

How a QE Recruiter Actually Reads Your Resume

What the tool is built on — and what separates the phone call from the pile.

The resume has one job: **get the phone call**. Not impress anyone. Not document your career. Get 30 more seconds of attention from someone moving fast who has seen hundreds of resumes that week.

The First 10 Seconds

I open the file, read your objective, and jump straight to your most recent role. If there's a skills wall — a block of tools, competencies, or certifications — between your summary and your work experience, my eyes glaze over. I either skip straight to your last job or close the file. That section you spent an hour formatting? I never read it.

What I'm Looking For Immediately

Not tools. Not methodologies. A story. Specifically: what company were you at, what were they building, what did you own, and what changed because you were there? If I can't answer those four questions from your first bullet, you're already losing me.

The Single Biggest Mistake QE Candidates Make

Almost every QE resume describes *how* tools were used. Almost none explain *what product* those tools were protecting, *who the customers were*, or *what would have happened if the testing failed*. That context is what makes a recruiter connect you to their open role.

Here's What Your Peers Are Actually Submitting

These are real bullets from real QE resumes — and they represent the majority of what lands in my inbox:

"Developed UI automation scripts using C# and Playwright, increasing regression coverage and reducing manual testing effort."

"Improved test coverage and reduced regression testing time through structured QA processes and early automation initiatives."

"Performed API testing using Postman, validating request/response payloads, headers, and service integrations."

"Designed and implemented API automation for RESTful services, validating request parameters, payload schemas, and HTTP responses as part of end-to-end system validation."

"Leveraged AI-powered debugging tools to ship 2x more maintainable automation per sprint while mentoring through high-quality output others could learn from."

"Integrated performance/load testing suites into CI pipelines and tracked observability metrics to ensure deterministic behavior under AI-accelerated development velocity."

Notice what every single one of these is missing: what product was being tested, who the customers were, and what actually changed for the business. The last two are trying harder — there's a number, there's AI terminology — but they still don't tell me what was at stake. "2x more maintainable automation" for what? Protecting what product? "Deterministic behavior under AI-accelerated development velocity" sounds impressive but says nothing a recruiter can act on.

This is the pile. If your resume reads like this, you are in it.

What the Same Bullet Looks Like When It Works

■ GENERIC

"Built Playwright E2E automation suite covering 400+ test scenarios across web and mobile."

■ SPECIFIC

"Built Playwright E2E suite for the credit card application flow — the highest-revenue product on the platform, used by 3M+ customers — catching an average of 8 pre-production defects per sprint and eliminating a 2-day manual regression cycle before every release."

The first tells me you know Playwright. So does every other candidate I'm looking at. The second tells me what was at stake, who it served, and why it mattered.

What Kills a Resume Before I Finish the First Page

- **Skills wall before experience.** Tool lists or competency blocks placed before work experience.
- **Generic summary phrases.** "Results-oriented," "detail-oriented," "proven track record," "driving quality in Agile environments" — these appear on the majority of QE resumes and tell me nothing.
- **Passive language.** "Responsible for," "participated in," "assisted with," "involved in" — these describe tasks assigned, not work owned.
- **Impact claims with no numbers.** "Improved test coverage," "reduced manual effort" — invisible without a before/after or a percentage.
- **Unknown companies with no context.** If I don't recognize the company, I need one sentence: what they built and who their customers were.

What Makes Me Slow Down and Keep Reading

- A specific outcome: not "improved pipeline" but "cut regression runtime from 8 hours to 45 minutes"
- Product and customer context inside the bullets — not just at the company header level
- Ownership verbs: built, designed, architected, launched, eliminated, drove, engineered
- An honest explanation of transitions or gaps — I notice every gap, and if you don't explain it, I assume the worst

The Formula for a Bullet That Works

What you built or owned
+ for what product or feature
+ serving what customers or at what scale
+ what changed because of it

That's it. That's the whole game. The candidates who get the phone call are the ones who make that answer obvious in the first 30 seconds.