


# Trends in Resumes and Cover Letters

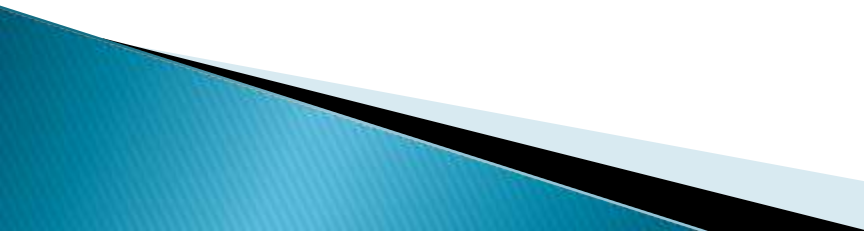
For NCEEA, April 29, 2010

by Dr. Kate Duttro,  
Career Change for Academics

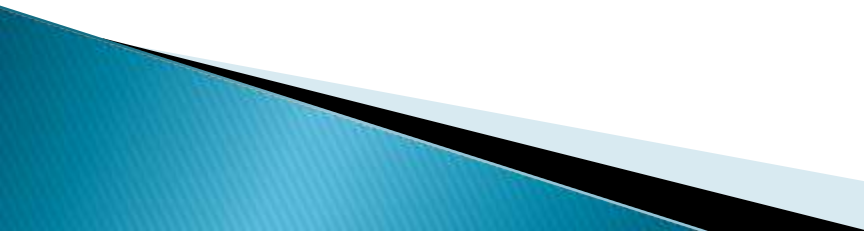
# Resumes in the 1990s

- ▶ Chronological
  - ▶ Functional
  - ▶ Hybrid / Combination
  
  - ▶ Varying degree of targeted focus
  
  - ▶ Electronic and/or paper requests common
  
  - ▶ Cover letters seen as necessary, more likely to be individualized
- 


# What Changed (about 2000)?

- ▶ Majority of resumes were delivered online, both to company websites & job boards.
  - ▶ Job Boards began growing dramatically
    - (especially Monster & CareerBuilder), as newspapers lost ad revenue.
  - ▶ Inexpensive home internet connections made it easy to send more resumes, just in case....
  - ▶ Advertised jobs began drawing hundreds to thousands of resumes for each job.
- 

# Recruiting Arms–Race?

- ▶ Small recessions & 9/11 made companies cautious about adding employees.
  - ▶ ATS developed, proliferated & became more affordable.
  - ▶ Keyword searches could micro–target multiple, specific criteria for employees.
  - ▶ Employers with a glut of resumes, could keyword search for 10–20 criteria and find 20–30 applicants.
- 

# What This Means to Applicants

- ▶ Resumes have to be heavily customized to make it through a system designed to screen them out
  - ▶ Cover letters are seldom included in ATS
  - ▶ Cover letters are less likely passed on to hiring managers
  - ▶ Hiring managers are reading resumes in 15 seconds or less, and even less likely to read cover letters
  - ▶ Networking remains VERY important
- 

# The Screening Process

What actually happens when  
you  
send off the resume?

(The importance of CONTEXT)



# Resume Screening

- ▶ When you send the resume –
  - Online application box without cover letter –> e db
  - Email with cover letter –> e db
  - Paper with cover letter
    - May be sent to Hiring Mgr.
    - May be sent to HR and may be scanned into e db

Note:

e db = electronic database

ATS = Applicant Tracking System

# Keyword Searches of e db

Most organizations e-screen (using ATS)  
100s of resumes to get 50

Then

- assistants (of Hiring Mgr. or HR)
- use job description and computer to find matching description


To get 10 (+/-) for the Hiring Mgr.



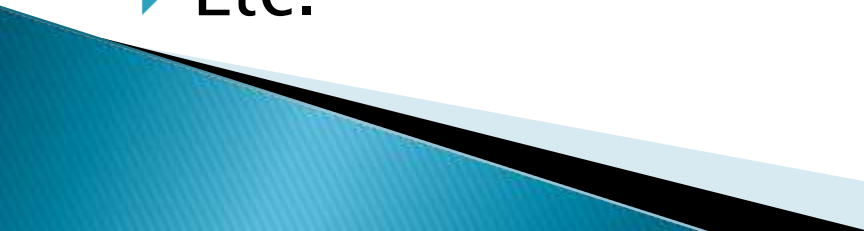
# Context of the Assistant



# How much does the assistant actually read?

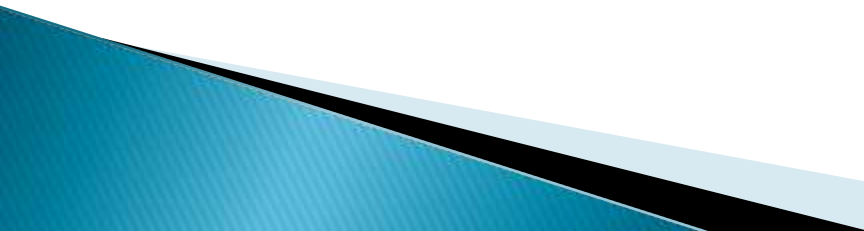
- ▶ A. All of the resume
  - ▶ B. Most of the resume
  - ▶ C. The whole first page
  - ▶ D. The top 2/3 of the first page
  - ▶ E. The top 1/2 of the first page
  - ▶ F. The Summary on top of the first page
- 

# It depends.....

- ▶ How large the screen is
  - ▶ How much time the assistant has
  - ▶ How many resumes the assistant has read so far
  - ▶ How well formatted the resume is
  - ▶ Whether there are visible errors (typos, misspellings, etc.)
  - ▶ Whether applicant has demonstrated match with job description early on 1<sup>st</sup> page
  - ▶ Etc.
- 

SO –

The top  $1/2$  to  $2/3$   
of the 1st page  
is critical space  
to show match  
in content



(General Resume Principle)

**LESS IS MORE**



When you want to emphasize

Something 2010


*(surround it with space)*

Or **bold the typeface** to help  
it stand out among the other words  
around it.




What words stood out  
in the last slide?

# More is Less


- Communicate effectively in English, orally and in writing
  - Have biology training/background
  - Collect data and maintain records precisely according to standardized protocol
  - In excellent physical shape
  - Able to persevere under stressful conditions
  - Can work outdoors, day and night in isolated conditions, and in adverse weather.
  - Walk in the sand up to 10 kilometers/night; climb rocks; stoop, kneel and stand on soft substrate and in cramped conditions.
  - Have a strong work ethic
  - Able to work all night and on weekends
  - Operate communications equipment properly (cell phone, hand-held VHS radio, marine radio)
  - Able to swim; crew a boat in open water conditions
- 

What words stood out  
in the last slide?

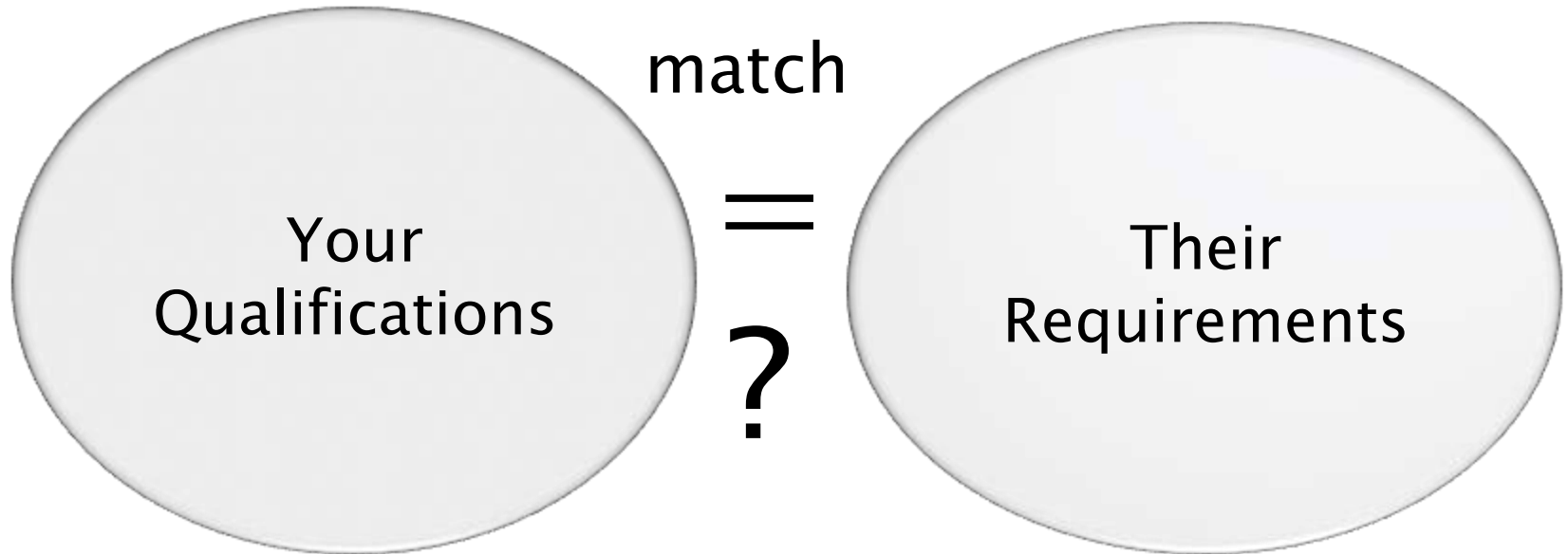


IS

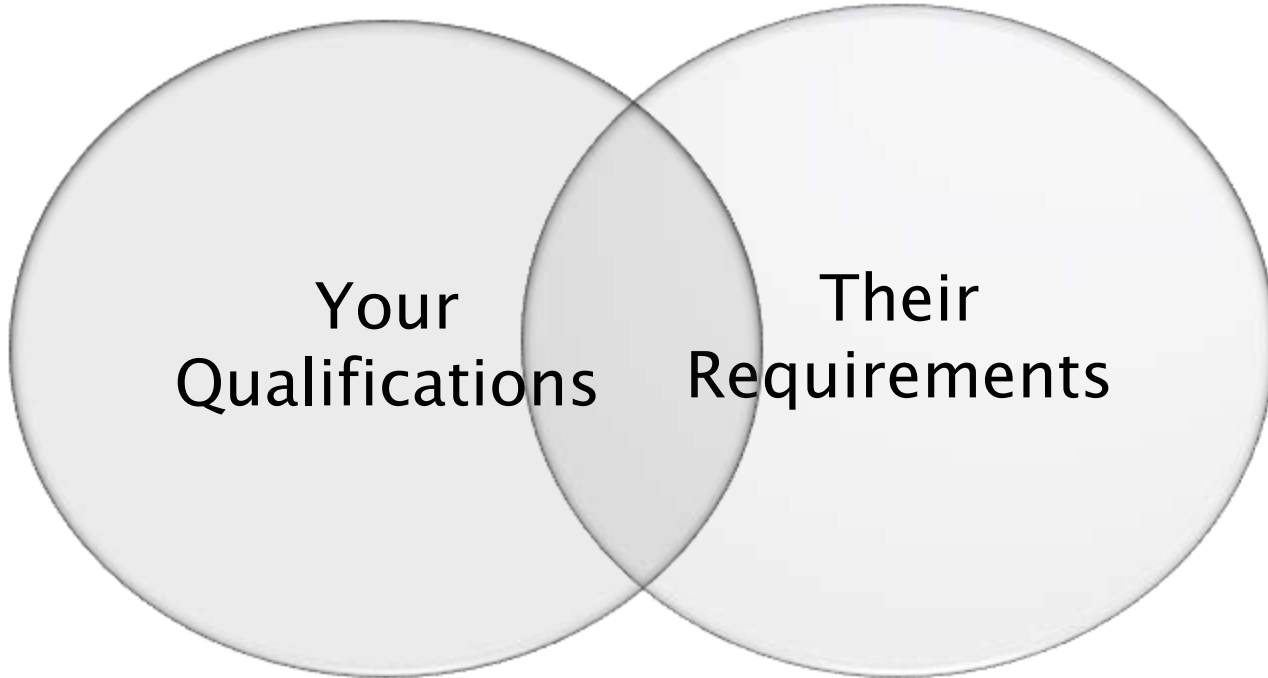
the content match  
immediately apparent  
on the top 2/3 of  
the first page?



# Do



?




Your  
Qualifications

Their  
Requirements

?

Your  
Qualifications  
Their  
Requirements

# Get Their Attention

- ▶ Analyze the job – what they need/want
  - ▶ Analyze your value – to them
  - ▶ Articulate – how you match their need  
(using their own words)
    - Hard Skills
    - Experience
    - Knowledge
    - Soft Skills
- 


# Two-Column Format

<b>Their Requirements</b> (from their Job Description)	<b>My Qualifications</b> (from your Kitchen Sink Resume)


# Analyze the Job

- ▶ **Buck Island Sea Turtle Research Program Research Assistant, (US VI)**  
Description of job – etc., etc., etc.
- ▶ **Qualifications Required – Must:**
  - **Communicate effectively in English**, orally and in writing
  - **Have biology training/background**
  - **Collect data and maintain records precisely according to standardized protocol**
  - **Be in excellent physical shape**
  - Be able to persevere under stressful conditions
  - Work outdoors, day and night in isolated conditions, and in adverse weather.
  - Walk in the sand up to 10 kilometers/night; climb rocks; stoop, kneel and stand on soft substrate and in cramped conditions.
  - **Have a strong work ethic**
  - Be able to work all night and on weekends
  - **Operate communications equipment properly (cell phone, hand-held VHS radio, marine radio)**
  - **Be able to swim; crew a boat in open water conditions**

# Analyze Yourself – Kitchen Sink Resume

- ▶ For your eyes only – any length
  - ▶ Chronological or reverse-chronological
  - ▶ Include EVERYTHING, especially accomplishments = your whole life
- 


# Analyze Yourself – Kitchen Sink Resume <sup>2</sup>

- ▶ Include Strengths/Skills you WANT – & don't?
  - ▶ “ travel, languages, adventures
  - ▶ “ any assessments, personality/career
  - ▶ “ hobbies, interests, significant events
  - ▶ “ early career dreams
- 

# 2-column format

Their Requirements	My Qualifications
Master's degree	Master's degree in Marine Affairs, focus on marine conservation & policy
1 year experience in conservation biology and policy	Internship – Naturalist and Environmental Policy Analyst, The Nature Conservancy, Seattle, WA (9 months)
Extensive experience communicating ecological issues to the public	*Two summers leading discussions on Ecology Camp Projects (daily, groups of 12 gifted high school seniors) at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, 1999 & 2000 * Facilitated public meetings, hearings & workshops for Co. Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and community groups on proposed wetland codes, Jefferson County, WA (1 yr.)
Demonstrated research skills in environmental conservation	Directed research, published paper and presented results at Puget Sound Marine Protected Areas Conservation Group Meeting to regional marine professionals

# Typical Resume Sections

- ▶ Header
  - ▶ Objective / Sum of Quals / Personal Brand Stmt
  - ▶ Education
  - ▶ Relevant Experience / Employment
  - ▶ Additional Information (Other Relevant Info.)
    - Activities, Honors, Interests, Hobbies, etc.
    - Specialized Computer Skills
    - Travel, Work / Study Abroad, Languages
    - Self-Employment, Special Projects
- 

# Header

Employer looks for	You demonstrate
How to contact this person	Complete information, clear
	Name large and clear, professional
	Address(es), best phone number, “professional” email, best website profile and/or LinkedIn

Header

# Timothy Ferriss–Wheel

4356 78<sup>th</sup> Street, #9A, Seattle, WA 98105

206–123–4567, Cell 206–987–6543

[timothy.ferris@timothyferriss.com](mailto:timothy.ferris@timothyferriss.com), [www.timothyferriss.com](http://www.timothyferriss.com)

<http://linkedin.com/in/timothyferris>



# Objective/Sum of Quals./Personal Brand Stmt.

Employer looks for	You demonstrate
Does this offer match my need?	A promise to fill their need
NOT	Challenging position in progressive organization that needs my skills and provides opportunities to grow.
<p><b>Maybe Match Job Title:</b></p> <p><b>Better Match to Job Desc:</b></p> <p>Skilled policy analyst with outreach experience and community mediation</p> <p>Effective facilitator with experience coordinating diverse groups – scientists, government agency staff, environmental organizations, business associations and property owners</p>	<p><b>Director, Marine Protected Area in North Pacific Ecozones</b></p> <p>*<b>Skilled Policy Analyst</b> with hands-on experience at community level and advanced training in mediation</p> <p>*<b>Effective Facilitator</b>, experienced with diverse groups, including scientists, government agency staff, environmental organizations, business associations and property owners</p>

## Job Description :

### Qualifications Required – Must:

- Communicate effectively in English, orally and in writing
- Have biology training/background
- Collect data and maintain records precisely according to standardized protocol
- Be in excellent physical shape
- Be able to persevere under stressful conditions
- Work outdoors, day and night in isolated conditions, and in adverse weather.
- Walk in the sand up to 10 kilometers/night; climb rocks; stoop, kneel and stand on soft substrate and in cramped conditions.
- Have a strong work ethic
- Be able to work all night and on weekends
- Be able to lift and move heavy objects
- Operate communications equipment properly (cell phone, hand-held VHS radio, marine radio)
- Be able to swim; crew a boat in open water conditions

## Summary of Qualifications

- BS, **Biology**, University of Delaware, DE
- As whale-watch boat guide,
  - **Communicated effectively in English**
  - **Operated communications equipment (cell phone, hand-held VHS radio, marine radio)**
  - **Crewed small boats in open water conditions**
- As graduate student at UW SMA, **collect data and maintain records precisely according to standardized protocol**
- **Excellent physical shape, and strong work ethic**
- **Advanced lifesaving certificate, able to swim in all conditions**

# Education

Employer looks for	You demonstrate
<b>Is this person knowledgeable (&amp; certified so by accredited/official institution/organization)</b>	Your relevant knowledge, training
	Formal degree titles, institution, location, year granted (or month/year expected)
	Related educational projects, internships, and other related educational activities
	Sub-categories can include relevant courses, papers, thesis, scholarships, awards, distinctions, other training, etc.

# Education

- ▶ **Master of Marine Affairs, UW, Seattle, WA**  
(expected June 2010)
  - Certificate in Conservation Biology Policy
- ▶ **Bachelor of Science, Biology, Duke University, 2007**
  - Summa Cum Laude, 2007
- ▶ **Inter-University Language Program for Chinese Studies (Stanford Center/National Taiwan University), 2004–5**
  - Conversant in Mandarin Chinese

# Education

- **Master of Marine Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle, WA (expected June, 2010)**

OR

- ▶ **Master of Marine Affairs, School of Marine Affairs, University of Washington, 2008**
  - **Concentration: Fisheries & Marine Mammal Management, Analysis of Environmental Policy Implementation**

# Relevant Experience / Employment

Employer looks for	You demonstrate
Evidence of potential, abilities, results and benefits	*Accomplishments, specific, measurable and relevant to work required *That your highest and best use matches the needs of the job
Personal qualities that add value (Will we <u>like</u> this person?)	Attitude, creativity, energy, enthusiasm
The least risk to hire (Does this person <b>want</b> to work here?)	Commitment

# Experience – Employment – Etc.

**Market Research Analyst, *Todd Pacific Shipyards, Seattle, WA, Summer 2000***

Developed and implemented market research project analyzing \$2 billion ship repair market

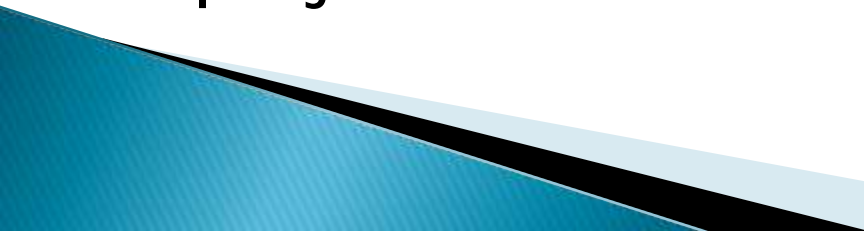
- \* Researched, defined, assessed and analyzed local and regional markets
- \* Designed database to track qualitative information and compiled spreadsheet analysis of quantitative data
- \* Presented detailed, 79–page report and charts to satisfied client

# Skills / Interests / Additional Info.

Employer looks for	You demonstrate
Relevant information that adds value	Relevant information that adds value
	Related skills and accomplishment, experience from internships, jobs, sports, related training, interests, travel , leadership, sports - etc.
	Portrayal of meaningful work / initiatives described on website &/or portfolio
	Skills list, technology, languages, management, relevant interests

# Skills / Interests / Additional Info.

## Organizational Skills and Data Management

- ❑ Designed sampling methods and database for 2003 Cook Inlet Beluga calf study
  - ❑ Managed addition of 20,000 photos and data to North Pacific Humpback Whale dbase
  - ❑ Planned, budgeted and tracked purchases for two large field research trips (15 people)
  - ❑ Planned, budgeted, purchased, produced 500 kits for Cetacean Tissue Collection project
- 

# Translate: Jobs → Tasks → Skills

- ▶ **Job** of Teaching Assistant
- ▶ **Tasks** = Lecturing, office hours, grading papers & exams, maintaining class records & grades, collaborating with other TAs, meeting/coordinating with faculty advisors, developing outside projects

## **Skills** of Grading Papers & Exams

- Knowledge of specific complex technical material
- Knowledge of grading standards of excellence
- Application of standard evaluation to knowledge displayed
- Judgment in assessing whether particular tested communications reach that standard
- Maintaining accurate accumulating records

# Translate: Jobs → Tasks → Skills


## ▶ **Job** of Teaching Assistant

**Tasks** = Lecturing, office hours, grading papers & exams, maintaining class records & grades, collaborating with other TAs, meeting/coordinating with faculty advisors, developing outside projects

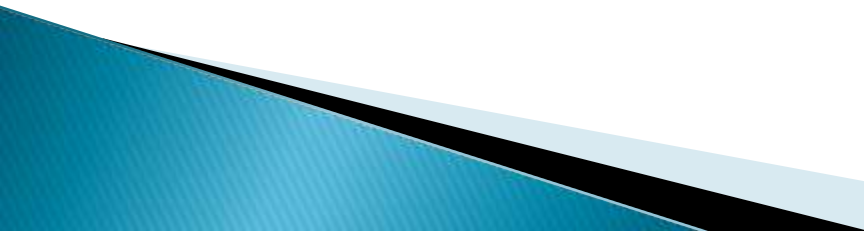
## ▶ **Skills** of Lecturing

- Preparing concise explanations of complex, technical material for a novice audience
- Prioritizing and editing materials for relevance to learning objectives
- Public speaking
- Creation of appropriate media to supplement and amplify lecture content using computers, video, audio, etc.
- Handling emerging issues and questions raised in lecture

# Bottom Line (for now)

- ▶ Analyze your skills, knowledge, abilities
  - ▶ Analyze the job description
  - ▶ Research the organization problems/culture
  - ▶ Customize each resume to the job requirements = expert rather than generalist
  - ▶ Use actual words of job description
  - ▶ Keep zero tolerance for errors
  - ▶ Keep cover letters brief, zero errors
  - ▶ **Exception to all the rules** in small organizations – and based on inside knowledge from networking
- 

# The Next Big Change

- ▶ Monster recently went live with its Power Resume Search
    - It “intuits” skills from a job title
    - It ranks and re-ranks candidates depending on recruiter skill requirements & experience
    - It “understands” many more terms and titles than previous ATSs
    - It assumes more skills from job titles, without recruiters having to list all the terms
    - It is a premium service (> \$800 for 2-week search)
    - (Monster’s \$100 million investment)
- 

# More information #1:

- ▶ **LinkedIn Groups** – Career Change Central for Phil Rosenberg discussion.
- ▶ **Also see other groups** – Career Counselors Network, Career Services Professionals, Career thought Leaders Consortium, National Employment Counseling Association, National Career Development Association
- ▶ Review of <http://www.ere.net/2009/11/19/monsters-new-resume-search-is-a-winner/> with 40 comments as of April 28 –
- ▶ ERE also has related articles and lots of other tabs with recruiter-info stuff – directory, network (discussion groups, feedback), webinars, blogs, events, etc. –
- ▶ Some Examples
- ▶ <http://www.ere.net/webinars/>
- ▶ for example, this one <http://community.ere.net/blogs/> linked to this one <http://blog.alstin.com/alstin-exclusive-an-interview-with-peter-weddle>
- ▶
- ▶ Monster's Power Resume Search – Overview (29pp)
- ▶ [http://media.monster.com/id/training/JobAidsPRS/Download\\_Entire\\_User\\_Guide.pdf](http://media.monster.com/id/training/JobAidsPRS/Download_Entire_User_Guide.pdf)
- ▶ Test Drive of Monster Power Resume Search  
<http://hiring.monster.com/resumearch/resumearchtestdrive.aspx><http://hiring.monster.com/resumearch/enhancedresumearch.aspx>

# More Information 2:

- ▶ Note that this one is NOT Monster's Search, but is another example of current attempts to improve AST for recruiters.
- ▶ Video on Semantic Search Recommendation Tool—not the same as Monster – <http://vimeo.com/11241659> including description -- Our recruiting keyword recommendation engine helps recruiters to reduce the recruiting process by recommending job keywords. The system has over 38 job categories that contain a total of over 100,000 keywords. By searching job keywords and getting job keyword recommendations, the tool helps recruiters and sourcing to export keywords into a resume database to find better candidates.  
We utilize semantic search that diagnoses over 500,000 resumes to get keyword recommendations from actual resumes. Recruiters can either export recommended keywords or use them to create resume search strings to find candidates on the open web.

# More Resources 3:

- ▶ My main website is <http://careerchangeforacademics.com> (which is really more for my academic “tribe”)
- ▶ I’m also developing
- ▶ <http://SeattleCareerTrainer.com>
- ▶ (where I’ll be storing more information like this in future, more for my career colleagues)

Please stay in touch,

Kate [Kate@CareerChangeForAcademics.com](mailto:Kate@CareerChangeForAcademics.com)