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Six Overlooked Mistakes That May Be
Costing You an Interview

When we submit a résumé for a position, for better or worse, we are being judged on much more than the merit of our work experience. We are also being judged on more than the content of the résumé and the way we present it. Employers and recruiters take notice of small mistakes, which are often overlooked by the writer. Some of them may not even be readily classifiable as mistakes, but are major issues that make identifying your résumé and tying it to you more difficult. What are these small things that may be costing you an interview?

1. Is each file properly named? What is the file name of your résumé? It should not be generic, like "Resume 2016" or "New Resume." Yes, the file name should refer to just what it is, a résumé, but it should also include your full name. If it gets saved to the recruiter's computer or in a candidate database, there is a strong possibility that it will be misplaced. They will not take the time to sift through old emails and locate your résumé unless you are the No. 1 superstar in your industry. Don't take the chance of it getting lost.

Additionally, some employers allow you to upload one to five résumés. In that case, you need to make sure that you know which résumé you are using. Choose a file convention that makes sense to you and to other people. You should still label them all with the word "résumé" and your full name, but you should also reference what that particular résumé emphasizes, such as "Editing" or "Digital Marketing." Similarly, the file name for your cover letter needs to have "cover letter" in it as well as your full name, and the same goes for writing samples, portfolios and any reference letters. These items should only be included if specifically requested.

2. Do you have a professional email address? This does not have to be something fancy; it could just be your first initial and last name or your full name. However, if you have an email address from your earlier years such as partyprincess@ or hotstuff@, you need to create a new email account. There is absolutely no excuse for not doing so, as they are free. An odd email address does not show personality and humor as you may think. It flat out looks unprofessional.

3. Does your email signature contain a quote? While your signature quote and emojis may be heartwarming, there really is no place for them in professional email exchanges with potential employers. And that's true when you apply as well as any email follow up. You may be attempting to inject personality, but it is very distracting and could offend someone without your intending to. The simple fact is you just don't know what people's sensitivities are, so why take the chance? Show your personality through your résumé, cover letter and emails.

4. Does your email display name match your résumé? A mismatch between the name that shows up as "from" when you send an email to someone and your file name or résumé header is a no-no. This is extremely confusing for an employer and has the potential to cause issues in a candidate database, which again will decrease your chances of hearing back from an employer. You should be using your full legal name or the one you use professionally, and it should appear the same in all places. Think about it: If you have Angie Smith as your name in the email "from" display, but "Angela Hecht" as your file name for your résumé, how will the person know which is correct? And how will the computer know how to file your résumé? Be consistent so that potential employers and their systems won't have to guess.

5. Have you checked for careless mistakes in your résumé? We aren't talking only about grammar and misspelled words here…if there is a comma hanging out on its own between two words, that's a problem. Are there two spaces after some periods and only one space after others? These are some examples of careless mistakes that could cost you. The way to avoid these is to print out your résumé and use a pen to mark it up. You should also have a friend review your résumé and correct any mistakes. Don't forget to go back to your file and correct them before you hit "send"!

6. Do you have track change markings in the résumé? You may be surprised, but many people end up sending out their résumé with review markings still in it. They likely forgot to accept changes. This is both easily avoidable and necessary to avoid. Open and review your file as many times as you need to ensure there are no strange markings still in there.

Sending a high-quality résumé and application is not a breeze, but it is easy to avoid these six careless mistakes. It is highly worthwhile to take the time to do so, or else you run the risk of being overlooked for a job you may be the perfect fit for.