

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS

QUICK TIPS

WHAT IS AN APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM?

The job market has become increasingly competitive, and resumes are often pre-screened by an **Applicant Tracking System (ATS)**. When you apply for a job via an online portal, it is highly likely your application will go through an ATS.

An Applicant Tracking System accelerates the hiring process and acts like a filter, analyzing a large number of resumes and **prioritizes the most qualified candidates that have tailored their application to the job description**. It is programmed to look for “keywords” that you can find in the job posting. These “keywords” will answer questions about your *skills, location (include your postal code), experience (company names and job titles) and qualifications (certifications, training, programs, specific institutions)*.

HOW TO OPTIMIZE YOUR RESUME FOR ATS

Tailor your resume

- Customize EVERY RESUME. Identify keywords and phrases from the job posting to tailor your resume. Make sure you indicate how your accomplishments address their requirements.

Match your words to the job posting

- If the job posting uses the phrase “customer experience” and on your resume you used “client experience”, change your wording to “customer” to match the job posting.

When using abbreviations, ensure you use the long versions at least one time

- Computer Aided Design – CAD
- Key Performance Measures – KPI

Stick to a chronological or hybrid resume style

- These are the resume styles employers prefer.

Make sure your resume reads left to right

- ATS cannot read columns. Keep the writing flowing left to right.

Use traditional fonts

- Garamond, Calibri, Cambria, Georgia, Helvetica, Times New Roman, Arial, Palatino, Tahoma, Verdana

Hyperlinks

- Cut and paste the URL separately from important words such as your job title or an accomplishment. Link out from a word like “website” or “portfolio”.

Use standard headlines and section titles

- Keep conventional labels like “Education,” “Work Experience,” “Highlights of Qualifications” and “Technical Skills”.

Test your resume using an online scanning tool

- Check out www.jobscan.co. Details on free & paid plan options: <https://app.jobscan.co/plan>

File type

- Save your document as a PDF or Word document.

THINGS TO AVOID

Delete text boxes

- Keep all your text in the body of the document.

Remove all headers and footers

- Information in the header and footer sometimes gets dropped by the ATS.

Avoid logos, images and graphics

- Although they can add style to a resume, often the ATS cannot recognize them.

Eliminate Columns

- ATS commonly reads left to right, and does not compute up and down.

Uncommon section titles

- Avoid titles like “Where I’ve Made an Impact” – keep it traditional, don’t get too creative.

Less common fonts

- Stick to the list noted on page 1. Avoid fonts you have to download.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Overview of how to ensure your resume is ATS-friendly:
www.themuse.com/advice/beat-the-robots-how-to-get-your-resume-past-the-system-into-human-hands
- Top applicant tracking systems:
www.jobscan.co/blog/top-applicant-tracking-systems-used-hiring-companies