



Article Guidelines

Did you know that 79% of web users scan the page instead of reading word-for-word? That people read from computer screens is 25% slower than from paper? Or that web content should have 50% of the word count of its paper equivalent?

When writing and/or submitting an article to CareerBuilder.com, please keep in mind the following guidelines. This will ensure an optimal experience for CareerBuilder.com users.

We are always accepting pitches for the following sites:

- **MSN Careers, AOL Find a Job** – general job and workplace advice
- **CareerRookie.com** – traditional college students and new grads
- **DegreeDriven.com** – typically older than college age looking for certification, first or second degrees both online and off
- **CBsalary.com** – anything to do with salaries, salary negotiation, etc.
- **TheWorkBuzz.com** – job blog (you can guest blog)
- **OpportunityBuilder.com** – audience is entrepreneurs, franchisees, direct sales personnel
- **BlackCareers.com** – audience is African-American job seekers and has blog
- **Empleos.com** – audience is Hispanic job seekers; publishes in English and Spanish
- **PrimeCB.com** – site for older workers and has blog
- **Sologig.com** – specializes in freelance and contract opportunities
- **WorkinRetail.com** – site for retail professionals
- **JobsontheMenu.com** – site for professionals in the food service industry

Article Essentials

- **Clean Copy:** no spelling errors, no missing words, no typos, no formatting issues.
- **Fact Checking:** All facts must be checked for 100% accuracy. Incorrect facts are unacceptable and may result in rejection of article.

Style:

- Articles should be 600-800 words.
- Use plain language and avoid jargon.
- Bullets, numbered lists, subheads, etc. are encouraged to break up text for readability.
- Tips, steps, "how to," quizzes, tests.

- Be succinct. Write no more than 50% of the text you would have used in a hardcopy publication.
- Write for scannability - don't require users to read long continuous blocks of text.
- The Web is an informal and immediate medium, compared to print, so users appreciate a somewhat informal writing style and small amounts of humor.
- Limit the use of metaphors, particularly in headings. Users might take you literally.
- Use simple sentence structures. Convoluted writing and complex words are even harder to understand online.
- Add bylines and other ways of communicating some of your personality. (This also increases credibility.)

Spelling

- Co-worker
- Job seeker
- E-mail
- Résumé

Appeal to Large Audience:

- Keep in mind you are writing for a national publication. Make sure there is appeal to a large audience.
- Unless it is a gender-specific piece, balance examples of male/female quotes, anecdotes, etc.
- Stories should be “balanced” to include all types of careers, rather than strictly white collar or office positions. The content should include and/or address service professions and blue-collar positions. Include a range of industries, such as from healthcare to technology to hospitality.
- Avoid niche topics. Treat all articles like they could stand alone by themselves.

Engagement:

- Make sure there is a good “hook.” Ask yourself: Is it fun to read?
- Keep in mind visual imagery. Is there a picture that might complement this article?
- Is this new info or info presented in a new way?
- How compelling is the info?
- Use examples of good and bad scenarios.
- Include anecdotes.
- Timeliness – what do people care about now?

Sources

- Be sure to cite all sources and legitimize their expertise if possible. As an example, mention the company that person works for, number of years of experience in the recruitment field or any of the expert’s accolades (such as author of X book)
- Are your facts correct?

Bylines

- Include full name in the byline and any information to legitimize authority, such as “author of X book” if appropriate.
- Include short bio and email address at the end of article when author is expert source.

Tone

- Authoritative/expert
- Timely and/or useful
- Engaging/entertaining

Promotions

- Articles should not promote CareerBuilder.com’s competitors.
- Keep self-promotion to a minimum when possible.

Headlines:

- Create a headline a user will feel compelled to click on.
- Headlines should be clear, strong and engaging. They should explain the article succinctly and contain key words.
- Do *not* use clever or cute headings since users rely on scanning to pick up the meaning of the text.
- Other factors to keep in mind when writing headlines

1. Reference numbers

5 Worst Co-worker Types

7 Tips for Getting the Salary You Deserve

10 Worst E-mail Blunders

2. Ask a question in the headline (this is especially good for polls)

Do We Need More Vacation?

Are You Dressing for Success?

3. Play Off Negative Angles

Things You Should NEVER Do In a Job Interview

Worst Career Advice Myths

4. Include “fun” and engaging words in the headline

Negative: *Taboo, Disaster, Catastrophe, Failure, Ridiculous, Agonizing*

Positive: *Triumph, Winner, Star, Sensation, Fashionable, Hip, Cool, Hot*

5. “How to” Headlines

How To Land the Impossible Interview

How To Find Out If You are About to Be Fired

For more info on writing for the web, check out the Web Style Guide – Editorial Style

<http://www.webstyleguide.com/style/index.html>.

FAQ

What do you pay for contribution to your site?

We do not pay our contributors because of the exposure they receive on CB and its network.

What should I submit – a topic proposal or an entire article?

We prefer submissions of completed articles, but you can propose a topic before writing the entire article.

My article is longer than 800 words. Can I still submit it?

You can submit it, but there is a smaller chance your article will be published on the CareerBuilder network.

I submitted an article to CareerBuilder and haven't heard anything back. What should I do?

Due to the high number of submissions, we cannot respond to all prospective contributors. We will contact you if we can use your article. It is possible that your submission was caught by the CareerBuilder spam filters and you can resubmit your article. Please indicate "resubmit" in your e-mail subject line.

When will I see my article on CareerBuilder?

We will do our best to notify you when your article is published. Please note: because of editorial schedules, publication dates can change.

Submission Guidelines

We do not pay our contributors because of the exposure they receive on CB and its network.

We prefer submissions of completed articles, but you can propose a topic before writing the entire article.

Publication is not guaranteed if an article is submitted.

AP style preferred.

Topics that work:

- Quizzes and Tests
- Anything tied to pop culture
- Hot jobs/industries
- Best/ How to . . .
- Bad/Negative bosses/ co-workers

- Tips for raises and higher salaries
- Cubicle culture
- Top 10 Lists
- Salaries
- Interviews

Topics that don't perform well:

- General self-improvement (ex. Keys to Job Success)
- Networking skills
- Office romance
- Career change

Top-Performing Articles

- How much do they make? 90k jobs
- No degree; no problem
- Hottest jobs for 2009
- 20 jobs to earn more; work less
- What America earns
- 9 great entry-level jobs
- Before they were famous
- Take this quiz; uncover your dream job
- So, what are your weaknesses?
- Want to earn \$25 an hour
- 30 best cities for jobs
- Salaries for the class of 2009
- 20 top-paying careers in America
- Does your career fit your personality?
- How to anger your co-workers
- 10 worst work habits
- Jobs that pay \$25 an hour
- They said what? Things actually said in interviews
- \$20-an-hour jobs
- Lies we all tell

Remember:

Getting people's attention and conveying your message isn't about the number of words you use but how you use them. Technical communicator and design specialist William Horton demonstrates this by showing the words in influential and not so influential documents.

The Lord's Prayer – 56 words

Gettysburg Address – 266 words

Ten Commandments – 297 words
Declaration of Independence – 300 words
Box of breakfast cereal – 1,200 words
U.S. Government order on pricing cabbage – 26,911 words*

**Developing Online Content, Wiley and Sons*

CareerBuilder Style Rules

GENERAL PUNCTUATION

- **Résumé (with accent marks)**
- **No comma before conjunction in a simple series**
 - e.g.: With a nationwide focus on retirement saving, investing options and other financial issues...
- **AP style puts spaces on both sides of dashes.**
- **Periods go inside quotes.**
- **Movie titles go in quotes.**
 - e.g.: Bill Lumbergh, “Office Space.”
- **If what follows a colon is not a complete sentence, the first word should be lowercase, and vice versa.**
 - e.g.: Other thriving jobs in education: administrators and sales executives.
 - e.g.: Face it: You are going to suffer while you foot the bills.
- **If semi-colons are used in a series, one should precede the conjunction.**
 - e.g.: ...46 percent took a “listen, but keep your opinions to yourself” approach; 30 percent answered “don’t ask, don’t tell”; and only 22 percent say they wanted to “stand up and be heard.”
- **No comma before “Inc.” in company names.**
 - e.g.: Garter Inc. revealed.
- **Dashes should be used for specific emphasis.**
- **No comma before book titles and titles are in quotes.**
 - e.g.: ...author of the book “Choose Your Life!”

WONDERFUL WORLD OF HYPHENS

- **“Short-term” takes a hyphen**
- **“Health-care” takes a hyphen when used as an adjective.**
 - e.g.: Legal nurse consultants are the liaison between lawyers and the health-care community.
- **“Real-estate” takes hyphen when used as an adjective.**
 - e.g.: He completed his real-estate certificate.
- **“Job hunt” is not hyphenated.**
- **“E-mails” is hyphenated.**
- **“Co-workers” takes a hyphen.**
- **“Baby-sitter” not “babysitter.”**
- **“Work-from-home”**
- **“Post-secondary”**
- **Modifiers with “well” take a hyphen.**
 - e.g.: “Well-known,” “well-written.”
- **“Sure-fire” takes a hyphen.**
 - e.g.: It’s a sure-fire way to get fired.
- **No hyphen with prefix “multi.”**
 - e.g.: “multitasking,” “multiproblems.”
- **Most words with the prefix “non” don’t take a hyphen.**
 - e.g.: Catching up on noncritical paperwork...
- **As a verb, “follow up” has no hyphen.**
 - e.g.: Follow up after the interview.
- **Modifiers ending in “ly” don’t take a hyphen.**
 - e.g.: A combination of more than two years of directly related experience.
- **No hyphen in modifiers that start with “pre.”**
 - e.g.: Telephone interviews are prescreening tools.
- **“Full time” and “part time” are not hyphenated unless used as a compound modifier.**
 - e.g.: “He worked full time.”
 - e.g.: “She had a full-time job.”

ONE FISH TWO FISH

- **“Child care” is two words, no hyphen, in all uses.**
- **“Pay cut” is two words.**
- **“Workweek” is one word.**
- **“Workplace” is one word.**
- **“Workday” is one word.**
- **“Work force” is two words.**
- **“Work space” is two words.**
- **“Job seeker” is two words.**
- **“Web site” is two words; “Web” is capitalized.**

- **“Schoolteacher” is one word.**
- **“Health care” is two words not as an adjective.**
 - e.g.: Health care: nurse, doctor, EMT, paramedic.
- **“Awhile” is one word, unless used as “for a while.”**
 - e.g.: If you haven’t calculated your hourly pay in awhile.
 - e.g.: If you are going to be gone for a while.
- **“Day care” is two words.**
- **“Web site” is two words, with an upper-case “w.”**

SPELLING AND CAPITALIZATION

- **Adviser, not advisor**
 - e.g.: financial adviser
- **“Advisers” not “advisors”**
- **“BlackBerry” not “Blackberry.”**
- **Avoid all caps on company names unless each letter is pronounced separately.**
 - e.g.: IBM, USA Today.
- **First word of a quote should be capitalized.**
 - As McGuire explains, “You make your priorities.”
- **“Dos and don’ts” not “do’s and don’ts.”**
- **“OK” not “okay.”**

PHRASING

- **No acronym in parentheses after organizations, but OK to use on second reference**
 - e.g.: Bureau of Labor Statistics and BLS on second reference.
- **Use “who” and not “that” when referring to people.**
 - e.g.: It’s not good news for someone who may not be a perfect match.
- **Correct positioning for modifier “only.”**
 - e.g.: If the perfect candidates out there have only 10 years experience...
NOT
 - If the perfect candidates out there only have 10 years experience...
- **When referring to opinions or beliefs, rather than emotions, “think” is a better word than “feel.”**
 - e.g.: Do you think your contributions in the workplace are overlooked?
- **Add locations to schools, companies and organizations.**
 - e.g.: Bruce Barry, a professor at the Vanderbilt Owen Graduate School of Management in Nashville, Tenn.
- **“More than” not “over”**
 - e.g.: He earned more than \$62,000 annually.
- **Pronouns and their antecedents should agree.**
 - e.g.: Farel believes in creating the ultimate experience for his **clients**, whether it’s enjoying a manicure or having **their** hair colored.

- **Abbreviate most states after cities.**
 - e.g.: Richmond, Va., Pleasant Ridge, Mich.
- **Magazine titles are in roman, not italicized.**
 - e.g.: Vogue, Marie Claire, Town & Country and Elle.
- **“Past experience” is redundant.**
 - e.g.: Your experience turns into transferable skills. **NOT**
 - e.g.: Your past experience turns into transferable skills.

NUMBERS

- **Use numerals with percents, even if under 10.**
 - e.g.: Above all, 9 percent of employees think their boss is a jerk and only 2 percent get along with him or her.
- **Unless numbers are identical, “an additional” is better choice than “another.”**
 - e.g.: Transportation jobs accounted for 25 percent of jobs, while office and administrative support occupations employed **an additional** 17 percent.
- **“No.1, No.2, No.3,” not “number one, number two, number 3 or #1, #2, #3.”**
- **Numerals for numbers 10 and up**
 - e.g.: After about 10 years...
- **AP style on millions is to use numeral up to two decimal places, followed by the word “million.”**
 - e.g.: Overall HR employment is projected to grown 17 percent between 2006 and 2016, estimating 1.02 million jobs in 2016.

ATTRIBUTION

- **Sources’ full names should be used unless there’s a good reason not to do so. If there is such a reason, include in story.**
- **Do not follow a person’s name with abbreviations of academic degrees.**
 - e.g.: Instead of Kimberly May, DVM, MS, DACVS, it’s Kimberly May, a veterinarian and assistant director of the American Veterinary Medical Association’s...
- **No courtesy title on second reference.**
 - e.g.: For above doctor, would not refer to as “Dr. May;” just “May.”
- **Only last name on second reference.**
- **Titles after names are lower case.**
 - e.g.: Kim Connolly, vice president of Smith Brothers Insurance.
- **Use “Dr.” for physicians. If the title is used for a person who holds another type of doctoral degree, we should state what it is.**
 - e.g.: if someone has a Ph.D. but doesn’t specify what field, do not refer to him as “Dr.”