

"Mysteries" of the Hiring Process

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

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?"

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.