



FINDING AND USING INDUSTRY KEYWORDS TO TAILOR APPLICATIONS

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WHY SHOULD I FIND AND USE KEYWORDS TO TAILOR MY APPLICATIONS?

Finding and using industry keywords to tailor your application will communicate to a potential employer that you understand the role, industry, and organization. A **'keyword'** is a word or short phrase related to the qualifications associated with a particular job or industry. For example, the word 'client' may be referred to differently in industries and organizations; for example, they may be referred to as 'customers,' or 'stakeholders' among other terms. Taking the time to notice these nuances will help you convey your alignment with the organization. Also, take note of the action verbs used in the job description and review your application, especially your resume, to discern if you can incorporate them at the beginning of your skill-based statements (i.e., bullet points).

In addition, applications - especially for medium-large size companies - go through an applicant tracking system (ATS). An **ATS** is often the first point of review, where your application is matched against specific words and phrases used in the job description. It is helpful to take note of the keywords used in the job description, like the action verbs & skills.

HOW DO I USE THE JOB DESCRIPTION TO FIND KEYWORDS?

The job description will contain a lot of information on the keywords (including action verbs) that you can expect and apply to your application documents. Action verbs express the action(s) you did for a role (i.e., facilitated, lead, streamlined, managed, etc.) the frequency of the action verbs may also reveal the importance of a specific skill. Be sure to review the various sections of the job description, especially the 'Qualifications' or 'Job Responsibilities' sections.

Tip: Save a copy of the job description, as you may need to refer to it later on!



If you discover that the job description contains vague or little information, try using other approaches, including researching the company on LinkedIn and other sites. Alternatively, you might search for other similar role titles at different organizations to supplement your knowledge and gain a better understanding of commonly used terms. Be mindful that in some cases, vague job descriptions could signal that the organization is not legitimate – make sure to do some background research on to verify that the job posting belongs to a legitimate organization.

USEFUL TOOLS

Word Clouds

Copy a job description into a word cloud generator (such as worditout.com). The bigger the word, the more frequently it appears in the posting, and thus the more important it might be to the potential employer. For example, if you find keywords such as, ‘team,’ ‘financial,’ and ‘management’ incorporate them into your application if they represent your skills and experiences.

Job Scan

[Job Scan](#) is an excellent tool from LinkedIn that will scan your resume against a job ad for keyword matches. It will also provide helpful tips to make it more ATS compatible. It also offers to resume writing guides and templates.

LinkedIn Learning

[LinkedIn Learning](#) also has up-to-date information on resumes and other jobsearch-related topics. **This service is free for Humber students.**

T-Charts

T-Charts can be a helpful strategy to group together expected duties into skills. You can use the chart below to identify a skill emerging from the job description on left side and on the right side list the expected duties.



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| Skills | Job Description Duties |
|--------|------------------------|
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As you review the T-Chart, consider the following questions:

- Which of those skills are ones you would like to include in your application documents?
- Is there a specific skill that shows up in greater frequency? If so, is there an experience that would demonstrate that skill?