



CREATING SCANNABLE RESUMES

Computer-read Resumes

Age-old resume advice has always stressed the “look and feel” of your resume. Is it on nice paper? Does it use action verbs and good grammar to relate your job skills and experience? Is the layout easy on the human eye? These days, while you should have a traditional resume on hand for your interview, it is very likely that you will need to create a scannable resume to even be contacted for an interview.

An electronic resume summarizes your qualifications by keywords. It is scanned into a database that combines and sorts keywords according to single skills or skill sets that the employer has specified.

Why a Scannable Resume?

Many companies are turning to databases as a more efficient way of storing and categorizing the constant flow of resume submissions. The database sorts your skills by keyword, which makes it very easy for a manager to search a great number of documents for particular job-specific skills.

What to Watch For

If your resume is going to be scanned into a database, you must make sure that it is in a format that can be read by the scanning software. Some companies will tell you to resubmit your resume if it's unreadable, some companies will not. Additionally, you need to know which keywords describe your qualifications and experience.

General Guidelines

- Use standard-sized white paper.
- Print on one side only.
- Use a laser printer. DO NOT use a dot-matrix printer.
- Do not fold, staple, or bend the resume.
- Use sans serif fonts like Helvetica, Times or Courier.
- Keep text and headings at 10–14 points.
- Do not use underlining, italics, shading, graphics, vertical lines, or boxes. Use horizontal lines sparingly.
- Use bold text for section headings only. Some people say that it is better to not use bold at all.
- Put your name on a separate line at the top of each page.
- List phone numbers on separate lines.