

BROOKHAVEN COLLEGE  
CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
**SCANNABLE RESUME**

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Scannable electronic resumes are just like the regular resume you may already have but formatted in simple text version. Scannable resumes are “read” by computers and matched with employer’s job openings by matching the words in your resume with “key words” in the job description of the position(s). Oftentimes, the resumes are stored in a database by the employer for future review.

Employers scan your resume using an optical character reading, OCR, scanner that is designed to read the text on your resume and give the employer the opportunity to save it in a database. When a position becomes available, the employer pulls up all potential “matches” in the database by scanning for key words. Some components that can be important to have your resume pulled from the scan-sort are key job titles, skills, experience and education. If you know any hot industry buzz words, use them. Also, if you are responding to a written posting, use the wording available in the posting to create the most word matches.

There are several types of scanning software and storage software for resumes. It is impossible to know which one the company where you are applying might use. If you know for sure they will scan your resume, call their human resources department and ask what the parameters are. Basically, you want to remove all graphics, shading, uncommon font styles, columns, lines and anything else that is not straight text. Italics and bold face are the exceptions.

Some tips to creating a scannable resume:

If you already have a resume completed and saved to disk, you do NOT have to make another one! The header with your name, address, etc. and the major headings will stay the same. If you do not have a resume, obtain handouts from the Career Development Center and then make an appointment to see a counselor.

- Save the document again in MS Word and call it by another name.
- Remember, only change the scannable resume, not the “original” if you copy it.
- Change the font to a common non-decorative sans serif typeface such as Helvetica, Optima or Univers.
- Ensure the font is between 10-14 points.
- **Make certain none of the characters touch each other.** Keeping things in italics and boldface is OK as long as this does not cause the letters to touch. **OCR scanners misinterpret touching characters!**
- Do not use columns.
- Use round solid bullets only. Avoid them if you can.
- Do not use “signs” like ampersands, percent signs, accent marks or foreign characters.
- Left justify text.

- If your resume is more than one page, place your name and address header at the top of each page.
- Use light or white paper and print only on a high quality laser printer or inkjet (24 pin letter quality) printer.
- Use 8 1/2 X 11 paper unless another type is specified.
- Do not staple. Send only original copies and send in a flat envelope. If you must fax (only if there is no other option) put the setting on “fine mode” if available.
- To ensure the document is readable, you can save the file using MS Notepad. It automatically saves the file as a .txt (text) file. You can use Notepad in this manner to double-check that no characters are touching.
- As for content, action verbs are still important but the addition of key phrases and nouns will potentially give you more word matches.

If you have any further question please make an appointment with a career counselor or call the human resources department of the potential employer to find out details of their process.

Material adapted from [Scannable Resume Fundamentals: How to Write Text Resumes](#) by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D. on Quintessential Careers [www.quintcareers.com](http://www.quintcareers.com) , information from Proven Resumes at [www.provenresumes.com](http://www.provenresumes.com) , [Tips for Creating a Scannable Resume](#) by Kim Isaacs at [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) , and Information form the Dixie College Career Center.

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**IT ALL BEGINS HERE.**



**Brookhaven College**

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

**Career Development Center**

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www.BrookhavenCollege.edu, click on “C” and select “Career Development Center”

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