BEST RESUME FORMAT IN PRACTICE

An essential part of your job seeking process, your resume format plays a huge role in securing a conversation for that job you want. Experienced recruiters filter up to a thousand resumes daily to find the right profile for their clients, and HR professionals may go up to a hundred pre-filtered applicants through their talent acquisition partners & networks. Depending on the tolerance level of whoever is screening the profile, having a resume structure that is difficult to comprehend may lead to your application being ignored.

SUMMARY OF POINTS

1. The most widely preferred resume structure is the *reverse chronological format*.
2. Make sure contact details are updated and included in the resume.
3. A well-taken photograph helps.
4. Resumes should be sufficiently detailed but concise. It is fine to exceed the *'1-page limit'.*
5. Adopt an appendix section if you are in a project-based environment.
6. Cover letters are no longer a thing.
7. Make your resume **'AI-friendly'**.

REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL FORMAT

A. FORMAT GUIDE

1. Information is sorted in the order of most recent to least recent for all the sections
2. Sections are then ordered as follows
   a. Contact Details
   b. Executive summary
   c. Education
   d. Certification
   e. Professional Experience

    f.   Additional Skills

B. THINGS THAT WORK AND WHY

1. *Reverse chronological format*.
Most widely adopted format in the industry, this familiarity makes it easy for HRs & Recruiters to have a clear overview of the candidate's career history. While functional formats bring your best skills to focus, the chronological format is the best way to understand candidate's personal motivations, and career progression/history quickly. When there's hundreds of potential applications to go through, resumes that cannot be quickly digested will be left aside for later, or forgotten.

2. **Make sure contact details are updated and included in the resume.**
Although not that it happens often, it's a tragic scenario when there's a great profile and contact details are omitted. Sometimes, candidates think that it's sufficient to place their contact details on the job site forms and it will automatically reach the HR/Recruiter. However, in our world today, resumes are parsed through multiple tech platforms designed by different companies several times before it reaches the internal databases the company. Play it safe by keeping all your information in one place: your resume.

3. **A well-taken photograph helps.**
"Judgements on attractiveness and trustworthiness are consistent across cultures, and these assumptions based on facial beauty are made extremely quickly," - lead study author Dr. Anjan Chatterjee, Penn Center, Neuroaesthetics.

There are multiple studies conducted regarding the correlation of attractiveness and career prospects due to the people's unconscious bias. While it's not a standing requirement for job application process, a professionally taken shot and a warm smile helps build a better impression and improve your chances for an interview.

4. **Resumes should be sufficiently detailed but concise. It is fine to exceed the *'1-page limit'.***
Modern digital society is a far more complex environment compared to the paper-reliant 1980s, and working professionals today shift roles at an average of 3-5 years and doing complicated scopes that are woven together from different functions. A 1-page limit is an antiquated saying that is not just irrelevant, it's potentially detrimental as having too little keywords on your profile makes it harder for potential employers to search for you.
Depending on your position level or job, its fine to even stretch your resume into 4-5 pages if it is sufficiently well-written.

5. **Adopt an appendix section if you are in a project-based environment.**
Appendixes are extremely underutilised but highly useful to highlight in a list format all the projects you've participated in. When used correctly, this also gives your profile higher searchability when companies are hiring for positions which are similar to yours.

6. **Cover letters are no longer a thing.**
Most HRs and Recruiters today jump straight to the resumes section, so you can save your effort in this. Instead, if there's something you want to impress on, try adding a 3-4 liner career summary / objective section at the top of your resume.

7. **Make your resume 'AI-friendly'.**
Recruitment process today is primarily aided by technology. During the application process, resumes are parsed through external job sites into internal corporate databases and organized via third party software systems. After which, recruiters / talent acquisition specialists then utilise Boolean search strings and pre-built data filters to retrieve relevant candidate profiles for shortlisting and interview.

Since parsing systems interpret tables and graphics poorly, especially after pdf conversion, minimize the usage of such tools when creating your resume. Instead, improve your profiles searchability by inserting industry buzzwords or technical terms.