

Where Does My Resume Go? Part 3: How do I get my resume noticed?

In this second edition of the “[Where Does My Resume Go?](#)” [blog series](#), we answer a question often asked by job seekers: “**How do I get my resume noticed?**” A recent study shows that recruiters spend an average of **6.25 seconds scanning your resume**. If that isn’t disheartening, consider that almost **50 percent of resumes are weeded out by an Applicant Tracking System (ATS)**, which 90 percent of companies now use. This means that if your resume lacks a certain keyword or cannot be easily parsed by an ATS, your resume might not even be considered for the role you’ve applied to.



Even the hottest resume can get lost in the shuffle

To make it past the ATS, start by familiarizing yourself with the basic criteria of your prospective employer or client.

Try to include keywords and experience levels as they appear in the original job posting, but make sure they’re actually an accurate reflection of your own experience.

“If it were as simple as copying & pasting keywords from the job description, wouldn’t every Tom, Dick and Harry get their resumes past the ATS?”

Companies have caught on to this keyword mirroring technique, which is why recruiters now include alternate keywords when filtering applicant resumes. For example, a recruiter may be looking for “web-based software specialists;” if you’re an SaaS whiz, why not include alternate keywords such as “web-based software,” “on-demand software,” or “hosted software” in your resume to ensure that this recruiter finds you.

Sometimes, it’s the little things that can trip you up. For instance, you may be harder to find if you’ve had unconventional job titles in the past. Even if your previous position fits the bill for this new opportunity, if it’s called something different, it may get lost in the shuffle. Consider finding a more mainstream equivalent to your title so that it won’t be excluded in a recruiter’s search. Likewise, your resume may slip through the cracks if you use abbreviations instead of fully naming your province/state, or if you forget your Postal or Zip Code ! If you type “ON” instead of “Ontario,” an ATS will only recognize the abbreviation as the word “on,” rather than the province.

“Once my resume makes it past the filters, will the recruiter notice it?”

That all depends. Wendy Kennah, Procom’s Director of Recruiting recommends keeping summaries short, so recruiters don’t have to scroll to the next page to see your work experience. She also recommends a chronological rather than functional format. Recruiters want to see your most recent experience, not necessarily your most relevant. That’s because if your most relevant experience is decades old, you may not be right for the job.

“It’s confusing to see that relevant work experience at the top when it isn’t the most recent, and it might annoy a recruiter to have to scroll through pages before finding your most recent job,” Kennah advises.

Now that you’ve formatted and optimized your resume to beat the system, you just might get a call. Know what to expect when engaging with a recruiter, and address the less tangible criteria that recruiters search for in a candidate. Stay tuned for next week’s [“Where Does My Resume Go”](#) blog.