



5 health care resume hacks you just can't ignore

Get your resume to the top of the pile with these recruiter-approved do's and don'ts.

Lily Martis, Monster staff



The success (or failure) of every health care job application you submit hinges on your resume. And even if you're a perfect fit for the position, you could miss the mark if your resume isn't up to snuff.

So Monster asked Nicole Cox, chief recruitment officer at Decision Toolbox, a recruitment product and services company based in Irvine, California, how, with just a few tweaks, your health care resume can be transformed from just a Word

doc into a powerful, interview-scoring machine. Cox has more than 10 years experience reviewing resumes from job seekers in the medical device, biotech and pharmaceutical industries to name a few, so check out her top five resume “hacks” and land the interview—and job—you want.

1. Stick to this format

The resume format Cox says she likes to see is as follows: name and contact information at the top, followed by a summary of qualifications, experience and then clinical work, followed by education (including residency and fellowship training). From there, you can add honors, awards, speaking engagements and publications, putting those in the order that’s most relevant to the position you’re going after.



Also, say no to graphics, text boxes and any other fancy formatting—it will likely get distorted if it’s put into an applicant tracking system, which is a software application that processes and sorts resumes.

2. Spell words out

Two words of caution: Avoid acronyms.

“We don’t all speak the same language from facility to facility,” Cox says. “So staying away from those acronyms does two things: It makes sure the reader understands what you’re referring to and it helps your resume be found because those become keywords.”

3. Bold the keywords

Speaking of keywords, Cox says those are the first thing people look for when reviewing resumes.

“They scan over it for some of the keywords, titles, technologies, number of direct reports,” she says. “They may not be reading it line for line. So, they’ll scan it first

for those keywords they're looking for or those key components they're looking for in a candidate, and if they see some, they'll stop and read it at a deeper level.”

She recommends bolding important words to help the reader move through your resume, as long as it's done in moderation.

Think hot topics in health care like patient satisfaction, infection prevention and cleanliness. And if you speak a language other than English, add that, too. Some smart words Cox says you can use on a resume may include data and analytics, safety, cost reduction, quality measures and value-based care models.

4. Spotlight these achievements

When it comes to the content of your resume, focus on what you've done, not how long you've done it. Cox says it's more important to spotlight your achievements instead of your years of experience.

Specifically, Cox says, if you work with patients is perhaps the most important area to highlight. For example, if you reshaped underused programs, you can show quality of care while hinting at cost efficiency.

Also if you used medicine based on strong research, or you implemented a program or process that has reduced medical errors to improve your facility, these are all big time winners you should include.

But that's not the total hack: Be sure to include exact percentages and dollar signs when talking about how much money you saved the company or your patient satisfaction or surgical outcome percentage.

With health care mergers and acquisitions on the rise, Cox says health care professionals, especially executives, need to show that they embrace changes as an opportunity and show how they are growing future leaders through mentoring.

5. Include links

Because resumes are now shared digitally, be sure to include links where the recruiter can go to learn more about you. Cox says it's good to link to the places you've previously worked as it adds another level of legitimacy to your resume.

"All facilities aren't the same," Cox says. "Some have better, newer technology than others. One hospital might have a trauma level one or a NICU level one, but another hospital has a level three. Knowing that someone comes from a hospital or facility with that kind of background shows they're better equipped to handle certain emergencies or operate technology, so there's less of a learning curve."

Revamp your resume with Cox's tips and [upload your resume on Monster](#). Then, start applying to [health care jobs](#) on Monster.

Recruiter photo by Sheri Geoffreys.