How to Decide on Resume Length

By Kim Isaacs, Monster Resume Expert

"How long should my resume be?" is one of the most commonly asked questions about resumes. Not too long ago, job seekers were told that a resume should never exceed one page. Those who broke this golden rule were destined for the circular file.

Times have changed, and so has the criteria for resume length. The new guideline is: A resume should be long enough to entice hiring managers to call you for job interviews. That may sound vague, but there is no hard-and-fast length rule that works for everyone. Factors to consider include career objective, occupation, industry, years of experience, number of employers, scope of accomplishments and education/training.

Keep these facts in mind when deciding on your resume's length:

- Your resume is a career marketing tool, not an autobiography. Strive to keep your resume concise and focused on your key selling points. Be willing to let go of past experiences that don't market you for your current goal. Every word in the resume should sell your credentials and value to a potential employer. You should also leave something to talk about in the interview.
- It's common for employers or recruiters to sort through hundreds, or even thousands, of resumes to fill one position. Hiring managers often just give resumes a cursory glance before deciding if the applicant deserves to be added to the "maybe" pile. While your resume will probably get a more thorough read if you are called for a job interview, ensure that your strongest selling points are immediately visible to make the first cut.

Consider a One-Page Resume If:

- You have less than 10 years of experience.
- You're pursuing a radical career change, and your experience isn't relevant to your new goal.
- You've held one or two positions with one employer.

Consider a Two-Page Resume If:

- You have 10 or more years of experience related to your goal.
- Your field requires technical or engineering skills, and you need space to list and prove your technical knowledge.

Put the most important information at the top of the first page. Lead your resume with a career summary so your key credentials appear at the forefront of the resume. On the second page, include a page number and include your name and contact information.

Consider a Three-Page Resume or Longer If:

- You're a senior-level manager or executive with a long track record of leadership accomplishments.
- You are in an academic or scientific field with an extensive list of publications, speaking engagements, professional courses, licenses or patents.

Multiple-page resumes can use addendum pages after page two. Job seekers can decide whether or not to send the full document or just the first two pages to a potential employer, based on the job opportunity requirements.

Let Monster Resume Writing Services write you a resume that gets results.