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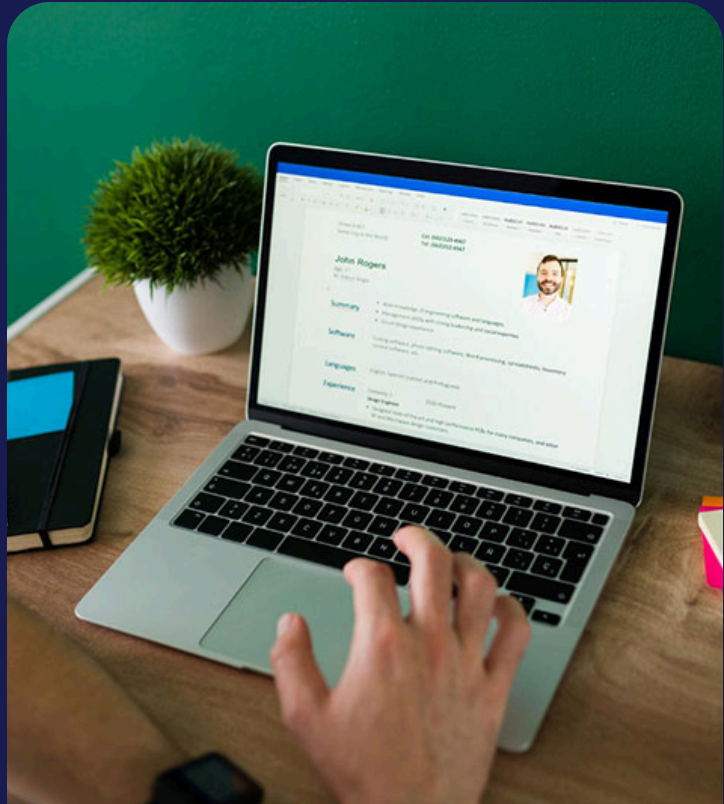
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How to Write an ATS-Friendly Resume that Passes AI Candidate Screening

In the modern job market you need a smart resume that appeals to both an ATS and human recruiters

Alina Neverova
Global Talent Acquisition Expert
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In today's competitive job market, standing out in a sea of applications can be challe
One key aspect that many job seekers overlook is the necessity for an ATS-friendly
But what is an ATS-friendly resume, and why does it matter so much in your job hun

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How Recruiters Rely on an ATS

An ATS, or **Applicant Tracking System**, is a software tool that companies utilize to s
rank candidate resumes based on specific keywords and criteria related to the vaca
These systems help them sort through hundreds, if not thousands, of applications.

ATS software is used widely, and it has become a critical aspect of the job applicatio
process. According to **survey reports from JobScan**, an astonishing 99% of Fortune
companies use an ATS for hiring, while 66% of large companies and 35% of small
organizations rely on them. These numbers highlight the ubiquity of ATS in today's j
market and the crucial importance of tailoring your resume to meet their criteria. If
resume is not catering to these platforms, you're at a huge disadvantage.

What is an ATS-Friendly Resume?

An ATS-compliant resume is written and formatted with these tools in mind. Compo
resume that an ATS can understand is essential to ensure your application doesn't g
overlooked. It also gives you the upper hand— 88% of employers believe that highly
candidates are screened out of hiring processes by ATSs because they *"don't meet th
criteria set forth in the job description."* This is according to a recent **study by Harvard
Review**.

You might be wondering how to check if your resume is ATS-friendly. This process is
daunting as it may seem. From the right file types to the strategic use of keywords, c
an ATS-friendly resume is about understanding what the software reads and unders
based on the information you provide.

qualifications in a way that resonates with both the tracking systems and the human recruiters behind them. Let's explore how you can optimize your resume to ensure i the right hands.

How an ATS Reads Your Resume

An ATS scans for specific keywords, formatting, and structures that match the job description they have on hand. Unlike a human recruiter, an ATS doesn't have the ca infer or assume anything from your text. An ATS identifies section headings and oth of "expected" information to parse your career details through algorithms, filtering that don't meet the specific guidelines set by the hiring company.
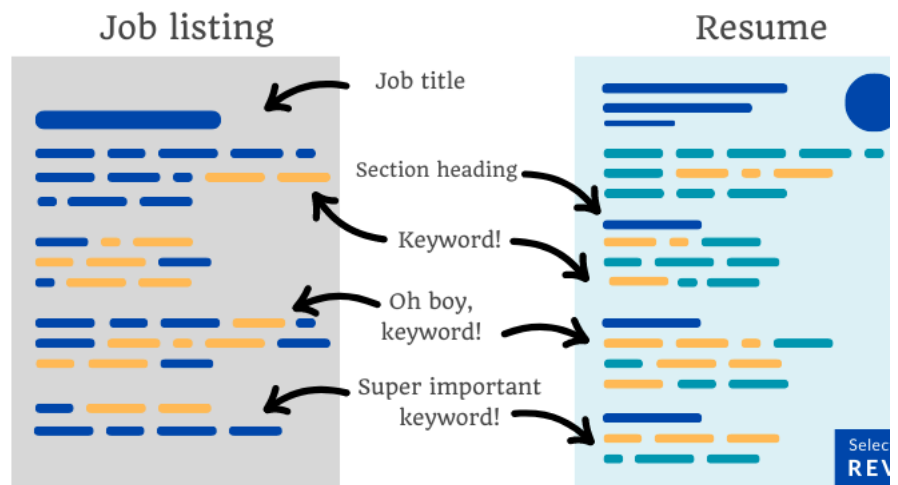
Algorithms, as smart as they are, are not written to appreciate uniqueness. An ATS example, understand a section of a resume called "Skills" and look for relevant skills it. It cannot apply the same logic to a section called "My Toolbox" or "Reasons I'm Ra

The ATS is Here to Stay

The use of **Applicant tracking systems** (ATS) is not merely a trend but a fundamenta how companies, both large and small, approach the hiring process. They aim to strea the recruitment workflow, ensuring that only the most relevant resumes reach the I recruiters. If you don't align your resume with what these systems are programmed your application could be disregarded before it even reaches human eyes.

Think of these systems as the first gatekeeper in your job search, a gatekeeper that by a vast (and growing) majority of companies across different sectors. In the follow sections, we'll guide you through the specifics of creating an ATS-friendly resume, so

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Writing an ATS-Friendly Resume?

An ATS-friendly resume is tailored to be easily readable and interpretable by an ATS
Resume parsing software. This doesn't mean it has to be devoid of creativity or indi
but rather that it adheres to certain guidelines that ensure an ATS can understand it

Here are some things to bear in mind:

Importance of Keywords.

When an ATS scans your resume, it's looking for specific keywords that match the jo
description. These keywords represent the skills, qualifications, and experience req
the position.

It's not just about listing hard skills but also showcasing relevant soft skills.

ATS-friendly resume hack: Let the job posting guide you. Pay attention to the terms
phrases used repeatedly. Incorporate these exact words into your resume, as these
the ATS is programmed to look for.

Impact of Formatting on ATS Scanning.

While it might be tempting to create a visually striking resume with tables, headers,
and graphics, these elements can actually hinder an ATS from reading your resume
Many ATS systems struggle to interpret information contained within tables or und
unusual headings.

ATS-friendly resume hack: When crafting your resume, choose a chronological resu
and use fonts like Arial, Times New Roman, or Calibri. Stick to standard formatting
simple fonts and bullet points. Avoid using images or graphics that could confuse th

The Role of Resume Parsing Software

A resume scanner, or parsing software, is the part of an ATS that automatically "rea
information. It breaks down the information into categories like education, work ex
and years of experience, skills, and more so that it can neatly compare candidates to
a top tier to the recruiting team.

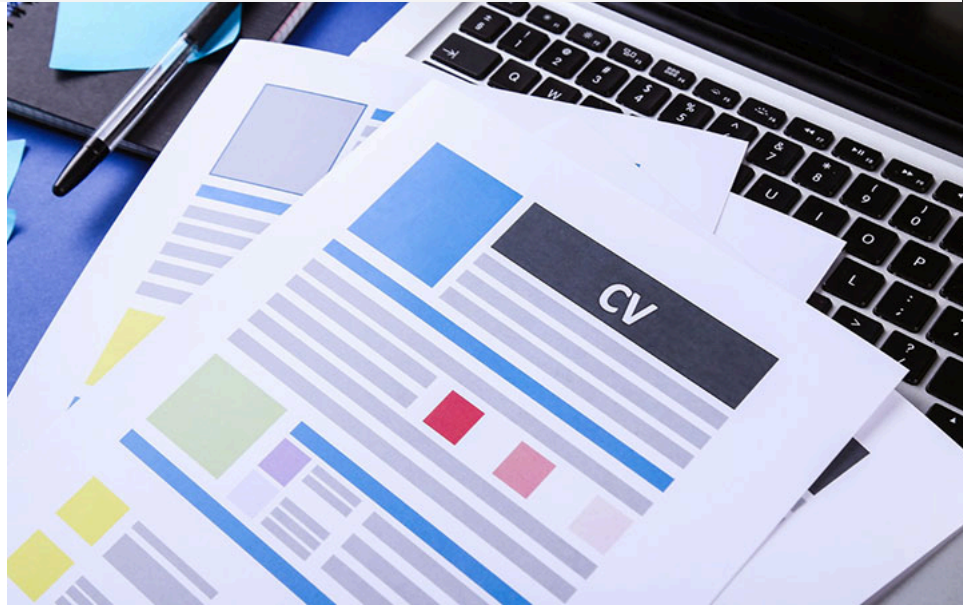If your resume is not aligned with what the software is looking for, important details
missed or misunderstood.

8 Tips for Writing an ATS-Friendly Resume

With so many companies relying on automated systems to screen applications, it's e
to understand how to tailor a professional resume to meet both human and machin
expectations.

Here's a guide to help you write a resume that will not only pass through ATS but als
impress recruiters and hiring managers:

1. Customize Your Resume for Each Job Application

One size doesn't fit all when it comes to resumes. If you want to stand out, you'll nee
customize your resume for each job application. In this customization, your experier
section must reflect the specific needs of each role.

Start by analyzing the job description to identify the specific keywords and skills rec
Tools like **Resumeworded** can assist you in finding the necessary keywords within tl
description, allowing you to make your resume more relevant to the role.

2. Use Standard Formatting

Keep your resume formatting clean and straightforward. Use simple fonts, standard
headings, and avoid graphics or fancy design elements that could confuse the ATS. E
points are your friend, and they allow for a clear presentation of your qualifications
achievements.

3. Optimize for Keywords but Avoid Keyword Stuffing

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4. Include Relevant Sections

Make sure your resume includes standard sections like Summary, Experience, Educa
Skills, and Certifications. These help the ATS categorize your information accurately
ensure that nothing important gets overlooked.

5. Use a Professional Filename

Naming your resume file professionally (e.g., "AlinaNeverovaResume.doc") helps en
it's easily identifiable by both the ATS and human recruiters.

6. Use an ATS-friendly Resume Template

Many online platforms offer templates specifically designed to be ATS-friendly. The
a great starting point, especially if you're unsure about the formatting guidelines.

7. Proofread and Test Your Resume

Carefully proofread your resume to eliminate any errors. Some platforms also allow
test how ATS-friendly your resume is, giving you an opportunity to make necessary
adjustments.

8. Prepare for the Next Step

Passing the ATS is just the beginning. You'll also want to be ready for the next stages
hiring process. Utilize career advice, resume writing techniques, and insights from
professionals to prepare for interviews and more. For more insights, check out thes
valuable **job interview tips** to help you shine in person.

Remember, the goal of tailoring your resume for ATS is not to trick the system but to
your qualifications in a way that aligns with what companies are looking for. They w
find the best candidate for the job, and by taking these steps, you'll be helping them
you are that candidate.

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Do's and Don't of Writing Your Resume to Be Friendly

Navigating the world of modern job applications can feel like traversing a maze, esp when it comes to crafting an ATS-compliant resume. To assist you in this journey, he concise guide to the essential do's and don'ts, peppered with insights that will help y clear of common pitfalls:

- **Do focus on readability:** Ensure that your resume is easy to read, both for ATS human eyes. Use clean lines, simple fonts, and a layout that flows logically.

- **Do verify contact information:** Your contact information must be up to date ar formatted consistently. Any discrepancy might create confusion for the recruit

- **Do optimize your LinkedIn profile:** Your online presence, especially on profess networks like LinkedIn, can also be essential in the recruitment process as the may use an AI recruiting or AI candidate screening tool to verify your career in **Optimizing your LinkedIn profile** to mirror the professional portrayal in your r can create a cohesive and attractive image for prospective employers.

- **Do use action verbs:** Incorporate action verbs to describe your experiences. Th convey a sense of purpose and align with the language that recruiters often loo Good examples of action verbs are acted, adapted, composed, conceptualized, customized, designed, and developed.

- **Don't rely solely on spell check:** While spellcheck tools catch many errors, the overlook abbreviations or context-specific mistakes. Have someone review you resume or read it aloud to catch any unnoticed errors.

professional and relevant to the job application.

- **Don't use acronyms without explanation:** If using industry-specific acronyms, sure to spell them out at least once to ensure that both ATS and recruiters und them.

Common ATS Myths Debunked

- **Myth:** ATSs only care about keywords.
  Fact: While keywords are essential, an ATS also considers other factors like you experience, education, and formatting. It's about a well-rounded portrayal, not keyword-matching.

- **Myth:** An ATS can read any file type.
  Fact: Despite technological advancements, not all ATS tools can handle every f (like pdf files or docx). Always follow the employer's instructions regarding the preferred file format.

- **Myth:** Cover letters are unnecessary.
  Fact: Some believe that ATS overlooks cover letters, but that's not true. Many companies still value a well-crafted cover letter as part of the application proce these also get scanned for relevant experiences and keywords.

- **Myth:** More pages make your resume more impressive.

- **Fact:** While it's important to showcase your achievements, a concise, focused r often more effective than a lengthy one. Both applicant tracking systems and h managers appreciate clarity and brevity.

Your Template for an ATS-Friendly Resume

Creating an ATS-friendly resume doesn't need to be an overwhelming task. By follo few simple guidelines and understanding the structure that works best with applica tracking systems, you can create a compelling professional resume.

ATS-Friendly Resume Template:

Contact Information:

- Your full name
- Phone number
- Professional email address
- LinkedIn profile URL

Objective or Summary

A brief statement highlighting your career goals and what you aim to achieve in you

success.

Work Experience

List your work experience in reverse chronological order using this format:

- **Job Title:** Senior Project Manager

- **Company Name:** ABC Tech

- **Employment Dates:** January 2016 - Present

- **Job Description:**

- Managed a diverse team of 15, delivering multiple concurrent projects with bu
  up to $1M.

- Increased project completion rate by 20%, while reducing budget overruns by :

- Implemented new project management software, leading to a 15% increase in
  productivity.

Education

List your degrees, institutions, graduation dates, and relevant coursework or honor

Skills

A list of relevant skills, focusing on those mentioned in the job description.

For example:

- Proficient in MS Office Suite, with an emphasis on Excel

- Strong communication and team leadership skills

- Expert in project management software: Trello, Asana, JIRA

- Excellent time management and organizational skills

Certifications and Awards

Any additional certifications, licenses, or awards that support your qualifications.

Professional Memberships

Memberships in professional organizations related to your field.

Tools for Creating ATS-Friendly Resume

How to Check If Your Resume Is ATS Friendly

Review the Job Description Carefully.

Identify the key skills, qualifications, and attributes they are seeking. These should be mirrored in your resume to ensure alignment with the role.

Utilize Online Tools

Several online tools can help you gauge how well your resume matches a specific job description:

- **Skillsyncer** offers tailored resume feedback based on the job description you're targeting. It provides suggestions on how to align your resume more closely with position you're applying for.

- **JobScan** allows you to compare your resume against the job description to see they match. It provides detailed insights into keywords, skills, and other elements ATS may look for.

Ask A Professional

If you're unsure about your resume's ATS compatibility, consider seeking profession Many resume writers and career coaches specialize in creating ATS-friendly resume understand how these systems work and what recruiters are looking for.

Conduct a Peer Review

Sometimes, a fresh set of eyes can catch mistakes you might have missed. Ask a frien colleague who understands your industry to review your resume. Their insights mig uncover valuable improvements.

Test with Actual Applications

While this might sound unconventional, applying to jobs and monitoring your respo can give you real-world feedback on your resume's effectiveness. If you notice a pat non-responses, it might be time to revisit your resume.

Conclusion

Navigating the landscape of modern job applications may seem complex, but unders how to create an ATS-friendly resume can greatly enhance your success in the comp job market. As you've seen, companies large and small rely on Applicant Tracking Sy

discussed in this article offer a pathway to a resume that appeals to both machine and human recruiters. By focusing on relevant keywords, maintaining simple yet effective formatting, and utilizing special tools, you are taking charge of your career path.

Alina Neverova
Global Talent Acquisition Expert

Alina Neverova is a Global Talent Acquisition Expert with over six years experience in recruiting. Alina has worked with top international companies from the Fortune 500 list, starting her career in a recruiting agency before moving into IT 4 years ago.

Alina has successfully built recruiting processes from scratch, hired 120 specialists in two years for an IT startup, and built a strong recruiting team. Her areas of expertise include building hiring strategies, training recruiting teams, hiring planning, automating sourcing processes, using AI in HR and recruiting analytics.

She holds a Bachelor's degree in Administrative management from National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

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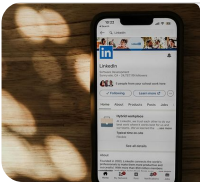
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CONTACT INFO

Main Office

196 Broadway, Suite 200
Cambridge, MA 02139

Call Us

+1 (319) 481 2578

Email Us

info@selectsoftwarereviews.com

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