



Ignore These 10 Outdated Pieces of Career Advice

By [ALISON GREEN](#)

July 11, 2011

Job-search advice that worked a decade or more ago isn't always effective today. In fact, some of it can hurt your chances.

Here are 10 pieces of job-search advice that are now outdated and you should ignore:



Alison Green

1. You must use a landline for a phone interview. These days, many people don't even have access to a landline, so [this advice has become unrealistic](#). It's still better to use a landline if you have one, but if you have to use a cell phone, check first to make sure that you're somewhere quiet with good reception and strong sound clarity.

2. Your resume can only be one page. At some point in the past, resumes were supposed to be limited to one page. But times have changed, and two-page resumes are common now. People with only a few years of experience should still stick to one page, but two pages are fine for everyone else.

[See [The Death of the One-Page Resume?](#)]

3. Every job has to go on your resume to present a complete account of your professional history. Your resume is a marketing document, designed to present your candidacy in the strongest possible light. It doesn't need to be an exhaustive accounting of every job you've held.

4. Include "references available upon request" on the bottom of your resume. This is a convention from another time. These days, it's assumed that you'll provide references when asked and [you don't need to explicitly say it](#). Including that line takes up space unnecessarily and feels dated.

5. Include an objective at the top of your resume. Let's ring the death knell for resume objectives. Hiring managers just don't care about them; they care about what you can do for them. Objectives never help, and can often hurt—if they aren't tailored enough to the position or even have nothing to do with it (which makes it look like you're blasting your resume out without enough of a focus). Most objectives, though, simply waste space. The trend now is to include highlights or a skills summary where objective used to go.

6. Invest in good resume paper. Don't invest in any resume paper. You should be submitting your resume electronically. The days of buying heavy stock to print resumes are over.

[See [6 Creative Ways to Showcase Your Resume Online](#).]

7. Overnight your resume to g
out as outdated. You'll also look
tracking systems.

overnight your resume—or even simply mail it—you'll only stand
near-impossible to enter into today's electronic application-

8. When your interviewer asks about your weaknesses, offer up a positive framed as a weakness. This has become such an interview cliché that your interviewer will assume you're being disingenuous. Interviewers have heard hundreds of people claim they're perfectionists or that they work too hard; try something new.

9. Your resume and cover letter should be written in formal language. These days, the best resumes and cover letters sound like you. Well, the best version of you—not the you who lounges on the couch eating chips. But conversational, slightly informal language is completely fine and generally more compelling than overly stiff, formal language.

10. A few days after you submit your resume, call to schedule an interview. Job-seekers don't get to decide to schedule the interview; employers do, and it's inappropriately pushy and not good salesmanship to pretend otherwise. These days, with hundreds of applicants for every opening, if every applicant called to follow up, employers would spend all day fielding these calls. Believe me, [they don't want to](#).

Alison Green writes the popular [Ask a Manager](#) blog where she dispenses advice on career, job search, and management issues. She's also the author of [Managing to Change the World: The Nonprofit Leader's Guide to Getting Results](#) and former chief of staff of a successful nonprofit organization, where she oversaw day-to-day staff management, hiring, firing, and employee development. She now teaches other managers how to manage for results.

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