

During your job search, to be most effective you will want to stand apart from the crowd. Office managers and human resource personnel receive hundreds, if not thousands, of resumes and cover letters. As they scan through these, there has to be something that catches their eye to move your resume to the "maybe" stack and keep it out of "File 13".

When you are preparing your resume, it is essential to customize it to the position you are applying for. If the job criterion calls for a "meticulous" person, consider using similar terminology in your resume. You will want keywords in your resume to stand out marking you as qualified for the position. Often experience will do this, but you will want to include some of this information in your skills section as well.

A source of much debate is the type of paper you should print your resume on. Some suggest high quality white paper, while others suggest conservative stationary. This is a personal decision. The most important thing is to use quality paper and print it on a good printer. Also, do not handwrite the address on the envelope; print it as well. You may consider off-white paper or stationary to offset your resume from the hundreds of others.

You will also need to stand out during the interview process. You will achieve this first and foremost by your appearance. Dress professionally and make sure every aspect of your appearance is impressive. Before the interview, consider what questions may be asked and what your responses will be. You do not want to sound rehearsed, but you want to be able to respond with clear and concise answers. Be confident and self-assured of your qualifications and ability to perform well in the position they are filling.

Send a short but professional thank-you note after the interview. The idea behind this is to keep your name fresh in their mind. This shows consideration but also gets your name in front of them one more time. This is less intrusive than calling to follow up on the position, although that is also an option a few days after the interview. You must reinforce your profile for a hiring manager if you want to achieve job search success.