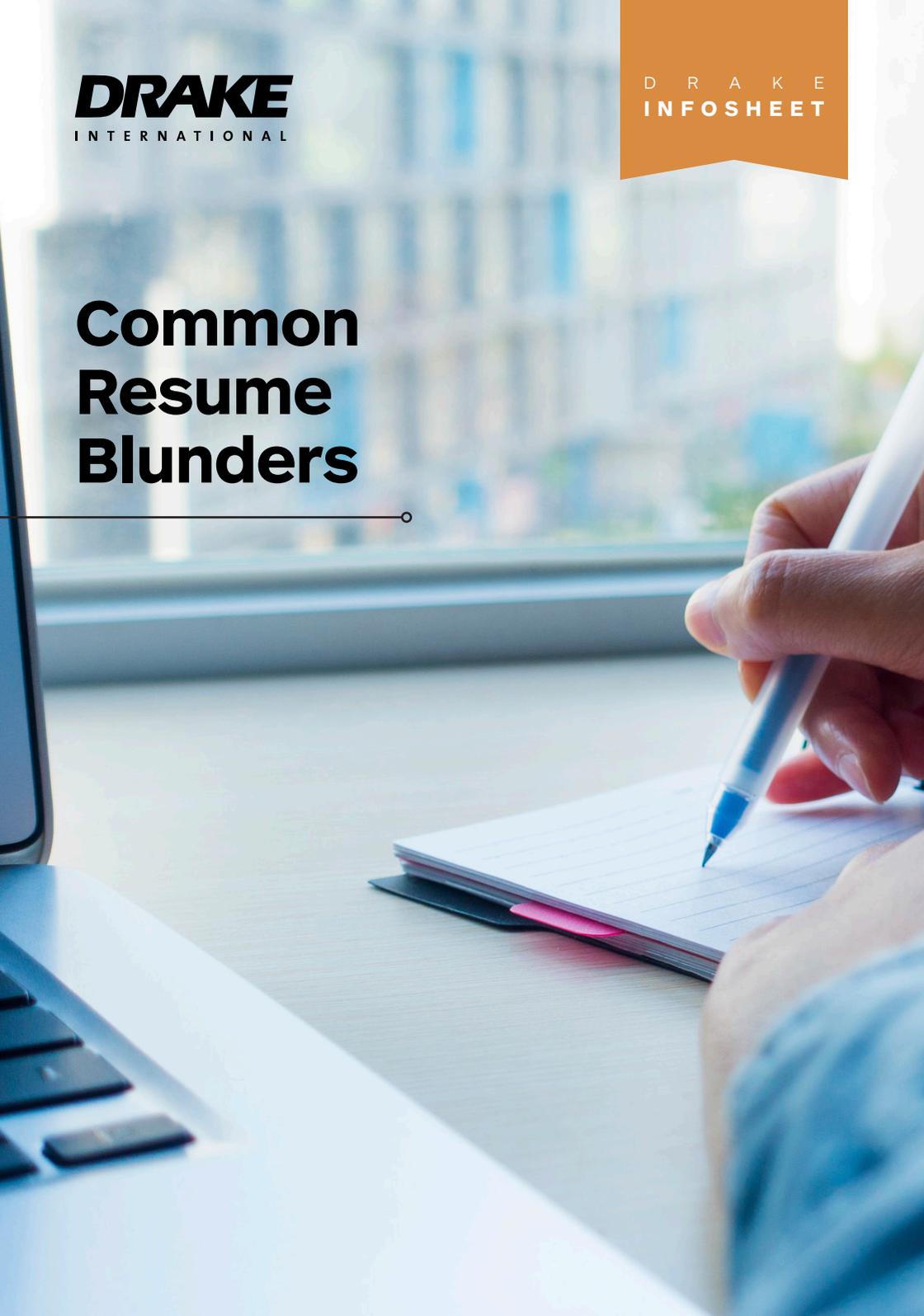


Common Resume Blunders



Make sure your resume is top-notch by avoiding the top 10 resume blunders:

1. Too Focused on Listing Job Duties

One of the most prevalent resume blunders is to turn your resume into a dull list of job duties and responsibilities. To create a resume that is a cut above the rest, you need to demonstrate how you made a difference at each company and provide specific examples of how the company benefited from your performance.

When developing your achievements, ask yourself the following questions:

- What were the problems or challenges that you or the organisation faced?
- What did you do to overcome the problems?
- What were the results of your efforts?
- How did the company benefit from your performance?

2. Not Being Specific with Your Career Objective Statement

Many candidates lose their readers at the very beginning of the resume by being too general with their career objective statement e.g., "A challenging position that will enable me to contribute to organisational goals...". Always link your objective statement back to the job in question, what you are looking for in your next career move and include some of your key achievements.

3. Too Short or Too Long

Too many people try to squeeze their experience onto a single page, because they've heard that a resume should never be longer than one page. When formatting the resume to fit on one page, many job seekers delete their impressive achievements. The reverse is also true when people try to record their entire career history.

The rule about the appropriate length of a resume is that there is no rule – however typically, a concise resume is anywhere from 2-4 pages long depending on which stage of your career you are in.

The most important guideline however is that every word in the resume should sell the candidate.

4. Using Personal Pronouns

A resume is a form of business communication, so it should be concise and written in a telegraphic style. There should not be any use of articles such as "I" or "me." Instead of writing "I developed a new product.." you would write "Developed new product...".

5. Listing Personal or Irrelevant Information

Many people include their interests, such as reading, hiking, snowboarding, etc. These should only be included if they relate to the job objective. Personal information, such as date of birth, marital status, height and weight, or nationality should not be included on a resume.

6. Not Using the Correct Format or Order for Your Information

One of the most effective resume formats is the modified chronological type.

Here is the basic layout:

- Header (name, address, email address, phone number)
- Objective Statement
- A strong profile section (detailing the scope of your experience and areas of proficiency)
- Reverse chronological employment history (emphasising achievements in the past 10 years). Include employer names, positions held and primary responsibilities
- Education (this might be moved to the top for new grads) Be concise by listing the qualification obtained, year it was completed and listing the institution.

7. Not Including a Summary Profile

A summary section is one of the greatest tools a job seeker has. Candidates who have done their homework will know the type of skills and competencies that are important in the position.

The summary should demonstrate the skill level and experience directly related to the position being sought. Note, it is a summary and should be no longer than a paragraph.

8. Not Using Keywords

With the majority of large and medium-sized companies using technology to store resumes, often a job seeker can only be found in an applicant search if they have included relevant industry or job specific keywords in their resume.

Read the job advert carefully and make sure you include any keywords.

9. Listing References

Employers know that if you are searching for a job, you should have professional references. So this statement mainly wastes space. Use it only as a graphical element, to signal the end of a long resume or to round out the page design.

10. Typos, Spelling and Grammatical Errors

One typo or spelling mistake and your chances are greatly diminished. Two errors can land your resume in the bottom of the pile. If possible, ask someone to proofread your resume to check for any typos, spelling or layout errors.

This document is a reflection of you and should be absolutely perfect.

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