Resume Design

Why is design important?

Making first impressions is important, especially in the professional world. Most people do not meet employers before having job interviews, so well-designed resumes may help secure face time with prospective interviewers.

A resume is comprised of two components: **design and content**. While content is very important, many employers may not even choose to read a poorly-designed resume. It is essential to ensure that your resume represents you in the best light possible.

Design Tests

Check out this example of an effectively designed resume!

- **20 second test**: It only takes about 20 seconds for an employer to tell if a resume is well-designed or poorly-designed. If an employer has to look over many resumes, they will quickly rule out any that don't catch their interest, look professional, or appear organized.

- **Quadrant test**: Your resume should appear visually balanced. To see if your resume passes the quadrant test, print it out and fold it into equal fourths. The information on the document should be fairly evenly distributed.

Design Elements

- **Organizing in columns**: By organizing like information into columns, you create a hierarchy. For example, you may choose to include past positions in a left-hand column and their respective dates in a right-hand column.

- **Types of emphasis**: When designing a resume, it is often important to highlight key information through types of emphasis such as **bolding**, underlining, and *italicizing*. For example, you may choose to italicize all the dates.

This is an example of how the quadrant test works.

- **Bulleted lists:** Organizing items into bulleted lists helps you to better utilize page space as well as create the visual appearance of order and structure.

  *Try listing information such as previous jobs or experiences with bullets under a heading.

- **Typography:** Typically when designing a resume, you will want to use a serif and a sans serif font. Ideally, you may want to use one for headings and one for content.

  Using different types of fonts creates contrast. However, you should limit yourself to using no more than three. Try to avoid using "default fonts" such as Times New Roman or Calibri.

*Examples of serif fonts: **Examples of sans serif fonts:*

Georgia   **Arial**

Courier New   **Candara**

Cambria   Euphemia

Quick Tips

- When creating your resume, try to avoid using templates.

  *While templates may be a great starting point, adhering to them strictly limits design and content.

- When appropriate, try adding **pops of color** to your resume.

  *This strategy shows your creativity and uniqueness.

- Tailor the design of your resume to the job you're applying for.

  *Be professional, but also add creative flair!

Further Assistance: For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library, or call 815-836-5427.

Sources Consulted: Purdue OWL, *Writing That Works*