

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Announcing a special offer to kick off the Holiday Season: Give the gift of Career and Life coaching to your friends, family or colleagues! The Next Step Career Solutions is offering a free coaching session to all referrals through the end of the year. Act now; space is limited! For more details and to obtain a personalized E-Gift Certificate, please contact me directly at jnovick@careersolution.biz

In our previous newsletter we discussed the importance of some fundamental tips that can make or break your résumé's effectiveness. As a reminder before you begin to craft your next résumé, consider the following tips:

1. **Focus the résumé on the position for which you are applying.** Do not try to write a one-size-fits all résumé. Use different versions of your résumé to target different positions.
2. **Separate responsibilities from accomplishments.** Do not bury accomplishments in the same paragraph as responsibilities. Use separate bullet points to showcase accomplishments. This will also draw the reader's eye towards the results you have delivered.
3. **Prune, prune, prune.** Résumés should be no more than two pages. When pruning ask yourself, "Does this information support or detract from my candidacy?"

Remember your résumé is like your second skin, it shows who you are, what you have accomplished and what you can contribute to a given job opening.

Did you know that over 75% of companies are **ONLY** accepting electronic résumés? This number keeps growing. It's time to get educated!

What is an electronic résumé?

"Electronic résumé" is a catch-all term used to describe a simple and portable résumé text document that might be used in many different ways.

Almost always, what's required is a very simply formatted document in Microsoft Windows text file format, (a file with ".txt" as the filename extension).

Such files are usually derived from a more elaborately formatted word processed document. You might transmit an electronic résumé as a data file, or copy and paste the text from it into a web form or e-mail message. Rarely, will you be asked to supply the file as a printed document.

Whether printed for physical scanning, (quite rare these days), or transmitted electronically, an electronic résumé is likely to be stored in an employer's database for subsequent sorting, categorizing, and keyword search & retrieval (see archived "Keyword " article on www.careersolution.biz)

Regardless of the jargon used, a plain text format file is sufficient for e-mail, web forms, and especially as e-mail body text or a data file attachment when you are unsure of the software used by an intended recipient.

Why do you need an electronic résumé?

For use with your networking contacts and for recruiters who may prefer to correspond electronically.

For responses to openings posted on job listing Web sites; eighty percent of Fortune 500 companies post jobs on their own Web sites, most of which now ask for résumés in an electronic format.

What are the guidelines for creating an electronic résumé?

Successful electronic résumés require a different strategy from those of traditional paper résumés.

A fairly long list of guidelines appears below. Consider them all, but in fact, no elaborate restructuring of a typical résumé is required. Usually a few keystrokes and replacements can change your regular résumé document into a plain text format suitable for most

electronic résumé tasks.

- Use your computer's software to open your formatted résumé and rename it to create a data file copy. Then, for that copy, use the "save as" function in your word processor to save the résumé as "plain text" or "text only."
- After saving it in text format, close the file and open the new document again. It may open in your word software, but appear in a simpler text editor like Microsoft Notepad, which offers a more accurate view of how it will be handled in e-mail and by Web forms.
- You'll find that the majority of formatting has been stripped from the résumé.
- In some cases it's easier to do some quick simplification of the word processed document (like converting bullets to dashes), using your word processing software, before saving the document as a plain text file.
- Review your new plain text résumé. Check and edit it to make sure the following changes have been made.
- Lines from your formatted résumé that had text left and right-justified on the same line (as with company name & date), are now left justified simply on a single line. Add commas or spaces to organize that text.
- Databases use empty lines (white space) to recognize that one topic has ended and another has begun.
- Due to the conversion of your resume to a plain text format often boldface, italics, underscoring, bullets, fancy fonts, shading, borders, graphic lines, tables, columns and special characters will have been eliminated. Make substitutions as required.
- Simple dashes or asterisks replace graphic bullets. Abbreviations, except the more common ones like BA (Bachelor of Arts) are spelled

out. You could also choose to include both the abbreviation and its complete wording.

- The font is a common Courier, Arial or Times New Roman, and a consistent 10 or 12 point size.
- The "john smith - page two" header from the second page of your word processed résumé, and page numbering has been removed. Pagination is a lesser consideration on plain text documents, especially those which will be used in a database.

Test your new electronic résumé. View it in a Microsoft Notepad, e-mailed to yourself or to a friend for review, and/or post it in an online database where you can edit or delete it if you don't like the results.

For more information on electronic résumés or to send me your résumé for review please contact your Career & Life Coach Jamie Novick at jnovick@careersolution.biz

Best regards,

Jamie Novick

Certified Career and Life Coach

714-928-6398

"Take the Next Step Today for a Better Tomorrow"

P.S. - The Next Step Career Solutions website has had a makeover! Please visit us at www.careersolution.biz to see our new look.

Please feel free to email this newsletter to your friends, family and co-workers. If you no longer wish to receive information from The Next Step, please email me your request and your information will be removed from our mailing list. Thank you.