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From Marc Cenedella



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Resume

Is Your Resume Old-fashioned?

Resume length, font, and an old-fogey e-mail address are just a few ways to label yourself as antiquated.

By Lisa Vaas

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Remember mulling over whether to buy pure-white or ivory paper stock? Remember the satisfaction of printing your resume on that creamy, heavyweight, Strathmore pure cotton watermark paper? Remember washing your hands so you wouldn't get marks on that pristine curriculum vitae?



OK, put down the paper and slowly back away from the printer. You're committing resomicide: violence to your chances of getting an [interview](#). You're labeling yourself as out of touch, and we're here to help.

Sending paper resumes is just one way to make hiring managers think you're not up to date with standard business practice. AOL e-mail addresses are another, but omitting an e-mail address altogether is the antiquation kiss of death.

We asked professionals, including career coaches, hiring managers and recruiters, what resume practices will label you as passé. Here's what they had to say.

References Available Upon Request? Resume professionals differ on how old/out of touch this time-honored snippet makes you appear. "References Available Upon Request" at the bottom of the resume is not at all out of touch," said Pamela Claughton, a recruiter with Custom Search Group, Inc. "It's fine, and it's a polished and standard way to close a resume. You don't have to reinvent the wheel with a resume, you just have to present your information clearly and in a manner that draws the right kind of attention."

"That phrase doesn't deter employers," agreed David Chernick, a communication expert who chairs PREFIT, a vetting and screening body. It doesn't do anything particularly useful though, Chernick said. "It just wastes space."

Which brings up the question of length: Both overly short and overly long resumes can label you as out of touch.

How many pages? Lucky job applicants do get interviews with long, traditional resumes, Chernick said. Not many, though. "And their luck's gradually running out," he said. "The modern trend is for shorter resumes."

Shortened resumes should be more than mere abbreviations of old, long resumes, however, he said. "Traditional resumes ... are usually long lists of applicants' work and education histories. All that tells a hiring managers is: 'This is what I did.' ... If all you're doing is shortening your old resume,

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--Select--



you're probably telling employers less."

Jennifer Mounce, Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) with [Coach Effect, Inc.](#), worked with a senior level executive who was presenting an eight-page curriculum vitae as his resume. This might have been appropriate had he been applying for jobs in Europe or were he a researcher, but neither applied. Mounce encouraged him to cut back on an entire page of continuing education, shift from paragraph form to a more concise list of bullet points to explain positions, and to shorten the positions' descriptions on the jobs held over 10 years ago. **Many resume professionals recommend leaving off job history older than 10 or 15 years.**

Mounce's rule of thumb:

- **1 page for recent college or post-college graduates**
- 2 pages for experienced professionals
- 3 pages for those with 15+ years of experience

Cut to the chase. Even more important than length is how relevant the resume is to the employer. A resume that meets current standards encapsulates why a hiring manager should bother interviewing you. **To that end, make sure your resume addresses the two or three things that Chernick said employers really want to know:**

- 1. What will you do for me?**
- 2. Have you done it before? And how often?**
- 3. Do you get along with people?**

"My advice for candidates is to think like hiring managers," Chernick said. "Don't bore them with your life history. Concisely write what it is that you've actually done that will be worth something to the employer you're writing it for. If that takes a page, great. If it takes two pages, that's fine as well."

Shun fusty fonts. Courier is the creakiest font you could use. For we fossils born pre-PC, the reason is clear: Courier makes recruiters think that job applicants used a typewriter to create their resume, said Abby Kohut, a staffing consultant, author and blogger at [AbsolutelyAbby.com](#).

Marilyn Santiesteban's experience is that Gen-Xers consider Times New Roman to be crusty. They do approve of Arial, said Santiesteban, a [careers blogger](#) and the director of career services at talent acquisition and management consultancy [King & Bishop](#), given that it's a sleek, sans-serif font.

Nix the fax. Another sign of being passé is to list a fax number or pager on the top of your resume, Kohut said. A phone and cell phone are all that is necessary today, she said.

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Include e-mail at the top of your resume. Neglecting to include a professional e-mail address at the top of a resume screams "out of touch." Make it a professional one, as opposed to a cutesy e-mail address or one that advertises that you share your e-mail with your spouse or kids, and stay away from Hotmail or AOL. According to Santiesteban, younger hiring managers tend to consider AOL and Hotmail e-mail address antiquated. **They prefer the more common Gmail addresses.**

Forget the fancy paper. It was all the rage a number of years ago, said [career counselor Holly Klose](#), but, aside from the fact that you will [submit most resumes electronically](#), fancy paper is a thing of the past. "It either shows that you're over a certain age, or that you're new to the workforce and received advice from someone of a certain age," she said.

Don't include street addresses in contact info. Phone number and e-mail address is sufficient, particularly given the fact that personal safety is more of a concern today, said [careers author J.T. Kirk](#).

Don't include your GPA. "So you graduated with a 3.5 MBA from Columbia? Great," Kirk said. "Too bad your resume is being evaluated by someone with a 4.0 from Harvard School of Business. No sense in limiting your chances of getting an interview with too much information." Only provide GPA in the cover letter, Kirk said, and only if it is asked for in the job ad.

Lisa Vaas covers resume writing techniques and the technology behind the job search for TheLadders.

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