

# DISPELLING THE ONE-PAGE RÉSUMÉ MYTH

& OTHER TIPS TO UNDERSTAND THE RÉSUMÉ WRITING PROFESSION



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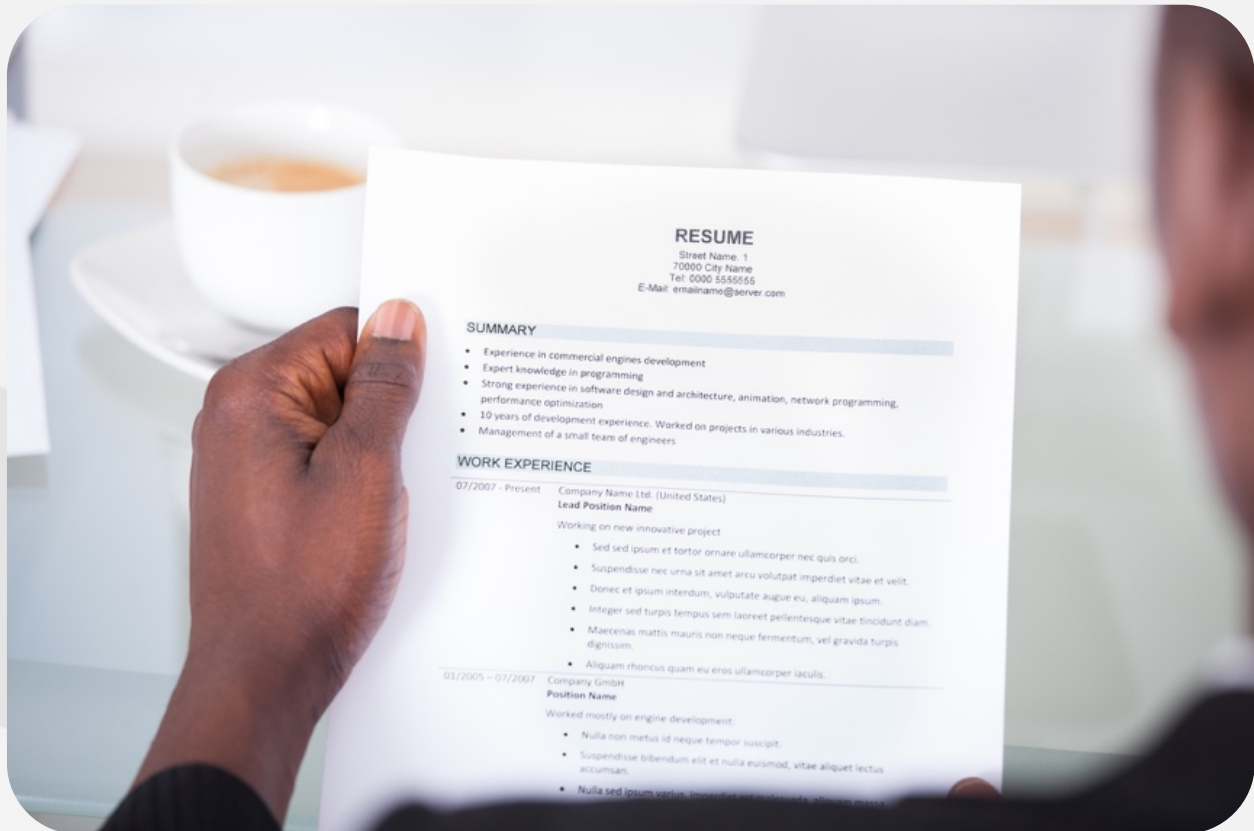
## Introduction

There is no “rule” that a résumé should be only one page. In fact, there are many instances when a multi-page résumé is not only appropriate, it’s expected.

Length is not the only consideration for a résumé’s effectiveness. Yet, the one-page résumé myth persists. Jobseekers are being misled that recruiters, hiring managers, and HR professionals won’t read a résumé that is longer than one page. That’s simply not true.

While recent research shows that a résumé will be read for only seconds when it is first screened, the first review is only to determine if it is a match for the position. If the jobseeker is considered a serious candidate, the résumé will be read again.

## What a Résumé Screener REALLY Does



Jobseekers who believe a HR professional won't read a two-page résumé should stop and consider the résumé screening process. The résumé screener's boss is asking him or her to come up with four or five people to bring in for an interview.

If a candidate with 5-10 years of experience tries to condense that to fit an artificial one-page limitation, you're asking that HR person to make a decision about you, based on what amounts to a few paragraphs.

Given a choice between a well-written two-page résumé or a cluttered one-page résumé which omits notable accomplishments in the interest of saving space, the HR professional is likely to choose the longer résumé.

If you submit a two-page résumé and the person reading it decides you're not a match for the job, he or she will stop reading. But if you do seem to fit the job requirements, that person will want to know even more about you. A well-organized two-page résumé can actually make it easier for the screener to do his or her job by allowing him or her to easily determine if you're a good match for the position.

## So Why Does The One-Page Myth Persist?

Some recruiters are vocal about their desire for a one-page résumé. However, not all recruiters share this preference. There are certain recruiters who say they will only read one-page résumés. However, recruiters are responsible for placing fewer than 25% of candidates in new jobs, and not all recruiters subscribe to the one-page limit. If a particular recruiter requests a shorter résumé, you can always provide a one-page version to him or her.

When hiring managers and HR professionals are surveyed about résumé length, the majority express a preference for résumés that are one page OR two pages – the general consensus is “as long as needed to convey the applicant’s qualifications.”

College professors also share some of the blame for perpetuating the one-page résumé myth. Some professors – who have no connection to the employment world – believe “their way” is the right way to do things. They provide a template to their students and require advisees to use that format, even if the person is a non-traditional student who has an extensive work history or career path that sets them apart from other job candidates with similar educational backgrounds.

It would be unusual for most 21-year-old students to need two pages to describe their education and work history, but it’s not unrealistic to expect that an accomplished graduate might have internships, projects, activities, and honors that would make it necessary to exceed the one-page length.

## “Do As I Say, Not As I Do”

If you doubt the “Do as I say, not as I do” approach, ask any professor to see his or her résumé. Chances are, it will be at least two pages long to include consulting work and works published, in addition to classroom teaching experience. But professors call their résumés “curriculum vitas,” so they don’t have to follow their own one-page résumé limit.

## Online Résumés

Résumés submitted online are also less likely to be affected by the one-page résumé myth. That's because the one-page format is unique to the printed page. Résumés uploaded to company websites aren't affected by page limits. Approximately 30 percent of résumés are only stored electronically. They're never printed out, so the screener never knows it's more than a one-page document.

Length does matter. Your résumé should only be as long as it needs to be to tell the reader exactly what he or she needs to know to call you in for an interview ... and not one word more.

## Guidelines for Deciding Résumé Length

- If your résumé spills over onto a second page for only a few lines, it's worth editing the text or adjusting the font, margins, and/or line spacing to fit it onto one page.
- Don't bury key information on the second page. If the first page doesn't hook the reader, he or she isn't even going to make it to the second page.
- Don't be afraid to go beyond two pages if your experience warrants it. Senior executives often require three- or four-page résumés, as do computer programmers and many professionals (physicians, lawyers, professors).
- Traditional college students and those with five years or less of experience should be able to fit their résumés onto one page. Most everyone else, however, can (and should) use one page OR two.
- Make sure that everything you include – regardless of length – is relevant to your job target and what the hiring manager will want to know about you!



## Explaining Résumé Tense



Résumés use a unique style of writing to emphasize brevity in order to maximize the reader’s time. Many people find this style of writing a bit confusing when they first encounter it, so I wanted to clarify for you how résumés are written.

- Résumés use a version of first-person style, but omit the subject (“I” / “me” / “my”).
- We use present tense for activities you currently perform, and past tense for past activities and achievements (particularly for older positions on your résumé, but also to describe responsibilities you once performed in your current job, but no longer do).
- To emphasize brevity, we remove most articles (“a” / “an” / “the” / “my”), except when doing so would hurt the readability of the sentence.
- We write in a strong, active style, emphasizing action verbs (“direct” / “manage” / “conduct” / “develop”) instead of passive descriptions of activity.
- Most often, numbers one through nine are spelled out; numbers 10 and above are expressed as numbers.

If you have any specific questions about the language used in your résumé, let me know! Otherwise, please be assured that I have written your résumé to conform to the generally-accepted principles of résumé writing.

## 100% Payment Up Front, Please

Your résumé is customized just for you – no other jobseeker has the exact combination of experience, education, knowledge, and skills that you possess. Consequently, your résumé is a unique document designed to tell your personal story to capture the attention of the hiring manager and generate a request for an interview. Just like a custom suit, the résumé cannot be “tailored” to any other jobseeker. It tells your story, and only “fits” you.

It is customary practice in the résumé writing industry to collect payment in full, in advance, before beginning the résumé project. Not only does this demonstrate your commitment to collaborating with me to design powerful documents for you to use in your job search, it commits me to setting aside the time and energy to focus on your project. I only work with a limited number of clients at any one time, in order to provide you with personalized service.

Because of this commitment, the fees for your résumé development cannot be refunded once we begin working together, as you are not only securing my time and attention to support you in your job search, but you will also receive access to my proprietary processes that are designed to help you land interviews and job offers.





## Can I Get A “Generic” Résumé?

Unfortunately, it is not possible to create an effective “generic” résumé that will be truly effective in helping you land your dream job. A résumé that is not tailored towards a specific type of position is a “career obituary” and tells the story of the past – not the potential you have to offer to a prospective employer and how your specific experience, education, and skills can benefit the company or organization.

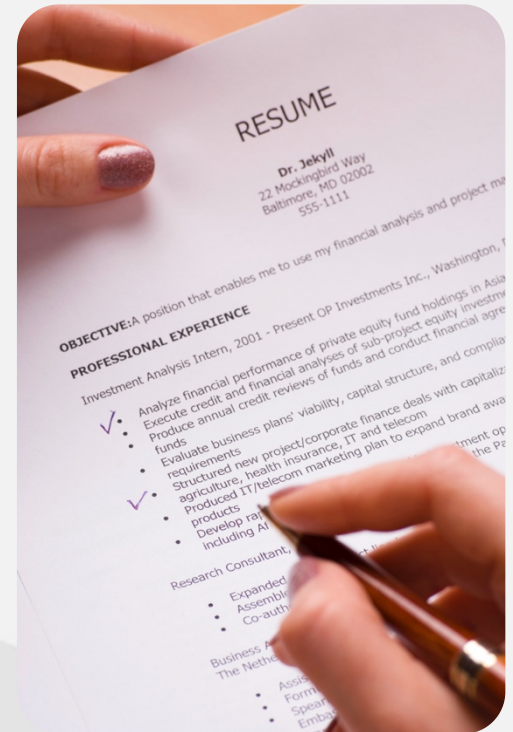
An interview-winning résumé spells out the specific value that you have to offer the prospective employer without including additional, irrelevant experience. To create such a document, it is important to understand the specific needs of that particular role – and, in many cases, tailoring the résumé for the needs of a specific company.

With this in mind, it is important for you to identify a specific job title that you are pursuing, and even more helpful to collect 3-5 job postings for this type of position, even if these job postings are no longer active and even if you do not wish to apply to this specific company.

Being able to incorporate relevant keywords while describing current and past work experience is one way to demonstrate value to a prospective employer. An analysis of relevant job postings helps make this possible.

Note, however, that you can craft multiple versions of your résumé in order to target different types of job postings – assuming, however, that your relevant experience and education is transferable to the different types of positions being pursued. Most writers charge 50% of the original cost for a second version. This can vary from writer to writer.

In contrast, however, please note that you are limited to a single LinkedIn account, so it may be necessary for your LinkedIn profile to be a bit more “generic” than a customized résumé used to target a specific job type.



## Why Do You Charge More Than Other Résumé Services?

I understand there are a lot of online services charging \$97 or less for a résumé. These are considered “résumé writing mills”. They are skilled at formatting résumé but not skilled at telling your career story.

There is a vast difference of telling a career story and making a pretty looking resume. The latter lacks depth and when used, takes longer to land a job as it does not tell the recruiter or potential hiring manager you have the skills for the specific job. Also, many times, those services create a “generic résumé” and we already covered that in the prior section. However,

if you just want your résumé formatted, and not written d by a professional résumé writer and coach who can highlight your talent, skills, and abilities, then go for it.

Each résumé writer sets his or her own rates, depending on skills and specialization, certifications, knowledge, and experience. The price for your project will also depend on the level of the project – a résumé for a senior executive is obviously priced different than a résumé for a new college graduate.

Fit is most important when choosing a résumé writer to work with you. You want a résumé writer who you are comfortable working with, because developing your résumé is a collaborative process.

Working with a résumé writer is an investment in your career. Most jobseekers who work with a career professional find a job faster and earn more at their next job than they’re currently making. So remember, it’s more about price – it’s about value. Make sure your résumé writer is the right fit for you!



**As always, iRock is here to help.** If you want or need assistance in telling your career story to land an interview, visit our website at [irockresumes.com](http://irockresumes.com), call us at 469-666-0753 or send an email to [irock@irockresumes.com](mailto:irock@irockresumes.com). We will be happy to assist you!