

## Using Keywords to Get the Interview

These days, employers rely on keyword-searchable databases, and software to locate prospective candidates. Pat Kendall, president of the National Resume Writers' Association, notes that more than 80 percent of resumes are searched for job-specific keywords. **Bottom-line:** If your resume lacks the keywords to identify and fulfill the position at hand, you will not get the interview.

So, how do you know which keywords to use? Keywords the employer is looking for can only be found by reading the job description and researching the company. After your research you can easily list your precise "hard" skills to relate to the position you are applying to. For example:

- Profession or industry-specific skills
- Technological terms
- Descriptions of technical expertise (including hardware and software in which you are proficient)
- Job titles
- Certifications that relate to the job you are seeking
- Certain products and services
- Industry buzzwords
- Types of degrees
- Names of colleges
- Company names
- Terms that tend to impress, such as "Fortune 500"
- Awards that relate to the job you are seeking
- Professional organizations affiliations

The golden rule in job searching is to emphasize action verbs in all job-search correspondence, including your resume. So, your keywords should be situated not only at the top, but also throughout your resume. The more keywords the more you will get noticed.

Ideally, keywords are tied to accomplishments rather than job duties, so a good way is to take each keyword you've identified as critical to the job and list an accomplishment that explains how you've used the skill represented by that keyword. For example:

- Solid team-building skills, demonstrated by assembling Starwood's marketing team from the ground up to service Starwood International's 7,700 hotels worldwide.
- Savvy in e-commerce marketing concepts, having participated in design of two company Web sites, and conducted a symposia series to instruct hotel executives in the value of Internet marketing.

Using keywords is the most direct way to identify your professional past and future. And remember: A resume is always a work in progress! Careful review and consistent updating will nearly guarantee your resume at the top of the HR stack.

**Job Searching Tip:** Upload your resume every week on major job sites to continue to appear "new" to employers searching for prospective candidates. The "older" the resume the less chance you will have at getting noticed amongst thousands of job searchers.