Electronic Resumes

Human resource professionals in small, medium, and large organizations frequently utilize computer systems to increase efficiency in storing and accessing resume information. When using these systems, resumes are either obtained in electronic format through online submission or are received in hard-copy format and then optically scanned into the computer database. Employers then determine potential candidates by searching the database with key words that are relevant to the particular job opening.

To maximize potential employment opportunities, it is important to be prepared to submit an effective electronic resume. Develop your resume by using the following guidelines for format and content:

- Keep it simple.
- Avoid ornate fonts and fonts where the characters touch. Font size is also important. Use sizes between 10-point and 14-point type size.
- *Italics* and underlining cause problems for the scanner, *especially if combined*. Use **boldface** for emphasis or ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.
- Vertical or horizontal lines should be used sparingly. When used, leave at least a quarter of an inch of space around the line.
- Avoid graphics, shading and shadowing.
- Do not compress or expand the space between letters or lines.
- Do not double space within sections.
- The resume you submit should be an original. It should be printed with a laser printer on white or light-colored 8.5- x 11-inch paper. Print on one side only.
- Resumes that have been folded, stapled or otherwise mutilated will not scan well.
- It is imperative that you describe your skills and accomplishments in key word phrases.
- Use the language of your profession.

Nouns are more distinguishable to a computer than action verbs. Use phrases that describe activities or experiences. For example: Use "managed training and development" vs. "trained and developed" or use, "Assisted with salary survey" vs. "surveyed salaries of..." You may also want to consider a summary of accomplishments that focus on results not duties and responsibilities. Remember to keep the resume basic in format, style, and language.