

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a glowing, blue-tinted network of people icons. The icons are connected by thin lines, forming a web. The central icon is the largest and brightest, while others are smaller and dimmer, creating a sense of depth and focus. The background is dark, making the glowing elements stand out.

GET THE  
**Job**

YOUR NAME HERE

# What Your Cover Letter Should Say About You

If the resume is a snapshot of your professional achievements, the cover letter should offer a peek into your personality. Many job-seekers make the mistake of submitting bland, standard cover letters for openings they are targeting.

Hiring managers and recruiters want to see a little personalization in your cover letter, so let them have it. This means including specific stories or examples of how you have proven your mettle in the workplace.

## FIRST OR THIRD PERSON?

One of the biggest differences between the cover letter and the resume is how you address yourself. Always use a first-person, conversational tone in your cover letter. Your resume is a more basic, straightforward representation of you, while your cover letter is

supposed to show a softer side of you.

While first person is preferred, avoid using “I” too many times. Starting every sentence with “I” will leave your letter very ego-focused, which can be a red flag to hiring managers. Use “we” or “our” often in your letter to convey your team spirit.

## CUSTOM, CUSTOM, CUSTOM

Many companies will receive hundreds of resumes and cover letters for a single position. How do you make sure your documents stand out?

When it comes to the

cover letter, it's important to take a lighter and more anecdote-driven approach. Does your prospective company require project management experience for its vacant position? Use a paragraph or bullet point to describe how you have planned and led critical initiatives in past or current positions.

## KNOW YOUR TARGET

Cover letters, much like the resume, are keyword driven. This requires you to do some research on your target company before sending in your cover letter.

Try to match as many

keywords as possible in your cover letter with the job announcement. This will help your letter perform better in keyword searches conducted by job recruitment software that many companies use today.

Once your letter makes it to an actual human reviewer, it must tell your story in a quick, engaging way. Mention where you heard about the vacancy and why it attracted you. Include your thoughts on a recent company initiative or accomplishment. This will show your hiring manager your dedication to becoming a valuable, committed employee.

The cover letter in particular offers you a golden opportunity to tell your story in a way that resonates with recruiters and hiring managers.





# Cyber Security

Looking for an exciting, pressure-packed job with a lot of responsibility? The cyber security field is growing at an incredible pace, especially considering how companies continue to shift their information and systems online.

Professionals in the cyber industry have noticed a shift in focus over the past decade or so. As more reports of large-scale data breaches hit your local newspaper, the cyber function has rapidly become one of the most important for a business to hire quality, innovative professionals.

Think you have what it takes? Check out our tips below for pursuing a career in cyber security.

## TYPES OF CYBER ROLES

Penn State University's cyber security program prepares students for multiple roles within the industry. Here are a few, according to the university's master's program:

- Information Assurance Manager
- Intel Analyst
- Information Assurance/Security Engineer
- Network Intel Analyst
- Enterprise Architect
- Cyber Network Security Engineer
- Information Assurance Analyst
- Catastrophe Risk Analyst
- Computer System Security Analyst
- Systems Integration Analyst
- Information Technology Analyst
- Information Technology Consulting Manager

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Criminal attacks on healthcare computer systems are up 125 percent since 2010,

according to a recent study by the Ponemon Institute. We have seen massive hacks into retail companies across the country.

It seems that no industry is immune to hackers focused on stealing customer information, trade secrets, credit card data and medical health records. The job of a cyber professional is to stop criminals who are oftentimes experts at remaining undetected.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A CYBER PRO

The specific responsibilities of a cyber professional vary depending on particular roles. Engineering and quality assurance professionals are 'in the weeds' as some experts like to call it. This means they are experts in coding and dealing with emerging technologies to create infrastructure, information systems and software.

The further up the ladder you go into management, the more important it becomes for you to understand all functions of a business' operations. The pinnacle career role in the field is Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), who oversees entire cyber departments and has responsibility for building teams, strategies and programs to defend against attacks.

Most CISOs start at the technical level and work their way up, accruing critical business leadership and experience along the way.



# Practice for an Interview

**Y**our resume made it through the initial review phase and you got the call for an interview. Congratulations, you're halfway there! With only a few steps left to land your new job, it's time to get serious.

Preparing for an interview can be a stressful experience, especially if it is at a company you are excited about. Besides putting together the right professional outfit and appearance for your talk, it's important to refine some of your answers to some standard interview questions coming your way.

Below are some tips on getting ready for your next big interview. Good luck!

Practice makes perfect: The old cliché is true. If you want to knock your interview out of the park, you have to prepare yourself for success. This includes finding a list of general interview questions and rehearsing your answers, which should be only a few sentences long to keep the conversation moving.

Once you're comfortable with your responses, ask a friend or family member to have a mock interview with you. This will help you work on making eye contact as you answer questions.

Here are a few general questions you can expect during your interview:

- Can you tell us about yourself and your background?
- What drew you to this position and why do you think you're the right fit?
- Why are you looking to leave your current job? Or what made you leave your pre-



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vious position?

## THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

Another cliché that is particularly relevant for the job interview is “You only have one chance to make a great first impression.” How you handle yourself as a professional during an interview can literally make or break your chances of landing the job.

Companies want a polished, enthusiastic professional, especially if you will be working with customers or internal leadership on special projects. Everybody likes to work with someone who is pleasant and collaborative. Giving off a good vibe and not disparaging past employers are two ways of making sure you fit the bill.

## INTERVIEWER STYLES

It's important to be ready for different interview styles. Some hiring managers are very cut and dry. They will ask a few general questions and move on with their day.

Others are more in-depth and looking for detailed, thoughtful answers. The best interviewees are able to “understand the room,” mean-

ing able to analyze the interviewer's style and craft answers according to their expectations.

If your interviewer laughs a lot and tells personal stories, go along with them by telling a couple of your own. Just remember to keep things short and sweet. There will be more time for chatting once you land the job!

# 3 Common Mistakes

**A**sk 10 people what makes a great resume and you're likely to get 10 different answers. The art of writing a quality resume is all about meeting a particular company's requirements on style, content and formatting.

An electrical engineer's resume is going to look and read differently than that of a graphic designer. That's because professionals in these fields have different skill sets and job requirements. The same holds true for all industries, including nursing, cyber security, writing, warehousing and general labor.

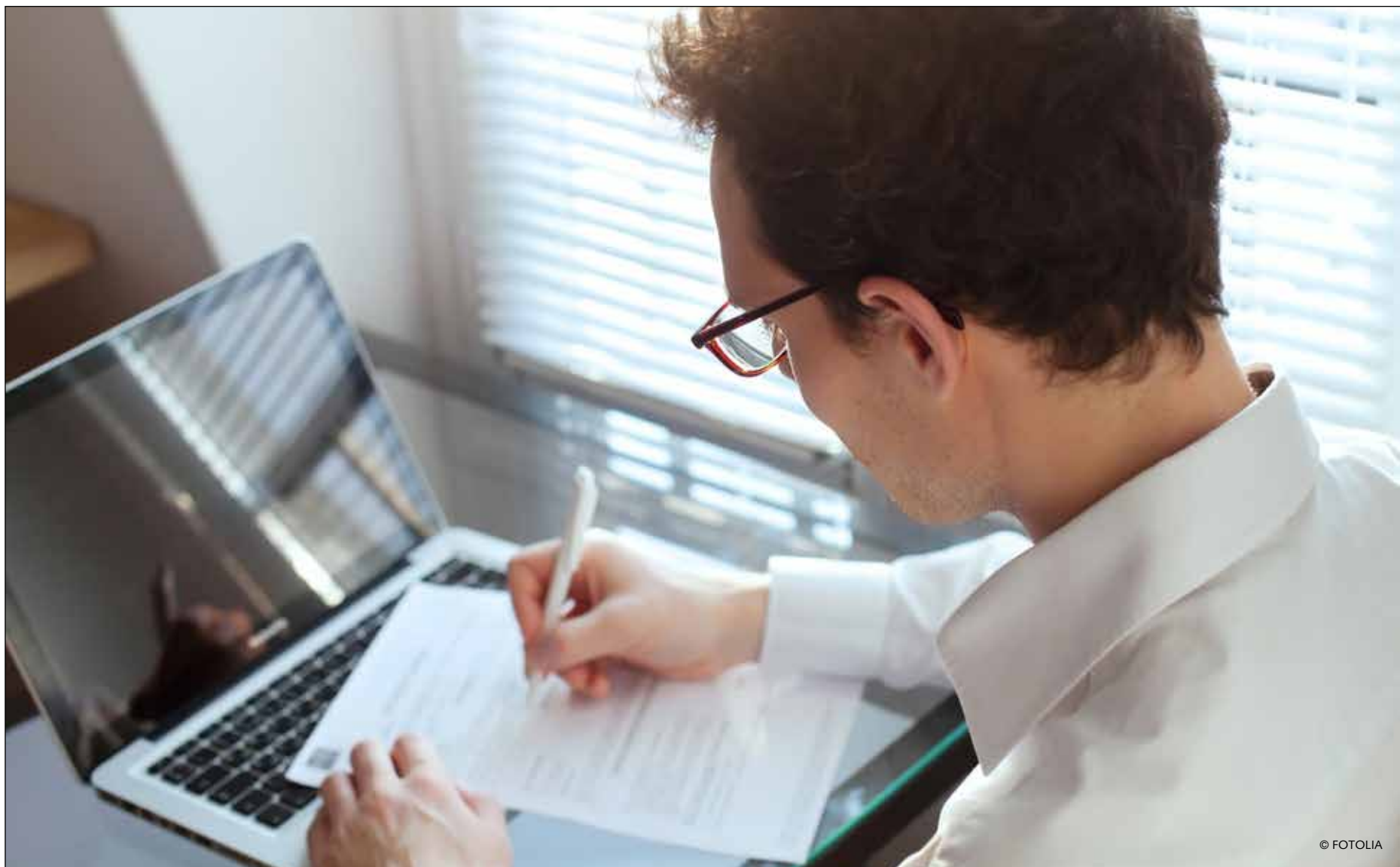
One thing is universal, however. There are specific mistakes every professional must avoid if they hope to attract and retain the attention of hiring managers.

Here are three of the most common resume mistakes made by job-seekers:

## **COOKIE-CUTTER CONTENT**

Many in the employment industry liken your chances of landing a job on your initial application as improbable. Some studies report that the average job-seeker spends six months to land a new position.

This can be scary news for those on the market, so it's vital that your resume tells your story in a powerful way, meaning no cookie-cutter content that leaves hiring managers unimpressed. Describing yourself as "results-focused" and "analytical" just doesn't cut it today. Wow your reviewer with a clean, crisp representation of your personal brand. Customize your document with relevant keywords to



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make sure it has a fighting chance against the competition.

## **TYPOS AND MISTAKES**

A quick Google search for "resume mistakes" reveals a long list of goofs and gaffes. Don't end up in the job-seeker hall of shame! Carefully proof-read your resume's content to

make sure it is airtight. Look for missing apostrophes or incorrect years.

Make sure company names are spelled correctly. Read your resume from the bottom-up. This will keep you from involuntarily stringing words together without really reading them, which can happen when you read something multiple

times. This strategy can help you spot missing words throughout your resume that you may have skipped over before.

## **TOO MUCH INFORMATION**

Hiring managers spend an average of six seconds on an initial resume review, according to the online job search ser-

vice TheLadders. And in those six seconds, recruiters are looking for very specific information that should be easy to find.

Burying your college degree or key software skills behind a lot of content focused on typical job tasks is a mistake. Put the most important information front and center to make things easy on hiring managers.



# Age Discrimination

**A** recent study by AARP, Inc. (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) revealed that American seniors face ageism in the employment sector. The organization's poll of employees found that one-third reported that they or someone they know has experienced age discrimination in the last four years.

Other key findings included:

- Sixty-four percent of respondents think that people over age 50 face age discrimination in the workplace.
- Of that 64 percent, 92 percent say ageism is very or somewhat common.

Also, according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission more than 20,000 age discrimination reports are filed every year. So what is the law, and what can you do to make sure you have a fair opportunity?

## THE BASICS

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 protects workers 40 and older from personnel decisions based solely on age in hiring, firing, layoffs, promotions or demotions. The act applies to employers with at least 20 workers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports more than 20 percent of workers in the United States, some 33 million, are ages 55 and up. That statistics underscores the importance of regulations like those found in the Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

## HOW TO GET HELP

There are resources at your disposal if you need help mak-



ing an age discrimination claim. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (800-669-4000) can provide detailed information on age discrimina-

tion laws in your area. The National Employment Lawyers Association offers a lawyer-search function for discrimination cases to help you

find a professional near you.

Be honest and open with your employer if you feel discriminated against. With several layers of management, there

may be discrimination happening that the company would not condone. Take your case to the right people to make sure your voice is heard.

# Job Search Etiquette

**W**e all know the job search can be one of the most stressful experiences in our lives, especially if you are without a paycheck and living week to week. Even in the face of seemingly insurmountable anxiety, it pays to retain a strong etiquette in your search.

This includes remaining positive during your interactions with hiring managers, interviewers and even in everyday engagements. You never know where your next job lead is going to come from – the gym, the grocery store or even your child’s school are plausible places – so it’s a good idea to be respectful and courteous to all those you come in contact with.

## THE POSITIVE INTERVIEW

Every interview can have a few curveballs thrown in. Whether it’s an odd question or last-minute scheduling change, interviewers will be assessing how you handle the situation to learn more about your personality. In fact, some companies build in these types of challenges just to test you!

When you do get called in for an interview, it’s important to keep your answers focused, make consistent eye contact and remain calm under pressure. Be sure to have a couple of company-focused questions ready for your interviewers too. This shows initiative and that you’re genuinely interested in the company.

## SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION

Adhere to this model for post-interview outreach to



optimize your chances of making it further along in the hiring process:

- Draft a brief, half-page thank you document that mentions your specific interaction with your interviewers.

This can include a project or achievement you mentioned in your interview and how it relates to the prospective job.

- Also in the document, be grateful and offer your appreciation for the company

extending and conducting the interview.

- Copy, paste and send your “thank you note” in the body of an email to your main contact with the company.

- Avoid any further fol-

low-up, as you don’t want to be considered an inconvenience to a busy hiring manager. Be patient and wait for contact – and feel confident that you have left a positive impression of yourself.

# Career Coaches

**A**thletes need coaches to help keep them on track and focused on the goal ahead. Why should trying to land a new job be any different? As a job-seeker, you're facing an uphill battle. Hundreds of applicants may be vying for the same job as you.

Maybe you're not quite sure how to maximize the time you spend looking for a new job. Enter your professional career coach. These trained professionals are here to help you navigate the process of landing your next role.

They are oftentimes highly connected to recruiters, headhunters, resume writers and interview coaches. In fact, they may actually handle all of these functions under the umbrella of their own company.

Consider finding a certified career coach to help you along your way. Look for credentials and references from other job-seekers before cutting a check. Remember that word of mouth is important for these types of service professionals, so take referrals very seriously.

## CAREER COACH DUTIES

Many career coaches specialize in one particular level of employment. For example, some may be experts in helping new college graduates land their first full-time role, while others may be more focused on guiding senior executives through the job-search process.

Regardless of their target audience, career coaches primarily execute the same tasks. According to Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N.C., here are a few basic duties of the career coaches it hires to serve its stu-



dent population:

- Conducts career development functions, including administering and interpreting career assessment instruments.
- Designs and implements outreach programs to promote and encourage use of career services.
- Monitors and maintains protocol that provides support for high-demand jobs, certifi-

cates, degree programs and non-credit training options.

- Advises students individually and in class presentations regarding resume writing, interviewing and job search skills.

No matter your experience level, it's convenient to have a professional in your corner for questions on resume trends, industry-specific keywords and

recruiter connections.

## LOOK FOR UPFRONT PRICING

Pricing is key if you're considering a few different career coaches for your final choice. The first step is figuring out how much you are allocating to this portion of your job search. Like a new suit, haircut or tie, hiring a career coach should be

considered an investment into your professional advancement.

If you're researching career coaches, be sure to ask about their rates before getting started. Find out how they collect payments and be wary of services that do not offer money-back guarantees if you are unsatisfied with the final services.