

STYLE POINTS TO USE WHEN CREATING YOUR RESUME



Never use the word “I” in a resume.

Tempting as it may be, when you’re writing your resume, don’t use the word “I” – it does not fit with the “business” style for a resume. Sometimes you’ll find yourself having to play a little bit of a game to figure out ways to rephrase things to avoid using “I” in the “Skills/Abilities” or “Work/Volunteer Experience” sections, but you can do it!

Be consistent in your style for addresses, phone numbers, etc.

For a number of things that will be in your resume – addresses and phone numbers, to name two – there will be several correct ways you can write them. The important thing here is to remember to be consistent; pick one style and use it all the way through your resume. Doing this well shows an attention to detail that could mean the difference between a potential employer considering you for a job or putting your resume aside. Examples:

PHONE NUMBERS – First, always include the area code (but not the “1” that you would dial for long distance). There are three acceptable ways to list phone numbers:

Hyphenated, as in: 541-555-1212 ... use a hyphen after the area code and after the next three digits, and don’t put a space on either side of the hyphens.

Parentheses, as in: (541) 555-1212 ... use parentheses around the area code, put a space after the second parentheses, don’t put a hyphen between the parentheses and the rest of the phone number, and put a hyphen between the next three digits of the phone number and the last four digits of the phone number.

Dots, as in: 541.555.1212 ... do it just like you would in the hyphenated style, but use a period rather than a hyphen.

If a phone number needs an extension, then put one space after the last digit of the number and then “ext.”, followed by the extension number, as in: 541-555-1212 ext. 15

ADDRESSES – There are a couple of things to remember when writing your own address or the addresses of your references.

State names: There are three acceptable ways to list a state; just be sure to use the same one whenever you refer to a state. The easiest is to spell out the full name of the state – Oregon, California, Washington. The second is to use the postal abbreviation, which is generally the first two letters of the state’s name (there are exceptions to this), with both letters capitalized – OR, CA, WA. The third is to use the Associated Press abbreviations for a state, which is generally the first three to five letters of a state’s name, with only the first letter capitalized, and concluding with a period – Ore., Calif., Wash. You can find a complete list of both postal and Associated Press abbreviations at: <http://www.nyu.edu/classes/copyXediting/STABBREV.html> . In the chart at this website, if no abbreviation is shown in the AP style, write out the full name of the state.

And remember, you always need a comma between the name of a city and the name or abbreviation of the state – Corvallis, Oregon / Corvallis, OR / Corvallis, Ore.

Street names: For the “direction” of a street, you should abbreviate the direction down to the one or two letters, both capital letters. It’s permissible to either use periods or not use periods – N.W. / NW; S / S. – but make sure you do it the same way all the time.

For the last part of the name of a street, you can either write it out completely or abbreviate it. If you abbreviate, use the standard abbreviations – Street, St.; Boulevard, Blvd.; Avenue, Ave.; Place, Pl.; Drive, Dr. Way should be spelled out. For apartment numbers or suite numbers, do not use the symbol #; use the standard abbreviations of apartment = Apt.; suite = Ste. Unit should be spelled out. You can find a complete list of abbreviations for street names and unit numbers at:

http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/lis/help/helpdesk/documentation/banner/data_standards/address/street_adrs.htm

Remember, the name of the street is a proper name; capitalize the first letter of every word in the street name.

Examples of address style:

John Doe 4444 NW Highland Dr. Corvallis, OR 97330 541-555-1212	John Doe 4444 N.W. Highland Drive Corvallis, Ore. 97330 (541) 555-1212	John Doe 4444 N.W. Highland Dr., Apt. 2 Corvallis, Oregon 97330 541.555.1212 ext. 92
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DATES - Generally, when you're listing work and volunteer experiences, providing the month and year that you started and finished each position will suffice. Don't use the hyphen/slash style for dates: "6/08" or "6-08"; spell out the month and use the complete four-digit identifier for the year. You can either use the standard abbreviation for the month or spell it out, and you must put a comma between the month and the year. Examples – Jan., 2008; March, 2009. You can find a complete listing of month abbreviations at <http://lts.library.cornell.edu/lts/pp/spp/mosabbr.cfm#english> ; use the table for the English abbreviations.

SEMICOLONS - When you're listing several things in a row and one of the items that you're listing has a comma contained in it (like the name of a city – say, Corvallis, OR), you need to use something other than a comma to separate the items in the list – and that's a semicolon. So when you're listing a school or someplace that you worked or volunteered, it should look like this:

Richey's Market; Corvallis, Oregon

This may also be used in listing your duties for an employer or somewhere that you volunteered, as in:

Washed, fed and entertained children; washed, dried and put away dishes.

MISCELLANEOUS PUNCTUATION - At the end of each of your skills, or where you're listing your duties with an employer or at a place that you've volunteered, you can either end that with a period or not end it with a period – just be sure that you do it the same way all the way through your resume.

ACRONYMS: When you're referring to anything by its initials, always spell it out on first reference, such as Oregon State University or Crescent Valley High School. You can shorten it to OSU or CVHS in any further references. And, even though most people in this area will know what type of school it is, include that in the full name – don't just say "Oregon State" or "Crescent Valley" on first reference.

BLANK LINES, INDENTATIONS – You can use blank lines in your resume to make it easier to read – a blank line both before and after one of the headings like "EDUCATION", or a blank line only before those headings but not after those headings, etc.. The important thing is to use the same style all the way through. Also, when indenting, be consistent on when you indent things, and in the distance you indent them.

PROOFREADING MARKS – You may find some or all of the following marks on your resume when it is returned to you. These proofreading marks will guide you in making the necessary corrections to your resume:

| = insert a space here – example: cooked, cleaned|and washed clothing

⌒ = eliminate a space here – example: enjoy playing basket⌒ball

/ = make this capital letter a lowercase letter – example: they /Can't win

= = make this lowercase letter a capital letter – example: Oregon state wins

⌒ = eliminate this letter and the space that removing it creates – example:

did yard⌒work for neighbors

⊖ = eliminate these letters and the spaces that removing them creates – example:

we put things toge~~ee~~ther in a hurry

⌒ = eliminate this word and close the remaining words to within one space of each

other – example: we can do it ~~it~~ together

⌒ = eliminate this letter and replace it with this letter – example: go ^o⌒ut and play

⌒ = eliminate this symbol and replace it with this symbol – example: they can't

wait for it ³⌒ but they must wait for a while

^{word} – = eliminate this word and replace it with this word – example: go ^{get} ~~fetch~~ wood

| = eliminate this letter or symbol – example: been swimming for seven years|

⌒ = switch the order of these letters - example: we went ⌒t school

⌒ = switch the order of these words – example: we to⌒went school