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## Here's Why No One Reads Your Resume: Top 5 Business Writing Mistakes to Avoid at all Costs

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In 20 years of editing books, writing resumes and award winning scripts and training, I see the same mistakes show up over and over again in executive materials. From resumes and cover letters to sales pitches and presentations, people tend to do the same things to make their reader's eyes glaze over or worse yet, move on.

Here are my top 5.

- 1. Brevity rules.** Be as brief as possible. Your hiring materials and pitches will be EYE SCANNED not read. The length of the majority of cover letters and resumes I see could be cut in half. Yes. Half.
- 2. Avoid starting sentences with "I, me or my."** Whether it is a hiring manager or a prospective client, they don't care about you yet, they care about how you can help them. They care that you understand them. Tell them what you know about their problems and how you can solve them. In the 90's when people still listened to FM radio, we called this WIFM, (What's In It For Me).
- 3. Avoid using the word "that."** It is not necessary in most sentences.
- 4. Avoid passive voice** e.g. "they are going to..."
- 5. Always close with a CTA, Call To Action.** State what you want them to do or what you will do to follow up. You want to show you can take the lead, not that you are passively waiting for them to take action.

This is the biggest mistake I see in cover letters. Most people end the letter with some version of, "I look forward to hearing from you," which is presumptuous and does not show initiative.

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