



FONT STYLES & SIZES: What We use

Marcia LaReau

In the blog update about Résumé Fonts, I discussed the preference of using Times New Roman. My past experience with my clients is that sometimes the jobseeker gets tired of the font and wants something new and they change the font. Nonetheless, the research indicates that Times New Roman is the most preferred font. But what size?

What size font for your name?

Again, people anguish over this detail. That's probably a good thing. If a person's name is in a large bold font, it makes a statement—and not always a good one. The question I think we should ask is:

“At what point in the résumé review does reader actually become interested in your name?”

Spoiler Alert: It isn't when they begin reading. Certainly, your name belongs at the top of the first page and should be on every page. However, the actual content is more important once you've made it through the Applicant Tracking System and an actual person is reading your résumé.

Consider the statement that these font sizes make:

Example No. 1:

Danielle A. Person

Opening Statement:

Per et veritus dolores definiebas. Minim error ne sed. Offendit repudiare quaerendum ex his, ad usu movet altera sadipscing. Ex vim quis meis, cu vero scaevola duo, ut error putant his. Fabulas delicata eos ad, congue eirmod delicatissimi vim an, solum liber veniam id quo. Graeco efficiantur ne duo, modo laboramus pri eu.

Example No. 2:

Danielle A. Person

Opening Statement:

Per et veritus dolores definiebas. Minim error ne sed. Offendit repudiare quaerendum ex his, ad usu movet altera sadipscing. Ex vim quis meis, cu vero scaevola duo, ut error putant his. Fabulas delicata eos ad, congue eirmod delicatissimi vim an, solum liber veniam id quo. Graeco efficiantur ne duo, modo laboramus pri eu.

In the first example, the font size is 24. The second example is 16.

Since the reader isn't interested in the name, I prefer Example No. 2. When they ready to put a name to the information they have read; the name is easy to find and clearly legible.

What size font for your subtitle?



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Okay, this is one of our trade secrets: We include the title *from the job posting*, under the jobseeker's name. It's one of the ways we customize résumés for specific positions. Our reasoning is this:

The hiring professional is probably trying to fill more than just one position. In many companies, there are many similar positions that are being filled simultaneously. We want to make it easy for that person to know which position, our candidate would like to fill.

If the position title is "Logistics Operations Support," then we put that under the name, in a font that is one size smaller: Font 14, Bold.

It looks like this:

Dannielle A. Person
Logistics Operations Support

Opening Statement:

Per et veritus dolores definiebas. Minim error ne sed. Offendit repudiare quaerendum ex his, ad usu movet altera sadipscing. Ex vim quis meis, cu vero scaevola duo, ut error putant his. Fabulas delicata eos ad, congue eirmod delicatissimi vim an, solum liber veniam id quo. Graeco efficiantur ne duo, modo laboramus pri eu.

Again, we use the Job Title from the Job Posting, and *not* the candidates former job title. This lets the reader know exactly where this candidate fits into their organization.

What size font for your basic text?

Résumés are still printed. When a candidate is invited to a face-to-face interview; it is wise to take several printed copies. Many companies have gone paperless and may not print résumés. Yes, readers can adjust their screens to easily read a résumé, however, it is awkward to adjust for smaller fonts.

If the hiring professional is reading information from the Applicant Tracking System, the font is pre-set. However, the layout on a résumé is important. Reading a résumé is as much about the information as it is the reader's experience while reading the résumé.

That's why font choice matters. Times New Roman indicates confidence. The cleanliness of the layout, the use of white space, clarity in the presentation of information all play a critical role in how the reader perceives the candidate.

What's the answer?

The answer is Font size 11. That's it. Times New Roman: Font size 11. Nothing smaller. When a documented is printed, smaller font sizes (smaller than 11), can become grainy. The smoothness of lines can be diminished and then the candidate's information has a "ragged" feel to it.





What size font for your Section Headers?

Section headers give context to the reader regarding the information that follows. Sample headers include: Education, Skill Sets, Experience, Work History and so forth.

Following our process, Headers are generally one size larger than the font for the basic text. We use Font 12, Bold. This allows the reader to easily identify the information that follows in that section.

Some people like use a different Font Style for the Section Headers. Changing font style adds considerable code to the document. Following the research that the easiest fonts to read are the ones we are familiar with, and following my approach that *everything* about the résumé layout is based on the needs of the Applicant Tracking System and the reader, I do not use any other font than Times New Roman.

Font size exception: References

Especially in small businesses and nonprofits, i.e. organizations and businesses that may not have updated software, reference lists are usually printed. An HR professional, or an assistant, may call the references and ensure the candidate can move forward in their hiring process.

On the reference sheet, which we include with all customized résumés, we use font 12. We do this because the page will often be printed and placed on a desk next to the phone. Font 12 is a bit easier to read in those situations.

Overview:

Here is the list:

Name: Size 16

Job Title: Size 14

Header: Size 12

Content: Size 11

Here's how it looks:

Dannielle A. Person
Logistics Operations Support

Opening Statement:

I hope this helps. If you have questions, comments or feedback, please contact me.

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