GETTING PAST THE 15 SECOND SCAN

Writing a résumé might not be all that difficult for you, but having to read them is a completely different story. That's because all too many *self-written* résumés ***lack focus*** and contain huge boring words. They have a reputation of being pretentious and vague, and most employers don't want to read them all the way through. Yours won't be the only document on the Hiring Manager's desk, so it must look good, be reader friendly as well as easy to understand.

Most résumés get a 10 - 15 second before deciding if this one goes into the keeper pile or the *circular file*. The writing must be crisp and get the reader's attention. **Here are some tips to get past the 15 second scan**:

Write a summary or Professional Profile that gives an effective overview of your experience, talent, knowledge, and special skills. Give the reader a hint of your most selling qualities right at the top of the résumé. {Check out my article: FORMULA FOR CONSTRUCTING A SELLING FOCUS STATEMENT OR SUMMARY.doc

1. Write your summary / profile / positioning statement to: a) capture the reader's attention; b) make sure to match your employer's stated requirements with your qualifications; and c) showcase your strengths, accomplishments, and achievements.
2. Use a quality linen paper that photocopies well. You never know how people will be looking at it.
3. Do *not* fold your resume, but instead use a large (9x12) white catalog envelope. Folds can blot out lines of text, just in case your résumé is scanned. Folds can also crack laser toner right off the page. Your resume will look so much more professional if it's not all folded up. {*Think crisply pressed interview outfit vs. here's what I wore to sleep and just rolled out of bed five minutes ago*!}
4. If your paper contains a watermark, be sure the watermark reads correctly and in the same direction as the text on the paper. Hold it up to the light. If it's backwards, or upside down, your résumé might be thrown out as this communicates that you *don't pay attention to details*.
5. Make effective use of white space and format the document to project your professional image at the proper level.

If you can catapult your reader through those 15 seconds enabling him/her to get farther and on to your *deliverable value*, your chances for a job interview will significantly increase.

Make those 15 seconds count!