

# Are your Documents “Key Word” Ready?

At this point in time, most people are aware that when a résumé is submitted electronically, human eyes will not be the first to read the document. Most Human Resource (HR) departments within institutions, firms and companies as well as recruiters use computerized scanning applications to read, process and track résumés by searching for key words.

Key words are specific to each job. To be clear, these are not power verbs such as “directed”, “steered” and “implemented”. Key words are nouns that clearly communicate a job function, responsibility or accomplishment.

For those of you still submitting hard copy documents, scanners are used employing a process called optical character recognition (OCR) technology to read résumé text. The text is then transferred to an applicant tracking system (ATS). It can be a challenge to ensure your documents are “clean” so that the text can be read accurately. This means not graphics and abnormal fonts, bullets and underlining.

For online applications or when a résumé is uploaded to a website, the documents go directly through ATS. They are ranked in terms of identifying the right applicant with the right qualifications using key words as the initial screening tool. The most likely successful candidates are then reviewed by hiring personnel.

Avoid the temptation to lump these phrases into one section on the résumé by simply listing them. Many people do this in a tiny, faint font at the bottom of the last page. This is called “key word stuffing” and is frowned upon because it is seen as cheating. Ideally, you should have a properly formatted and focused key word section near the beginning of your résumé. To validate your usage of these terms, incorporate key word phrases in context within the achievements listed in each job. It’s not just about listing key words; it’s about reinforcing how you relate them.

Each industry has its own key words. Here is a snapshot of teaching, school and ESL instruction key words.

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ✓ Assessment & Reporting                | ✓ Leadership Training                |
| ✓ Brain-based Learning                  | ✓ Lifelong Learning                  |
| ✓ Career Counseling & Development       | ✓ Multi-Cultural Awareness           |
| ✓ Child & Adult Literacy                | ✓ Multi-Cultural Sensitivity         |
| ✓ Classroom & Student Management        | ✓ Peer Mentoring                     |
| ✓ Co-Curricular Enhancement             | ✓ Positive Classroom Management      |
| ✓ Collaborative Facilitation            | ✓ Positive Parent Relations          |
| ✓ Course Design & Planning              | ✓ Primary Division Teaching          |
| ✓ Curriculum Development                | ✓ Program Development                |
| ✓ Early Childhood Education             | ✓ Public Speaking                    |
| ✓ Education Administration              | ✓ Remediation & Modification         |
| ✓ Educational Technology                | ✓ Rubric Development                 |
| ✓ Multiple Intelligences                | ✓ Scholastic Standards               |
| ✓ Enrolment & Retention Strategies      | ✓ Seminar Management                 |
| ✓ ESL / ESOL Programs & Curriculum      | ✓ Senior Division Teaching           |
| ✓ Evaluation & Assessment               | ✓ Learning Materials & Manipulatives |
| ✓ Measurements                          | ✓ Student-Centric Methodologies      |
| ✓ Field Trip Management                 | ✓ Student Services                   |
| ✓ Grant Management                      | ✓ Student / Faculty Relations        |
| ✓ Group Facilitation & Mentoring        | ✓ Student-Focused Instruction        |
| ✓ Holistic Learning                     | ✓ Teaching & Learning Strategies     |
| ✓ Individual Tutoring                   | ✓ Technology Integration             |
| ✓ Instructional Media                   | ✓ Textbook Review                    |
| ✓ Instructional Programming             | ✓ Training & Development             |
| ✓ Intensive Language Programs           | ✓ Tribes - Building Community        |
| ✓ Junior-Intermediate Division Teaching | ✓ Visual & Tactile Learning          |
| ✓ Language Instruction for Newcomers    |                                      |

Planning and researching the optimal key words in sync with your target job and your skill-set will pay off.

Audrey Prenzel, BA, BEd, CARW, CEIC

Twitter: @AudreyPrenzel

[www.resumeresources.ca](http://www.resumeresources.ca)

e-mail: [resumeresources@gmail.com](mailto:resumeresources@gmail.com)