

# Why Scannable Resumes are a Thing of the Past

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## What are they and do I need one?

A scannable resume is a hard copy document that is scanned into a graphic image and then converted back to text. This process enabled employers to receive hard-copy resumes, get that resume information into a database and retrieve that information later. This was done by businesses that handled a large volume of resumes.

Certain formatting would allow your resume to be successfully scanned and not misread. This type of resume was not necessarily appealing to the human eye but allowed technology to scan the document for key words.

Within the past five years, scannable resume requests from employers have been declining. Technology has made it easier to “scan” hard copy resumes and a scannable resume format is no longer necessary.

**Bottom line – you don’t need a scannable resume.** But just in case you heard about one, we wanted to give you the skinny on scannable resumes.

If by chance you come across an employer using this old technology and requests a hard copy scannable resume, where are some helpful details:

- Scanned resumes are typically retrieved using keyword searches. You need to research your industry and/or the requirements of the jobs you are seeking to make sure you've included appropriate information. Each time you apply for a job, review the position description. Make sure key terms that are included in the position description are also included in your resume where appropriate. You may revise your resume slightly for different positions or keep several versions of your resume if you are applying for different types of jobs.

It is not necessary to include a section entitled "keywords." A search will locate words in any part of your resume.

Some keyword examples are:

Accounting, chemical engineer, manager, BS or BA (to identify individuals with a bachelor's degree), MS, MA, PhD, process modeling, trainer, Spanish, C++, co-op, PowerPoint, etc.

- Be specific. For example, list the names of software you use such as Microsoft Word or Excel, instead of listing software packages.
- Use terms and acronyms specific to the industry.

In listing acronyms, it's wise to spell out the full name; i.e., IEEE, Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers. Either way the employer chooses to search for this information, your text will be found.

- Going beyond one page is okay for resumes used strictly for scanning. Be concise, but use more than one page if necessary to include all relevant information.
- Misspelled words will not be found in a keyword search. If you misspell a critical word, you have effectively left it off your resume for the purposes of retrieval after scanning. As with any resume, typos are unacceptable.