



A FREE CAREER RESOURCE FROM WRITESMITH AI

# The 2026 ATS Keyword Cheat Sheet

50 recruiter-searched phrases to strengthen  
your CV, cover letter and LinkedIn profile

## **Sorted by Industry**

7 sectors covered from  
Marketing to Healthcare

## **Plain English**

Clear, evidence-led sentences  
you can adapt

## **Recruiter-Tested**

Every phrase is ATS-friendly  
and natural to read

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# How to Use This Cheat Sheet

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**Don't copy keywords randomly.** ATS software and recruiters scan applications for relevant skills, tools, responsibilities and outcomes. Adding keywords at random won't make your CV stronger. The goal is to use the right phrases naturally, inside clear and evidence-led sentences.

**× WEAK PHRASING**

Responsible for social media.

**✓ STRONGER VERSION**

Managed social media content planning, campaign reporting and audience engagement across Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn.

## BEFORE SUBMITTING, ASK YOURSELF

**1 Does your CV mirror the job description?**

Read the advert carefully and reflect its exact phrasing for key skills.

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**2 Have you included relevant tools and platforms?**

Excel, Salesforce, HubSpot, Figma, Canva, WordPress, Google Workspace.

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**3 Are your keywords attached to real evidence?**

Every keyword should sit inside a sentence that shows what you did and the result.

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**4 Have you tailored your CV for this role?**

A targeted CV consistently outperforms a generic one. Allow 10 minutes per application.

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# Marketing, Content & Growth

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## Campaign strategy

Developed multi-channel campaign strategies across paid, organic and email to grow audience reach and improve customer acquisition costs.

## Content planning

Owned the editorial calendar and aligned content output with product launches, seasonal moments and SEO priorities.

## SEO optimisation

Optimised on-page SEO through keyword research, internal linking and improved page structure, increasing organic traffic to priority pages.

## Paid social advertising

Managed paid social campaigns across Meta, TikTok and LinkedIn, including creative testing, audience segmentation and weekly performance reporting.

## Conversion rate optimisation

Ran A/B tests on landing pages, forms and checkout flows to improve conversion rates and reduce drop-off.

## Email marketing automation

Built segmented email automation flows covering onboarding, lead nurture and retention, increasing open and click-through rates.

## Brand positioning

Refined brand positioning, tone of voice and messaging frameworks to support clearer customer communication across all channels.

## Performance reporting

Produced weekly and monthly performance reports across paid, organic and email, surfacing actionable insights for the wider team.

# Sales, Customer Success & Business Development

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## Lead generation

Generated qualified leads through outbound prospecting, LinkedIn outreach and targeted email sequences, consistently meeting pipeline targets.

## Pipeline management

Owned a sales pipeline of qualified opportunities, accurately forecasting weekly revenue and progressing deals through to close.

## Client relationship management

Managed a portfolio of key accounts, building long-term relationships and identifying opportunities to grow account revenue.

## Sales forecasting

Forecasted monthly and quarterly sales performance using pipeline data, win rates and historical trends, improving forecast accuracy.

## CRM systems

Maintained accurate customer records and activity logs in Salesforce and HubSpot, ensuring strong data hygiene across the team.

## Customer retention

Reduced customer churn by identifying at-risk accounts early and partnering with success teams on proactive intervention plans.

## Stakeholder communication

Communicated with senior internal and external stakeholders, delivering clear updates and managing expectations on deliverables and timelines.

# Technology, Product & Data

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## Product roadmap

Contributed to the product roadmap by gathering user feedback, analysing usage data and prioritising features against business impact.

## User experience research

Conducted qualitative and quantitative user research, including interviews and usability testing, to inform product decisions.

## Agile methodology

Worked within Scrum and Kanban teams, participating in sprint planning, daily stand-ups, retrospectives and sprint reviews.

## Data analysis

Used SQL, Excel and BI tools to analyse user behaviour and business performance, translating data into clear recommendations for stakeholders.

## API integration

Scoped and implemented API integrations between internal systems and third-party platforms, including authentication and error handling.

## Automation workflows

Built automation workflows using tools such as Zapier and Make to reduce manual reporting and free up team capacity.

## Technical documentation

Produced clear technical documentation, runbooks and onboarding guides, reducing time-to-productivity for new joiners.

# Admin, Operations & Project Management

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## Process improvement

Identified and implemented process improvements that reduced manual workload and improved team efficiency.

## Diary management

Managed complex diaries, travel and meeting logistics for senior leaders, balancing competing priorities under time pressure.

## Project coordination

Coordinated cross-functional projects across multiple workstreams, tracking deadlines, dependencies and stakeholder updates.

## Operational efficiency

Streamlined internal reporting and communication processes, cutting time spent on routine admin and improving information flow.

## Supplier management

Managed supplier relationships, including quote comparisons, contract negotiation, order tracking and issue resolution.

## Document control

Maintained accurate document control across shared systems, ensuring version control, access permissions and audit readiness.

## Cross functional collaboration

Partnered with finance, sales, customer service and operations to deliver shared projects and resolve cross-team issues.

# Finance, Accounting & Professional Services

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## Financial reporting

Prepared monthly and quarterly financial reports for senior leadership, including variance analysis and commentary on key drivers.

## Budget management

Managed departmental budgets, tracked spend against forecast and flagged variances for review with the finance business partner.

## Risk assessment

Carried out risk assessments on processes and projects, escalating control gaps and supporting remediation plans.

## Regulatory compliance

Maintained compliance with internal policies, audit requirements, GDPR and sector-specific regulations.

## Invoice processing

Processed high volumes of invoices and purchase orders, resolved supplier payment queries and supported month-end close.

## Management accounts

Supported the preparation of monthly management accounts, including journal postings, accruals, prepayments and balance sheet reconciliations.

## Commercial awareness

Applied commercial judgement when reviewing supplier costs, contract renewals and savings opportunities.

# Healthcare, Education & Public Sector

## Safeguarding procedures

Followed safeguarding procedures to protect vulnerable individuals, raising concerns through the correct channels in line with policy.

## Patient care

Delivered high-quality patient care, supporting appointments, handling queries empathetically and maintaining accurate clinical records.

## Lesson planning

Planned and delivered differentiated lessons aligned to the curriculum and tailored to a range of learning needs and abilities.

## Case management

Managed a case load of service users, maintaining accurate notes, coordinating multi-agency appointments and following up on actions.

## Behaviour management

Used positive behaviour management strategies to create a calm, structured and inclusive learning environment.

## Service user support

Provided practical and emotional support to service users, communicating clearly and signposting to additional services where appropriate.

## Confidential record keeping

Maintained confidential records in line with GDPR, data protection and organisational policies.

# Retail, Hospitality & Entry Level Roles

## Customer service excellence

Delivered consistent customer service in fast-paced environments, resolving queries quickly and building positive customer experiences.

## Stock management

Managed stock levels, replenished displays and reported low-stock or damaged items, supporting accurate inventory tracking.

## Cash handling

Handled cash, card and contactless payments accurately, completing end-of-day till reconciliations and float checks.

## Team collaboration

Worked closely with colleagues during peak periods, sharing workload and supporting new starters with on-the-job training.

## Problem solving

Resolved customer issues at first point of contact where possible, escalating complex cases with full context to senior colleagues.

## Time management

Balanced competing tasks under pressure, prioritising effectively to meet deadlines and service-level expectations.

## Adaptability

Adapted quickly to new systems, products and shift patterns, supporting different areas of the business as required.

# Quick CV Keyword Checklist

Run through this checklist before submitting any application.

- Have you matched the job description?**  
Read the job advert carefully and mirror the exact language for key responsibilities and skills.
- Have you added relevant industry phrases?**  
Use the keyword sections above to find the right phrases for your specific sector.
- Have you included tools and platforms?**  
Excel, Google Analytics, Salesforce, HubSpot, Mailchimp, Shopify, Figma, Canva, WordPress.
- Have you turned duties into achievements?**  
Don't just list what you did. Show what changed, improved or was delivered as a result.
- Have you tailored your CV for each application?**  
A generic CV rarely beats a targeted one. Spend 10 minutes adjusting for each role.

## COMMON TOOLS & PLATFORMS TO MENTION

Excel

Google Analytics

Salesforce

HubSpot

Mailchimp

Shopify

Figma

Canva

WordPress

Microsoft Office

Google Workspace

Slack

Notion

Asana

# Phrase Bank: Upgrade Your CV Language

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Swap vague, overused words for clear, action-led phrasing that shows what you actually did.

## Instead of **"helped with"**

- Supported the delivery of...
- Contributed to the rollout of...
- Partnered with the team on...
- Played a key role in...

## Instead of **"worked on"**

- Managed · Delivered · Owned
- Led · Implemented · Coordinated
- Analysed · Built · Launched

## Instead of **"good communication skills"**

- Communicated clearly with customers, colleagues and senior stakeholders.
- Presented updates to senior leadership and translated technical detail for non-technical audiences.
- Handled customer queries with professionalism and empathy in fast-paced environments.

## Instead of **"organised"**

- Coordinated schedules, documents and deadlines across multiple workstreams.
- Managed competing priorities in a fast-paced environment without missing deadlines.
- Maintained accurate records and clear internal processes.

## Instead of **"team player"**

- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to deliver shared objectives.
- Supported new joiners through onboarding and on-the-job training.
- Contributed to a positive team culture during periods of high pressure.



YOUR NEXT STEP

# Now turn the right keywords into the right application.

Knowing the language is one thing. Writing a CV, cover letter and interview answers that actually use it for a specific role is where most candidates lose hours.

## The WriteSmith Job Application Pack does it for you:

- ✓ **Tailored CV** rewritten to match the job description and ATS scanners
- ✓ **Personalised cover letter** written for the role, not a generic template
- ✓ **Interview prep** with five likely questions and STAR method answers
- ✓ **Smart questions to ask** the interviewer that show you have done your research
- ✓ **Company brief** covering what they do, who their customers are, and recent news
- ✓ **LinkedIn tweaks** to align your profile with roles like the one you are applying for

One job description in. Six tailored outputs out. **Free to try.**

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WriteSmith is a free AI writing toolkit built for UK students, job seekers and businesses.  
42 tools. British English. No signup required.