

Tips on How to Get Past an Employer's ATS - Applicant Tracking System

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JOB APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this accurately, giving as many details as possible of your skills and this job application.

Please either type directly in this form using or print out and complete the form in bla
CAPITALS.

POSITION APPLIED FOR:

Job title:
Department/Region:

What is ATS?

“ Applicant tracking systems provide a software interface for companies to manage their hiring process. At a base level, this consists of opening new positions and advertising them online — either on a corporate home page or job boards. Once recruiters open the position and advertise it, the ATS provides an interface for candidates to apply online and for managers and recruiters to view and search through those candidate submissions before moving them through the hiring processing — typically from screening to interview to offer and, of course, hire.”

Why Companies Use an ATS

- Allows companies of all sizes to streamline and automate HR responsibilities.
- Social media outreach capabilities, effectively manage candidate data, significant cost and time savings
- Automate and store hiring documents online - never have to sift through stacks of paperwork or hundreds of emails
- Makes recruiters lives easier



The Good



- Speed
- Get resumes, cover letters and data in front of the appropriate hiring authority quicker for faster review of qualifications, making the application-submission process much more efficient for applicants
- Better information.
- Better position your resumes with job-related keywords to take advantage of a solution's automated screening tools that index and crawl submissions
- Bring a resume to the forefront, where otherwise it might have been overlooked through manual submission and review

The Bad

- Kills 75% of candidates' chances of landing an interview as soon as they submit their resumes
- Created a perfect resume for an ideal candidate for a clinical scientist position.
 - Matched the resume to the job description and submitted
 - Work experiences was lost entirely because the resume had the date typed before the employer.
 - Failed to read several educational degrees



The End Result

- Only scored a 43% relevance ranking to the job because the applicant tracking system misread it due to a formatting issue
- Flawed!
 - Only hope - understand exactly how these systems work and how best to optimize your resumes for them.



Tips and Tricks

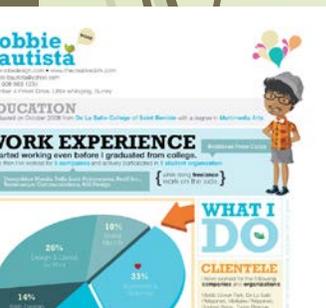
1) Never send your resume as a PDF



- .doc format, don't use resume templates, upload instead of typing it in. Even if you have to type it in, ATS will give preference to uploaded resumes.

2) **Keep formatting simple** - Conformity and Simplicity

- No special characters, fancy borders, shading, etc.
- Stick to standard fonts such as Arial, Georgia, Impact, Courier, Lucinda, Palatino, Tahoma, Verdana, Sans Serif





3) Divide your résumé into clear sections, and use common headers

- Summary, Work Experience, Qualifications, Education, Skills
- Don'ts – Affiliations, Publications, memberships, etc.

4) **Call your work experience “Work Experience”**

Fancy headings like Career Summary, Career Progression, and Notable Accomplishments, are passed over by the system because it is not designed to recognize such headings.

5) Don't include graphics or tables

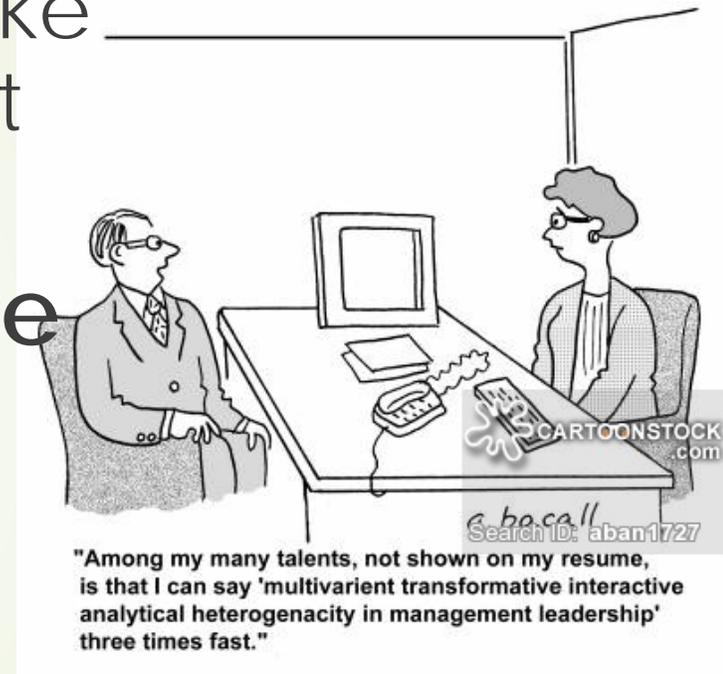
- Avoid using special characters (like arrows) for bullets. Standard "bullet points" are fine.

6) Learn the corporation's culture

- "corporate speak"

7) Don't limit the length of your resume

- ➔ Feel free to submit a longer resume if you're using the ATS.



8) **Don't start your work experience with dates**

ATS looks for the name(s) of employers first.

Employer's name, your title, and the dates you held these titles, and place them on separate lines. **OR**

Company Name	Date
Position	
Description	

9) **Ditch the career objective**

- Try replacing with a qualifications summary—a six-sentence (or bullet pointed) section filled with ATS-friendly keywords that concisely presents your achievements, major skills, and important experiences.

10) DON'T MAKE ANY SPELLING MISTAKES

Spelling mistakes are the death of your resume



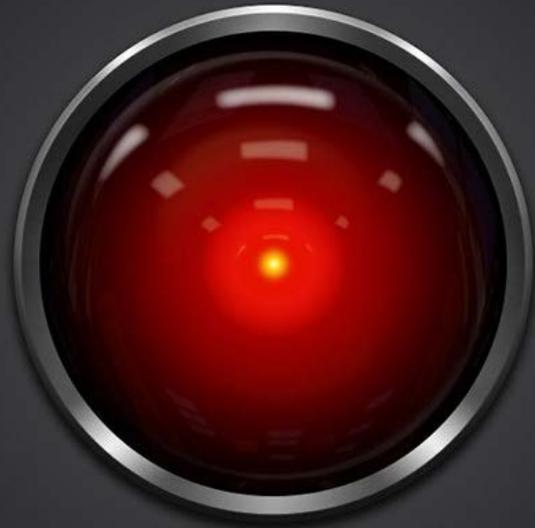
Nail the correct keywords

- Use both the acronym and the spelled-out form of any given title, certification, or organization. For example: Certified Public Accountant (CPA).
- DON'T OVERDO IT
- Aim for repeating important skills-related keywords two or three times (and no more) and within a context
- No laundry lists!
- Do not hide keywords in the white space of the resume

How you rank

"ATS, Please get me an interview."

"I'm sorry Dave, I'm afraid I can't do that."



- What matters most to applicant tracking systems is the uniqueness or "rarity" of the keyword or the keyword phrase to a particular job ad.
- The systems then develop a ranking based on how closely a job seeker's resume matches each keyword and phrase and how many of the keyword phrases the job seeker's resume has

Through the recruiter's eyes

- ➔ The recruiter doesn't see the resume submitted.
- ➔ The recruiter sees the information the applicant tracking system pulled from the candidate's resume into a database
- ➔ ATS contains different database fields for information on a resume: name, contact details, work experience, job titles, education, employer names and periods of employment.
- ➔ Identifies this information on a job seeker's resume, but if a resume isn't formatted according to the ATS, it won't pull this information into the proper fields.

Matched Keywords:

WORK HISTORY
Employer: ASBPE and American Business Media
February 2000 - Present
Position: editor
12 years of experience reporting and writing authoritative feature stories and incisive news analysis for print and online publications. Maintain a record of producing a volume of high-quality work that consistently drives site traffic on (daily) deadlines. Able to get tight-lipped sources to open up during interviews. Translate vendor jargon and core technology concepts into clear, compelling prose. As an editor, quickly identify and correct problems with story structure, clarity and grammar. Recognized by MIN, ASBPE and American Business Media for editorial honors.
PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE
Employer: CIO.com
October 2011 - Present
Position: Senior Feature Writer
Telecommute * Write features, news analysis, and Q&As on IT career management, IT security, and cloud computing. * Author the MIN-award winning Career Connection blog. * Interview CIOs, top executives at vendor companies, consultants, industry analysts, and job search/staffing experts for stories and blogs. * Produce text, select and images for slide shows. * Update CIO's Facebook page daily. * Code (HTML) features for TeamSite CMS and Drupal CMS. (Also know WordPress.) * Write 15 e-newsletters each month targeting 100,000 subscribers. * Edit stories from CIO.com staff.

Common ATS's

- **TALEO**: Used by Major League Baseball, Octagon, Yahoo! Sports, Fox Sports
- **KENEXA / IBM (BrassRing)**: Used by ESPN, Time Warner (Turner Sports, Sports Illustrated)
- **SuccessFactors**: Used by Under Armour, EA Sports

Remember, if your resume is passed on for review, a human will actually read it. Therefore, you need to create a resume that both passes the system, but does not offend (and in any way turn off) the actual recruiter.

Thank you and good luck!

