

# Ask the Career Coach: Getting Your Resume Through the Door

How do you overcome the technology or screening process for resumes?

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

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Dear Career Coach Lisa,

What value has technology brought to the recruitment process? How do you work around the technology screening to get an interview?

F.T.  
Millburn

For larger companies, technology has played a significant role in changing how applicants are selected. The technology, referred to as Applicant Tracking Systems or ATS, is used to screen candidates for qualifications based on matching terminology (key words) on one's resume relative to the job requirements. It allows the corporate recruiter to see only the candidates that are a match based on the programmed criteria.

Many of the programming criteria for job boards prevent the resume from being viewed by the receiving company if it doesn't match enough of the job specific criteria. Most of these job boards do not inform you that you have been denied the privilege of being viewed. This is when your network is critical.

If your resume is not getting noticed, then change it. Review job postings and look for consistent key words. Integrate these words into your resume. Using these words is the key to getting through the ATS screen. Most people update their resume by adding their last position. When you begin to look for a job, you need to review your resume for formatting and proper use of terms that will meet the ATS matching criteria. I would suggest looking at your resume with a critical eye. Seek others' opinions from friends, recruiters or a career coach.

The way to work around the ATS is through your network contacts. These contacts are individuals that care about you and truly want to help you. Having your contact introduce your resume to their company's recruiter or hiring manager is usually very helpful. Even if they introduce you to someone that knows someone inside can be helpful. Informing your friends and family about companies that you are targeting will help them determine if they can help you. If the introducer is respected and known for delivering value, then the introduced resume, or you, will typically be granted a phone screen and possibly an interview. It is important that you keep your contact informed of your job search status with the potential employer. This allows the introducer to follow up naturally with their inside contact as well.

The question for the hiring organization is to ask if they hiring for a specific position or hiring for potential to help grow their company. What most successful hiring managers, recruiters and HR professionals do is to hire talent based on *critical skills, matched values and potential*. Any hiring manager who understands this blend when hiring will drive success.

*"Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to [CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com](mailto:CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com).*

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