

Converting Key Elements of Your Resume to ATS-friendly:

Your ATS-Friendly Resume Checklist:

1. Update your contact information

Make sure your city, state, and ZIP code in the header next to your name.

2. Use your full LinkedIn URL

Replace “LinkedIn Profile” with your actual LinkedIn URL (e.g., linkedin.com/in/yourname).

3. Add month and year to all dates

Use a consistent format such as June 2000 – May 2010.

4. Remove page numbering

Delete any “Page 1 of 2” or “Page 2 of 2” text from the header or footer.

5. Spell out degrees under Education

Write out degree names in full, for example:

- MBA → Master of Business Administration
- BS → Bachelor of Science

6. Simplify formatting

Use a clean, readable font such as Calibri 10 pt. Remove italics, decorative fonts, excessive bolding, and other styling that may not parse correctly.

7. Use standard bullet points

Convert all bullets to simple round bullets (•) and remove any custom symbols or graphics.

8. Use ATS-friendly section headings

These exact headings help applicant tracking systems recognize your content correctly. All heads must be in CAPS to scan and parse correctly in the system:

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- COMPETENCIES
- PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
- EDUCATION
- CERTIFICATIONS

- LICENSES
- SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS
- VOLUNTEERING

Following this checklist will improve readability for both recruiters and ATS systems and help ensure your resume parses correctly when applying online.

Why We Use an Impact Snapshot Box

For most of you, you may notice that your resume includes an Impact Snapshot box near the top of the document. **This is intentional.**

The reality is that most recruiters, hiring executives, and executive search consultants spend only a few seconds evaluating a resume before deciding whether to continue reading. Rather than forcing the reader to scan your entire document and connect the dots themselves, the Impact Snapshot enables us to make a clear, compelling statement about your value and relevance to the opportunity.

This technique helps us:

- Drive differentiation in a crowded market
- Highlight the experience most relevant to the target role
- Align your background to the needs of a specific buyer
- Increase the likelihood that key strengths are seen immediately
- Create a stronger first impression during the critical six-second review

Simply put, it allows us to tell the reader exactly why you deserve consideration.

The ATS Challenge

Here's where things get a little tricky.

To create an effective Impact Snapshot, I use a table-based design element that improves readability and visual impact. Unfortunately, many Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) do not reliably parse table structures. While the document may look perfect to a human reader, the ATS may not read the content correctly.

Converting Your Impact Snapshot Box for ATS Systems

Because the Impact Snapshot is built using a table structure, it may not parse correctly in some Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). Before uploading your resume to an online application system, you'll want to convert the table into plain text.

Mac Instructions (Microsoft Word)

1. Open your resume in Microsoft Word.
2. Click anywhere inside the Impact Snapshot box.

3. Select the entire table.
4. From the **Table Layout** tab, select **Convert to Text**.
5. When prompted, choose **Paragraph Marks** as the separator.
6. Click **OK**.
7. Move the resulting text directly beneath your Executive Summary.
8. Change the Impact Snapshot headline from ALL CAPS to standard capitalization.
9. Place your Competencies section directly below the headline.
10. Save this version as your ATS-friendly resume.

PC Instructions (Microsoft Word)

1. Open your resume in Microsoft Word.
2. Click anywhere inside the Impact Snapshot box.
3. Select the entire table.
4. Navigate to **Table Layout** on the ribbon.
5. In the **Data** section, click **Convert to Text**.
6. Select **Paragraph Marks** as the separator.
7. Click **OK**.
8. Move the resulting text directly beneath your Executive Summary.
9. Change the Impact Snapshot headline from ALL CAPS to standard capitalization.
10. Place your Competencies section directly below the headline.
11. Save this version as your ATS-friendly resume.

This creates two versions of your resume:

Networking / Executive Search Version

- PDF format
- Includes the Impact Snapshot box
- Designed for human readers
- Ideal for networking, referrals, recruiters, and executive search firms

ATS-Friendly Version

- Plain-text formatting
- Designed to scan correctly through online application systems
- Used when applying through company career sites and applicant tracking systems

The good news is that converting the Impact Snapshot into ATS-friendly text is quick and easy.

Converting the Impact Snapshot for ATS Use

When preparing an ATS-friendly version:

1. Remove the table formatting from the Impact Snapshot box.
2. Convert the IMPACT SNAPSHOT headline from all caps to standard capitalization.
3. Move the content directly beneath your Executive Summary.
4. Then, move to COMPETENCIES.

5. Place the competencies section beneath the Impact Snapshot information.
6. Retain the heading "COMPETENCIES" in all caps.
7. Then, move all skills under this section via the technique outlined below.
8. Save the document as your ATS-friendly version before uploading online.

I've provided visual examples (on a Mac) and both Mac and PC instructions below.

Remember, the goal is not to sacrifice your positioning.

The goal is to preserve the message while ensuring the ATS can read every word correctly.

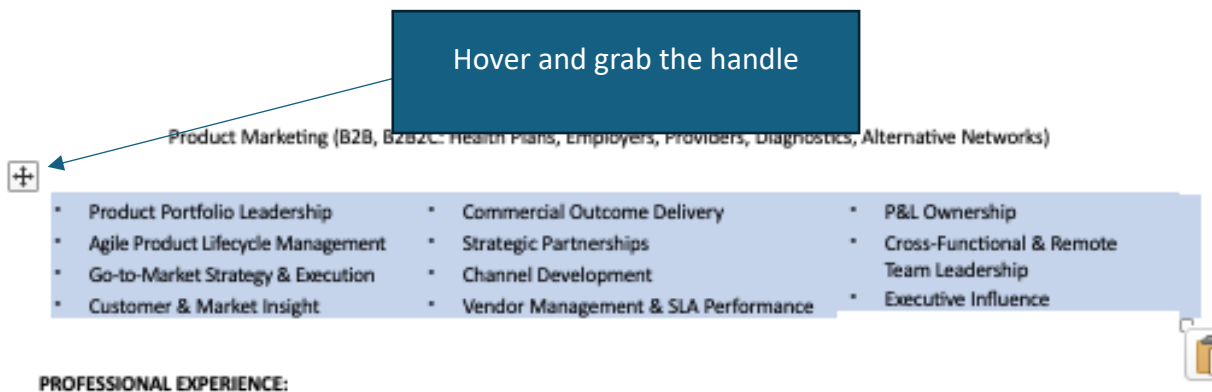
My job is to position you to compete effectively in a challenging market. The Impact Snapshot remains one of the most powerful techniques I know for helping executives communicate their value quickly and clearly.

We simply need to adapt the formatting when an ATS is involved.

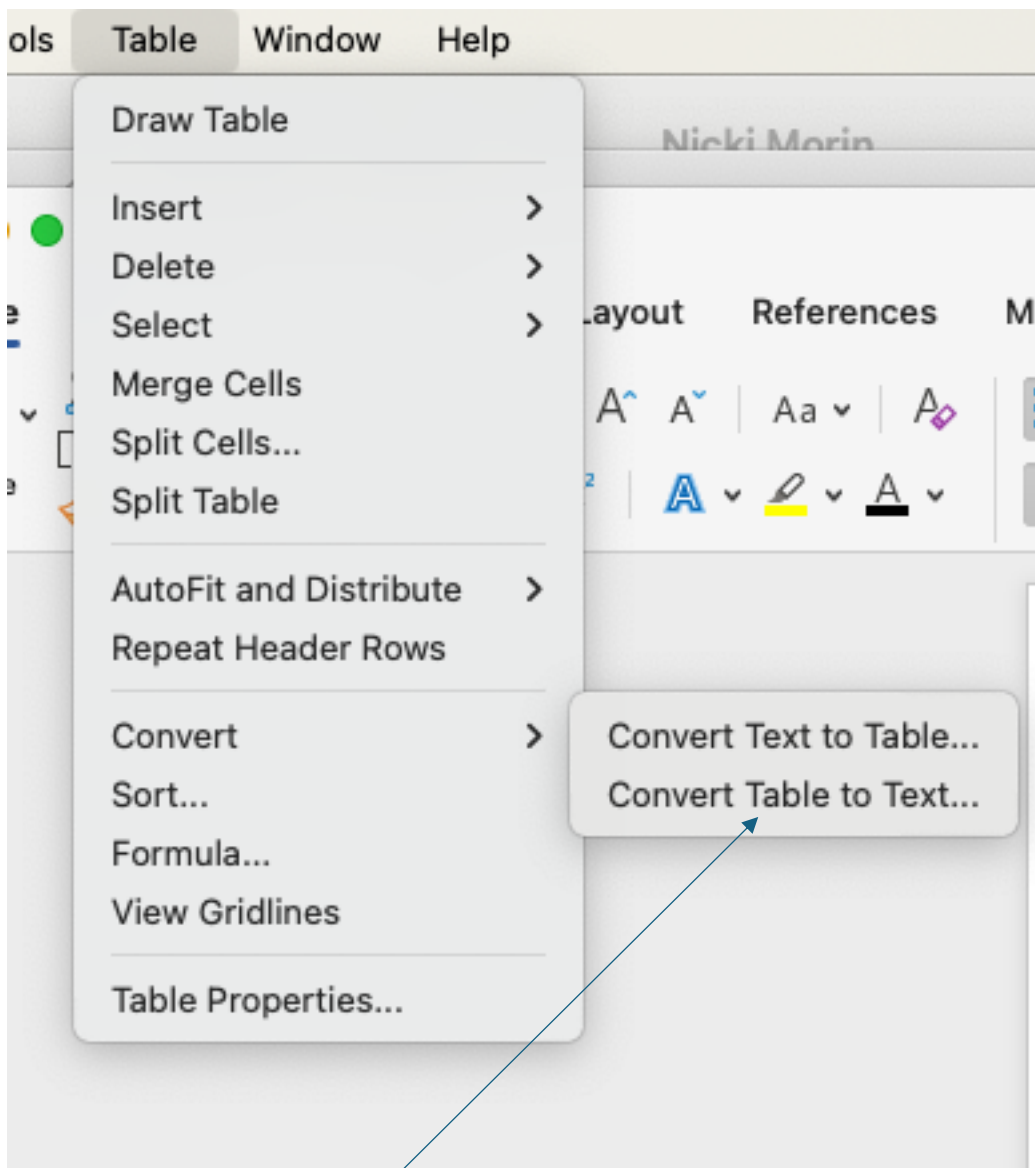
Converting a Table to ATS-friendly:

- Lastly, if a TABLE BOX is being used for branding purposes, you'll need to convert the Table. Here's how:

[I'm on a Mac so I'll demonstrate visually how to do this via a Mac. But I have also included instructions for PC below.]

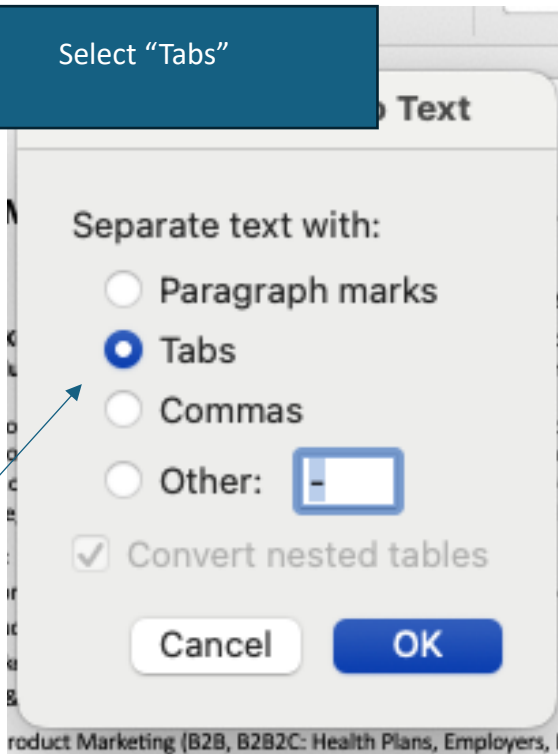


Go to Table



Click on "Convert Table to Text"

Select "Tabs"



Text

Separate text with:

☐ Paragraph marks

☒ Tabs

☐ Commas

☐ Other:

☒ Convert nested tables

Cancel OK

Product Marketing (B2B, B2B2C: Health Plans, Employers, F

From there, organize your
COMPETENCIES section like this:

COMPETENCIES:

Product Portfolio Leadership | Agile Product Lifecycle Management | Go-to-Market Strategy & Execution | Customer & Market Insight | Commercial Outcome Delivery | Strategic Partnerships | Channel Development | Vendor Management & SLA Performance | P&L Ownership | Cross-Functional & Remote Team Leadership | Executive Influence | Product Marketing (B2B, B2B2C: Health Plans, Employers, Providers, Diagnostics, Alternative Networks)