HOW TO IMPROVE ATS SCORE OF YOUR RESUME ?

What is an applicant tracking system?

Applicant tracking systems are used by companies as a way to streamline the application process for their open positions. The purpose of an ATS program is looking for words that indicate technical and specialized skills relevant to the role along with competencies, training and other strengths. This is why it is important to use recognizable acronyms and abbreviations and the key phrases from the job description.

It is important to note that the ATS assigns a score to every resume and only submissions with the highest score ever get out of the database to a desk. While the type of ATS an employer uses can vary, an ATS score that's above 80% usually assures a job candidate a chance to score a dream job. So how to pass ATS, and ensure your resume gets through with flying colours? Read on for our top tips.

How to pass ATS: Top 10 tips

The ATS assigns a score to every resume. Only submissions with the highest score ever get out of the database to a desk. This is ironic as computer tech has made it easier to find and apply for jobs, while something like an ATS is turning away an astonishing 70 percent of submissions. We need to optimize our resumes to ensure they pass the ATS challenge. Here are 10 solid tips for improving a resume's ATS score. So above 80% ATS score is always good to get a dream job.

1. Use concise sentences and skip the fluff

ATS scans your resume looking for pertinent keywords and if it finds an overabundance of fluff, then it will reject your resume immediately. If you want to get past ATS, use concise sentences and only use language that pertains to your field.

2. Do not use graphics or images

More and more candidates are personalizing their resumes with everything from pictures to videos. Unfortunately, an ATS cannot read any of these enhancements as the way the program works, it breaks down information, sorting it into readable categories. It cannot read visuals and hence will lower overall scores.

3. Avoid special characters

For bullets, stick with standard black circles. Arrows, squares, checks and other characters could stop the ATS from correctly parsing information, possibly dismissing important data as irrelevant. Also, make sure to format your name and contact information as a paragraph and NOT a header or footer as those section divisions are also hard for ATS to parse.

4. Watch the typos

As if we can't stress enough that a resume has to be grammatically and punctually correct. The ATS will not read words that are misspelled, including all-important keywords. It's critical to read the resume three and four times.

5. Stick to a traditional layout

ATS can have a hard time with creative formatting. For example, swapping out the usual header information like your contact details with another section, such as your summary, can cause ATS to not scan your document correctly. Stick to a traditional format and standard headings for each section of your resume. Check out [how to write a resume](#) page for the lowdown on how to structure a standard resume.

6. Choose readable fonts

No resume should use more than two [fonts](#) in general, but for the ATS, stick with readable, familiar, web-safe fonts like Georgia, Courier, Garamond, Arial, Times New Roman and Impact. Go near any other fonts in your library and you risk the ATS not being able to recognize your resume text.

7. Don't try to fool the system

Some candidates that are familiar with ATS have tried to circumvent the system using "hidden" or "white" fonts to insert keywords the system will find. They also claim to have skills that they don't. But remember, even if you get past ATS, you still have to get past the hiring manager and the interview process. Plus, some sophisticated ATS systems can detect these tricks and reject those resumes anyway. Above all, be honest: outside of proofreading carefully, the best advice you will ever get about your resume is to be truthful and straightforward about your background.

8. Spell out terms where possible

Spell out those acronyms and use industry-relevant abbreviations as it's impossible to know the exact keywords a system will recognize. For example: *PR/Public Relations, CPA/Certified Public Accountant, HRM/Human Resource Management, R&D/Research & Development, SMM/Social Media Marketing, P/E= Price to earnings ratio, UI/User Interface.* Use both versions of these common terms where it's relevant in your document so you can be sure the right keyword is captured.

9. Relevant content is more important than ever

Every career counselor and hiring manager will stress the importance of keeping your resume grounded in content that matters to the prospective position. Keep the text as brief as possible and describe skills and work experiences that are relevant to the job. Every task performed at your last job doesn't need to be listed. Irrelevant information lowers scores. If the info isn't directly related to the job in question, you risk ATS's wrath. Make every word, bullet point and sentence count.

10. Stick to a standard file format

ATS is more comfortable with resumes submitted in a standard file format, such as .DOCX or .PDF. If you use our Resume Builder, you can create an ATS-ready resume in those formats within minutes.