# Understanding ATS

Companies today use a software called applicant tracking systems. Failing to understand how the ATS works can leave you losing opportunities even if you're highly qualified for a position. This section will help you understand the ATS and how it works.

### WHAT IS ATS?

ATS are used by companies' human resources departments to quickly filter through applicants that are qualified and not. The great thing about ATS is they make the job search process easier for companies by cutting down the numbers, but make it hard for applicants because if you aren't aware of how they work you can get filtered out.

### HOW DOES ATS WORK?

ATS uses keywords and phrases to filter applicants résumés for companies. Applicant tracking systems keep similar résumés in one place, helping recruiters organize the applicants they are interested and keep them all in once place. Is ATS the best way to filter through applicants? Well, it does help companies save time and organize candidates, but the truth is the ATS also can allow for top candidates to slip away if they don't use the keywords or phrases they are looking for in résumés.

Today, more companies than ever are using ATS to help recruiters find applicants easier and more quickly. The best thing for job seekers to do is to familiarize themselves with the systems and how to use them to their advantage.

### BEAT ATS

Keywords and phrases are important when trying to take advantage of ATS. If you've held a job title of the position you are applying for make sure to use it again at the top of your résumé. Even if you haven't had the job title you are applying for, add it. Doing so will help filter you through the competition.

Use section headings are friendly to ATS. Don't get cute with headings such as "Where I'm going" or "What I've done." Rather, use simple sections headings such as "Experience" or "Education" to help you be identifiable to ATS.

Another way to beat the ATS is make sure you use the key phrases over and over again in your section headings, summary of skills or description. You want to make sure your résumé is as ATS-friendly as possible to help you be more easily identified. This means if you are applying for different positions in different areas, then you will have to tailor that résumé to fit the job you are applying for.

Another way to beat ATS is to format your résumé in a ATS friendly way. You can do this by placing all your information in chronological order and not using charts or graphs in your resume.

You can also do the same by using using traditional fonts such as helvetica, times new roman or others like them. The more simple and to the point you keep it, the better.

Some applicants try to beat ATS by using white letters to use the key phrases and terms over and over again in their résumé, but some ATS have been programmed to detect this in your résumé. Make sure you are not cheating ATS and actively beating it with the information and experience you possess.