

# HOW TO BEAT THE BOTS!



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GETTING YOUR RESUME PAST THE ATS! (APPLICATION TRACKING SYSTEM)

An Applicant Tracking System, usually referred to as an ATS, is a technology used by many employers to automate and streamline their hiring process.

BEFORE YOUR RESUME IS SEEN BY ANY HIRING MANAGERS IT MUST FIRST PASS THE INITIAL ATS SCREENING. FORTUNATELY, YOU CAN EASILY BEAT APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS WITH A BIT OF SIMPLE OPTIMISATION.

TO DO THIS, YOU WILL NEED THE RIGHT FORMAT, THE RIGHT KEYWORDS, AND THE RIGHT STRATEGY FOR YOUR RESUME.

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS ARE SOFTWARE THAT AUTOMATE THE HIRING PROCESS. THEY SCREEN RESUMES AND CANDIDATES AUTOMATICALLY, MAKING THE ASSESSMENT OF NEW CANDIDATES FASTER AND MORE EFFICIENT.

THAT MEANS SCANNING RESUMES FOR IMPORTANT KEYWORDS AND QUALIFICATIONS. THE GENERAL GOAL IS TO NARROW THE APPLICANT POOL SO THAT HIRING MANAGERS CAN MEET THE "BEST" APPLICANTS BASED ON A PREDETERMINED SET OF CRITERIA.

MOST RESUMES WILL BE REVIEWED AND SCANNED BY MACHINES BEFORE THEY ARE READ BY PEOPLE. MANY ORGANISATIONS USE APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS (ATS) TO MANAGE RECRUITMENT PROCESSES.

ATS'S CAN QUICKLY SCREEN RESUMES USING KEYWORDS, SKILLS, ABILITIES, EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS.

### Use *Keywords* customised for the job.

THE ASPECT OF YOUR RESUME THAT THE ATS IS MOST INTERESTED IN IS THE KEYWORDS. THE MAIN FUNCTION OF AN ATS IS TO READ YOUR RESUME AND COMPARE ITS CONTENT TO THE RELEVANT JOB DESCRIPTION, LOOKING FOR THE BEST MATCH.

READ THE JOB POSTING CAREFULLY AND USE THE SAME KEYWORDS TO DESCRIBE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE, BUT DO NOT OVERSTUFF *KEYWORDS*.



A GOOD PLACE FOR KEYWORDS IS A SKILLS SECTION, WHERE YOU LIST YOUR CORE COMPETENCIES OR ABILITIES. USING THE MAIN PHRASES IN BULLET POINTS IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE USING ALL OF THE RIGHT KEYWORDS IN A WAY THAT FITS IN THE RESUME ORGANICALLY AND IS EASY FOR ATS SOFTWARE TO READ.

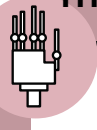
THE ATS KNOWS WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO FOOL IT. INSTEAD, BE SUBTLE WITH YOUR RESUME KEYWORDS. "SPRINKLE THEM THROUGHOUT YOUR RESUME,"

### USE *STANDARD* SECTION HEADINGS

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS USE HEADINGS TO NAVIGATE YOUR RESUME SO THAT THE INFORMATION IN EACH SECTION CAN BE CORRECTLY PARSED AND UNDERSTOOD.

FOR THIS REASON, TAKE CARE TO USE SIMPLE HEADINGS THAT THE ATS WILL RECOGNISE. MAKE THE PARSER'S JOB AS EASY AS YOU CAN BY USING THE STANDARD SET OF RESUME HEADINGS.

KEEP THE NUMBER OF FONTS TO A MINIMUM.



THE ATS WILL SORT YOUR CONTENT INTO THESE FOUR CATEGORIES:

- EDUCATION
- CONTACT INFORMATION
- SKILLS
- WORK EXPERIENCE

SO BE SURE TO USE THESE TITLES FOR THE SECTION HEADINGS OF YOUR RESUME. DON'T GET TOO CRAZY - JUST CALL YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE "WORK EXPERIENCE" AND YOU EDUCATION "EDUCATION".

### K.I.S.S. (KEEP IT SIMPLE...FOR SUCCESS)

KEEP IT SIMPLE! IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO CONFUSE THE ATS. THE ATS MUST BE ABLE TO NAVIGATE YOUR RESUME EASILY, WITHOUT GETTING TRIPPED UP ON ANY COMPLEX FORMATTING ELEMENTS.

UNFORTUNATELY, CERTAIN FORMATTING TRICKS THAT LOOK GREAT TO A HUMAN EYE WILL CONFUSE AN ATS. HOWEVER MUCH IT MAY HURT TO GET RID OF THE GRAPHICAL DETAILS YOU'VE ADDED TO YOUR RESUME, ANYTHING THAT MIGHT CREATE A PROBLEM FOR THE PARSER MUST GO, EVEN PERHAPS, HEADERS AND FOOTERS.



CHECK YOUR SPELLING AND GRAMMAR. OF COURSE, THIS ADVICE APPLIES TO ALL RESUMES', BUT IT BEARS REPEATING IN THE CONTEXT OF AN ATS APPLICATION.

A TYPICAL EMPLOYER OR HIRING MANAGER WILL BE FULLY PREPARED TO THROW OUT ANY RESUME WITH A SPELLING MISTAKE, BUT WITH AN ATS, YOUR RESUME WON'T EVEN GET THAT FAR. THE ATS IS LOOKING FOR MATCHING KEYWORDS AND RELEVANT HEADINGS, SO A MISSPELLED WORD WON'T REGISTER AS A MATCH, EVEN IF YOU ARE PERFECT FOR THE JOB. A LITTLE PROOFREADING CAN BE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INSTANT REJECTION AND A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION.

### USE FULL ACRONYMS AND TITLES...ACR

YOUR ATS-FRIENDLY RESUME MUST BE AS EASY TO UNDERSTAND AS POSSIBLE. THIS MEANS THAT YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH ACRONYMS.

AN ATS WON'T NECESSARILY KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FULL TITLE OF A COMPANY AND ITS ACRONYM FORM. TO BE SAFE, INCLUDE BOTH THE ACRONYM AND THE FULL TITLE IN YOUR RESUME.

THIS INCLUDES EVERYTHING FROM TITLES AND COMPANIES TO INDUSTRY LINGO.



SUBMIT YOUR RESUME AS A WORD DOCUMENT. DON'T SUBMIT AS A PDF DOCUMENT. APPLY, EVEN IF YOU MIGHT NOT BE QUALIFIED. THE THOUGHT OF UNERRING MACHINES READING YOUR RESUME MAY CAUSE YOU TO THINK THAT YOUR RESUME MUST BE A 100% MATCH WITH THE JOB DESCRIPTION TO APPLY, BUT THIS IS NOT THE CASE.

JUST BECAUSE YOU AREN'T THE PERFECT MATCH DOESN'T MEAN YOU AREN'T THE BEST POSSIBLE MATCH AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT. AS LONG AS YOU ARE A DEDICATED AND ENTHUSIASTIC LEARNER YOU CAN STILL BE A GREAT EMPLOYEE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ALL OF THE RECOMMENDED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.

