

Looking good on paper

By DON GOODMAN

THANK goodness for bullet points – who wants to read blocks and blocks of text on the resume! While bullet points can help with highlighting key information like major accomplishments and success on the job, when it's not used properly, the power of the bullet point is lost on the resume.

What you want to avoid is using it for the wrong reasons. Information presented with the bullet point should also be written succinctly for impact.

Follow these tips to using bullet points on your resume:

1. Numbers come first

When you have a bullet point with information that involves numbers, like "Saved RM500K by..." – give it priority over general text. Numbers and figure tend to be more eye-catching on the resume and it informs the hiring manager upfront exactly what you've been able to do with your experience and skills in a measurable manner. For help with quantifying your accomplishments, read *How To Quantify Your Accomplishments On A Resume*.

2. Focus on results

There is limited space on the resume so things like detailing your roles and responsibilities should be left in paragraph form while bullet points are used to highlight success (i.e. exceptional results in meeting sales goals, receiving a prestigious award or other form of recognition, or action you took that made something better or that led to impressive results).

3. Leave the "how" to later

Each bullet point should be written for immediate impact so start it with an action verb and indicate the accomplishment first. Leave the "how" part to later. For example "Shortened production time by 40% by training..."

4. Limit the number of bullet points

Bullet points help highlight what's important so when your resume winds up with a list as long as the weekly grocery shopping list, it loses its impact. Keep it to no more than three to four bullet points at a time.

5. Review and prioritise

When recruiters and hiring managers review resumes, they typically zone in on the bullet-points first. Prioritise with the best information first because if you don't impress upfront, they aren't going to read on.

A strong resume will utilise bullet points effectively. Remember to prioritise them and question each one on whether the information is deserving of a place on the resume under a bullet point. If not, the impact you are looking for will be lost. – www.careerism.com

