

The 75% ATS Rejection Myth Shattered: 92% of Recruiters Confirm Applicant Tracking Systems Do Not Auto-Reject Resumes

New Enhancv research with 25 U.S. recruiters finds 92% say their ATS doesn't auto-reject resumes. Application volume, not software, is what buries you.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, August 31, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [A study from Enhancv](#), a global career tools company, has debunked one of the most widely circulated myths in modern job hunting. After conducting in-depth interviews with 25 U.S.-based recruiters across major industries, the study reveals that 92% of recruiters confirm their Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) do not automatically reject resumes based on formatting, design, or content match scores. The findings challenge years of viral social media advice urging job seekers to fear "bot gatekeepers". Instead, the research highlights that human recruiters manually review applications, and the primary reason resumes go unseen is not artificial intelligence, but sheer application volume, with high-demand roles attracting hundreds or thousands of applicants in days.

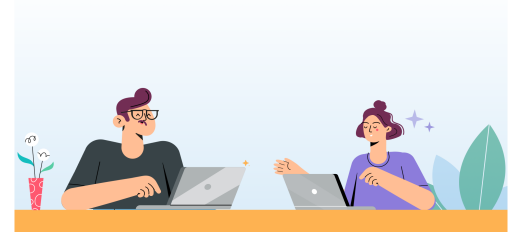
How Modern Applicant Tracking Systems Actually Function

Outright auto-rejection based on content or AI fit scores is extremely rare in real-world recruiting as only 8% of interviewed hiring professionals reported configuring their software to automatically turn away applicants based on keyword match thresholds.

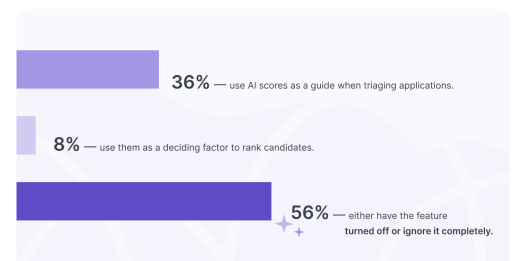
Basic eligibility filters remain universal across the hiring landscape with 100% of recruiters utilizing standard knockout questions for compliance factors like work authorization, required state licensing, or geographic location.

Artificial intelligence match scores are largely ignored or disabled by talent teams as 56% of recruiters report disregarding automated fit percentages in favor of manual candidate review. Application timing plays a crucial role in resume visibility with 52% of recruiters acknowledging that submitting a resume within the first 48 to 72 hours significantly increases the chances of

AI match scores are available in **44 % of systems**, but only 8 % use them to auto-reject.



AI scoring exists in many ATS tools, but recruiters say it's just another filter to check—not a reason to reject.



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ATS rejection study

being reviewed before shortlists are finalized.

Modern applicant tracking parsers readily process visual elements meaning clean multi-column layouts, standard graphics, and PDF files do not break parsing or cause system disqualification.

Human Overload vs. Algorithmic Gatekeeping

The research traces the origin of the ubiquitous claim that "75% of resumes are rejected by bots" back to an unsourced 2012 sales pitch. Over the past decade, this statistic was widely recycled across social media platforms and career blogs, creating widespread anxiety among applicants.

"Job seekers have been led to believe that an invisible software bouncer is shredding their resumes because of a two-column design or a missing keyword," said Volen Vulkov, co-founder of Enhancv.

"The reality is that software ranks and sorts, but humans make the decisions. What candidates mistake for AI rejection is actually human overload caused by hundreds of applications arriving at once."

"It's such a false narrative, and it takes advantage of job seekers," added Reggie Martin, a Los Angeles-based recruiter interviewed for the study. "People resort to that scare tactic, and it's really a shame because formatting is almost never the reason someone gets passed over."

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What Job Seekers Should Focus On Instead

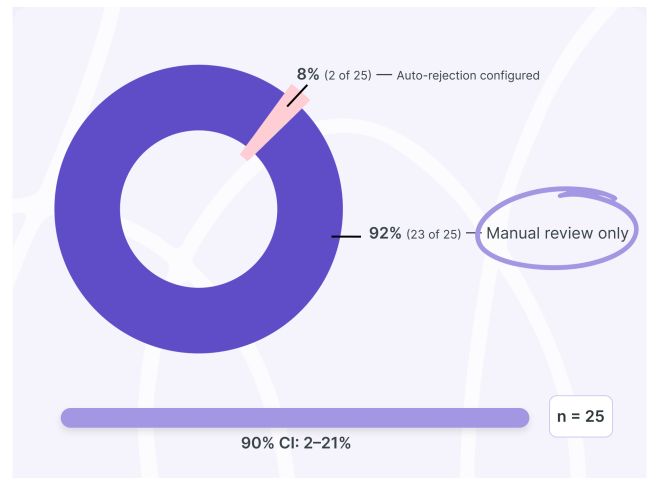
Rather than spending hours attempting to "ATS-proof" standard templates, the study advises candidates to focus on human readability and rapid submission.

Prioritize the top half of the first page so recruiters can identify core competencies and measurable impact within a quick scan.

Submit applications within 48 hours of a posting going live to ensure the resume lands near the top of the recruiter's review queue.

About the Study

Only **8% of recruiters** say their ATS automatically rejects resumes (based on content)



Even with uncertainty, auto-rejection is **rare** and only appears when teams explicitly turn it on.

 Enhancv

Only 8% of the recruiters

This study is based on qualitative, in-depth structured interviews with 25 U.S.-based talent acquisition managers and recruiters across healthcare, technology, finance, retail, construction, education, and consumer packaged goods. Participating organizations ranged in size from 120 to over 50,000 employees and utilized more than 10 major ATS platforms, including Workday, iCIMS, Greenhouse, Bullhorn, BambooHR, and SuccessFactors.

The complete findings and recruiter interviews are available at: <https://enhancv.com/blog/does-ats-reject-resumes/>

About Enhancv

Enhancv is a global career tools company providing millions of job seekers with AI-driven resume, cover letter, and ATS-tailoring tools. By combining data with human recruitment insights, Enhancv restores clarity and confidence to the modern job search.

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