

survey revealed that 84% of hiring managers exclude from further consideration applicants with two typographical errors on their résumé; 47% of these managers exclude applicants with just a single error. Second, customize your résumé to the position if at all possible (try to address how your background, skills, and accomplishments fit the specific job requirements). Third, although résumés are getting somewhat longer, recognize that brevity is highly valued among hiring managers—many will not read résumés that are longer than two pages, and some will not read those that are longer than a page. Fourth, as we noted above, be factual and truthful. Where judgment is required, err on the side of accuracy. As one expert put it, "People are lying when they don't have to." Most hiring managers understand that no résumé is perfect. Even if being truthful hurts you in the short run, better to pay the price now rather than later, when you might have an entire career at stake. Finally, though taking care to be truthful, a résumé is no time to underplay your accomplishments. Do not just list your job duties; identify your accomplishments as well. Consider your impact on your division or group: What would not have happened had you not been there? What are you proudest of? Can you identify your own strengths from your performance review? Did you demonstrate skills during college that you might describe? The global head of recruiting for Accenture says he looks for evidence of teamwork skills in hiring: "I'd have to put the ability to work in a team environment toward the very top of what we look for," he says. Since most college students do some of their work in teams, why not list that as a skill acquired.¹²

Evaluation. Almost no research exists on the validity and reliability of résumés and cover letters. There is also very little information on their costs or adverse impact. Regarding their validity, a review did indicate relatively low validity for applicant self-reports of grades, class standing, and test scores, but this does not address other information—such as self-reported work experience—often provided in applications and résumés. Regarding adverse impact, one study conducted in the Netherlands found that résumés with the common Arabic name "Mohammed" were four times as likely to be rejected as résumés with the common Dutch name "Henk." Moreover, résumés with female Arabic names were especially likely to be rejected when a high-status job was at stake. These situations are unfortunate given the pervasive use of résumés and cover letters in certain types of jobs, especially entry-level management, professional, and technical positions. Thus, organizations using résumés and cover letters in selection should carefully evaluate their effectiveness and make sure to independently verify information they are using in hiring decisions.¹³

Application Blanks

Most application blanks request in written form the applicant's background concerning educational experiences, training, and job experiences. This information is often on the résumé as well and may seem unnecessarily duplicated. This is not