

WHAT IS A SCANNABLE RESUME?

As human resources departments become smaller, scannable resumes are becoming more popular. Scanning resumes involves sending a hard copy of a resume through a computer with an OCR (optical character recognition) program. The resume can then be read by the computer program and may be categorized or rated for positions based on specific job standards.

Keep in mind that a scannable resume is different than an on-line or e-mail resume. If you are interested in creating an on-line or e-mail resume, the Career Center Library has many resources to help you modify your resume to that style.

WHEN SHOULD I USE A SCANNABLE RESUME?

How does one know what kind of resume to send? First of all, follow the instructions in the job description. If there are no instructions, consider the size of the company. Virtually all of the Fortune 500 companies and many high-tech companies have scanners. Today, even medium-sized companies that tend to receive a high volume of resumes are using scanners. If you are still unsure, visit the employer's web site for resume information. If you cannot find it, call or email the company and ask.

TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF A SCANNABLE RESUME

One way to improve the chances that your resume will be noticed is to use the same words and phrases found in the employment ad. Also, ask the human resources department for a job description or look for the description on their web site so you can tailor your resume to fit the position. Scannable resumes in which nouns, short phrases and concrete words have been used are more successful in being noticed by the computer (This is different than a traditional resume where the emphasis is on verbs). It is good to be specific about your abilities. Also, always include the types of hardware and software with which you are familiar.

The following guidelines will help you to create a scannable resume that will be easily recognizable by scanning hardware and software.

- Use 8 ½" x 11" white or very light colored paper with no background or pattern.
- Print on one side of the paper only.
- Do *not* use a two-column format. OCR scanner programs read from left to right and do not understand columns.
- Left justify text. (Do not use tabs.)
- Put name, address, telephone number and email address on separate lines at top of resume.

- If your resume is more than one page, place your name at the top of each additional page.
- Maximize the use of key phrases and nouns, such as industry and job specific skills, certifications, and accomplishments.
- Use 11 to 14 point font that is not overly decorative; a sans serif font such as Helvetica or Arial is a good choice. Avoid scripts. Do not vary size and type of fonts.
- Maximum number of characters per line should average 65.
- Leave generous areas of white between sections and use ample margins.
- Avoid underlining, graphics, shading, bullets, italics, bold-faced text and other fancy components.
- Avoid horizontal and vertical lines, borders, boxes, parentheses and brackets.
- Avoid abbreviations unless they are widely known or common to the industry.
- Avoid compressed lines of text.
- Use capital letters to emphasize headings and key words.
- Print from a high quality printer such as a laser or ink jet printer.
- Always send originals, no photocopies. Faxing is not recommended. The quality of some faxes is not clear enough for a scanner.
- Do not fold or staple resume.

There are various resources in the Career Center Library to assist you with designing your resume. A particularly good book for information about scannable resumes, what companies use scannable resumes and examples of different styles is *Resumes in Cyberspace* (located in the Career Center Library at 900.1).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT THE CAREER CENTER, WILLIAM CLOSE (BA) BUILDING, 6th Floor
PHONE: 803-777-7280 E-MAIL: career@sc.edu WEB PAGE: <http://www.sc.edu/career>

Scannable Resume Example

Sammy Scannable
USC P.O. Box 9999
Columbia, South Carolina 29208
(803) 544 – 0000
sammy@email.com

OBJECTIVE

Computer analyst for a high technology firm.

EDUCATION

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC
Bachelor of Science, Computer Science, May 2003
GPA: 3.5

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: C, C++, Visual BASIC, PASCAL, Clipper, COBOL
Operating systems: MS DOS, Ultrix, MS Windows, Macintosh System 7
Applications: Microsoft Office, LOTUS 123, Adobe Photoshop, PageMaker

EXPERIENCE

Applications Programmer/Analyst
Compu, Inc., Columbia, SC 1/00-Present
Write business related software using COBOL. Test programs for bugs. Consolidate three databases onto one server. Manage client/server automated application system involving Windows NT Advanced Server, Oracle 7 and UNIX.

Computer Lab Assistant
USC Computer Lab, Columbia, SC 8/99-12/99
Assisted students with questions concerning printing errors, software, and hardware. Taught classes on the use of Microsoft Access, Microsoft Publisher and Microsoft Excel. Acted as a troubleshooter for network problems. Maintained and repaired lab equipment.

Sales Associate
The Network, Irmo, SC 3/99-7/99
Sold IBM and Macintosh computers. Answered questions concerning available software and hardware including Assembly, Unix Shell, Fortran, PowerMac, IBM 4341 and others.

ACTIVITIES

President, Computer Club
Member, MIS Club