

## Calling All Recruiters— Is anyone out there?

Online job services were meant to automate the job search process and get job seekers in front of prospective new employers quicker. How well is it working for you? If you've sent out dozens of resumes and gotten little or no response it probably feels like you're shooting your resume out into some vast black hole with no recipient at the other end. Do you feel like shouting "hey, is anyone out there?"

To better your odds of that your resume is being seen by a real person who can offer you a real job, here are three guideline to make your resume more effective:

### 1. **Include Key Words**

With paper resumes a thing of the past, employers use candidate tracking data bases to store resumes. Recruiters and hiring managers use key words to query for appropriately matching candidate resumes. If you aren't using the right words to describe your employment experiences, then your resume might be rejected before it's ever seen. Review key words your resume uses to:

- **Describe your current career objective.** Do your qualifications match the job description? Look closely at areas listing your technical skills, job responsibilities and core competencies.
- **Attract your industry.** Are you using your industries current buzzwords? Avoid obsolete terms and phases that may label you as behind the times.
- **Attract your occupational field.** Does your resume give the impression of that you're on the cutting edge or over the hill?

### 2. **Use the Correct Electronic Version**

If your resume can't be opened as an attachment, then it can't be seen. Because of the threat of computer viruses many companies only accept resumes through their own online forms which ask you to cut and paste (rather than attach) your resume. Make sure you are sending your resume in a format that will work for the recipient.

- **If a resume attachment is requested:** Save your resume as a Word document (.doc or .rft). This is the standard most companies use. It should retain the formatting that you used for your resume so long as you avoid fancy formatting options such as columns, boxes and tables.

- **If an email or online form is used:** Use ASCII, plain text, or text only. This removes formatting, but the information is preserved. Be sure to review your resume before sending it so that it is still easy to read and user friendly.

### 3. Make Your Resume stand out from the Crowd

With hundreds of candidates to choose from, what makes your resume shout “Pick me!”? If your qualifications are similar or equal to the vast majority of other candidates, employers will need a compelling reason to select you out of the crowd. You need a differentiating edge or you’ll be ignored.

The best way to differentiate your resume from others is with accomplishments. And those accomplishments really stand out when:

- **They are quantified or measurable.** Can you define how much you accomplished in dollars saved, contracts won, or percent changed?
- **They highlight your transferable skills.** Can your skills be used by this company, even if your job experience is in a different industry? Transferrable skills help employers visualize you in their organization.
- **They show corporate impact.** How can you help them save *time*, save *money*, increase their *profit margin*, improve *sales*, or increase *revenue*?

While the Internet is still a great tool for job seekers to connect quickly with employers, take steps to insure your resume won’t get ignored by employers who need your skills. Before you apply online again, use these three tips to make sure your resume gets the attention it deserves!

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Read more career tips and see sample resumes at:

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