

## Recruiters Want E-Mailed Resumes

*As seen at careerjournal.com*

Jeffrey Weiner, a human-resources director, keeps a scrapbook on a nearby shelf to keep him humble. It's filled with more than 400 "no thank you" responses he received from employers during his last job hunt. During his search, he e-mailed more than 50 resumes a week to employers. "E-mail made the process so easy. It was the quickest way to contact companies," says Mr. Weiner. After six months, he eventually found a good fit at Alpha Technologies, a Piscataway, N.J., information-technology consulting firm.

Likewise, Richard Paul, a business analyst, spent 75% of his recent job search sending resumes via e-mail before landing a job at Cylogix, a Princeton, N.J., financial-software firm. "Speed is the biggest advantage," he says. He kept a resume file and generic cover letter on his PC and tailored each to every employer he targeted. "I modified it as necessary, and it took almost no time at all."

It's no surprise that the best way to contact most recruiters today is through e-mail. In fact, a recent e-mail survey of 416 U.S. recruiters by Manchester Inc., a staffing firm based in Jacksonville, Fla., found that 82% of respondents prefer to receive resumes by e-mail. "If I get phone calls from everyone, I'm on the phone all day long," says Mike Sweeney, managing director of project staffing for T. Williams Consulting, a staffing firm in Collegeville, Pa. "E-mail adds efficiency to the process. It helps me to screen resumes better."

Further, he says, it's more efficient to communicate with candidates by e-mail since so many professionals work in cubicles, making it difficult for them to speak on the phone during the workday. He'll e-mail standard questions about salary expectations, why they're looking to leave and whether they're willing to relocate. "When we talk later, we can talk details," he says. "You can pick up a lot about the candidate from their answers to questions via e-mail. A lot of jobs people get hired for their technical skills, but e-mail is a subtle way of testing other skills."

E-mail correspondence offers candidates an opportunity to sell themselves, says Mr. Wiener. "How many people are really taking the time to write an e-mail to sell something? Hop on the bandwagon and sell yourself," he says.

Mr. Paul says his e-mail helped him stand out from the crowd. "We went back and forth via e-mail" answering brief questions and scheduling interviews, he says. "They even e-mailed directions to get there."

Sending your resume by e-mail also says you're adept at using office technology. A resume that's sent through U.S. mail or fax may be a signal that you're behind the times. "You have to be able to use Microsoft Office proficiently. If I don't get the resume by e-mail, it's a negative," Mr. Sweeney says. In his view, a resume sent by U.S. mail is "the ultimate kiss of death" for a candidate. "If these people can't use technology, that's a basic," he says.

Consider Ellen Minardo, an events programming assistant at the N.J. Technology Council in Mount Laurel, N.J. Before she started her last job search, she never used e-mail and didn't know

how to attach a document. She learned, she says, not only to land a job, but because "I know these are the basic skills companies want today. I learned by using it over and over and asking questions. By doing it, I was able to show potential employers that I could use the tools."

Many recruiters responding to the Manchester survey (44%) prefer to receive resumes as attached Word documents. Says Mr. Sweeney, "It's the standard and an e-mailed resume in Word can easily be circulated to the various hiring managers. If I get a faxed copy, I have to make copies. It's more difficult for me," he says.

## **Organization Matters**

Thirty-three percent of the surveyed recruiters who expressed a preference about resume format said they prefer resumes that are in chronological order. "People feel the candidate is trying to hide gaps if they don't use chronological order in a resume," says Mr. Sweeney.

Still, there are others who prefer an accomplishment-oriented format. Mr. Weiner organizes his own resume in this way. "By listing accomplishments, I think you intrigue the reader. Chronological resumes tend to be too detailed-oriented," he says. The object of a resume is not to get the job, but to get the interview. "Leaving a gray area is good. A recruiter can't sell you without the detail, so they have to follow up with you. The recruiter is a middleman who needs info to sell you to their client. When it gets to a manager, and they call you for details, your foot is in the door."

What's the best way to approach recruiters by e-mail? Consider these three tips from recruiters.

- \* Send only targeted resumes. Mr. Sweeney says that more than 90% of the resumes he receives are from people who aren't qualified. To make a good impression, show that you've done your homework. Visit the company's Web site to learn more about the company and tailor your document accordingly.

- \* Scan all documents for viruses. Most companies scan incoming e-mail. If a virus is detected, the e-mail is deleted and no one is going to see your resume.

- \* Put your name in the filename of your resume document. For example, use "AlanJones.doc" instead of "resume.doc." Recruiters and managers receive numerous resumes each day named "resume.doc." or "myresume.doc."