

# Cracking the Code: Applicant Tracking Systems



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# What is an Applicant Tracking System (ATS)?

- ATS is a software application that handles the recruitment process by sorting through thousands of resumes
- Determines which resumes are the best fit for the positions for which they were submitted
- Operate by searching resumes for keywords



## Why are ATS's used?

- Help companies save time and help them stay organized
- Easier for employers to keep tabs on the hiring process and allows the employer to communicate directly with the applicants
- ATS's were first used by large companies that receive 1000s of applicants, but now even smaller companies are utilizing this software

# How do they work?

- Process resumes submitted by applicants
- When you submit your resume, it stores it and enters it into a database
- Recruiter will displace applicants based on skills and keywords in each resume
- At times, recruiters can search the entire database and might identify you as a good candidate for a different position long after you originally submitted your resume



# How to optimize your chances with the ATS?

- Matching keywords is an important part of how the ATS will search for your resume
- Best way to do this is tailor your resume with keywords that are in the job description- aim for repeating important skill-related keywords two or three times
- If there are required skills in a JD, make sure that you meet all of those or the ATS could reject you automatically - this does not mean to embellish on your resume, but if you are not qualified for the role, you may not be the best fit
- Do not submit your information to EVERY job posting because the ATS will keep your information on file and the recruiters can see that you applied for 50 openings within 2 days - if there are multiple openings that could fit your background, only submit to the jobs that you qualify for

# How to tailor your resume?

- This could be minor or major changes to your resume with every job opportunity
- It should be clear why you are a good candidate for the specific job you are applying for
- The employer is seeking certain qualifications in their candidates, make sure that if you have those qualifications that it is easily outlined on your resume  
Keep the formatting simple - some ATS cannot read logos, symbols and pictures
- Use both the acronym and spelled out form of any title, organization, or certification



## Other tricks and tidbits

- Ditch the career objective section - instead replace it with a qualifications summary/professional profile (sentences or bullets) filled with ATS friendly keywords - this is also much easier to update from each job you may be applying for
- Do not make any spelling mistakes
- Sometimes a professional is your best bet.. They can make the resume clear and concise

# Questions?

