



This guide is designed to educate you on ATS (applicant tracking system) including, what it is, key features of the software, and quick tips on how to prepare your documents to aid in using these systems.

If you need help formatting your resume to ATS standards, brainstorming and building bullets, targeting your documents, and anything more related to career and life, please visit the UCM Career and Life Design Center in Ward Edwards (WDE) 1200, or call the office at 660-543-4985!

What is an ATS?

ATS stands for “applicant tracking system,” ...think of an ATS like a one-stop shop for hiring managers.

ATSs have actually streamlined the hiring process for hiring managers. [About 99%](#) of companies use an ATS, particularly Fortune 500 companies and job search platforms (LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor, etc.).

The bigger picture of an ATS is that they are a rejection system rather than a hiring system. In fact, about 90 to 95 percent of resumes that go through an ATS are automatically rejected

The goal is for you to understand what an ATS is looking for and what they will reject in order for you to create the best targeted resume to get the job!

How to Optimize Your Resume for ATS

Optimizing your resume is critical to getting past the ATS. Without the right keywords, formatting, and other ATS-friendly elements, qualified candidates can slip through the cracks.

Here are some quick tips on how to beat applicant tracking systems:

1. Tailor, target your resume to the specific job you are applying for
2. Match your resume keywords to skills found in the job description
3. Use long-form and acronym versions of keywords (e.g.: “Search Engine Optimization” and “SEO”, “Bachelor of Science” and “B.S.”/”BS”)
4. Use Reverse Chronological resume format
5. Don’t use tables, columns, or graphics
6. Use a screen-friendly, traditional font
7. Don’t use headers or footers
8. Use standard resume section headings
9. Save Your File as a .pdf

Key ATS Features

ADVANCED SEARCH – With applicant tracking system’s powerful and extensive search functionality, recruiters can easily pull up candidate information, sort through hundreds of applications using keywords, and find the perfect candidate for a job.

RESUME PARSING – The ATS extracts and organizes parts of each resume into structured easy-to-scan information.

CANDIDATE SOURCING – Once entered into the ATS, resumes remain in the system as possible candidates for future positions. This allows companies to grow their talent pool.



RESUME SCREENING – Based on eligibility parameters set by hiring managers, the ATS automatically discards resumes that don't meet the minimum criteria.

KEYWORD SEARCH – Recruiters and hiring managers can search by any keyword, often with the Boolean search. Boolean search connects keywords using AND, OR, NOT, and NEAR.

FILTERS – Filters can include the job seeker's location, source of your application, how long ago you applied to the company, and whether or not you are a referral.

AUTOMATED EMAIL CUSTOMIZATION – Companies can customize rejection letters and other emails to ensure that applicants get a response to their application.

ADVANCED ANALYTICS AND REPORTING – Applicant tracking systems keep accurate information, analyze large data sets, provide insights into important recruitment metrics, help HR teams make informed decisions for improvement, and generate timely and compliant reports.

VARIOUS INTEGRATIONS – The best ATS integrates with other software, apps, and services; sends offer letters and contracts; provides online tests; even analyzes a candidate's potential performance.

IN-BUILT CRM SOFTWARE – Some ATS has built-in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) that allows recruiters to nurture relationships with candidates through proactive communication. Through its algorithm, the ATS can analyze if a candidate is seeking a job and offer opportunities to them.

ONBOARDING – Some Applicant Tracking Systems have onboarding capabilities where HR teams can welcome new hires and share information about the company, from its vision down to its policies.

Resource Credits:

Quinnia Tips - ATS, Quinnia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJUC5IDco9w>

99% of Fortune 500 Companies use Applicant Tracking Systems, Jobscan

<https://www.jobscan.co/blog/99-percent-fortune-500-ats/>

Applicant Tracking Systems: A Guide for Job Seekers, Jobscan

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What Is An ATS? 8 Things You Need to Know About Applicant Tracking Systems, Jobscan

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List of Popular Applicant Tracking Systems | Your Guide to Applicant Tracking Systems, SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management)

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/ats-table.aspx>