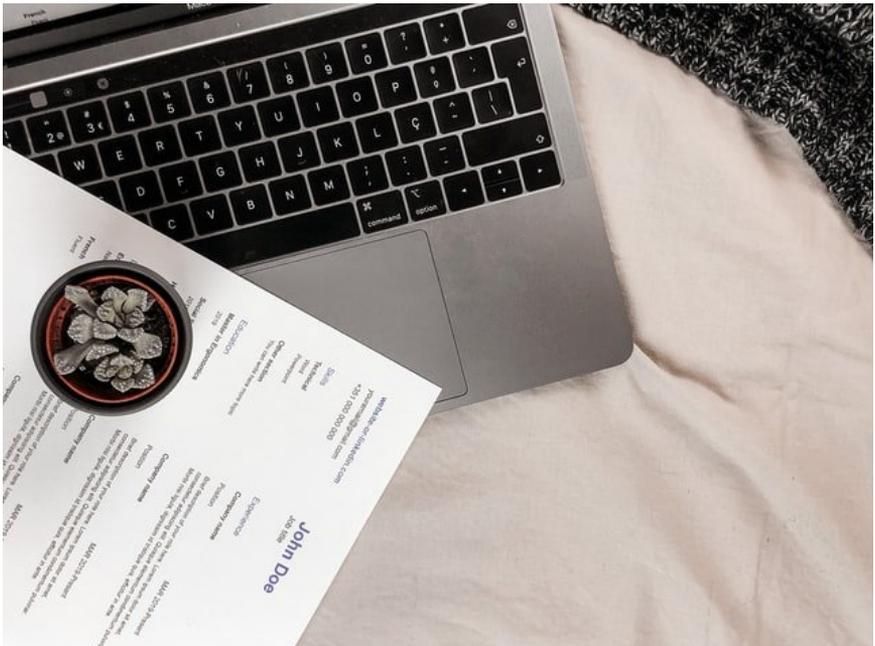# Designing a Resume

Using Typography to Influence and Inform

A resume is supposed to help demonstrate your professionalism, skills, and experiences in an efficient and pleasing manner. In this assignment, you will practice the basics of typography by creating a resume in Adobe Illustrator. Resumes are often read very quickly or even skimmed by hiring agents to determine which candidates should be interviewed. Having a professionally designed resume will help you

stand out from the pack.

Designing a resume also presents a lot of important questions. Before you begin designing make sure you have answers to the following questions:

- Who am I designing for?
- What information do I want to communicate?
- How do I want the information to land or stick?
- How could I cause problems? What do I want to avoid?

After you have these questions answered, then you can start making design decisions. Here are basic tools that will help you along the way.

Cognitive Load: Cognitive load is the energy we expend trying to understand things. Often this energy is emotional, think about how annoyed you feel when the freeway exit signs are confusing or a friend's text message could mean three different things. Good design reduces the cognitive load while bad design adds to it. A good question to ask as you design your resume is, "is this easier and more pleasing to read than a boring word document format?" If not then you have more thinking to do.

Eye Flow: Good design always accommodates the human brain's ability to focus on one thing at a time. Think about driving or shopping for sales at the grocery store. Do you stare and comprehend everything in your field vision or do your eyes flit around quickly focusing on one thing than another? Probably the latter which means that as a designer you need to help your target user to know where they need to look first then where to go after that and finally where to end. A bad design creates a sense of confusion and this is often because the observer does not know where to start looking. Thus, for your resume, it is your job to make design decisions that deliberately guide the attention of the reader. Their eyes should flow from one element to the next so they can ingest the content one bit at a time. For text-heave designs, often a "F" shape works well. Try using a "Z" with a design the is more horizontal, modular, or that has lots of images.
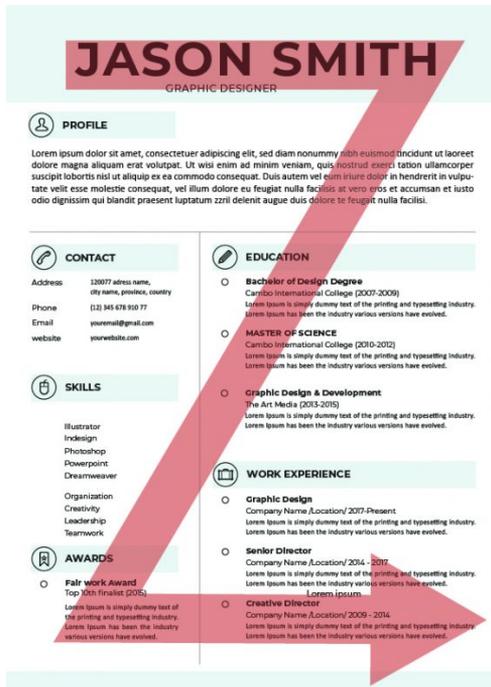
Whitespace: Experiencing design is like eating a meal. Eye flow helps organize the sequence of dishes and whitespace is the everpresent need to chew and swallow after a bite. Your design needs to create space for your user's brain to digest what they have just encountered before they move on to the next element.
Choosing where to leave empty space is just as important as choosing what to fill it with.

Information Hierarchy: Before you begin your resume design, make sure you know what information is most important and how you want that information to be communicated. Bad design will emphasize unimportant content and impede your goals. The most important information does not need to be first, nor the unimportant content last but with your design decisions, the right info can land in the right way.

Typography: The written language is the most effective means we have of transmitting information. Words when strung together in sentences are powerful communicators and your design should enhance the reading of those words and not distract from it. Often, inexperienced designers try to replace the function of written language with icons or images which again causes confusion and adds to the cognitive load. Your goal is to reduce the energy needed to understand your resume so don't be afraid of mastering the tools of typography like font, stroke, weight, kerning, and other variables to help with your eye flow and information hierarchy goals.

Eye flow blog post:

https://edtechbooks.org/-LkFc

Inspiration for resume designs:

https://edtechbooks.org/-GtxE

Free fonts:

https://edtechbooks.org/-NaPh

	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Competent	Professional
Appeal				
Whitespace	The layout is either cluttered or overly sparse.	Whitespaces are consistent.	Whitespaces complement the information.	The user experiences a rhythm or flow to the presence or absence of design elements.
Typography	Fonts and are not used or are inappropriate, inconsistent, or frequently changing.	Appropriate fonts and text sizes are used …	… in a consistent manner …	… that only changes to enhance meaning (e.g. preattentive attributes).
Retention				
Cognitive Load	The resume is confusing, ambiguous, and difficult to read quickly. Errors and bugs distract the reader.	The resume is as easy to read as a basic document with the same information.	The resume has deliberate design elements that enhance its readability.	The resume functions as a whole that is more than the sum of its parts.
Information Hierarchy	The resume is unclear or confusing about what information is the most important.	Some information is obviously more important than others. All relevant information for a resume is included.	The resume clearly emphasizes some information.	All the information is seamlessly and coherently emphasized.
Comprehension				
Eye Flow	The resume has no clear starting, middle, or ending.	The reader knows where to start.	The reader is able to read the document with one of the reading shapes (F, Z, etc.)	The reader smoothly and effortlessly glides through the document.
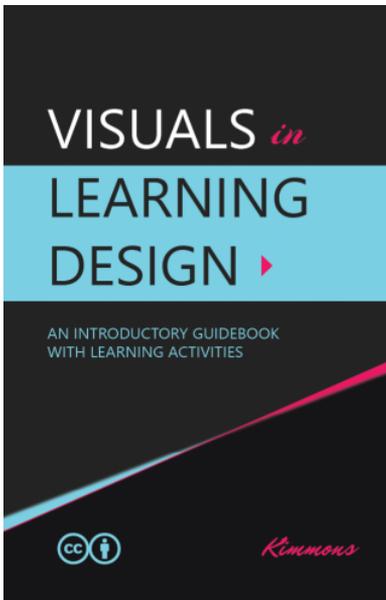
Kimmons, R. & Yamada, S. (2022). *Visuals in Learning Design*. EdTech Books. https://edtechbooks.org/design