

## Enhance Your Resume with Strategic Keywords

*Online searches for resumes are becoming more popular as employers are becoming less attracted to the idea of paying for employee resumes. Often an employer types in keywords that are common to the position that they are trying to fill. Therefore, to get your posted resume noticed numerous keywords are imperative. It is also important to use various forms of the same word to address many different searches. Searched words that are often used describe needed qualifications including experience and skills. A useful tool that enhances your possibility of getting a higher rank on the result list is a keyword summary at the top of your resume. Using these tactics, you are more likely to get noticed.*



Optimizing the words on your resume is critical if you intend to apply for work online. Even small companies are using scanning technology and searching the Web for resumes when in need to fill a position. These days, it is essential that you consider tailoring your resume to meet the functions of Web search engines such as Google, because employers and recruiters are more often than not using the Web to find worthy candidates via their online resumes. Some employers are attracted to the no-cost nature of searching the Web as opposed to paying job sites like [Monster.com](http://Monster.com). And sometimes it's more effective for them to search on their own other than posting an ad somewhere and have to sift through scores of submissions. Scanning software can no recognize text in bold, italics, and various fonts throughout your resume, so that you don't have to worry about altering the appearance of your already well-polished resume.

It is said that up to 80% of employers use this search technology to establish certain essential keywords that highlight their needs. When scanned, your resume may receive some "hits." Based on that sum, your resume is ranked and sent to an employer for further review or decline. The ranking, of course, is based on the number of keyword hits.

Keywords are usually nouns and verbs that state experience and skills. They are the words searchers type into search engines to find what they want. These can include action verbs such as "analyzed" and "managed," which are just as important for standard human review. But you want to also focus mainly on keyword nouns ("leadership" and "Adobe Photoshop") for technology selection before an actual person reads your resume.

The more essential the keyword, the more likely your resume will be found— and ranked higher. And the higher the rank, the sooner your resume will be read.

### Examples of Keywords

**Job Titles:** Sales Manager, Laboratory Assistant, Customer Service Representative

**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, M.A. in English Literature, Juris Doctor

**Skills:** Business Consulting, Legal Research, Marketing Development

**Certification:** CPA, CNA

**Computer Terms:** Microsoft Access, C#, AutoCAD

Regardless if you submit a hardcopy of your resume to be scanned into an applicant tracking system, or if you submit it in ASCII form in an email (or simply cut and paste it into the box of an online application form), your resume needs to become a keyword resume first and foremost.

Your way to an interview could be simply a matter of which keywords you select for your resume.

### **Keyword Summary**

If you plan on creating a resume specifically for resume search engines, you might want to consider creating a “Keyword Summary” at the top of your resume. Sometimes similarity to other keywords and closeness to the top of the page where hits occur can help. But if you placed enough keywords throughout your resume, specifically in the Summary of Qualifications (or Profile) section—if you have one—that should suffice.

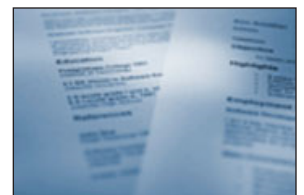
Either tactic will offer the opportunity to supply a variety of keywords that might not be a good fit in other areas of the resume like the experience and education sections.

“Keyword density” is what it’s called. And you’ll get a higher rank if your density is high.

### **Make a List**

- Look over your resume and select all the existing keywords that you want to highlight.
- Take these words and find all synonyms, forms, and tenses. If one of your existing keywords is “advise,” then add the following: advising, advised, counsel, recommend, etc...]
- Use acronyms like IP or IRS and spell them out as well
- Focus on nouns: Management— supervision, administration, organization
- Separate with commas and periods
- Use alternate keywords in various areas to increase quantity

But keep in mind that search engines are becoming increasingly sophisticated in that they can interpret keywords contextually. They can detect the legitimacy of keywords based on the words that surround it. In this case, providing a list of keywords will not work as well as an actual sentence that involves the “human element.”



### **Example**

#### ***Non-Keyword Maximized Statement***

Accomplished attorney with 20 years of proven experience and proficiency in case management, new business, and adapting to new legal arenas.

#### ***Statement with Keyword Density***

Accomplished commercial litigation attorney with 20 years of experience in international and corporate law. Proficient in advocacy, contracts, and trial work, as well as generating client intake. Proven track record in winning cases for national and international corporate, small business, and individual clients.

## **Tips on Keyword Optimizing**

### ***Take Advantage of the Job Posting***

You will find the keywords you need the most here. If the ad states that it wants a candidate with macrobiotic research experience, then “macrobiotic research” should be in your resume somewhere. But make sure you are not repeating the entire ad back to the employer.

### ***Put “Resume” on Your Resume***

This is a major no-no, but since a lot of employers type in “resume” in their search, it will help. You can also put “Resume of {your name}” as well.

### ***Be Inconsistent***

Different minds will use different ways to look for the same keyword. Use common variations. If you are looking for a position in California, spell it out, use the old “Calif.” (or “Ca.”), and write CA as well.

### ***Certain Keywords Are Always in Demand***

If you are having trouble finding keywords for yourself or just can’t get enough, the following is a sample of some that will always be sought after:

- Leadership
- Team Player
- Problem Solving
- Business Development
- Communication Skills

### ***Showcase What You Can Bring to the Employer***

Use your keywords in a way to prove that you get results. Certain phrases can place keywords in a way that will stand out when being scanned by a computer or viewed by an actual person. Employers want to be able to know within 10 seconds what you will bring to the company.

- Drive sales
- Increase profits
- Influence staff motivation
- Built team

### ***Use Keywords in the File Name***

When you name the file of your resume, consider how even that area can be identified. Naming your resume’s file something like “BJFrank\_molecular\_resume.html” might be beneficial. Don’t use blank spaces and only use a hyphen or underscore for readability.

Whatever you do, don’t overdo it. Never use keywords that are don’t describe your skills and experience accurately. The computer won’t know that you sprinkled you resume with random words, but the employer will. Using keywords lackadaisically and in abundance can make your resume unreadable. If you resume is unreadable at first glance, it won’t be read, and you will have lost your opportunity for an interview.