Applicant Tracking System

PREP TALK

So you completely revamped your resume, its looks AMAZING, you then submitted that resume to 75 different job posts, and got 0 phone calls.

What gives?

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So you completely revamped your resume, its looks AMAZING, you then submitted that resume to 75 different job posts, and got 0 phone calls. What gives? Well, a lot gives. But let's start with who you wrote your resume for. Ask yourself, who did I write this resume for? Me? The hiring manager? The director for the position? Who or WHAT should I have written it for? That's right,

WHAT! If you are applying to large or even mid-size corporations you're more than likely being stopped by the ATS the company has in place.

See an ATS or Applicant Tracking System is designed to pull out key words from resumes that match the criteria the company put in the job post. If your resume doesn't hit on those key words it automatically throws your beautifully created resume in the right into the electronic round file.

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Application tracking systems were created in the early 90's when the internet boom began to help employers filter through the resumes of 100's of applicants in order to find the right fit. If companies in the 90's were getting hundreds of applications for one job, imagine today when a company may see thousands of applications for the same job. The ability for an individual to sort through and pick the 10 best candidates would take months, and that's just for one position. Consider the ATS the front gate to the company, you're knocking on the door but unless you know the secret code, you aren't getting in.

In truth you should have many resumes, one for the small company that is very well written and personalized to meet the needs or a small, hands on company. One for a company that might be a little bigger but still has the capabilities and the man power to look at each individual resume by hand. Finally, one structured and built specifically for getting through the black hole that can be the ATS. Each one of these documents is a living, breathing thing that needs to be updated and edited constantly to meet not only the ever changing demands of your current position, but the future needs of the company that you want to work for. The biggest difference with the ATS is the wording. Having a resume that is too complex, too formatted, and too wordy will automatically get your resume thrown into the trash, no matter how great of fit you would be for the company. Did you know that, according to Top Resume and CNBC, at least 75% of resumes are thrown out by the ATS? You want to be part of the 25% that make it through? Here are some helpful tips to get your resume in human hands and landing the interview.

Keep it simple:

- Keep your work history limited to 10-15 years. It is perfectly okay to list some of your experiences in a section titled other professional experiences.
- Don't over format. Fancy fonts and colors are great, but you aren't inviting us to a wedding, you want a job. Black and white are perfectly okay for a resume, and a simple format will keep the ATS moving right through your resume to those key words you found in the job post.
- When it comes to saving, and well formatting, PDF is always best. It's simple and smaller than a word document. Most ATS can pick it up and it won't lose any formatting you did. Keeping it in word, or another word processor can sometimes be difficult for an ATS to completely interpret and, at times can cause your resume to get out of sync.

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- Too many pages is 2 many pages. The one page resume is still a great tool in your career toolbox. Statistics show that you have anywhere from 6-10 seconds in the hiring manager or departments hands once you get through that ATS. The top of your resume is the most vital space you have in your job search, use it wisely.

Use the write words:

- Find those key words in the job post and make sure your resume matches. Keep those key words in the first half for even better results.
- Spell and grammar check. All too often we forget this vitally important step for our resume. It can get your resume thrown out in an instant. Even if the ATS doesn't catch it, the hiring manger will.
- Remember I and me are never good on a resume. Use your humble brag, how did it help the company. It's a team game and we're all in it together.
- Don't just throw your responsibilities down and think you're done, we want accomplishments. Accomplishments with quantitative figures are even better. Companies want to see numbers and results.

Know who or what you're writing to:

- Your resume isn't about or for you. It's about the company's needs and how you can meet them.

Here are some great sources used in writing this article. We encourage you to find the format and method that fits you and your job search best. And remember don't settle for a stale, stagnant resume, the employers won't!

https://www.jobscan.co/blog/history-applicant-tracking-systems/

https://www.jobscan.co/blog/8-things-you-need-to-know-about-applicant-tracking-systems/

https://www.cio.com/article/2398753/careers-staffing-5-insider-secrets-for-beating-applicant-tracking-systems.html

https://www.cnbc.com/2019/02/28/resume-how-yours-can-beat-the-applicant-tracking-system.html

https://www.topresume.com/career-advice/what-is-an-ats-resume

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