

"Rising to the Top of the Pile," by Mitch Small

Sometimes the smallest thing can get your resume tossed in the trash. When an employer is looking at 100 resumes for 2 jobs, he may have to find whatever reasons necessary to pare down the pile. This may mean that he looks through and picks out the messy ones, the ones folded or crumpled or the resumes that just don't look good. Making a first impression can be essential to getting your resume through the first round of cuts. Try these techniques to help keep your resume circulating:

1. Put the first page of your resume and two friends' resumes on a table face down. Mix them up and then flip them over at the same time. In five seconds, order the resumes in terms of your immediate reaction from positive to negative. Was there one that stood out? Did the person use a specific format, font or color? Where there graphics? Most resumes stand out because of a distinct format.
2. Pass your resume to a friend. Have them check for spelling, grammar and punctuation mistakes, especially in the first two sections. If an employer finds a mistake here, you're sunk.
3. Use a resume service that give you the format you want while using state-of-the art graphics and promote a dynamic visual document.

Getting to the top of the pile requires some effort to ensure that your message is read and read again.