

Customising Your Resume



**Sending generic resumes
will get you nowhere.
Get noticed – customise
your resume.**

Picture this situation – You're about to start your job hunt, and have devised a masterful plan to put together the best resume you can, and fire it off to as many companies as possible in the hopes it will be a good match for something, somewhere. It's the classic "throw mud against the wall and see if any of it sticks" approach.

Although this strategy is great for making you feel like you're doing something positive in your job search, realistically you're wasting your time, energy, and (potentially) money.

The one-size-fits-all resume (and its cousin, the one-size-fits-all cover letter) just doesn't work. Put yourself in the employer's shoes, and it's easy to understand why.

The Swamp Factor

Employers dread sifting through the deluge of resumes they receive every time they advertise an open position – especially when the majority of applicants fail to tailor their resume to the position.

So when you're generic, one-size-fits-all resume shows up alongside dozens of others, it's likely to be sent to the circular file (aka the recycle bin), never to be considered again.

- 1. Research the company**
 - 2. Understand the role**
 - 3. Tailor your resume to address the key selection criteria**
 - 4. Mould yourself into the profile of the 'ideal candidate'**
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The Passionate Candidate

Managers trying to fill an open position within their organisation don't want to hear from applicants half-heartedly 'taking a shot' at the role – they want to hear from those who really, truly want the opportunity. Applicants who are passionate about the position are those who invest the time and energy necessary to customise their resume and cover letter to suit both the role, and the company at hand.

Put yourself in the shoes of the hiring manager – which of the following candidates would be of greater interest to you?

Candidate 1 – Sent a generic cover letter and resume not particularly suited for any particular role or industry. This candidate has clearly applied for a large number of open positions as quickly as possible.

Candidate 2 – Has evidently researched your organisation and tailored both their resume and cover letter to suit the specific requirements of the role, and nuances of your organisation. This candidate has clearly taken a keen interest in the position.

Watch for the Clues

Every job listing you'll ever see contains clues about the specific experiences, skills and educational background the employer desires in the ideal candidate.

If you take the time to identify those characteristics and highlight them on your resume (and cover letter), you'll present yourself in the best possible light and elevate your application above and beyond the competition.

In other words, you give the organisation what it's looking for, instead of trying to (usually unsuccessfully) impose your agenda upon the company.

Does customising your resumes and cover letters take more time than the one-size-fits-all approach? Yes. Does it involve more research, energy, and work? Definitely. But does it give you a greater chance for a positive payoff that offsets this commitment? Absolutely.

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