

# 50 Common Problems With Resumes And Cover Letters And How To Fix Them

When it comes to applying for a job, your resume and cover letter are often the first impression you make on potential employers. A strong resume and cover letter can help you stand out from the competition and secure an interview. However, many job seekers face common problems when it comes to crafting these essential documents. In this article, we will explore 50 common problems with resumes and cover letters and provide you with actionable solutions to fix them.

## 1. Lack of Keywords

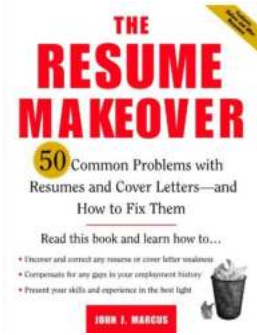
One of the most common mistakes job seekers make is failing to include relevant keywords in their resumes and cover letters. Employers often use applicant tracking systems (ATS) to scan and filter resumes based on specific criteria. By incorporating keywords from the job description into your application materials, you increase your chances of getting noticed.

## 2. Generic Objective Statement

A generic objective statement such as "Seeking a challenging position in a respected company" does not provide any valuable information to the employer. Instead, tailor your objective statement to highlight your specific skills and how they align with the company's goals.

**The Resume Makeover: 50 Common Problems With Resumes and Cover Letters - and How to Fix Them** by Kirk Snyder (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5  
Language : English



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Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 208 pages



### 3. Overused buzzwords

Words like "hardworking," "team player," and "detail-oriented" have become cliché and do not add much value to your application. Instead, focus on providing concrete examples of achievements and skills that demonstrate your qualifications.

### 4. Lack of quantifiable achievements

Employers want to see measurable accomplishments on your resume. Instead of simply listing your job responsibilities, include specific examples of how you made a positive impact in your previous roles.

### 5. Poor formatting

A resume that is cluttered and difficult to read can hinder your chances of getting noticed. Use a clean and professional format with consistent fonts and bullet points to make your resume easy to scan.

### 6. Typos and grammatical errors

Nothing can discredit your application faster than typos and grammatical mistakes. Always proofread your resume and cover letter multiple times, and

consider having someone else review them as well.

## **7. Irrelevant information**

Only include information that is relevant to the job you are applying for. Leave out any personal details or experiences that do not contribute to your qualifications.

## **8. Lack of customization**

Sending the same generic resume and cover letter to every job application shows a lack of effort and interest. Tailor your application materials to each specific job by highlighting relevant skills and experiences.

## **9. Missing contact information**

Ensure that your contact information is prominently displayed on both your resume and cover letter. Include your full name, phone number, email address, and LinkedIn profile.

## **10. Long cover letter**

A cover letter should be concise and focused. Keep it to a single page and avoid repeating information that is already stated in your resume.

## **11. Lack of clear structure**

A well-organized resume and cover letter will make it easier for employers to skim through your application. Use headings and subheadings to create a clear structure.

## **12. Inclusion of salary expectations**

It is generally not recommended to include salary expectations in your application materials unless specifically asked for. Save this discussion for later stages of the

hiring process.

### **13. TMI (Too Much Information)**

While it's important to provide relevant details about your skills and experiences, avoid overwhelming the reader with unnecessary information. Stick to what is necessary and impactful.

### **14. Lack of industry-related jargon**

If you're applying for a job in a specific industry, using jargon or technical terms relevant to that industry can demonstrate your familiarity and expertise.

### **15. Unexplained gaps in employment**

If you have gaps in your employment history, briefly explain them in your resume or cover letter. Highlight any relevant activities or learning experiences during those gaps.

### **16. Missing action verbs**

Use strong action verbs to begin your bullet points in order to make a stronger impact. For example, instead of saying "Responsible for managing a team," say "Managed a team of 10 employees."

### **17. Lack of online presence**

In today's digital age, it's important to have an online presence. Include a link to your professional website, portfolio, or LinkedIn profile to showcase your work and skills.

### **18. Inconsistent tenses**

Make sure to use consistent verb tenses throughout your resume and cover letter. Mixing present and past tense can create confusion and make your application seem unprofessional.

## **19. Lack of proof of skills**

Instead of simply stating your skills, provide evidence of how you have applied them in previous roles. This could include specific projects you have worked on or certifications you have earned.

## **20. Missing keywords in cover letter**

Just like in your resume, include relevant keywords in your cover letter to show that you have read and understood the job description. This will help your application pass through any automated filters.

## **21. Lack of clarity in your summary**

Your summary statement should provide a clear snapshot of your professional background and key qualifications. Avoid vague statements and be specific about your expertise.

## **22. Failure to showcase accomplishments**

A good resume and cover letter should highlight your achievements, not just your job duties. Quantify your accomplishments wherever possible to show the impact you made in your previous roles.

## **23. Inadequate research on the company**

Before applying for a job, take the time to research the company and understand their values, culture, and mission. Tailor your application materials to align with what the company is seeking in an ideal candidate.

## **24. Overemphasis on irrelevant education**

If you have several years of work experience, your education should take a backseat on your resume. Only include relevant degrees or certifications and focus on your professional accomplishments.

## **25. Lack of specific keywords for the ATS**

Applicant tracking systems often search for specific keywords to determine if a resume is a good match for a job. Be sure to include keywords related to the job description to increase your chances of passing through the initial screening.

## **26. Failure to demonstrate cultural fit**

Employers not only look for qualified candidates, but also individuals who align with their company culture. Highlight your experiences and values that reflect a cultural fit with the organization.

## **27. Overreliance on templates**

While templates can be helpful for organizing your thoughts, avoid using them as-is without any personalization. Customize your resume and cover letter to stand out from the crowd.

## **28. Omitting relevant volunteer work**

If you have volunteered for relevant organizations or causes, include this experience on your resume. It can demonstrate valuable skills and a commitment to making a difference.

## **29. Failure to follow instructions**

Read the job posting carefully and follow any instructions provided for submitting your application materials. Failure to comply with instructions can result in your

application being overlooked.

### **30. Lack of polished writing skills**

Strong written communication skills are essential for many job roles. Take the time to refine your writing and ensure that your resume and cover letter are well-written, clear, and concise.

### **31. Ignoring networking opportunities**

While a resume and cover letter are important, networking can often be the key to landing a job. Don't neglect the power of personal connections in your job search.

### **32. Failure to quantify results**

Whenever possible, include numbers, percentages, or dollar amounts to quantify your accomplishments. This helps employers visualize the impact you have made in previous roles.

### **33. Lack of industry-specific certifications**

If there are industry-specific certifications that are relevant to the job you are applying for, consider obtaining them. This can make you a more competitive candidate.

### **34. Failure to differentiate yourself**

With numerous job seekers applying for the same positions, it's important to stand out. Highlight your unique skills, experiences, and accomplishments that differentiate you from the competition.

### **35. Overly complicated language**

Avoid using excessively technical or convoluted language in your application materials. Keep your writing clear and accessible to a wide audience.

### **36. Using a generic email address**

Create a professional email address that consists of your name or a variation of it. Avoid using personal or generic email addresses that may give a negative impression.

### **37. Failure to leverage transferrable skills**

If you are transitioning to a new industry or job role, highlight your transferrable skills that would be applicable to the new position. Show how your previous experiences can benefit the employer.

### **38. Inconsistencies between resume and cover letter**

Ensure that your resume and cover letter complement each other and tell a consistent story. Avoid contradicting information or duplicating content between the two documents.

### **39. Lack of proofreading and editing**

Mistakes can easily slip through the cracks if you don't carefully proofread and edit your resume and cover letter. Make sure to check for errors in grammar, punctuation, and formatting.

### **40. Failure to address employment gaps**

If you have notable employment gaps, take the time to provide a concise explanation in your cover letter. This prevents any doubts or assumptions by the employer.

### **41. Lack of soft skills**



While hard skills are important, employers also value soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities. Highlight these skills in your application materials.

#### **42. Neglecting white space**

Avoid cramming too much information on your resume. Include sufficient white space to make your document visually appealing and easy to read.

#### **43. Failure to showcase continuous learning**

Employers value candidates who are eager to learn and improve their skills. Highlight any professional development courses, certifications, or workshops you have completed.

#### **44. Lack of industry-specific terminology**

If you are applying to a specific industry, make sure to use industry-specific terminology that demonstrates your familiarity with the field.

#### **45. Omitting keywords in headlines and subheadings**

Besides including keywords in your job descriptions, also incorporate them into your headlines and subheadings. This helps to further optimize your resume for ATS screening.

#### **46. Failing to quantify the duration of past employments**

Including the duration of your past employments can give the employer a clearer picture of your experience. State the month and year you started and ended each job.

#### **47. Lack of proof of ongoing professional development**

Show that you are committed to continuous improvement by highlighting any memberships, professional associations, or conferences you are involved in.

## 48. Inconsistent use of fonts and sizes

Avoid using multiple fonts and sizes in your resume and cover letter. Stick to one or two fonts and maintain consistency throughout the documents.

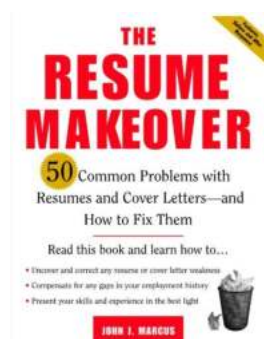
## 49. Failure to showcase relevant side projects

If you have worked on side projects related to the job you are applying for, include them on your resume. This demonstrates your passion and dedication to the field.

## 50. Lack of a strong closing statement

End your cover letter with a strong closing statement that reiterates your interest in the position and your confidence in your ability to contribute to the company's success.

In , crafting a compelling resume and cover letter requires careful attention to detail and a thorough understanding of what employers are looking for. By addressing and fixing these common problems, you can increase your chances of landing the job you desire. Remember to always tailor your application materials to each specific job, showcase your relevant skills and experiences, and proofread diligently. Good luck!



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Clear, quick, effective solutions to the 50 most common resume problems

In this solution-oriented guide, bestselling careers author John J. Marcus zeros in on the 50 most common resume writing problems and offers easy-to-perform fixes for each.

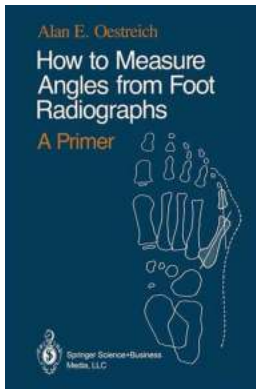
Among other crucial lessons, readers learn how to identify and deal effectively with job history problems, skill-set deficiencies, poor visual presentation, and formatting problems.

A compelling feature that distinguishes The Resume Makeover from all the competition is its unique quick-reference, "Before & After" format. Each chapter focuses on one common problem and offers a proven solution, along with before-and-after documents illustrating how a few simple changes can significantly improve a resume.

In addition, readers learn:

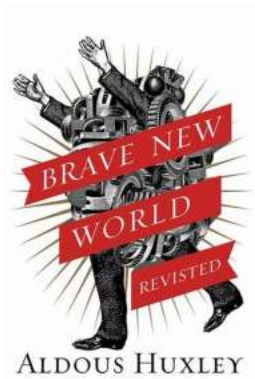
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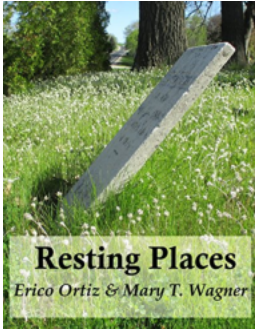
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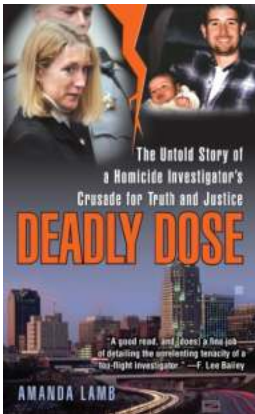
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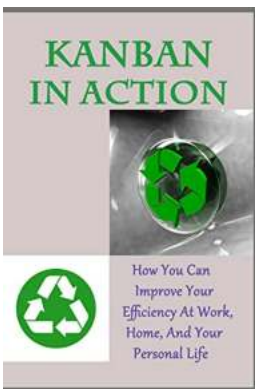
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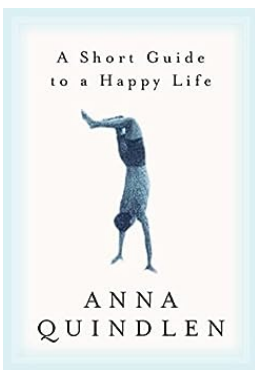
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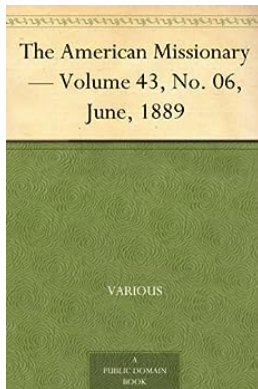
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