FORMATTING GUIDELINES FOR CREATING
ATS (APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM)-FRIENDLY, HUMAN-FRIENDLY RESUME

When applying for jobs online, many times job seekers are asked to upload a resume. Resumes are "parsed" by an applicant tracking system to pull out individual items, such as name, phone number, company, job title, etc. If the resume is not formatted properly, the resume parser may not be able to pull specific information and that resume may never get into employers database.

Here are some guidelines to increase resume compatibility with applicant tracking systems (ATS):

1. Document Type

Recommended
-Microsoft Word (.doc)
-Txt
-Rtf
Save your resume in the most acceptable formats like Microsoft Word, txt or rtf formats.

Not Recommended
-Docx
-PDF
-HTML
-Open Office
Pdf sometimes gives broken text and many resume parsers/management systems fail to convert the pdf, html, docx and open office files into text. Never ever scan and send your resume as an Image.

2. Body Format

Recommended
Use generic text type like Arial/Times New Roman. With standard font size (10, 12, or 14)
Do not insert pictures/templates inside the resume body.

Not Recommended
Avoid tables as this will break the continuity of resume when read by the software.

3. Candidate Name

Recommended
Mention your name clearly in continuation with the First, Last and Middle name. You can use Bold/Italics while writing the name.

Not Recommended
Do not use any special character like (,;0/- etc. with your name.
Do not mention your present designation or any skill set along with your name.
Do not use extra spaces between each letter of your name.
The system will take the generic words/special characters under elimination category while identifying the name.

4. Timelines/Dates

Recommended
Try to follow the standard date format i.e. MM/DD/YYYY or you can use Month Name, Year
i.e. May, 2010. Don't forget to mention the complete year i.e. 2010.
Use similar format throughout the resume.

Not Recommended
Mentioning Date without proper year description is unacceptable to resume parsers i.e.
07/09 – Wrong Format, May'10 – Wrong Format.

5. Fonts - No specific fonts required. Use standard fonts for a professional appearance.

- ▪ *Sans-serif fonts*: Ariel, Arial Narrow, Calibri, Century Gothic, Gill Sans, Lucinda Sans, Tahoma, Trebuchet, Verdana

- ▪ *Serif fonts:* Book Antiqua, Bookman, Cambria, Century Schoolbook, Garamond, Georgia, Palatino Linotype, Times New Roman

Use a reasonable font size (10, 11, or 12 point, depending on the specific font).
Fine to use larger fonts for name and headings.

6. Borders and Lines – Fine to use if not touching any text. If in doubt, leave them out.

7. Headers and Footers – Do not use for any important information particularly, contact information.

8. Graphics, Logos, Charts, Graphs – Do not use.

9. Bullets – Fine to use but avoid fancy shapes. Make sure bullet is not touching any text.

10. Bold and Caps – Fine to use.

11. Italics and Underlines – Do not use.

12. Tables and Columns – Do not use. Keep everything in a single column, top to bottom.