

7 Resume Myths That Will Keep You Unemployed

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When it comes to resumes, most job seekers think they need a cover letter, to fill in any work gaps and include all of their employment history, even if it's a part-time job during college. Unfortunately all of those moves and more will mean your resume ends up on the rejection heap.

"There are quite a few mistakes with resumes," says Paul McDonald, senior executive director with Robert Half. "The resume myths sometimes outweigh the facts."

From thinking your resume will get you the job to sending a separate cover letter, here's a look at seven resume myths recruiters and career experts see far too often.

Myth No. 1: A good resume will land you the job

A popular misconception among job seekers is that the resume is what gets you the job, when the truth is its how you do on the interview, says McDonald. "The resume should outline your accomplishments...and in the interview you expand on those points and show how they fit within the organization," he says.

Myth No. 2: Cover letters still matter

Ask pretty much anyone over the age of 40 and most will say you need to send a separate cover letter when applying for a job, but the reality is that your email acts as the cover letter, says David Boggs, practice leader at WK Advisors, a division of executive search firm Witt/Kieffer.

"Not only is there no need for a separate cover letter, you may actually be confusing potential employers with too many documents," says Boggs. He says when applying for a position or reaching out to a recruiter make sure your email is tailored for the specific person or company. After all blasting off a generic email isn't going to help your prospects.

Myth 3: It's ok to use the same resume over and over

Many job seekers will boast about sending out thirty resume in one day but then end up wondering why they got zero calls. The reason in most cases is job seekers are using the same resume for multiple job opportunities, which Joel Garfinkle, author of *Getting Ahead: Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level*, says is a big no no. He says it's better to customize your resume to each job you are applying for. "The more you customize your resume to the opportunity, the greater you stand out compared to your competition," he says.

Myth 4: Never have gaps in your resume

The economic downturn of a few years ago resulted in many unemployed people who after a couple of years of not working have to deal with gaps in their work history. While the first inclination is try to explain away the gaps, McDonald says it's better to save that for your initial email or during the interview. "Don't put in your resume for an 18 month gap that you traveled abroad, sought employment and suffered the downturn," he says. "Fill in the gaps when you are in front of the individual."

Myth 5: You should give everyone and anyone your resume

You may think the shotgun approach is the best way to find a job, but focusing on a few companies and/or jobs is a much better way to go about it, says Boggs.

“Take the vision of what you ideally want to be doing and identify the 5-10 companies that you’re seriously interested in,” he says. “Then pursue them like it’s your job.”

Myth No. 6: Resumes should include all your work history

Hiring managers and recruiters have short attention spans and have no desire to read a multiple page resume that includes every job the person ever had. Instead, Garfinkles say less is more when it comes to your resume.

“Your entire resume should be only the information that is relevant for the position,” says Garfinkle. “If it’s not relevant remove it.” Job seekers may think their entire job history will get them the job but hiring managers are only having them in based on the information in the resume that pertains to the current job opening, he says.

Myth No. 7: Social media is the best way to network

Social media sites like LinkedIn and Facebook have made it much easier to reach people around the country, if not the world. But when it comes to networking to get a job, nothing replaces face-to-face meetings, says Boggs.

He says job seekers should take advantage of professional associations and other networking events that will put them in front of people that can help them get a job. That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t ignore social media. In fact, Boggs says you need to be on more than LinkedIn if you want to get noticed by recruiters. “Know that recruiters are looking at all social platforms to get a sense of your skills – not just LinkedIn,” he says. “Make sure you’re posting industry trends and interesting stories relating to your area of expertise to Facebook, Twitter and even Instagram.”