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A Guide to Resume Preparation – New Bees!

This guide is intended to help you in preparing a Professional Resume for IT Consulting/Contract Positions in the United States. As a matter of fact, a professional and a properly written/formatted Resume is the first and the last step to land that dream job!

This Article is based purely on my personal experience working as an IT Manager and a Senior Technical Recruiter for number of years. You may use contents of this Article to prepare your resume and prepare for Interviews at your own risk. You may seek help by visiting www.infowaysoftware.com/support, I am willing to provide FREE assistance.

You may be experienced or a fresher, please do not copy/paste and start editing a resume, you need to work on your own resume. It is a very common mistake candidates do – In order to elaborate a very well known Technical aspect that they have knowledge and experience, candidates simply copy and paste from various sources – This may lead to unwanted confusion during Interviews. Please write and format resume yourself before seeking professional help.

Standard Resume Structure:

Rule # 1– A Resume must be properly formatted with the same font and size, justified and checked for any grammar and spelling errors.

Rule # 2– Please ensure you save your word resume in “Word 97-2003” Format. If you saved and sent in an .RTF (Rich Text Format) or a latest format line .DOCX; Recruiters may not open your resumes due to version impacts. I guess Recruiters need more time to fully upgrade to latest word versions.

Rule # 3– Please ensure you maintain proper line spacing (Select Paragraphs, Right Click > Paragraph > Spacing)

Rule # 4– Do not insert any unwanted images, you may add any certification logos under the header, I do not recommend doing so.

Rule # 5 – Make sure you remove any XML Data and Personal information. In older versions – Go to File > Properties and Remove all Properties. Newer Versions – Go to File > Properties > Check for

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issues. Please don't ask me where that is, you are an IT Consultant and these are just basics of a Word Document.

Rule # 6– If you think that your Resume is technically well written and you do not care about any of these rules, please stop reading this Guide.

Section 1: Summary of your Experience, Skills and Highlights

You will briefly describe your domain experience, and few bullets about your work history including major areas of work History. Please keep this as concise as possible, in other words not more than half a page.

Section 2: Technical Skills

As a rule of the thumb, avoid inserting Technical Skills data into fancy Tables.

Section 3: Education and Certifications

You will provide information about your education with the year of completion and certification details. If you have Certifications like MCSE, Java or Brain bench, make sure you enter the ID or Certificate number with the year. *I have noticed that some candidates list this information at the end of the resume, that's fine too!*

Section 4: Work History or Experience

Now, this is the toughest and the most important part. With years of experience in Recruiting Candidates for various IT Positions, I have noticed that even Senior Candidates do not explain their work history relating to job descriptions, roles and responsibilities. They often end up with a Resume with absolutely no keywords that reflect their knowledge and experience. I will discuss more about optimizing your resume with rich keywords after this Section. Don't scroll down, read this first!

For each Project or Employment, please list the following (Latest Project First)

Sub-Section # 1Client/Project Name, Location, Dates

(Example: Acme Incorporated/Online Ordering, New York, NY August 2010 to July 2011)

>Sub-Section # 2Job Title or Role

(Example: Java Developer, Lead QA Analyst, Security Specialist etc.)



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Sub-Section # 3 Project Description

This area should contain description/information about the project you have worked, I suggest more in terms of what the Project is about; not what the client is about. I do not recommend providing information about the business nature of the Client. If you worked for Microsoft, you have no reason to narrate a story about their business; the whole world knows about it. Please make sure you be specific about the project description.

Sub-Section # 4 Roles and Responsibilities

In this sub section you will explain your roles, job duties or responsibilities while working on a project. It is strongly recommended to show these in bullet points, so it is easy for anyone to get a quick understanding of your experience.

Sub-Section # 5 Environment or Technologies

Dumbest Thing: I have seen lots of resumes with no information about the Environment and/or Technologies that were used on a Technical Project. How will someone know the Technologies you actually worked on, if you have not provided this information for a project.

You want to ensure that you have listed all the Technologies and the Environment of the Project.

(Example: Windows 2008, SQL Server, ASP. NET, SSRS, Dream Weaver, Java Script etc.)

Please make sure you repeat **Section # 4** for Each Project

ABC Government, New York, NY *February 2009 – February 2010*

Role: .Net Developer

Information System [IS]:The IS application monitors the development of Enhancements programs and brings out its evaluation and improvement. The IS application gathers information from source , processes it and generates program indicators and reports. The users are allowed to upload excel data files and store the data in database server after validation .The end users are allowed to view the data as reports. The indicators are generated by the application based on the user selected data. This application was developed in C#, .NET 3.5, ASP.NET, SQL Server 2005/2008, Windows 2000 Server

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Responsibilities:

- ✓ Participated in developing critical applications, Analyzed requirements, Application development, design, Enhancement of IT Systems as a primary Developer.
- ✓ Participated in Re-Architecting PMIS System Portal and ESEP Suite of Applications
- ✓ Designed and developed user interfaces using ASP.NET web forms and C#.
- ✓ Participated in migration from Java to .NET Platform
- ✓ Extensively used Microsoft AJAX Toolkit to create AJAX based applications.
- ✓ Developed the application using ASP. Net, WPF and AJAX.
- ✓ Extensively wrote Code using C#, .Net 3.5, ASP.NET
- ✓ Worked within OO Concepts and Design Patterns utilizing c#
- ✓ Application developed based on work items and designed in Visual Studio 2008
- ✓ Worked extensively on Database Design, Data Architecture, Database Tuning, Capacity Planning, Database Resizing, Database Backup, Database Testing, Database Recovery.
- ✓ Reports were generated using SSRS (SQL Server Reporting Services).
- ✓ Generated XML files using SSIS (SQL Server Integration Services) on SQL Server 2008 and Writing in MS T/SQLSS
- ✓ XML Validated with Object-oriented development process
- ✓ Used Web Services to check interoperability between Software Applications SS
- ✓ XML Validated with Object-oriented Programming Technique
- ✓ Full understanding of framework, libraries and Used Model-View-Controller design patterns.
- ✓ Implementation of business requirements using ADO.Net, Stored Procedures, Writing MS T/SQL, UDFs and Database management.

ENVIRONMENT: C#, .Net, Java, Java Applets, Java Script, C#.Net 3.5, Visual Studio 2008, Team Foundation Server (TFS), ASP.NET, Microsoft AJAX Toolkit, SQL Server 2005

KEYWORD MAGIC (Keywords are Flesh and Blood of a Resume)

Wait, let's talk about the Keywords and the Magic they can do. As an insider, and a Recruiter myself, I would like to expose the magic of Keywords – Let's get a little deeper into the importance of keywords and we will try to understand certain aspects.

Why keywords play a major role on your resume?

How resumes are parsed by Resume parsing programs?

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How resumes are read/searched by Recruiters and Hiring Managers?

How and why we reject or disqualify a candidate in minutes?

When a Job is received from a Client or for an Internal Job requisition, recruiters will have access to hundreds of resumes in their database, job boards and a result of multiple submissions when a job is posted on the Internet or broadcasted to Marketers or Job Seekers. A recruiter may receive over 50 Resumes for a single job opening and may not have time to read each resume and call each candidate. An experienced recruiter has birds eye view on a resume and may filter resumes by just taking a glance at the resume. As I described earlier, a well formatted resume will grab the attention of a Recruiter and he/she will proceed further to Interact with the keywords on your resume to make sure you have the experience in skills as required by the Job opportunity.

A resume may just go through a Parsing System even before it gets into hands of a Recruiter and may be rejected by the Parser itself.

How parsers work?

Resume Parsers perform Resume analysis and Resume Parsers extract skills, qualifications and experience from a resume. A Resume Parser is a program that retrieves the information about a candidate's qualification, skill, keywords and experience. These parsers are widely used by Recruiters and hiring Managers to analyze, evaluate and shortlist applicants.

Resume analyzer performs thousands of calculations within few seconds and records candidates data of work experience, education and skills into industry standard HR-XML format.

There are generally three types of Parsers : keyword based parsers, grammar based parsers, and statistical parsers.

Keyword-based parsers are the simplest and the least accurate. They try to identify words or phrases from given key words. These parsers fall deficient when the terms of skill, qualification or experience contained in the resume are beyond given key words.

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Grammar based parsers are guided by grammatical rules. The grammar rules help the parser understand the meaning of every sentence, and thereby extract relevant information. Grammar based parsers are able to acquire a higher rate of accuracy.

Statistical Parsers attempt to extract numerical figures from the text of resume. Statistical parsers can achieve a very high rate of accuracy in data extraction.

Using Resume Keywords: Your Resume must have a set of keywords reflecting your skills and work experience.

For Example: If a Job requires a “Java Developer” with 4 years of experience with “Web sphere(This is the Keyword)”, you must have this keyword reflecting in your Summary (Preferably), Technical Skills, and projects covering at least 4 Years. The keyword must be present in your Roles and Responsibilities and Environment and Technologies.

You must list out all keywords based on your Skills and experience and ensure these keywords repeat everywhere in your Resume.

A Parser or a Recruiter search for keywords based on the job requirement and filter resumes. If a Recruiter needs to find a Particular skill in your resume, say “SSIS, SSRS” – Recruiter will simply hit CTRL+F and find this keyword in your resume and will check to see how many years you have used that Particular Skill. If the Recruiter did not find it, he/she will go to the next resume. If the Recruiter found all skills based on the Search (Find), he/she will than start reading your resume and than possibly call you to discuss the Job opportunity. (Please read other Articles – Dealing with Recruiters, Interview Preparation)

The bottom line is after you have completed writing and formatting your resume, make sure you read the resume to properly use Keywords or at least search (Find) keywords yourself. I hope you understood the importance of Keywords.

I would strongly recommend that you also prepare a separate Skills Matrix with information about your skills, years of experience, last used and send when you apply for Jobs. This helps recruiters to understand your Technical abilities in a glance. This really works, see a sample below.

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Skill	Experience Years	In	Last Used (Year)
ASP. NET & C#.NET under Visual Studio .NET	8 Years		2011
TSQL, Stored Procedures (MS SQL 2000/2005)	8 Years		2011
Functions, Indexes, and Triggers (MS SQL 2000/2005)	6 Years		2011
Database Tuning and Performance Monitoring	6 Years		2010
ADO. NET	8 Years		2011
AJAX, master pages, style sheets, and themes	6 Years		2011
MS DTS or MS SQL Server Integration Services	6 Years		2011
Source control: Dimensions SVM, Visual SourceSafe	6 Years		2011