

The Extra Polish That Can Make a Job Candidate Shine

By Accountemps

Catching a hiring manager's eye can be a challenge, even in a market where skilled financial talent is in demand. With so many seeking employment right now, it's easy for even the most qualified candidates to be overlooked amid the flood of resumes employers receive.

How can you stand out from the crowd? Here are some strategies to help you shine and gain a potential employer's attention:

Cultivate your digital brand: Today, you must maintain your "brand" both offline and online. What you share on your Facebook page, in a YouTube video, or on a blog all matter to potential employers. In fact, it's likely a hiring manager will at the very least "Google" you before an interview. So you need to ensure at all times that what is viewable to the public won't reflect poorly on you as a professional.

Also consider whether you're using technology to your full advantage in your job search. Certain tactics, if used strategically and judiciously, can work in your favour. For example, register your name as a domain and create a simple website for posting a digital resume. Another trend: Place a smartphone-readable QR (quick response) code on your resume or business card to link to other information, such as your up-to-date LinkedIn profile. (Be sure to provide a URL as well so a hiring manager won't need to download a mobile app to learn more about you.)

Create targeted job application materials: Tailor your resume and cover letter for every application. Yes, this takes time, but it's well worth it. First, it makes the hiring manager's job easier: It's apparent at a glance that you have the right credentials and should be considered for an interview. Communicating what you know about a potential employer, and why you'd be a great fit for the organization, also can impress.

Additionally, adapting your resume for each job opportunity shows you're taking a thoughtful approach to your employment search. Instead of just hitting "Send" and deploying the same information time and again, you're making the effort to explain why you're the best candidate for each specific role.

Follow up – before and after the interview: After you send out a resume, don't just play the waiting game if you want to get noticed. In [a recent survey](#) by Accountemps, seven in 10 senior managers encouraged candidates to follow up within two weeks of applying for a position. Sending an email or calling to confirm your resume was received can help earn you a spot on a busy hiring manager's radar.

After an interview, don't fail to send a handwritten thank-you note – even if you send a thank-you email first. It's an important opportunity to re-emphasize both your enthusiasm for the position and your strengths. It's also part of the extra "polish" that shows a potential employer you're a professional who will put forth the effort to do a job well.

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