

EQUIPPD · FREE RESOURCE

The Resume That Gets Read

Six seconds, one page, and the bullet formula that carries it.

What recruiters actually scan for, how to write bullets that prove something, and the mistakes that get you cut.

Built for the Equippd community · equippd.io
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How your resume is actually read

Not carefully. A first-pass screen is measured in seconds, and it is looking for a small number of things: does this person do the kind of work we are hiring for, at roughly the level we need, with evidence attached. Everything else is noise on that pass.

This is not a reason to despair. It is a design brief. You are writing something to be **scanned** first and read second, and most people write only for the second case.

The six-second test

Hand your resume to someone for six seconds, take it back, and ask what they remember. If they cannot tell you what you do and one specific thing you achieved, the layout has failed — regardless of how good the content is.

Structure

Section	Where	What goes in it
Name & contact	Top	Name, phone, email, LinkedIn, GitHub or portfolio. No full address
Education	Top, while a student	School, degree, graduation date. GPA only if it helps you
Experience	Main body	Internships, jobs, significant roles. Reverse chronological
Projects	Main body	Critical if you lack work experience. Treat like experience
Skills	Bottom	Languages, tools, frameworks. Honest and specific

- **One page** until you have roughly ten years of experience. This is not a style preference; it is a filter for judgement.
- **Education moves down** once you have a real job. Until then it belongs at the top.
- **Skip the objective statement.** It uses your most valuable space to say nothing.
- **A summary is optional** and only worth it if you are changing field and need to explain the pivot.
- **No photo, age, or marital status** on a U.S. resume.

The bullet formula

This is where resumes are won and lost. Almost everyone writes duties. You want evidence.

The formula

[Strong verb] + [what you specifically did] + [tool or method] + [measurable result]

Duty (weak)	Evidence (strong)
Responsible for the company website	Rebuilt the marketing site in Next.js, cutting load time from 4.2s to 1.1s
Worked on a team project	Led a 4-person team to ship an inventory tool now used by 30+ staff daily
Helped with data entry	Automated a weekly reporting task with Python, saving ~6 hours per week
Tutored students	Tutored 12 students in calculus; 10 improved by a full letter grade
Used SQL	Wrote SQL queries feeding a dashboard the sales team uses weekly

If you have no numbers

Most people insist they have nothing to measure. You almost always do — it just is not revenue. Reach for:

- **How many** — users, students, records, teammates, events, tickets
- **How often** — daily, weekly, per semester
- **How much faster** — before and after, even roughly
- **How much bigger** — growth, adoption, attendance
- **What replaced what** — a manual process that became automatic

A defensible estimate is far better than nothing. “~6 hours per week” is honest and specific. Never invent a precise figure you could not explain if asked — you will be asked.

Projects, when you have no experience

A strong project section beats a thin experience section, and it is entirely within your control to build one. Treat each project like a job entry:

- Name it something descriptive, not “*Final Project.*”
- One line on what it does and who it is for.
- Bullets in the same formula — what you built, with what, and what came of it.
- Link it. A live URL or a GitHub repo with an actual README.
- Two or three finished projects beat eight abandoned ones.

What makes a project count

Not difficulty — completeness. A small tool that is deployed, documented and used by ten real people demonstrates more than an ambitious half-finished clone of a famous app. Finishing is the rare signal.

Getting past the filter

- **Mirror the posting’s language.** If it says “PostgreSQL” and you wrote “Postgres,” write both once.
- **Keep it a single column** with standard headings. Multi-column templates and text-in-graphics parse badly.
- **Submit a PDF** unless told otherwise, and name it *Firstname-Lastname-Resume.pdf*.
- **Use standard section names** — Experience, Education, Skills, Projects. Clever headings confuse parsers and skim-readers equally.
- **Spell out an acronym once** before using it.

What gets you cut

- ☐ Typos — proofread, then have someone else proofread
- ☐ Inconsistent tense: past tense for past roles, present for current
- ☐ Inconsistent formatting — dates, punctuation, bold usage
- ☐ Listing a skill you could not answer a basic question about
- ☐ Duties instead of achievements throughout
- ☐ Two pages with no ten-year career behind it
- ☐ A generic version sent to every company
- ☐ A dead link in the contact section
- ☐ An unprofessional email address

☐ No evidence of anything you claim to be good at

Before you send it

Read every bullet and ask: *could someone who did far less than me have written this sentence?* If yes, it is a duty, not an achievement — rewrite it with the formula. That single pass improves most resumes more than a redesign ever will.