



How to Develop an Electronic Resume

[J. Murray Elwood]

You can easily develop an electronic resume and send it by e-mail, but there are caveats.

Many law firms are technologically conservative and not at all savvy in the electronic processing of their documents. They prefer to receive paper resumes for law school recruiting or for screening of lateral moves. But sooner or later in a job search, a potential employer or recruiter will ask you to e-mail your resume. Or it might be that an ad in a legal newspaper will instruct: "Apply by e-mail and send your resume as a Word attachment." What do you do?

First of all, you don't need a completely different resume for e-mailing. With a few slight variations, the same text can be used for the **three most common formats for transmitting resumes:**

A Paper Resume

Sometimes labeled "hard copy," with arresting typefaces and bulleted descriptions of accomplishments. This is the resume, still widely used, that you have traditionally mailed with your cover letter. When required, you can also fax your paper resume as an answer to an advertisement.

A Scannable Version

This form of electronic processing does not yet seem to be widely used by law firms, but resume scanning is employed by the human resource departments of major corporations to manage large numbers of incoming paper resumes. **Clue:** The ad tells you to direct your resume to "Data Processing."

The company scanner creates an electronic

image, or text file, of the resume that it then stores for later retrieval and review in a databank. **This scannable resume** is developed from your ordinary word-processed resume, but created with simple typefaces, such as the kind of typefaces used in this book - Times New Roman, Ariel, Helvetica, Univers - **but without** italics, horizontal lines, or underlined words. Note also that words used for section headings (e.g. **Education, Bar Admissions**) in the scannable resume are emphasized by capitalization, rather than written in bold type.

An Electronic Resume

Your resume can also be sent electronically either as an **attachment file** to your e-mail message that the addressee opens upon receipt or as **plain text** pasted onto the e-mail message itself. Both methods are widely used to submit resumes to either recruiters or in answering advertisements.

As An Attachment File. If you've created your resume using standard word processing software, say WordPerfect or Microsoft Word 98/2000, after composing your e-mail message, you hit "Browse" to find your resume file, then click the "Attach" button and then "Send" and your resume goes out as a file with your covering message. If sent in Word and received as a Word document, formatting and fonts should appear very much as they do in a "hard copy" format. For example, Bradford Bunting's corporate resume, when sent as an attachment and "read" in Word 98, came through exactly as printed on page 60.

Be aware of two downsides to attachments. Sometimes attachments are not sent in Word or a compatible format and the attached file is garbled when opened. This file can usually be read by some other application already in the computer, but the process is time-consuming, inconvenient, and infuriating. **A more serious problem** with attachments is that some employers, concerned about viruses, have firewalled their systems against all attachments to protect the integrity of their emails. As a result, the phrase "No Attachments Please" seems to be appearing more and more in corporate advertisements. Read the advertisement carefully or ask the person requesting your resume what e-mail format to use when forwarding the resume.

As Plain Text. You convert your resume to an ASCII ("ASK-key") or plain-text format that is then pasted directly on to the bottom of your e-mail message.

To send your resume as part of the e-mail message for Word 98/2000, just follow these steps:

1. Open your resume. Choose: File → Save As → Save As Type; Choose: Text Only. You'll probably get a message saying that the document "may contain features that are not compatible with Text Only format. Do you want to save the document in this format?" Select: Yes
2. A Text Only form of your resume will come up on the screen. Select the resume, then Choose: Edit → Copy. Then go to your E-mail text, position your cursor after your message

and Choose: Edit → Paste. **If your resume contained bullets**, they will be changed into asterisks. Check your heading to make sure the name, address and phone and e-mails are in the proper order, and make sure the Section headings are printed in capital letters for emphasis.

To test the appearance of your plain-text resume, it's easy to open up another e-mail address, say in HotMail, and send yourself your resume at your usual e-mail address.

Note the Plain-Text Resume [at the End of This Section]

The original hard copy version of Tamika Greene's resume ... was converted into ASCII, or Text Only format, pasted onto an e-mail and the resume appeared as it does on the next page. Other than dropping the horizontal line below the letterhead and looking as if it had been typed on an old Remington typewriter, in 10-point New Courier typeface, the resume required no changes or edits. Substituting either a series of asterisks or dashes can approximate the effect of the horizontal line in the original.

Resources

The Internet contains many additional resources to answer questions and assist you in creating your electronic resume. Some of the best:

www.eresumes.com This is Rebecca Smith's site, "eResumes 101," and it is a comprehensive source containing several pages of excellent technical information about e-mail resume design and formats, including Keyword resumes, Web resumes, HTML resumes, and so on.

www.dbm.com/jobguide Margaret Riley Dikel, author of "The Riley Guide" to web career research information, has several pages at the Drake Beam Morin corporate site with good, common-sense advice about web resume

design and, especially, the process of web posting.

www.monster.com Kim Isaacs has an excellent article here on converting a resume to ASCII format. Select: Career Center → General Resources → Resumes.

TAMIKA GREENE

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(212) 123-4567**

EDUCATION

Fordham University School of Law, New York, N.Y.

Juris Doctor (cum laude), 2002

American University, Washington, D.C.

Bachelor of Fine Arts (magna cum laude), 1997

Washington Post Scholar, National Foundation For The Arts Award

EXPERIENCE

**Justice Milton Migrano, Appellate Division of New York, 2nd Department
Law Clerk, 2002 - Present**

Electronic legal research using Westlaw and LEXIS-NEXIS.

Prepared written memoranda and oversaw statistical reporting, document review and file management.

**Peace Corps, Republic of Ghana
Volunteer, 1997 - 1999**

Teacher of art in small village school; community organizer.

Facilitated various agricultural development projects.

**American University, Fine Arts Department
Student Research Assistant, 1995 - 1996**

Prepared bibliographies, catalogues,

overheads and other classroom materials. Using PowerPoint software, created several presentations for History of Architecture courses.

ADMISSIONS

**United States District Court, E.D.N.Y., 2003
New York State Bar, Second Department, 2002**

AFFILIATIONS

**Bar Association, City of New York
American Red Cross - CPR Instructor**