Here's a review of the ten factors you should use to evaluate your resume.

Appearance/Style. For traditional formatted "print" resumes, appearance and consistency are critical. Your resume must be professional. Stick to using only one to two "normal" fonts. Use font sizes no smaller than 10 point. Keep colors to a minimum. Be consistent in the use of color, font, size, and style (bolding, italicizing, underlining). Use normal (3/4-1") margin widths. Don't use resume templates; they are difficult to make changes to later on -develop your resume from scratch -- with your own unique style. Use bulleted phrases to describe your accomplishments, rather than lengthy (and hard-to-read) paragraphs.

Completeness/Length. A resume should give a complete picture of why you should be called for an interview; however, that does not mean you need to include every job you have ever worked at in your life. U.S. resumes should rarely be longer than two pages (although you can have supplemental pages for things such as grants, consulting, references, and the like), and for entry-level positions, really no longer than one page. Some senior executives with exceptional work experiences are sometimes deserving of a three-page resume.

Content/Layout. Use standard resume headings. All resumes must include certain critical information, such as contact information, experience, and education. Other possible sections include job objective, professional profile, honors and awards, professional interests and memberships, and keyword summary. U.S. resumes should never include names of supervisors, salary information, photos, or references.

Focus. Perhaps the most critical element of any resume is its focus. Your resume must have a specific theme -- related to the position (and employer) you are seeking. Do not include extraneous information on your resume. Whether you use a job objective or not, always keep that objective in mind when writing the rest of the resume. Your resume must be written in such a way that your job/career objective, as well as what you're good at, is obvious to anyone reading your resume.

Format/Approach. There are two main types of resume formats: chronological, and functional. Job-seekers with a steady employment history in one field looking to advance within that field should use a chronological resume that focuses on employment history (starting with most recent). Recent college grads with a variety of work experiences and job-seekers changing careers sometimes use a functional resume.

Perspective. Review your resume from the perspective of a hiring manager with just a few seconds to review your resume. Your resume must be attention-getting, good-looking, and sharply focused. Your resume should provide the employer enough reasons to invite you for an interview.

Professionalism/Integrity. There's simply no excuse for resumes to have any kind of misspellings or typos. Employers often toss resumes with even just one error in the trash. The other issue is honesty. Your resume is a statement of facts, so do not fudge your dates of employment, job titles, certifications, or educational achievements. It's not only wrong, but employers often conduct background checks.

Use of Accomplishments. In terms of job-hunting, nothing is more important than documenting all your accomplishments. It's even better if you can quantify those accomplishments. Employers want job-seekers who are problem-solvers with a proven record of success. If possible, do not stop at describing your experiences in terms of duties and responsibilities. Create a fuller picture by improving on these.

Use of keywords and action verbs. Action verbs are verbs that make your experience jump from the page. And while more important in the days before e-resumes, action verbs are still important today. Keywords and keyword phrases are vital because as more and more resumes are placed into large databases, employers search for job-seekers the same way you use Google to search a topic -- with one or more keywords. Pull keywords from the job description or posting.

Versions. Job-hunting today really requires more than one version of your resume. You still need your traditional "print" resume, but you'll also want to develop one or more electronic versions of your resume. E-resumes come in a number of versions, including Rich Text, Text (ASCII), Portable Document Format (PDF), and Web (HTML). Each type of e-resume has a different benefit, a different use.

Resume Critique Worksheet

	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
Appearance/Style *Is your resume visually appealing?*				
Completeness/Length *Is your resume complete, but not too long?*				
Content/Layout *Does your resume contain all the relevant information?*				
Focus *Is your resume sharply focused to your job objective?*				
Format/Approach *Are you using the proper format -- and do you need more than one format -- for your situation?*				
Perspective *Does your resume have what it takes to get noticed by employers?*				
Professionalism/Integrity *Is your resume free of errors?*				
Use of Accomplishments *Have you identified one or more accomplishments for each experience?*				
Use of Keywords/Action Verbs *Have you included keywords and action verbs in your resume?*				
Versions *Do you have both print and electronic versions of your resume?*				

Remember the purpose of your resume -- to create enough interest from the employer to invite you to a job interview. A resume is a statement of facts (using keywords and action verbs) -- that highlights your accomplishments, skills, and education/training.