Keyword Identification & Management

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This article is a deeper dive following the blog on the ATS and Key Words, published on May 14, 2018.

Most jobseekers know that keywords are important for the ATS. However, few people realize that key words do more than get through the Applicant Tracking Systems.

Companies define their culture through carefully selected word sets and phrases. Slogans become a part of the culture and are frequently a part of the company icons. Together, these build "brand."

Do you remember these slogans?
- "What's in Your Wallet?"
- "If You See Something, Say Something"
- "Can You Hear Me Now?"
- "Like A Good Neighbor, …"
- "Melts in Your Mouth, Not in Your…"

The purpose, of course is to build rememberability…that's a word I just made up. My point is that these branding elements come together as part of the culture of a business, corporation, non-profit, or other community.

POINT: When applying to a job, jobseekers should do what they can to:
- Be memorable!
- Demonstrate that they fit into the culture.

And having those keywords are going to be a help because companies demonstrate their culture through carefully chosen words. Using those words in moderation can win points. Overdoing it, may solicit an adverse reaction.

The use of space on a resume is critical. Word take up space, so choosing wisely is important.

The following words and phrases have been taken from job postings. I've copied the entire phrase and then indicated how to thin it out and still have the key words.

These keywords come from the Requirements section of job postings.
- ~~Experience with~~ CAD, 3D Parametric Modeling software MathCAD ; Autodesk Suite
- ANSYS ~~experience a plus~~.
- ~~Applicant must be a~~ US citizen.
- ~~Highly effective~~ communications and influencing skills

Other keywords are found in the Job Description. These are generally focused on activities that the person will complete if they are hired for the position. Since these phrases refer to activities, they tend to use verbs. However, for the purpose of a job application, I suggest these words and phrases be presented as nouns which can be extracted from the sentences.

Here are some examples:

Example No. 1:
- Complete understanding of the Safety, Quality, Capacity and Continuous Improvement aspects of all processes within the manufacturing assigned department

Suggested key words:
- Safety, quality, manufacturing processes
- Capacity and Continuous improvement

Example No. 2:
- Work directly with R&D to execute any design or mechanical review that occurs in the product development cycle.

Suggested key words:
- Research and development (R&D)
- Design and mechanical review
- Product development cycle

Example No. 3:
- Create and review production documents including drawings and bills of material.
- Suggested key words:
- Production document review
- Material drawings and bills

Example No. 4:
- Answer incoming calls in a timely and professional manner.
- Be responsive and timely with correspondence and problem resolution.
- Display a caring attitude and develop a rapport with the customer base.
- Use best practices to provide best in class customer service.

Suggested key words:
- Responsive, timely, caring and professional
- Customer base rapport development
- Best in class customer service

I hope this helps you extract the key words that will get you through the ATS and help you stand out to your potential readers.