."
6. Candidate included a picture of herself in a cheerleading uniform.
7. Candidate drew a picture of a car on the outside of the envelope and said it was the hiring manager's gift.
8. Candidate's hobbies included sitting on the levee at night watching alligators.
9. Candidate included the fact that her sister once won a strawberry eating contest.
10. Candidate explained that he works well nude.
11. Candidate explained an arrest by stating, "We stole a pig, but it was a really small pig."
12. Candidate included family medical history.

"Employers do appreciate creativity in job applicants because rooting through piles of resumes often times can be a monotonous task," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources at CareerBuilder.com. "However, the key is to balance that creativity with professionalism. You want to stand out as someone unique but also as someone with applicable experience who can add value to the company."

To help job seekers make a lasting impression for the right reasons, CareerBuilder.com recently launched a free resume review feature on <http://cbresume.com/>. Job seekers can upload their resumes and immediately receive feedback on how to improve their chances of getting hired.

Haefner offers the following tips to get you started on your road to resume success:

Your personal life is just that -- personal.

Hiring managers don't need to know personal information such as what your waistline measurement is or where you spend your summer vacations. Instead, include information on activities that are business-related such as memberships in professional organizations and community service involvement.

Simple. Bold. Professional.

Three key ideas to keep in mind when formatting your resume are: simple, bold and professional. Instead of flashy formatting and stationery with borders or graphics, create a clean and polished document on resume paper with consistent formatting for headings and bullet points. Additionally, to gain a hiring manager's attention, use strong action words such as "achieved" and "managed" instead of unconventional fonts or colored text.

One size does not fit all.

If you're applying for a sales position, it wouldn't make much sense to focus on your experience in an unrelated field like education or information technology. Not only do you want to play up achievements and experience specific to each individual job to which you are applying but also be sure to provide quantifiable results. For example, it's easy to say that you have experience in sales, but employers will take note if you say that you were responsible for a 10 percent growth in overall sales.

Two sets of eyes are better than one.

After you have proofread your resume a few times, ask someone else to review it. A second pair of eyes may be able to catch mistakes you missed and could provide a fresh perspective on how to improve your resume.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 2,627 hiring managers and human resource professionals (employed full-time; not self employed; with at least significant involvement in hiring decisions), ages 18 and over within the United States between November 17 and December 11, 2006. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

With a pure probability sample of 2,627, one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 2 percentage points. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies. However that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

About CareerBuilder.com

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