



TOP RÉSUMÉ MISTAKES

The following mistakes are among the most common that employers report to Career Services professionals, and that I see. Make sure to avoid these (and all others!) as you get ready or continue submitting or sharing your résumé. Detailed information on creating your résumé, with example entries for each section, can be found on the *Creating Your Professional Résumé* workshop on the Career Services website (www.morrisville.edu/careerplanning/guides.aspx). For assistance with your résumé, call 315.684.6615.

So what is the most frequent single mistake? The misplaced comma in the address section! The correct placement is city, state zip code or Morrisville, NY 13408.

1 – It's too long: While there may be some employers and industries that are open to a multiple page résumé, the overwhelming majority indicate that a single page is what they expect from candidates coming out of or still in college. Connect with Career Services for assistance in deciding what to include or delete on your résumé.

2 – Misspellings: To an employer, a misspelling represents either a lack of attention to detail, which is a concern for most, or lack of knowledge of the importance of detail, which is equally or even more problematic. **Everything** on your résumé must be spelled correctly (this includes specialty software, names of certifications, technical equipment, honors, etc.). And don't rely just on electronic spellchecking; it won't catch items such as new for now (not even in New York), perspective for prospective, preformed for performed, or four for for.

3 – Experiences listed out of order: Entries in each section must be listed in reverse chronological order, that is, current or most recent experiences first, oldest last. Under the reverse chronology rule, your current MSC academic program is the first item under your Education section, with previous college degrees listed next, and high school following that, if you choose to include.

4 – Inconsistency in formatting: There are many different formatting choices to make, then stick with, when creating your résumé, so it is easy to err, but still not okay. An employer views lack of consistency as sloppiness or inattentiveness, neither of which is favorable to you. Make sure that all entries of a similar type are the same font, font size, line spacing, and that bolding, underlining, italics, periods, and spacing (especially before and after hyphens in dates) are consistently applied. Need an example? Check the on-line résumé workshop.

5 – Incorrect or inconsistent verb tenses: You can choose what verb tenses to use in describing your experience: present tense for current or ongoing experiences and past tense for completed ones, OR present tense for all, OR past tense for all. What is not correct is combining your choices, such as using present tense for past experiences and past tense for current ones. The following is an example of what you shouldn't do:

Volunteer, Acme Elementary School, Wherever, NY Fall 2013-Spring 2014
Assisted students in grades two and three learn multiplication and division. Aiding teacher in classroom management. Complete 60 hours of community service.

6 – Bad information: Included here is critical information such as the exact degree you will be receiving and name of your program (check on Web for Students), current GPA (also on Web for Students), dates of experiences (you should make a list and check it twice), and exact name of employers. Even if an employer doesn't catch these errors in reviewing your résumé in advance of an interview, it may trip you up in the interview itself, or in a reference check. Mistakes like this can cost you an offer.

Bad information can also mean adding improper information such as personal attributes and characteristics (e.g., friendly, hard-working, honest, quick-learner) in a skills section. While these qualities are important, you need to show an employer how and where you've demonstrated them, not just tell them you have them.

7 – Missing information: If you are seeking positions that require select technical skills, such as experience with hardware, software, or computer languages for a technology job or internship, you must specifically include that information. Otherwise the employer may assume you do not the required skills and pass on interviewing you.