

HOW TO PUT TOGETHER A RESUME

There are lots of sites out there with advice for how to snazz up your resume. Much of the advice contradicts itself. Should you print on colored paper, or



not? Should you include your photo, or not?

Fortunately for you, I used to be an office manager. Part of my job was going through the stack of resumes, pulling the 5% that the human resources veep might want to see, and sending the rest to the round file. My advice is the right advice. Here is what you need to remember when creating or updating your resume: **Only use white paper, or slightly off-white (beige, ivory, pearl, bone).** Any other color is difficult to read, and looks unprofessional. Oh, and the 1980s called -- they want their pastel colors back. **Use "fancy" paper.** You know that extra-expensive "resume paper" they sell at the office supply store? Use it. Thick, textured ivory paper with a paper-maker's imprint tells the employer *I take this job application seriously, and took the time and effort to demonstrate it.* A resume printed on cheap printer paper says *I send out 20 of these a day, and if you call me for an interview, I won't remember who you are.* But -- do not send a resume on paper that is so thick, it feels like poster board. If you can't easily fold a piece of "resume paper," don't use it. If you are providing a separate cover letter, then use the same fancy paper. **Make sure your resume looks professionally printed.** There's an easy way to insure this -- get your resumes professional printed. All the big box office supply stores now have printing departments; or if you enjoy waiting in long lines, go to Kinko's. But printing your resumes at home is fine -- as long as your home printer does a good job. If you print a resume and the letters look irregular, or some areas are lighter than others, don't use it. And don't send in a resume if you've smeared it. Let your newly-printed resumes dry for a few minutes. **Don't use unusual fonts.** Allow me to introduce a friend of mine. His name is Times New Roman. Get to know him well, because unless you're a professional graphic designer or advertising director, he is the **ONLY FONT YOU SHOULD EVER USE** on a resume. No, it's not okay to use Arial (your resume is not a web site) or Courier (unless you actually typed out your resume on a manual typewriter). And if you ever, ever use Comic Sans for any reason, you deserve to be unemployed. **Don't attach anything to the resume unless specifically instructed to do so.** Recruiters don't need your photograph or business card. They won't think it's cute that you tied a lollipop to your resume with a bow. They just want your resume, hopefully without a staple or paperclip attached. Cute attachments get thrown out, along with the resume. Unless it's candy -- we eat the candy, and then throw the resume away. **Don't fold your resume unless you are mailing it.** Never hand anyone a resume that has been folded. Or crumpled. Or has a coffee stain on it. If you're mailing in a resume, you can fold it into three to fit in the envelope. Do so very carefully. (And make sure the envelope is made of the same fancy paper as the resume.) Got any additional advice for resume creators? Let us know in the [comments!](#)