

## A Practical Guide to Resume Screening

Audie McCarthy, Marrek Solutions Inc

Picture this....You have placed a recruitment ad in your local paper or on one of the on line recruiting vehicles. The resumes are starting to come in – in droves. It is an employers market. There are more people looking for work than there are positions to employ them in. How do you make sure you select the right candidate to interview from all those resumes?

Reading resumes ...a grueling task at best. And yet, a critical step in the hiring process. Here are some tips to help you through it.

### Tip #1:

Gather all resumes and set aside some time to go through them – all at once. Refrain from looking at each one as it comes in. It will take you more time in the long run and it is less effective. It will also distract you from your other work.

### Tip #2:

Scan resumes, seeing if the candidate matches your requirements. This scan should only take about 20 – 30 seconds. Here are some criteria you may want to use to eliminate candidates:

- Poorly organized, hard to read resume
- Position indicated does not match the position you have open
- Geographic restrictions incompatible with the position
- Time gaps in the resume that are not explained
- Completely unrelated skills and experience
- Lack of educational qualifications required

### Tip #3:

Have a system for rating. It can be as simple as 1, 2, 3...

If the candidate meets your requirements put the resume in a file folder marked “1”. If the candidate meets some but not all of your requirements, the resume goes in a folder marked “2”, and finally if the candidate does not meet your requirements at all, the resume gets filed in a folder marked “3”.

### Tip #4:

Start with your “1’s” and take more time now to read the resume. Concentrate on the work experience section, looking for:

- Sufficient, relevant experience
- Accomplishments – don’t be fooled by a long list of job responsibilities – look for examples of how the candidate has contributed to the company’s success – not just what they have done but how they have done it
- Critical skills – is there anything missing?
- Educational requirements, if applicable

You may also want to look for

- Awards and Recognition received
- Community involvement
- Evidence of continuous learning

Tip #5:

Compare all the “1’s” in your file folder. Are they all still “1’s”? You will still have variations amongst the “1’s”. Stack them in order of the most qualified on top.

Then, get ready to interview!