

# How to Screen Resumes

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To effectively screen resumes, you'll want to have your job description and a list of the qualifications you're looking for in front of you. As you evaluate the resumes, this will help you to eliminate candidates whose resumes do not show these qualifications. I find it very helpful to screen resumes by highlighting the parts of the resume that match the job description.

In addition to just looking for the appropriate qualifications, there are other signs to look for

Signs of a sound resume

- **Sufficient detail:** Although you don't want an overly wordy résumé, you do want to see a clear description of the applicant's accomplishments and skills in previous jobs. Be sure to look for details about how they increased revenues, lowered costs, or improved productivity.
- **Continual advancement:** Steady progression into more responsible roles indicates someone who is likely able to take on new responsibilities as your business grows.
- **Targeted information:** A great sign that a candidate may be able to adapt to your needs starts with including reference points from the job posting or outside research and explain how their qualifications can benefit your business.
- **Clean content:** A serious candidate should have a resume that is free of typos and grammatical mistakes. A clean, well-organized document is a sign of professionalism and attention to detail.
- **Followed Instructions:** If you asked for a resume with salary history, did you get it? Nothing is more exasperating than asking a person to follow a set of instructions and not have your requests complied with. If they can't follow directions in sending their resume, will they be able to follow directions on the job?

There are some red flags you should look at for; paying attention to these will save you many hours of wasted interview hours

- **Fluff:** Some job candidates try to pad their resume with information that makes them look more qualified than they really are, some examples are writing every minute detail of their previous jobs, overusing the thesaurus, or detailing personal hobbies or interests.
- **Vagueness:** View with suspicion phrases such as *familiar with*, *knowledge of*, or *understand how*. This type of wording can indicate that the applicant may not have the actual experience he claims or that his experience is more limited than you need.
- **Jumpy work history:** A series of short terms of employment can be the sign of a job hopper or problem employee. But if they seem to possess the right skills and experience, be sure to ask for more background about these positions and the reasons and circumstances surrounding the applicant's exit from prior employers to see if you detect a pattern.
- **Unprofessional mail address:** A job applicant's e-mail address may seem like the last thing that matters, but a silly or inappropriate address may hint at someone who's not serious about his career or lacks the maturity you may be looking for in a potential hire.