ENDORSED BY THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RESUME WRITERS AND CAREER COACHES

2500 KEYWORDS TO GET YOU HIRED

- Thousands of Powerful Words That Pack a Punch on Today's Winning Resumes
- The Right Words to Use in Electronic Job Searches

JAY A. BLOCK, CPRW, AND MICHAEL BETRUS, CPRW

2500 Keywords to Get You Hired

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Introduction

Welcome to the seventh installment in our series of reference guides designed to help you in your career. Our previous guides have been focused on the structure and development of resumes and cover letters. They include:

- *101 Best Resumes*
- *101 More Best Resumes*
- *101 Best Cover Letters*
- *101 Best .Com Resumes*
- *101 Best Resumes for Grads*
- *101 Best Tech Resumes*

Keywords represent a subset of this matter. Keywords are nouns and adjectives that serve to describe you professionally.

This guide offers a variety of tools for you. For the top professions we identified, you will find a list of at least 20 keywords, an example of their use in a sample resume, and their use in a sample interview question. Not every keyword is illustrated in every respective resume or sample interview. Inserting every keyword would have made them too wordy and in many cases unrealistic. These samples will give you some ideas, but your use really depends on your own experiences and objectives. Each profession showcases the work of both the authors and the members of the Professional Association of Resume Writers.

Really look over "Tips to Get You Hired" starting on Chapter 3. They will provide you with savvy tips you won't find anywhere else. The tips are divided into six categories and are very tactical in nature. We always try to stay away from theory and instead emphasize hands-on tactics.

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Part I

1

What Is a Keyword?

Keywords are those descriptive words, usually nouns, that are associated with specific disciplines or industries. Keywords are important because they are considered standardized for specific industries. For example, if you were an accountant, keywords would include: cost accounting, budget analysis, auditing, tax, etc. Keywords can be critical in the world of software management and job searching. Employers and recruiters may take your resume and cover letter (especially if sent electronically) and do a computerized search for keywords or descriptors that match the profile they are seeking. Think of it as a prescreening process. For example, a finance director for Microsoft hiring a staff accountant might have a scan or search of resumes and cover letters completed for the words listed above, and if they aren't on your materials, you could miss the first cut.

Keywords play an integral role in two areas of the resume screening process. One is the human element, when hiring and nonhiring managers are screening resumes for words and phrases that match the criteria they are seeking. The second is the computer search, where computers search the data on many different resumes to select those that match the words and phrases. That is how posted resumes on Web sites like Monster.com work.

Prescreening by Personnel

Keywords can be very important outside the computer search arena. In many cases, the initial scan of resumes is completed by either a human

resources person or an assistant to the hiring manager. Even the most competent people doing this function can only do a high-level job of resume scanning if they are not intimately aware of the position or are not hiring for themselves. That is why it is important to keep a certain amount of "boilerplate" in your resume.

A client of ours named David Robinson comes to mind. He worked for Verizon Wireless and was curious about an advertisement he saw for a position with Ericcson. We updated his resume in the style that looks like that on pages 56–57 from our first book, *101 Best Resumes*. The key to that resume style was the use of the left column for a listing of accounts—that really becomes the core of the resume if you work in an account-driven environment like sales. The hiring manager called David for an interview and told him: "We've had so many resumes that I told my assistant not to bring me any more unless they look like a perfect fit. The way that you listed your accounts on the first page of the resume was a great way to show us who your contacts are." So, the initial screening was conducted by his assistant, who was only scanning resumes for key items (words, even things like industry-specific terms, product names, etc.), and his resume effectively illustrated his sales accounts.

Don't make the readers work to learn what you're all about. Even in a four percent unemployment environment, the competition for good jobs is too stiff.

The Online Environment

Today, the Internet environment brings a new way of distributing your resume. As part of the "boilerplate" activities that people do when beginning to market themselves to potential employers, using the Internet is now a standard resource tool. One of the first things many people do is post their resumes on Web sites like Monster.com or Headhunter.net. Corporate recruiters and independent recruiters do review resumes posted on these sites. It works best when the search field is very narrow. If you were to do a keyword search of all the resumes posted on Monster.com for *telecommunications*, for example, the return would be in the thousands. However, if you narrowed the search to *MMDS narrowband spectrum management*, the return would be significantly lower. So, you need to whittle your skills down as much as possible to help the right people find you through these keyword searches. Keywords make your traditional resume electronically retrievable in resume databases like Monster.com or Headhunter.net.

After your resume is entered electronically into a resume database like that on Monster.com, it is ready to be searched and ranked. A hiring manager or recruiter then decides which keywords best identify the skills needed in a candidate, and based upon those keywords, has the system search the resume database. Typically, the reviewer will have several keywords that are required and others that are optional.

When the search engine recognizes a keyword in your resume, it is called a "hit." Your resume is ranked according to the number of keyword hits. Only resumes that have the required keywords are found. Of

those, resumes that have more of the desired keywords rank higher, and will be selected first to be read by a human reviewer. Other factors that can affect search rankings include proximity to other keywords and how close to the top of the page keyword hits occur. Therefore, in addition to placing keywords relevant to your field throughout your resume and cover letter, an extra "keyword summary" should be created near the top of your resume specifically for a resume search engine. Our resume guides provide many examples of how to do this in constructing the opening part of your resume.

A good "Summary of Qualifications" provides an opportunity to include listings of keywords that may not fit in the rest of the written part of the resume. The more keywords you have, the greater the likelihood of ranking high in the search.

Keywords

Below is a plain-formatted resume that is representative of something that might be pasted in the application area on Monster.com. Highlighted in gray are the keywords. Granted, this resume is an exaggerated version of the use of keywords. Still, it will give you a good perspective. Also, it's no secret that the more specialized a position is, the greater the role that keywords will play. However, even if you're in sales or general management, key industry terms can be very helpful.

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Keyword Summary

Systems Engineer. Client Server System Architect. Systems Analysis. Systems Integration. Network Administration. Database Administration. Systems Administration. Software Engineering. Troubleshooting Computing Systems.
DOS. Windows NT. TCP/IP. OSI. Microsoft LAN Manager. Novell Netware. Project Management. Trade Studies. Consulting. BETA Tester. Technical Presentations. Sales Presentations. Instructor. BS Degree. Mathematics and Computer Science. UCLA. Air Force Institute of Technology. Computer Engineering.

Summary of Qualifications

Seven years of experience in designing, installing, and troubleshooting computing systems.

Programming: C, C++, Visual BASIC, FORTRAN, Pascal, SQL, OSF/Motif, UNIX Shell Script (sh, ksh, csh), BASIC, Clipper, Algol 68, and 80X86 Assembler.

Operating Systems: UNIX (bsd & SVr3/r4), MS Windows, MS DOS, MS Windows NT, Solaris, HP-UX, Ultrix, AIX, VAX/VMS, and Macintosh System 7.

Networking: TCP/IP, OSI, Microsoft LAN Manager, Novell Netware, DDN, Internet, Ethernet, Token Ring, SNA, X.25, LAN-WAN interconnection.

Applications: Microsoft Office, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Visual C++, Microsoft Project, Microsoft Publisher, Lotus 123, Lotus Freelance, System Architect, and others.

Professional Experience

Network Engineer

Netcom, Dallas, Texas 1996–Present

* Provide systems engineering, software engineering, technical consulting, and marketing services as a member of the Systems Integration Division of a software engineering consulting company.
* Designed and managed the development of an enterprise-level client/server automated auditing application for a major financial management company migrating from mainframe computers, db2, and to a workgroup-oriented, client/server architecture involving Windows for Workgroups, Windows NT Advanced Server, Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle7, and UNIX.
* Designed an enterprise-level, high-performance, mission-critical, client/server database system incorporating symmetric multiprocessing computers (SMP), Oracle7's Parallel Server, Tuxedo's on-line transaction processing (OLTP) monitor, and redundant array of inexpensive disks (RAID) technology.
* Conducted extensive trade studies of a large number of vendors that offer leading-edge technologies; these studies identified proven (low-risk) implementations of SMP and RDBMS systems that met stringent performance and availability criteria.

Education

University of Kansas, B.S. Software Engineering and Computer Communications

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OSI X.400/X.500 Messaging and Directory Service Protocols; Communication Technologies, Inc.

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