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How to Ensure Your Resume is Read by Recruiters

By Laura Adams

Even the most qualified candidates with the strongest qualifications sometimes get bypassed by recruiters when they are looking to fill an open position. Why is this? Don't recruiters want to interview and hire the best of the best?

The answer to this question is, of course, yes! Recruiters are reviewing the resumes of submitted candidates to determine which individuals appear, on paper, to be a potential match for the position. But considering that a recruiter may get dozens, if not hundreds, of resumes for a single job opening, there is little time to carefully dig through each individual resume to see if a candidate has the "special something" the employer is seeking.

As disappointing as this fact is for many job seekers, most recruiters will decide the fate of your resume in less than 15 seconds. If a recruiter cannot match your qualifications to that of the open position in that time frame, your resume is headed to the "File for Future Reference" stack, otherwise known as the Black Hole of Resumes. This means that you need to sell yourself very quickly and capture the recruiter's attention from the start.

So what do you need to do to stand out in the crowd? First off, your resume needs to be results-oriented and concise, and quickly summarize your qualifications for the target position. Grab the reader's attention with strong selling points at the very top of your resume on why your accomplishments, skills, and experience match the position you are seeking. Doing research on the company at which you are applying and the specific open position will provide you with the information you need to ensure you are focusing in on the right skill areas.

The next step is to demonstrate the value you will contribute to the company. Recruiters are going to be looking for ways in which you will be an asset to the company. An easy way to ensure that your resume gets a more thorough review is to specifically address this topic in a summary of qualifications at the top of your resume. Don't leave it up to the recruiter to deduce how (and if) you will be an asset - tell them directly!

Finally, with so many incoming resumes for a single position, recruiters are eager to reject and screen

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out individuals down to a more manageable level. Any little mistake or error of judgment may be enough to disqualify you before your qualification summary is even reviewed.

To ensure that your resume is even more than just a cursory glance, avoid the following top recruiter pet peeves:

Spelling errors and typos

Poor grammar / Failure to use proper English

Missing or inaccurate contact information

Missing or inaccurate dates of employment

Poor or distracting resume formatting

Use of unusual resume paper such as bright colors or patterned paper. Scented paper is also a no-no.

Position accomplishments read more like a company-developed formal job description than an outline of your skills, key outcomes, and results. Recruiters don't want to know what your employer says someone in your position should be doing - they want to know what you actually do!

Long, tedious resumes - more than 1 page for new graduates or inexperienced professional, more than 2-3 pages for experienced professionals

Grossly unqualified candidates

And last, but not least:

Inclusion of personal information that is unrelated to the job. Recruiters don't want to know about your family life, your religion, your extracurricular activities, your weight and height, or anything else that does not directly qualify you for the position. Never attach your picture to your resume!

Laura Adams is a qualified careers advisor with 11 years experience.

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Resume Distribution and Resume Posting Explained

By Rita Fisher, CPRW

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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RESUME DISTRIBUTION AND RESUME POSTING SERVICES

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Resume Distribution Services

There are many resume distribution services on the Internet today. Basically, the way they work is that you pay a certain amount of money to them, anywhere from \$30 to \$200, and the resume distribution service will distribute your resume to their database of recruiters and employers.

Resume distribution services will let you choose your industry, geography, salary level and position title and based on these employment specifications, they will e-mail or fax your resume to those recruiters and / or employers who match your employment specifications.

The main thing to remember here is to TARGET your resume to only those recruiters and employer who match your employment specifications. You don't want your resume to be sent out to everyone in the resume distribution service's database because that will not help your job search and you will end up paying more.

Resume Posting Services

Have you ever visited CareerBuilder.com or Monster.com? I'm sure you have. These are called job search sites or job board sites. These are the sites where you can post your resume for free. You can also search for job openings on these sites.

Job search sites have clearly explained instructions on how you can post your resume to them. The reason for posting your resume to these sites is because that is how recruiters and potential employer will find you.

Two important items to remember when posting to job search sites:

1, You have to include industry keywords in your resume in order to be picked up by recruiters or employers. What are keywords? For example, if you are a Pharmaceutical Sales Representative, your keywords might be "mood stabilizing drugs", "Prozac", "Zoloft", "Paxil" etc. Just build these into your job descriptions and job accomplishments.

The reason why you want to include keywords in your resume is because both recruiters and employers will be searching for potential candidates by typing in certain keywords. (They are looking for someone with the kinds experiences your keywords convey).

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2, The other important item to remember when posting to job search sites is that it is not an "active" way of looking for work.

Only a fraction of all job seekers find employment via posting their resumes to job search sites. Job search sites have thousands if not millions of resumes in their databases so the likelihood of your resume popping up in front of a recruiter or an employer is very slim.

After briefly reviewing both the resume distribution and resume posting services, my professional recommendation is to use the first one: the resume distribution. The reason for my recommendation is that when you have a resume distribution service distributing your resume, it will be a TARGETED distribution, not a blind action in job search process (like the resume posting). To find resume distribution services, just go to google.com and put "resume distribution service" into the search engine. Good luck!

Rita Fisher, a Certified Professional Resume Writer, has received publicity for her work with job seekers on the Oprah Winfrey Show, in McCall's magazine and in many other media sources. Her professional resume writing work has been featured in "Gallery of Best Resumes" a book by Jist Publishing. You can reach her at <http://www.CareerChangeResumes.com>.



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