

# "Mysteries" of the Hiring Process

Understand, how to meet specific ATS filters to come up on recruiters radar

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## 1. Cracking the ATS Code

Most people think the ATS is "reading" their resume like a human. In reality, it's a **search engine**. When a recruiter opens the system, they type in keywords (e.g., "Project Management," "Python," "Budgeting") and the system ranks candidates who have those words.

### Best Practices for ATS:

- **The "Mirror" Technique:** Look at the job description. If they call it "Customer Success" and you call it "Client Relations," change yours to "Customer Success." The computer doesn't always understand synonyms.
- **Standard Headers:** Use simple headings like **Work Experience**, **Education**, and **Skills**. Creative titles like "My Professional Journey" can confuse the software.
- **Avoid "Fancy" Formatting:** Avoid using tables, text boxes, or graphics inside your resume. Many systems cannot "read" text inside a box, meaning half your resume could come up blank on the recruiter's screen.
- **The 80% Rule:** You don't need to match 100% of the keywords—aim for 80%. The system usually highlights candidates who hit a certain threshold.

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## 2. The "Direct Message" Formula

If you find a recruiter or a peer at the company on LinkedIn, don't just say "Hi, I applied." Give them a reason to take action.

Structure of a winning message:

1. **The Hook:** Mention the specific role and that you've already applied.
2. **The Value:** One sentence on a major win (e.g., "I recently led a team that cut costs by 15%").
3. **The Ask:** Ask for a specific, low-friction next step (e.g., "Who would be the best person to speak with regarding this role?").

Example:

"Hi [Name], I recently applied for the [Title] role and noticed it was just reposted. Given my background in [Specific Skill] and my success in [Achievement], I'm confident I could hit the ground running. I've attached my resume here just in

case—would you be open to a brief chat or pointing me toward the right hiring lead?"

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### 3. The "Hidden" Interview: Networking

About **70-85% of jobs** are filled through networking before they are even posted. If you see a job you love:

- Search for people currently in that role at the company.
- Send a message asking for an "Informational Interview" (15 minutes of their time).
- **Ask:** "What does the team value most that isn't listed in the job description?"
- This gives you "insider info" you can use in your interview later.