

Resume Trivia

ANSWER KEY

1. A resume is...

- An autobiography of one's career life and professional experiences in order to secure employment.
- A detailed listing of a job candidate's skills, experiences, responsibilities and achievements as these relate to the position and company being targeted.
- A complete listing of an individual's education, work experience and professional training.

A – Incorrect: A resume rarely secures employment. Its sole purpose is to secure interviews and this should not be taken as an opportunity to create an autobiography of one's career life. Your reader wants to know what you have to contribute, and is much less interested in who you are and what you hope to gain from the experience. Therefore, the resume document needs to be focused on meeting the needs of the reader (hiring manager) rather than the needs of the writer (job candidate).

B – CORRECT: When writing a resume, the focus of the document needs to be on the skills, experiences, responsibilities and achievements most directly relevant and valuable to the position and company being targeted. This is writing with the reader in mind.

C – Incorrect: While this may sound correct, a complete listing of information not relevant to the position or company being targeted has little or no value for your reader. In addition, your reader is most interested in that information which is most current (the most recent 10-15 years). Therefore, while your experience and achievements in 1970 may be impressive, they may have little value in today's market, particularly if you have nothing recent to add.

2. The purpose of a resume is to...

- Establish a candidate's qualifications for a position in order to secure an interview.
- Establish a candidate's qualifications for a position in order to secure employment.
- Establish a candidate's qualifications for a position in order to eliminate the competition.

A – CORRECT: This is the best answer. The sole purpose of the resume is to generate enough interest for the reader to feel compelled to invite the candidate for an interview. To achieve this result, the resume must effectively qualify the candidate for the position and company being targeted.

B – Incorrect: A resume alone will rarely secure reemployment. The resume's sole purpose is to secure interviews.

C – Incorrect: While a focused, well-written resume may help place a candidate in the running for a position, a resume, alone, will rarely eliminate all other competition.

3. Ideally, the length of a resume should be...

XOne page, no longer.

Two pages, no longer.

Whatever number of pages is necessary to qualify the candidate.

A – CORRECT: This is the best answer. The best guide regarding length is to: 1) include all information that is directly relevant and valuable to the position and company being targeted, and 2) leave everything else off.

B – Incorrect: While a two-page resume may be sufficient for certain job candidates, for those who would be better served with a one-page document, or for those who require more extensive documentation in order to include information vital to the reader, such as certain individuals in the medical or academic industries, a two-page resume may be a poor choice.

C – Incorrect: Keeping in mind that your reader is going to invest a limited amount of time in the reading of your document (most resumes only receive an initial reading time of about 15 seconds). If you present a three-page document when a one-page document would have been fine, you may lose your reader's interest long before they have the opportunity to appreciate what you have to offer. Be considerate of your reader's time.

4. The most important information on my resume is...

Job experience and education.

XContact information.

Achievements.

A – Incorrect: while this information is very important, your reader must know how to contact you in order to schedule an interview.

B – CORRECT: This is the best answer. When all is said and done, how to contact you is the most important information in your resume, therefore, make certain this information is easy to locate, read and reference at a glance. This may feel like a trick question, but hundreds of resumes are submitted each year containing incorrect, inadequate or poorly presented contact information, taking candidates who would otherwise be considered serious contenders out of the job search game.

C – Incorrect: While this information is very important, your reader must know how to contact you in order to schedule an interview.

5. Its okay to exaggerate information on my resume when...

I'm writing about older, less important positions and need to make my career path more logical.

I was shy of completing a degree by only a few credits – and a degree is a requirement of the position.

XIt's never ok to exaggerate information in a resume.

A – Incorrect: Any deception in the resume can result in the removal of a candidate's opportunity for a position, or dismissal from a position he or she has accepted. Don't lie!

B – Incorrect: Any deception in the resume can result in the removal of a candidate's opportunity for a position, or dismissal from a position he or she has accepted.

C – Correct: This is the best answer. If the information in your resume won't hold up under a detailed background investigation, you're in trouble. Don't lie or exaggerate your information in your resume!

6. When writing my resume, my main focus should be on...

XWho will be reading my resume.

- Presenting my best skills, experiences and achievements in priority.
- The readability and visual presentation of my document.

A – CORRECT: This is the best answer. When we write anything, the focus should always be on the person who will be reading our document. In this case, the targeted reader of a resume is usually a hiring manager or potential employer. Keeping this reader in mind and write your resume for his or her benefit.

B – Incorrect: This is important and should be one of the most important things to consider when writing your resume, but if you do not have the reader in mind and do not understand the information they want it may be difficult to know which skills, experience and achievements are best.

C – Incorrect: While the readability and visual presentation of your document is extremely important, understanding who will be reading your document and knowing what information will be most valuable and important to the reader is more important when writing your resume.

7. When submitting my resume to a job advertisement, I need to make certain that...

I provide as many options for retrieving my resume as possible (ASCII, PDF, Word processed document, etc.)

XI follow the directions of the ad explicitly.

I secure the name of the hiring manager or decision maker.

A – Incorrect: It's a great idea to have your resume in the various formats needed for an effective job search, but it's more important to know which document your reader requires.

B – CORRECT: This is the best answer. The ad should tell you in what format the resume is to be submitted. Failing to follow the directions can lead to your document not being accessible. Follow the directions of the ad explicitly!

C – Incorrect: It's a good idea to secure the name of the targeted hiring manager or decision maker who will be reviewing your resume but it's more important to follow the directions of the ad to the letter!

8. Certain personal information needs to be included in the resume, such as...

XMy name and contact information.

- My name, contact information and date of birth.
- My name, contact information, date of birth and number of dependents.

A – CORRECT: This is the best answer. It's important that the reader of your resume (usually a hiring manager or potential employer) knows who you are (your name) and how to contact you.

It is illegal under the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations for potential employers to inquire about a job candidate's age, marital status, religious beliefs, number of dependents, and other specific personal information. Therefore, it's a good idea for job candidates and potential employers (including those who interview job candidates) to understand what is permitted and to become very familiar with potential discrimination issues under the EEOC.

B – Incorrect: A potential employer in the United States is restricted from inquiring about a job candidate's age.

C – Incorrect: A potential employer in the United States is restricted from inquiring about a job candidate's age or number of dependents.

9. A potential employer is permitted to ask me the date(s) of my _____ graduation; therefore, I should include this/these date(s) on my resume.

- high school
- high school and college
- college

A – Incorrect: Providing the date of graduation from high school allows a potential employer to determine a candidate’s age, which can be considered discriminatory under US EEOC regulations.

B – Incorrect: Providing the date of graduation from high school allows a potential employer to determine a candidate’s age, which can be considered discriminatory under US EEOC regulations.

C – This is the best answer. Because college can be completed at any time, the date of college graduation is not necessarily indicative of a candidate’s age. Potential employers are permitted to ask for college graduation dates, and this information is often included when performing candidate background checks and verification of degree.

10. Posting my resume on a job search database online will make my resume available to...

- Potential employers
- Only those ads to which I respond
- Almost anyone, including my current employer

A – Incorrect: While this may be true, it’s important to understand that others may have access to your resume and information, as well – including your current employer.

B – Incorrect: Once your resume is uploaded into an online database, you have very limited control (if any) regarding who will be able to access your resume and information – including your current employer.

C – CORRECT: This is the best answer. When you include your resume in an online database, you essentially make your document and information available to anyone who can access the database, including your current employer.