**STYLE GUIDE FOR BOLD**

**GENERAL:**

* Follow AP Stylebook.
* AP’s preferred dictionary is Webster’s New World College Dictionary.
* AP Stylebook and Webster’s dictionary available at [www.apstylebook.com](http://www.apstylebook.com) (must have subscription).
* Use US-English spelling and punctuation (i.e., commas and periods inside quote marks).
* Tone and style: friendly, personable, colloquial language.

**STYLE:**

**Abbreviations and acronyms:**

* When introducing a new term, spell it out at full first use, and then use the abbreviation in following sentences (example: *Many companies use applicant tracking systems (ATS) to conduct initial scans of resumes . . .*). Exception: GPA for grade-point average.
* In general, however, avoid alphabet soup when possible.
* Do not use in headlines.

**Ampersand:** Use when it is part of a company’s formal name, otherwise *it should not be* used in place of *and*, except for some accepted abbreviations (example: *B&B, R&B*); do not use in headings.

**Attribution:**

* Must attribute facts not gathered or confirmed on your own, whether the pickup is from a newspaper, website, broadcaster, blog, etc.
* News from a government, agency, organization, company or other recognized group may be attributed to that entity on first reference in the story (example: *the Department of Labor announced …*). If using a follow-up attribution to that source, specify whether the information came from a specific spokesman, another named official or a news release; that is, include where you found the information).
* Examples of citations:
* Noam Scheiber, “Facebook Accused of Allowing Bias Against Women in Job Ads,” *New York Times*, Sept. 18, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/18/business/economy/facebook-job-ads.html
* McDonald’s Corporation, *2014 Annual Report*, March 2015, http://www.aboutmcdonalds.com/mcd/investors/annual\_reports.html.
* Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* (New York: William Morrow, 2005).

**Bulleted and numbered lists:** Introduce the list with a short phrase or sentence and use a colon (example: *Our partners:* or *These are our partners:* or *Our partners are:*)  
Aim to use bullets (and not numbers) for lists in posts (as in this entry).If you must use numbers for lists in posts, adhere to same rules for bulleted lists below.

* Start each item with a capital letter.
* Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each line, whether it is a full sentence or a phrase. However, if you use one question mark or exclamation point at the end of one item in a bulleted list, then use the same structure for *each* item; that is, apply the same sentence type (statement, question, exclamation) for each bullet point.
* Make the voice consistent for each item (preferably active, not passive; in this example, everything starts with a present tense verb).
* Use the same verb tense for each item (example: *if starting with “Do,” do not switch to “Being”; keep as “Be”*).
* Use just a phrase for each item, if desired, but use parallel construction for each item in a list.

The following are two examples of lists that do not have parallel construction (numbers, not bullets, are used in these examples for easier illustration only):

No. 3 does not match the other items in the list:

1. Make it very easy to find.

2. Check that your URL works.

3. When visitors find your online resume, they should know it.

4. Elaborate on your strengths.

No. 2 is a complete sentence with the first few words bolded, but the rest of the list starts with short declarative statements that end with periods:

1. **DO open your resume with a short, clear, relevant summary.** Your summary should state the most important reasons why you…
2. **DON’T let any accomplishment go unmentioned** if you think it might be relevant…
3. **DO spellcheck your resume carefully.** You may want to ask a friend or family member…

**But:** (*see* comma in the Punctuation section) The follow are some examples of when to use and not use a comma with *but*.

Don’t use when you mean:

* with the exception of(nobody came to the interview *but* me).
* unless (it never rains *but* it pours job offers).
* that (they didn’t question *but* I had the right job skills).
* only (if I had *but* known the job was three hours away).
* merely or no more than(the opportunity is *but* a starting point).
* just (I heard it *but* now I’m a finalist).
* there is not some chance (we can’t be sure *but that* he’s right for the job).

Do use:

* on the contrary (*I am a senior executive, but everyone else is right out of school*).
* in spite of this (*The boss seems like a villain, but he has some virtues*).

**Capitalization:**

* In general, avoid unnecessary capitalization; use with proper nouns (example: *Mary, Labor Department*), but lowercase when standing alone in subsequent references (example: *the department*,or in plural uses such as *Main and State streets*).
* **Resume builder, cover letter builder and other similar terms (part 1)**
  + If used only as a noun, use lowercase (example: *a resume builder can play a big part in bringing your resume across the finish line*; *perusing cover letter examples can help you get ideas on how to write your own*). Use lowercase even if hyperlinking to a BOLD landing page.
* **Resume builder, cover letter builder and other similar terms (part 2)**
  + If used as a pronoun, use initial capitalization (example: *use our Resume Builder; check out our Cover Letter Builder; peruse our selection of Resume Templates*). Hyperlink each time.
  + When hyperlinking any specific BOLD template, example or sample in the body of an article, use initial capitalization (example: *Nursing Assistant Resume Template*; *Senior Technical Writer Cover Letter Template, Copy Editor Resume Sample, Administrative Assistant Resume Example*).

**Compound modifiers:**

* A compound modifier is a **compound** of two or more attributive words; that is, two or more words that collectively modify a noun.
* When a compound modifier precedes a noun, use hyphens to link the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in *-ly* (example: *a full-time job, a better-qualified woman, a know-it-all attitude, a very good time, an easily remembered rule*).
* Many combinations hyphenated before a noun are not hyphenated after a noun (example: *She works full time; His attitude suggested that he knew it all*).
* However, when a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs instead after a form of the verb *to be*, the hyphen usually must be retained to avoid confusion (example: *The man is well-known; The woman is quick-witted*).

**Contractions:** Avoid excessive use; this doesn’t mean you *can’t* use them at all (example: *can’t for cannot*).

**Core brands:** (note capitalization, spelling, and hyphenation; *see* Network brands)

* LiveCareer (www.livecareer.com).
* My Perfect Resume (www.myperfectresume.com).
* Resume-Now (www.resume-now.com).
* MightyRecruiter ([www.mightyrecruiter.com](http://www.mightyrecruiter.com)).
* BOLD([www.bold.com](http://www.bold.com)) - spell out with all cap letters in all instances.

**Headlines (main title of articles) and subheads (sections in an article)**

* Headlines: Capitalize all major words (example: *Steps to Write a Better Resume*).
* First letter after a hyphen in a headline is not capitalized (example: *Hands-on Resume Clinic*).
* Subheads: Capitalize only the first word and proper nouns (example: *Steps to take after an interview at Google*).
* Do not use periods.

**Hyperlinks:** (*see* capitalization)   
Embed the article link in the copy

* Wrong: *Read our article, “How to Write a Resume …”* or *Click here for more details ….*
* Right: *As you learn how to write a resume …*

**Months:** When used with a specific date, abbreviate: *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.* and *Dec.* Spell out when using alone or with a year alone (example: *Jan. 1, 2020*, but *January 2020*). Always spell out in full the shorter months.

**More/than:** Need both when making a comparison (example: *Social media users tell three times more people about a negative customer service experience than those who don’t use social media*).

**Network brands:** (note capitalization and spacing; *see* Core brands)

* Hloom (hloom.com).
* Resume Builder (resumebuilder.org).
* Great Sample Resume (greatsampleresume.com).
* JobHero (jobhero.com).
* Damn Good Resume (damngood.com).
* PrimoCV (primocv.com).
* Free Resume Builder (freeresumebuilder.com).

**Not only/but also:** requires use of both

* Must include the “also” (example below).
* Do not use a comma.
* Example: *This not only allows you to listen better but also shows you’re interested in what they have to say*.

**Numbers:** (*see* headlines)

* In general, spell out one through nine (example: *He had nine different resumes*).
* Exception: Use numerals in headlines (example: *4 Ways to Write a Better Resume*); subheads can also start with numerals.
* Apply standard guidelines in a series (example: *They wanted to hire 10 managers and two supervisors*).
* Use figures for 10 or above **and** whenever preceding a unit of measure or referring to ages of people, animals, events or things (example: *4 miles*).
* Spell out at the start of a sentence (example: *Forty years is a long time to work in one job*); exceptions are years (example: *2020 will be a good year*), and numeral and letter combinations (example: *If appropriate, ask if* *401(k) plans are offered*).
* Spell out with monetary units (example: *5 cents, $5 bill*).
* Spell out in indefinite and casual uses (example: *thanks a million*; *one at a time*; *an eleventh-hour decision*; *dollar store*).
* Follow rules for ordinals (used to indicate order): spell out first through ninth (example: *fourth interview; he was first in line*), and use figures starting with 10th (example: *10th, 25th*).

**Percent:** Don’t use % sign (example: *3.7 percent interest*);for a range, don’t repeat the word (example: *12 to 15 percent*).

**Regions:** Capitalize when used as a general adjective (example: *Midwestern retailer*).

**Since:** (*see* because)

* *Since* is acceptable in a causal sense when the first event in a sequence led logically to the second but was not its direct cause (example: *They went to the game, since they had been given the tickets*).

**So:** use comma in nonessential phrases or to avoid run-on sentences (examples: *A recruiter will ask for an example of a time you felt pressured, so it’s a good idea to prepare in advance*; *So, how would you answer that question?*).

**Than/then:** *Than* is a conjunction used to compare things; *then* is an adverb used to place events in time or things in order (example: *He wrote a resume longer than the AP Stylebook, and then he printed it*).

**That/which:** *An essential phrase* is a word or group of words critical to full understanding. A *nonessential phrase* provides information but no one would not be misled if the information were not there.

* Use *which* for nonessential clauses and *that* for essential clauses.
* Use commas to set off *which* clauses; no commas are used with *that* clauses. Examples:
* *Your interview outfit, which may be your favorite color, needs to be clean.* (If the *which* phrase was removed, the meaning of the sentence would remain.)
* *The outfit that you wear to an interview needs to be clean.*
* Wrong: *Use keywords which appear directly on the job description*.
* Right: *Use keywords that appear directly on the job description*.

**Titles:**

* **Books, movies, table of contents for longer articles, TV shows, video/computer games, etc.:** Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions, verbs, and conjunctions of four or more letters.
* Capitalize an article—*the, a, an*—or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title.
* Put quotation marks around the names of all works (except holy books and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material, which includes almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks, etc.). Examples:
  + “CBS Evening News”; “Gone With the Wind”; “The Matrix”; Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language
* Most website and app names are capitalized without quote marks or italicization (example: Facebook,but “FarmVille”).

**Job titles in articles:**

* Spell lowercase in the body of an article (example: *A position in health care technology…*).
* Spell out full terms on first usage (example: *Applying for the position of registered nurse (RN)…*).
* On second reference, the abbreviations can then be used (example: *The resume for an RN…*).
* In general, use capitalization only with formal titles used directly before an individual’s name (example: *Sam Smith, the president of XYZ Company*, but *President Sam Smith runs XYZ Company*)

**Sections of resumes in an article:** When referring to sections of a resume, lowercase the section title (example: *Here’s how to format the work history section of your resume*)

**Trademark:** (*see* Company names in the Spelling section) brand, symbol, word used by a manufacturer and protected by law (example: *AstroTurf*, for a type of artificial grass); in general, use a generic equivalent unless the trademark name is essential to the story. If using a company’s formal name, consult the New York Stock Exchange or similar website for accuracy. If used, capitalize it (example: *Google*; even e-Bay is E-Bay if it starts a sentence or headline).

**They/them/their:**

* In most cases, a plural pronoun should agree in number with the antecedent (example: *The students love the advice their business teacher gave them*).
* They/them/their is acceptable in limited cases as a singular and/or gender-neutral pronoun, when alternative wording is awkward or clumsy; however, rewording is preferable.
* Problems using *they/them* as singular sometimes arise with an indefinite pronoun (*anyone, everyone, someone*) or unspecified/unknown gender (*a person, the winner*). Examples of rewording:
* *The foundation gave grants to anyone who lost a job this year* (instead of *anyone who lost their job*).
* *Officials said the winner could claim the prize Tuesday* (instead of *their* or *his or her prize*).
* When *they* is used in the singular, it takes a plural verb: *Taylor said they need a new car to get to work*. Be sure it’s clear from the context that only one person is involved, or rewrite.

**Yes-no questions:** Example: *The interviewer may ask you a series of yes-no questions* (not *yes-or-no questions*)

**PUNCTUATION:**

**Apostrophe (possessives):**

* For consistency, use *’s* if the word does not end in the letter *s*, even for words ending in *ce*, *x*, or *z* (example: *Butz’s policies; Xerox’s profits*).
* Exception: add only an apostrophe for words that don’t end with an *s* but have an *s* sound and are followed by a word that begins with *s* (example: *for appearance’ sake*); otherwise use *’s* (example: *the appearance’s cost*).
* Singular nouns not ending in *s*: add *’s* (example: *the employer’s needs*).
* Singular nouns ending in *s*: add *’s* (example: *the boss’s office*).
* Singular proper names ending in *s*: add only an apostrophe (example: *Achilles’ heel*).
* Nouns plural in form, singular in meaning: add only an apostrophe (example: *measles’ effects*).
* Plural nouns not ending in *s*: add *’s* (example: *alumni’s contributions; women’s rights*).
* Plural nouns ending in *s*: add only an apostrophe (example: *applicants’ nerves*).
* Possessive of a plural word in the formal name of a singular entity: add only an apostrophe (example: *General Motors’ profits; United States’ wealth*).
* Joint possession: use possessive form after only the last word if ownership is joint (example: *Fred and Sylvia’s online business*).
* Use a possessive form after both words if individually owned (example: *Fred’s and Sylvia’s opinions about their online business differed*).
* Descriptive phrases: Do not add an apostrophe to a word ending in *s* when it is used primarily in a descriptive sense (example: *a writers guide*). An *’s* is required, however, when a term involves a plural word that does not end in *s* (example: *a children’s hospital*).
* Quasi possessives: (example: *a day’s pay*, *two weeks’ vacation*, *three days’ work*, *your money’s worth*); frequently, however, a hyphenated form is clearer (example: *a two-week vacation*, *a three-day job*).

**Colon:**

* Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence (example: *He promised this: The company will make good all the losses*).
* If the first word after a colon is not a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence, don’t capitalize (example: *There were three considerations: expense, time and feasibility*).
* Use for emphasis (example: *He had only one skill: writing code*).
* Use at the end of a sentence or phrase to introduce lists, etc. (*see* bulleted lists).
* Use for question-and-answer series:

*Q: Did you apply for 100 jobs?*

*A: Indeed I did.*

* Use with quotations: to introduce a direct quotation of one sentence that is within a paragraph; to introduce long quotations within a paragraph; and to end all paragraphs that introduce a paragraph of quoted material.

**Comma:**

* Do not use Oxford (serial) comma in a simple list (example: *Employers value soft skills such as excellent communication skills, customer service skills and conflict resolution skills*).
* Use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases: *The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.*
* Do use before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series already includes a conjunction (example: *Have a good meal before an interview, such as orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast*).
* Use with an introductory phrase (example: *When he learned about the job, he applied for it immediately*). However, commas are not needed with short phrases if no ambiguity results (example: *During the night he was worried about his interview*)*.*
* Use with conjunctions such as *and, but* or *for* when it links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences; use a comma before the conjunction in most cases (example: *She was glad she looked up, for her interviewer was approaching*).

**Ellipses:**

* Leave a single space on each side of a three-point ellipses.
* If the words that precede an ellipsis constitute a grammatically complete sentence, place a period at the end of the last word before the ellipsis (example: *She was sorry to learn she’d have to cancel her interview at her favorite company. ... Nevertheless,).*

**Em-dash:** (*see* hyphenation)

* AP refers to these as dashes*.*
* Use to signal abrupt change in thought or emphatic pause; however, avoid overuse when commas would suffice.
* Use as one option to set off a series within a phrase (example: *He listed the qualities — intelligence, humor, conservatism, independence — that he liked in an executive*).
* Use before an author’s or composer’s name at the end of a quotation: *“Who steals my purse steals trash.” — Shakespeare*
* Leave a space on both sides.

**En-dash:** don’t use at all.

**Exclamation point:** Use for emphatic expressions but avoid overuse; use a comma after mild interjections and end mildly exclamatory sentences with a period.

**Hyphenation:** (*see* em-dash)

* Follow Webster’s New World Dictionary if in doubt; there are also some exceptions in the APA Stylebook, but the following should cover most cases.
* Use to avoid doubled vowels and tripled consonants (example: *anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like*; some exceptions: *cooperate and coordinate*).
* Use to join doubled prefixes (example: *sub-subparagraph*).
* Use if what follows the hyphen is capitalized (example: *pre-Columbian*).
* Use with compound modifiers (example: *small-business owner*).
* Use in date ranges (example: *Jan. 1-4*).
* Use in numbers when spelled out (example*: twenty-one*, *fifty-five*).
* Many prefixes (anti, bi, co, non, pre, re, etc.) are not hyphenated. Pay attention to when a hyphen or lack of one leads to two distinct words (example: *recreate* vs. *re-create*).
* Don’t use extra spaces around a hyphen when used as a break in a sentence.

**Parentheses:** Avoid overuse. If a sentence must contain incidental material, then commas or dashes are frequently more effective. When parentheses are necessary:

* Place a period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (*such as this fragment*).
* (*An independent parenthetical sentence such as this one takes a period before the closing parenthesis.*)
* When a phrase placed in parentheses (*this one is an example*) might normally qualify as a complete sentence but is dependent on the surrounding material, do not capitalize the first word or end with a period.
* Insertions in a proper name: Use parentheses if a state name or similar information is inserted within a proper name: *The Huntsville (Alabama) Times*, but use commas if no proper name is involved: *The Selma, Alabama, group saw the governor.*

**Quotation mark:**

* Use double quote marks around direct quotes; periods and commas always go within the quotation marks. Examples:
* “I have no intention of staying in this job,” he says.
* A business owner said the interview process is “too long for modern times.”
* Dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence. Examples:
* The interviewer may ask you, “What did you like about your last job?”
* Who wrote “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”?
* The question mark replaces the comma that normally is used when supplying attribution for a quotation. Example:
* “What can I expect at this interview?” she asked.
* For quotes within quotes, alternate between double quotation marks (“or”) and single marks (‘or’). Example from AP Stylebook:
* She said, “I quote from his letter, ‘I agree with Kipling that “the female of the species is more deadly than the male,” but the phenomenon is not an unchangeable law of nature,’ a remark he did not explain.” Or rewrite to avoid this contortion.
* Use three marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time. Example:
* *She said, “He told me, ‘I interviewed well.’”*

**Semicolon:**

* Use to separate elements in a series when the items are long or when individual segments are already set off by commas; the semicolon is used before the final *and* (example: *I interviewed in Buffalo, New York; Berkeley, California; and Charlottesville, Virginia, last summer*).
* Use to link independent clauses when a coordinating conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* is not present) (example: *The resume was due last week; it arrived today*).
* If a coordinating conjunction is present, use a semicolon if extensive punctuation also is required in one or more of the individual clauses (example: *He cleaned his suit, put gas in his car and set his alarm clock three hours early; but even with these precautions, he was late to his interview*). Or break up several independent clauses into separate sentences.
* Place semicolons outside quotation marks (example: *I had not read the essay “Experience Matters Most”; in fact, I had never heard of it*).

**SPELLING:**

**Academic degrees:** Use apostrophe in *bachelor’s degree*, *a master’s*, etc., but there is no possessive in *Associate degree*, *Bachelor of Arts*, *Master of Science*. AP preferred form is to use full term (example: *An applicant doesn’t need a doctorate* [not *a Ph.D.*]).

**Application:** (*see* resume) The terms are not interchangeable. Application is a form an applicant fills out, either on paper or online.

**Applicant:** (*see* candidate, *see* finalist) These terms are not interchangeable. Applicant is someone initially applying for a job (there is no guarantee of even getting an interview).

**a.m.** (*see* p.m.) Lowercase, use periods (example: *10 a.m*., but avoid redundancy, example: *10 a.m. this morning*).

**All together:** Unity in time or place (example: *The candidates will be all together in a room*).

**Altogether:** Wholly; completely(example: *The interview was altogether a success).*

**As:** (*see* like)

* Use *as* to introduce or connect clauses (example: *Do you work too hard, as I do?*; *It happened just as I said it would happen*).
* Use *as ... as* to show the equality or sameness of two things (example: *as large as*, *as many as*, *as much as*, etc.).

**Because:** (*see* since) Use *because* to denote a specific cause-effect relationship (example: *He went because he was told*).

**Bureau of Labor Statistics:** Agency of the Labor Department; use “bureau” (lowercase) on subsequent appearances.

**Candidate** (*see* applicant, *see* finalist): These terms are not interchangeable. Refers to someone who will be interviewed; person made it to the next stage of the process, but there is still no guarantee of being hired (example: *Out of 100 applicants, 12 candidates made it to the interview process*).

**Co:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section) Retain hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives, and verbs that indicate occupation or status (example: co-founder, co-worker, co-working, but coordinate, coexist, copay).

**Company names:** Don’t include comma before Inc. or Ltd. (example: *Nexxt Inc.*), even if it is included in the formal name; include the full name of company somewhere in the post.

**Compared to:** (*see* compare with) Use when creating an analogy between unlike things (example: *She compared getting a second interview to winning the lottery*).

**Compared with:** (*see* compared to) Use when comparing the similarities or differences of similar things (example: *His interview lasted two hours compared with three hours for the next candidate*).

**Complement/ary:** (*see* compliment/ary) Denotes completeness or the process of supplementing something (examples: *The tie complements his suit*; *Learning to code can complement your other technical skills*).

**Compliment/ary:** (*see* complement/ary) Denotes praise (example: *He was flattered by the compliments on his tie*).

**Compose:** (*see* comprise) The parts compose the whole (example: *Many departments compose the company*).

**Comprise/consist of:** (*see* compose) The whole comprises or consists of the parts (example: *the interview panel comprises two managers and two supervisors*; *the interview panel consists of two managers and two supervisors*).

**Consistent/ly:** *(see* constant/ly) These terms are not interchangeable. Means in agreement (example: *deeds not consistent with his words*) or unchanging position (example: *consistent behavior*).

**Constant/ly:** (*see* consistent/ly) These terms are not interchangeable. Means remaining the same or invariable; continual or persistent (example: *constant interruptions*).

**Couldn’t care less:** Not *could care less*, which means someone actually could care less (example: *He couldn’t care less that he had to drive two hours to his dream job*).

**Council/councilor:** (*see* counsel/counselor) Council is a body of people or organizations, often appointed or elected.

**Counsel/counselor:** (*see* council/councilor) Refers to guidance or a person who provides such guidance (example: *He sought counsel from former bosses as he considered the job offer*).

**Double-check**: Hyphenate.

**Decision-maker/decision-making:** (*see* policymaker) Hyphenate.

**Dry run:** Not hyphenated (example: *Try a dry run of the trip to the interview location*).

**Either:** Use it to mean one or the other, *not* both. (Wrong: *There were managers on either side of the door*. Right: *There were managers on each side of the door*;or *There were managers on both sides of the door*).

**Email:** Not hyphenated (but other *e*-terms are hyphenated, example: *e-book, e-reader*).

**Employer:** (*see* Future employer) These terms are not interchangeable. An employee already works for an employer (example: *Ask your employer if there are any other jobs in your department*).

**Face-to-face:** Hyphenate (example: *face-to-face customer service*).

**Finalist:** (*see* applicant,candidate) These terms are not interchangeable. Finalist refers to someone who has made it the final round of the interview process (example: *two finalists remain out of 12 candidates*).

**Full time/full-time:** Hyphenate only when used as a compound modifier (example: *If you’re looking to work full time…* ; *If you already have a full-time job …*).

**Future employer:** (*see* employer) These terms are not interchangeable. An applicant or candidate hopes to work for a future employer (example: *Don’t ask a potential future employer about benefits before your second interview*).

**Hands-on** (adj.)**:** Hyphenate.

**Heads-up** (adj.)**:** Hyphenate.

**Health care:** Spell as two words.

**Home in on:** (*see* hone) Means to guide or be guided (e.g., by radar) to a destination.

**Hone:** (*see* home in on) Means to sharpen (example: *hone one’s skills through practice*).

**In:** (*see* within) *In* expresses inclusion with relation to space, place, time, state, circumstances, manner, quality, substance, class, etc.(example: *in the room*).

**ins and outs:** Not hyphenated (example: *Knowing the ins and outs of how to write a resume is crucial*).

**internet:** Spell lowercase (example: *internet service provider*).

**Job seeker:** Spell as two words.

**Job hunt:** Spell as two words.

**Job board:** Spell as two words.

**-like:** Do not use with a hyphen unless the letter *l* would be tripled or the main element is a proper noun (example: *businesslike*, but *Norwalk-like*, *shell-like*).

**like-:** Use with a hyphen when used as a prefix meaning similar to (example: *like-minded*); don’t use a hyphen if word has its own meaning (example: *likewise, likeness, likelihood*).

**Like:** (*see* as) Use *like* as a preposition to compare nouns and noun phrases; it requires an object (example: *Jim composes resumes like a pro writer*).

**Multi:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section) In general, don’t hyphenate (example: *multilevel*; *multiskilled, multitask*).

**Non:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section) Needed with compounds with special meaning (example: *non-GMO*) or with a compound modifier (example: *non-air-conditioned office*)*.* In general, don’t hyphenate (example: *nonprofit*, *nonchalant*).

**Off:** (examples: *off-site, off-color, off-duty*, but *offbeat, off chance*).

**On:** (examples: *on-site*, but *online*).

**On:** (*see* upon) (example: *Put that on the shelf*).

**On-the-job (adj.):** Hyphenate (example: *on-the-job training*).

**OK:** Two letters (not *okay*).

**Over:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section) In general, don’t hyphenate (example: *overdress, overrate, override*).

**Part time/part-time:** (*see* full time, full-time).

**Policymaker/policymaking:** (*see* decision-maker) Spell as one word.

**Position:** (*see* role*)* These terms are not interchangeable. A position isa post of employment; office; job (example: *to apply for a* *teaching* *position*. Wrong: *This is a time to ask about the daily responsibilities of the role*. Right: *This is a time to ask about the daily responsibilities of the position*).

**p.m.:** (*see* a.m.).

**pre:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section) In general, don’t hyphenate (example: *prejudge, predispose*, but *pre-exist, pre-empt*).

**Problem-solving:** Use hyphen.

**Re:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section).

**Resume:** (*see* application) These terms are not interchangeable. A resume is what a candidate creates and submits for a position.

**Role:** (*see* position) These terms are not interchangeable. A role is a function performed in a particular process (example: *the role of the teacher in the educational process*).

**Seasons:** Lowercase (example: *spring, summer, winter, fall*; but *Winter Olympics*).

**Self:** Hyphenate in compounds (example: *self-acting, self-evident*).

**Side by side** (adverb); **side-by-side** (adjective)**:** Examples: *They walked side by side*; *The stories received side-by-side display*.

**Skill set:** spell as two words (and not as *skillset*)

**So called** (adverb, no hyphen), **so-called** (adjective, use hyphen)**:** Do not use with quote marks Examples:

Right: *The word job is so called because it requires hard work.*

Right: *Too much confidence is a so-called problem.*

Wrong: *Too much confidence is a so-called “problem.”*

**Startup:**Spell as one word

**Thank you/thank-you:** Hyphenate when using as a modifier (example: *After an interview, send a thank-you note*).

**Their/there/they’re**: *their is* a plural possessive pronoun; *there* is an adverb indicting place; *they’re* is a contraction for they are (example: *They’re going to take their car there for repair*).

**Toward:** no *s* (not *towards*).

**Under:** (*see* Hyphenation in Punctuation section) (example: *underdress*).

**U.S.:** Use periods in abbreviation.

**Upon:** (*see* on) (example: *upon the job’s completion*).

**Upsell:** Spell as one word.

**Versus/vs:** Spell it out in full.

**Waitstaff:** spell as one word

**Web:** Spell lowercase (example: *web, website, webcast, webpage*; but *web address, web browser*).

**Well:** Hyphenate to avoid any confusion, otherwise don’t (example: *The candidate was well connected to the boss*, but *The well-connected candidate is the boss’s nephew*)*.* Webster’s Dictionary lists these adjectives as hyphenated: well-behaved, well-being, well-chosen, well-informed well-rounded, well-groomed, well-made, etc.

**Wide-:** Usually hyphenated (example: *wide-angle, wide-awake, wide-open*, but *widespread*).

* **wide:** Not hyphenated (example: *citywide, industrywide, nationwide*).

**Within:** (see *in*) On the inside; internally; indoors; inside the body, mind, heart, etc.; inwardly; not beyond in distance, time, degree, range, scope, etc.(*within* a mile, *within* one’s experience); inside the limits of (*within* the law).

**Who/whom:** *who* is the subject of a sentence (example: *Send your resume to the person who is in charge of the department*)*. Whom* is the object of a verb or preposition (example: *I don’t know with whom I’ll be interviewing*)*.* Tip: If you can rewrite and replace “who” with “he” or “she,” use *who* (example: *He is in charge of the department*). If you can replace it with “him” or “her,” use *whom* (example: *I don’t know if I’ll be interviewing with her*).

**Workforce:** Spell as one word.

**Work search/work-search:** Spell as two words, unless used as a compound modifier (example: *Use an organized work search to find a job; Use an organized work-search routine to find a job*).

**WRITING SUGGESTIONS:**

The following examples are from BOLD articles. They are used only to highlight the suggestions in this section; underlining added to show the type of writing under discussion.

**Write carefully and accurately, and don’t overwrite:**

Example:

Original: *Highlight your ability to recognize what tasks are able to be delegated and why it’s important to allocate them to the right people*.

Allocate means to set apart for a specific purpose; this could be assign, delegate, or give, etc. Better: *Highlight your ability to show you can delegate work to the right people.*

**Tips and suggestions:**

* Because the articles are meant to be helpful and actionable, they will inevitably contain guidance, tips, suggestions, and advice. Nevertheless, the articles should never make any kind of explicit or implied promises or guarantees. The effect of general guidance or advice will be situational.
* Use indefinite terms like “might” or “could,” as opposed to “will.”

Example:

Original: *Following this advice will get you an interview*.

Better: *Following this advice offers you a better chance at landing that interview*.

**Avoid overuse of metaphors, analogies, and jargon:** It’s better to use clear, specific writing.

*AP Q&A example*:

Q: Would you hyphenate out of the box if it’s not a compound modifier? For example, It inspired her to do something out-of-the-box and to solve a problem.

#### A: What is out of the box? Does it mean she was inspired to do something original? Creative? Unusual? Out of the ordinary? Outrageous?

**Avoid hyperbole, be specific, write with a professional tone**: The following original sentences sound too much like promises or guarantees, and do not sound as professional as they could. Wording is best kept neutral in general.

Examples:

Original: *Here is a great example of how an excellent answer to the delegation question would go.*

Better: *The following is a useful example if you are asked about your skills at delegating work.*

Original: *Apply them to your routine and you’re sure to get that awesome job you’ve been dreaming about in no time*.

Better: *Apply them to your routine to help you find the job you have always wanted.*

Original: *By using these secrets to write a killer resume that gets attention, you’ll increase the job opportunities that you receive.*

Better: *By using these secrets to write a solid resume that gets attention, you might find yourself with more interviews.*

Original: *If you’re anything like me, you’ve probably grown up hating the jobs that you have to do and you’ve never even thought about whether or not a job out there could possibly make you happy.*

This is personal, and it makes assumptions about the audience*.* For BOLD articles, keep the language more neutral.

**Neutral Qualifier Suggestions:**

* Could
* Helpful
* May
* Might
* Offer
* Practical
* Recommend
* Suggest
* Useful
* Try

**Final Paragraph Suggestions/Guidance**

*Ex. 1:* Get some inspiration by looking at [cover letter examples](https://www.livecareer.com/cover-letter-examples) from a wide variety of fields. Or, try our [Cover Letter Builder](https://www.livecareer.com/cover-letter-builder) to create a cover letter that could transform your job search. [LiveCareer](https://www.livecareer.com/) also has an article dedicated entirely to[how to write the first paragraph of your cover letter](https://www.livecareer.com/career/advice/cover-letter/cover-letter-writing-tips/opening-statements/how-to-write-the-first-paragraph-of-your-cover-letter).

*Ex. 2:* Use LiveCareer’s  [Cover Letter Builder](https://www.livecareer.com/cover-letter-builder) to create a message that can help take you where you want to go.

*Ex. 3:* For more on how to get in the door, visit [LiveCareer](https://www.livecareer.com/). The site offers interview tips, [a database of job search leads](https://jobs.livecareer.com/), and a sophisticated, easy-to-use [Resume Builder](https://www.livecareer.com/resume-builder) and [Cover Letter Builder](https://www.livecareer.com/cover-letter-builder) that can help you make a great first impression.

*Ex. 4:* Create a seamless experience by keeping relevant information exactly where readers expect to see it. Use LiveCareer’s [Resume Builder](https://www.livecareer.com/resume-builder) and [Cover Letter Builder](https://www.livecareer.com/cover-letter-builder) for some help.