

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM

Having a strong foundation for your resume is half the battle. It's not enough anymore to have a "one-size-fits-all" resume. You must take the intentional steps to edit and tailor your resume to *fit* each job posting.

What many job seekers don't realize is that 75 percent of job applications are rejected before they are seen by human eyes. Before your resume reaches the hands of a live person, it often must pass muster with what is known as an applicant tracking system.

WHAT IS AN APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM?

- An applicant tracking system — or ATS, for short — is a type of **software used by recruiters and employers** during the hiring process to **collect, sort, scan, and rank the job applications** they receive for their open positions.
- Today, approximately **98 percent** of Fortune 500 companies **rely on ATS software to help streamline their recruitment process.**

HOW DO APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS (ATS) WORK?

- The ATS parses a resume's content into categories and then **scans it for specific keywords** to **determine if the job application should be passed along to the recruiter.**
- Its job is to essentially **weed out unqualified applicants** so the recruiter can devote his or her time to evaluating the candidates who are more likely to be a **match for the position.**
- In other words, the ATS is **apt to toss the least-qualified candidates,** rather than identify the applicants who are the best fit.

21 CENTURY JOB SEARCH PROCESS

- On average, a corporate job posting receives **250 applications**
- Of those 250 applications, **4 - 6 candidates** will be contacted for an interview
- **75% of resumes** will never be seen by a human
- **98% of organizations** are using ATS as a part of their recruitment practice
- Larger companies receive about **50K - 75K** resumes per week



WHAT DOES A HIGH-RISK RESUME LOOK LIKE?

- **25%** have buried the contact information section in the header.
- **Omitting Keywords** from the job descriptions increase toss-ability.
- **Fancy Templates** get scrambled by the system and are ineffective.
- **43%** of resumes are submitted as an incomplete file type.
- **21%** of resumes include graphics and charts that ATS cannot scan.

*Technology is making the job search process both easier and harder for the job seeker and the hiring managers. **Understanding the use of the ATS is crucial to ensure your resume makes it into the hands of the hiring manager.***

THINGS TO CONSIDER TO "BEAT" THE RESUME ROBOTS:

1. **Select the right file type for your resume.** For example, (.pdf and .doc) are the easiest for the ATS system to read and scan. So, be sure to save and upload as a PDF for Word document before submitting.
2. **Do not put important information in the header or footer.** The applicant tracking system are not able to properly scan/read the coded information in a header and footer. Do not put any information in the header/footer.
3. **Optimize your resume with keywords.** Refer to the job description to determine what keywords and phrases to incorporate - be intentional and copy/paste them as often as you can. If you're unsure which resume keywords should be used, start by collecting three to five job descriptions that represent the type of position you're pursuing. Use the skills identified on these posting and incorporate them onto your resume.
4. **Create a keywords/skills section.** Create a "Core Competencies" or "Areas of Expertise" section within your resume professional summary that lists your strongest hard skills and soft skills. If there is a common abbreviation for one of your proficiencies such as "SEO" (for search engine optimization), include both versions in your resume. Then, pepper these same terms into your "Work Experience" or "Education" sections, where appropriate, to demonstrate when you leveraged that skill.
5. **Avoid images, charts, photos, or any other graphics.** This type of information is un-scannable.
6. **Stick to simple bullet points.** Stick to the simplest options, such as a solid circle, open circle, or square, to ensure your bullet points enhance your resume, rather than make it incompatible with an ATS.
7. **Use a clean resume design - avoid templates.** Not only do complex resume designs or unusual formats confuse most applicant tracking systems, but they also annoy recruiters who are accustomed to quickly scanning a resume for specific information they expect to find in particular areas in the document.

HOW TO CREATE AN ATS-FRIENDLY RESUME FORMAT

- If you want your resume to successfully pass the ATS, **stick to a standard resume format**, such as a hybrid resume.
- This resume format uses a **professional summary** section at the top of the document to **outline your key skills and qualifications** and **combines it with a chronological “Work History”** section that explains how you've leveraged these qualities to produce results for your employers.
- Most applicant tracking systems do a better job at reading and interpreting a **hybrid format** because they rely on chronological data to parse your resume.

IMPORTANT TIPS AND TRICKS FOR BEATING THE SYSTEM

1. Use keywords customized to each job.
2. Use standard section headings (contact information, education and training, skills, work experience, etc.)
3. Don't let your resume get too fancy. Fancy templates will often hurt you, not help you.
4. Check your spelling and grammar.
5. Use full acronyms and titles for organizations, certifications, and any other information found on your resume.
6. Apply, even if you might not be 100% qualified. You should apply for positions that you meet 65% or more of the qualifications for (excluding required education - if you don't meet an educational requirement, you may avoid that application).
7. Follow up with the employer. Use your network to send a note and make it clear that you are excited about this job. If you succeed in making an impression this way, the employer may make a point of finding your application in the ATS and giving it a look.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [What's an ATS-Friendly Resume? And How to Write One](#)
- [How to Customize Your Resume for Each Job Application](#)
- [5 Signs It's Time to Hire a Professional Resume Writer](#)
- [Words and Phrases to Remove From Your Resume Right Away](#)