

The Workplace

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A Fact Sheet

Highlights

Applicants have a greater chance of landing an interview and wider industry exposure if they use:

1. Keywords resumes—are resumes that rely on the use of targeted keywords, the foundation of electronic searches.
2. Scannable resumes—are resumes that are prepared for the purpose of scanning it into a database and includes both hard copy and electronic resumes.

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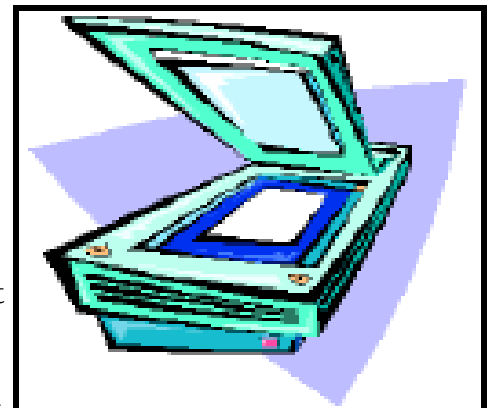
Job Search 101: Keyword and Scannable Resumes

Applicants have a greater chance of landing an interview and wider industry exposure if they use keyword resumes and/or scannable resumes. While keeping in mind that the same qualities that make hard copy resumes effective also apply to electronic resumes, i.e., resumes should be brief, informative, attractive, accurate, and well organized. Electronic resumes should also be easy to search and scan.

Keywords resumes are resumes that rely on the use of targeted keywords which are the foundation of electronic searches and are the instrument used to quickly search and select resumes. The use of keywords essentially eliminates seemingly unlikely candidates without examining the full text. Pointers to consider when using keywords include:

- Place a key skills section at the top of your resume. In this section, list nouns, verbs, industry jargon, etc., separated by commas. Your choice of words should concisely detail your skills, competencies, and education in concrete terms.
- Use the same terminology that appeared in the ad or the job description.
- Use different forms of those same keywords in the body of your resume. For example, if you use the word supervision in your keywords section, use words like supervise or supervisory in subsequent sections.
- Be sure to include both acronyms and full words. For example, use both "PI" and principle investigator.

Scannable resumes are resumes that are prepared for the purpose of scanning into a database. This includes both hard copy and electronic resumes. Scanning resumes into a database, a practice called electronic applicant tracking, is becoming more common. A scannable resume is clean and crisp so that the



A scannable resume is clean and crisp so that the scanner can get a good image.

scanner can get a good image. Hiring managers and recruiters scan resumes in so that they can search them using key terms, thus turning hard copy resumes into an electronic one. A hard copy resume that cannot be easily scanned and read stand a much greater chance of being cut from the pool prematurely. Suggestions to consider when preparing a resume for the possibility of scanning include:

- Print on white paper using a laser printer for hard copy resumes.
- Use a white background for e-resumes.
- Use plain, standard fonts, i.e., no fancy treatments, in a 10 to 14 point font size.
- Avoid the use of columns, boxes, lines, graphics, or any other special effect. These do not scan well.

If the company to which you are applying allows e-resume, it is reasonable to assume that company might also use scanning to help narrow the applicant pool.

If the company to which you are applying allows e-resume, it is reasonable to assume that company might also use scanning to help narrow the applicant pool. Regardless of which type of resume you design for your job search, the more mediums for exposure you can plan for and use will only increase the chances of your resumes being selected for further review.

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