

8 TIPS TO GET YOUR RESUME PAST THE ATS

The ATS is the Applicant Tracking System that is used by most companies - and can keep your resume from ever being seen.

by Abby Schmearer

1 CHOOSE A STANDARD FORMAT

ATSs prefer either traditional chronological resume layout or a combination resume. So do recruiters, as well. Combination or hybrid resumes are great if you're changing careers, have big gaps in your employment, or don't have a lot of traditional work experience.

2 USE KEYWORDS

An ATS can reject as many as 75% of the applicants based off of scanning the resume for keywords. Compare your resume against the job description and be sure to add in the keywords listed under the "Required" or "Preferred" qualifications. Hard skills are your best bet, such as "software". Use them so that they will make sense once a human reads them.

3 DON'T GET TOO FANCY

It's difficult for an ATS to scan the following: tables, text boxes, logos, images, graphics, graphs, columns, headers and footers, hyperlinks on important words, and less common fonts.

4 USE STANDARD HEADINGS

Most ATS separate your resume into Education, Contact Information, Skills, and Work Experience. This isn't the time to get creative, so make sure your sections are similar.

5 WRITE OUT ACRONYMS

For instance, if you're an RN, be sure to also write somewhere on your resume "Registered Nurse". Not all Applicant Tracking Systems are the same, so you need to prepare for even the older models that may only be looking for the complete wording.

6 CHOOSE THE RIGHT FILE TYPE

In resumes, there's really only 2 options: .pdf or a Word document. While a .pdf can keep your resume intact, it can be hard for the ATS to scan. Word documents are significantly easier. (And recruiters usually prefer them.)

7 INCLUDE YOUR NAME IN FILE NAME

Most people are only thinking of completing their resume and don't realize that it also has to be easy for the machine and the recruiter to find it. Saving your resume as "resume.doc" isn't helpful, but JaneDoeResume.doc will be.

8 APPLY ONLY TO JOBS YOU'RE QUALIFIED FOR

The ATS can see if you're qualified - AND if you're applied to other jobs at the same company. Applicants trying to get into an industry often make the mistake of applying too often to too many things, but it comes across as scattered and lacking focus. Aim for your target! Good luck!

