

Integrating ATS with Skills Testing

How Skills Testing Enhances Recruiting
with an Applicant Tracking System

It's funny to look back at the way job seekers searched for and applied to jobs in the past—circling jobs in the local newspaper, going door-to-door, and mailing out hard copies of resumes and cover letters without ever knowing whether a hiring manager received them or not. Plus, having to apply all over again for every job at any given company. It was an exhausting process for job seekers and hiring managers alike.

Now, with the Internet, things have changed. Employers are now conducting most of their recruiting business online. But going from paper applications to electronic versions effectively takes some getting used to, and many companies have struggled to come up with the most efficient way to accept job applications, standardize the process for all applicants, and choose the top candidates out of the applicant pool.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) have made it possible for employers to intake, organize, and analyze applicant information for any candidate, any job, and any location. These databases are searchable, and applicant resumes can stay in a company's ATS for weeks, months, or even years. Over that time period, they can always be found by hiring managers conducting searches.



“If we weren't still hiring great people and pushing ahead at full speed, it would be easy to fall behind and become some mediocre company.”

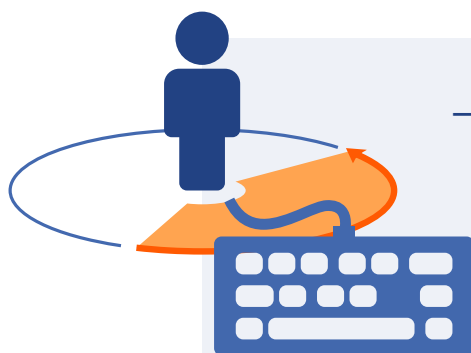
Bill Gates, CEO of Microsoft



What's in it for recruiters?

Using an ATS to Search for Candidates

Searching through an ATS, such as Oracle Taleo Recruit, can be accomplished in many different ways—most effectively using keywords related to the job. Every candidate that applies for a position is entered into the company's ATS system. Resumes, cover letters, sample work, job applications, and anything else that is asked of job seekers are filed in the database. The virtual data is then easily accessible and searchable throughout the recruiting process. An ATS also secures applicant information, so employers won't accidentally lose a candidate's resume or have to start doing searches from scratch.



—most effectively using keywords related to the job.

web programming

graphic design

- With all of this virtual candidate data available, hiring managers need to be effective in making the ATS work for them. Searching with a keyword can work in several ways: a hiring manager might choose to search for a keyword in a candidate's resume specifically related to a skill, like "web programming" or "graphic design."

This type of keyword can be problematic because they can be too specific—a candidate would have to have those specific words in his or her resume or application in order to turn up in the results. So, a candidate who lists "website programmer" or "logo designer," which involve essentially the same skills, would not come up as a result from that search.

communication skills

team player

- On the other hand, a hiring manager could search for more general keywords related to certain attributes that may be desired for the position, like "communication skills" or "team player." This type of search is likely to end up with way too many results, making the search sluggish and ineffective. The key is to strike a balance, where the hiring manager is conducting searches that result in just the right number of applicants with just the right skills.



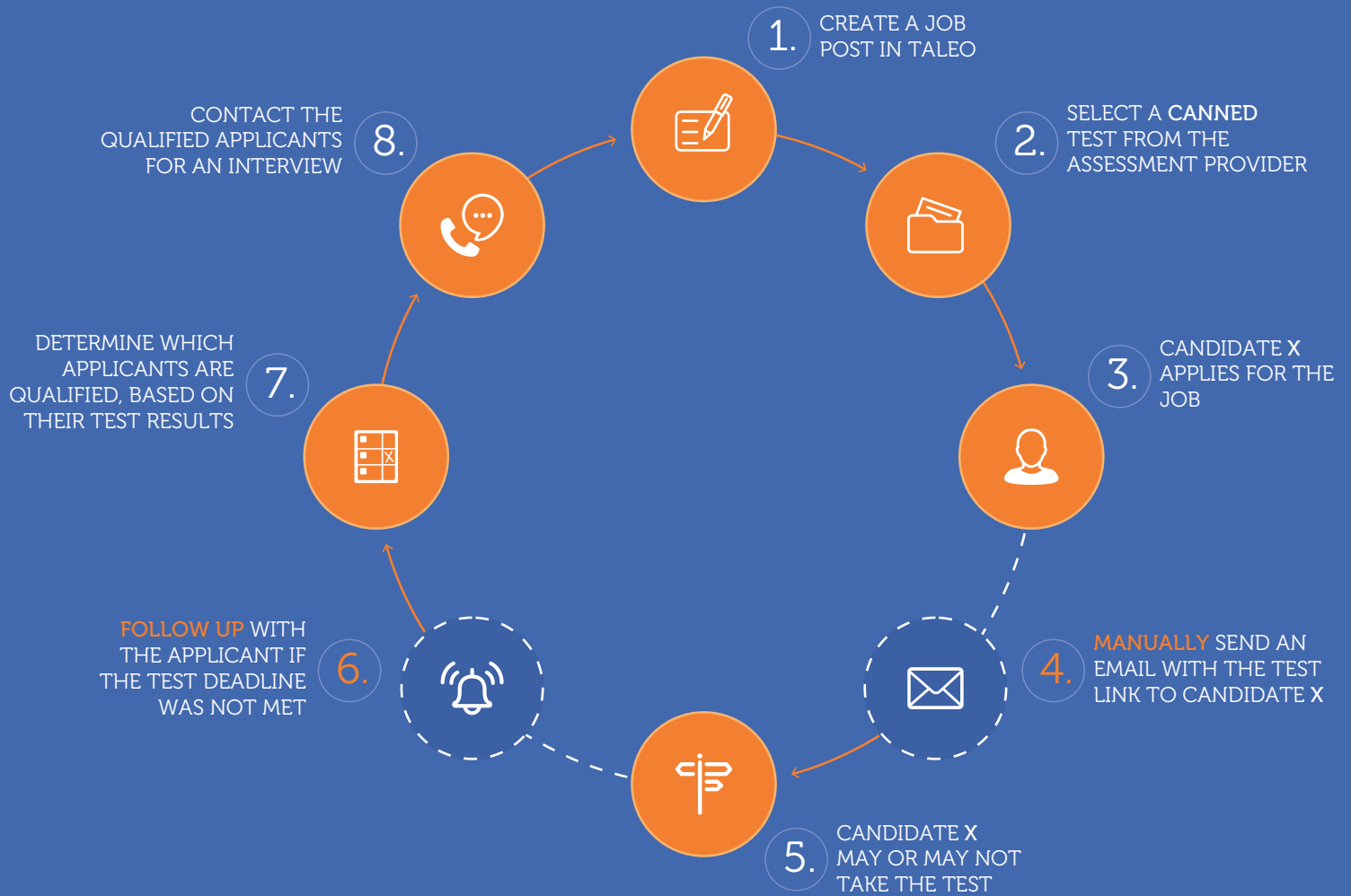
Since ATS databases store all of the information for every candidate who has ever applied to any position in the company, this is much easier said than done. There could be hundreds or even thousands of applicants with keywords that are either too specific for a search or too general, or both. Searching for keywords is the most common way hiring managers look for candidates in ATS databases, but it's not necessarily the most effective method.



Using ATSs Together with Skill Assessments

If keywords are not an effective search method, then what is? It would have to be something specific enough to get the candidates who really have the desired experience and skills, yet not leave any good candidates out. Skills assessment testing offers just the right solution to searching more effectively, by **closing the open loop** that ATS systems often leave when they are used independently from skills assessments. See the example below of a company using Oracle Taleo Recruit as its ATS, and an independent assessment vendor for creating and sending tests manually to candidates.

Closing the open loop



*"People are not your most important asset.
The right people are."*

Jim Collins, Business Consultant

Integrating skills testing into your ATS system, the way eSkill's online assessments are integrated with Oracle Taleo Recruit, is the best solution for closing the open loops in your recruiting process. It also provides by many other benefits, including the following:

1. Better Search Results




Put simply, a skills assessment test result is the easiest way to find a candidate with exactly the skills needed. Using the example above, imagine that the hiring manager who is looking for an applicant with graphic design experience has an ATS system synced with skills assessment test results. If all of the candidates who apply also have to take a graphic design skills test and their results are all saved, the hiring manager can then search for the top scores on the test and quickly get the candidates with proven graphic design skills.

An ATS system that collects and safeguards all of the candidates' information and combines it with skills assessment test results is easier to search. The applicants with top scores would come up in a search, and not just because they listed "graphic design" (or any derivation of those keywords) in their resumes, but because they have proven skills as determined by assessment testing.

For example, using Oracle Taleo Recruit (Business or Enterprise edition) integrated with eSkill's online testing solution allows recruiters to see:

- Individual Candidate's Test Results
- Candidate's Results for the Last Test Taken
- eSkill Assessment Results History of a Candidate
- Candidate Results for Each Requisition (Job Posting)
- All Candidates' Test Results (for All Requisitions)
- Candidate Results Per Requisition
- Specified Results Using Custom Reports

2. Easy Accessibility



ATS databases are appealing because they store all of the information and skills test results from every candidate who has applied to any job in the company, making it easy to conduct future searches by hiring managers or anyone at the company who has access to the ATS. The ability to access an ATS database from anywhere through cloud computing means hiring managers can look at an applicant's test results in real time, as they're coming in, from anywhere, and any time.

The ATS storing capacity has another advantage. Once an applicant takes a test, the results can be stored in the database for a long time, even indefinitely. A hiring manager can search these stored test results and find a suitable candidate, even if the candidate applied for the job months ago. If a hiring manager is looking for a candidate with specific skills, he or she might even find a suitable person in the database by conducting a skills test result search, without even having to post a job opening.

3. Quick Delivery System



Integrating skills assessment tests with ATS databases allows companies to ask candidates to submit their resumes and also complete any skills assessment tests relevant to the position online, from the comfort of their own homes, or wherever they may be. The ease of use is transferred from the employer to the job seeker, so that the process is smoother, and is more likely to be completed by the candidates.

Companies can choose the flow that works best for them when integrating skills assessment tests with an ATS system. For instance, a company can choose to post the link to the skills test on its career web page; send the link via email to candidates who express interest (candidate-centric flow); or have recruiters send the skills test link directly to the candidates they select (recruiter-centric flow). In all cases, the ATS is synched up to the skills assessment test results, so that the candidate's information (resume, application, cover letter, etc.) is submitted jointly with his or her skills test results.

Below is an example of the automated flow between eSkill and Oracle Taleo Recruit.



4. More Manageable Applicant Pools



Skills tests can be given to candidates at any time in the recruiting process. Simple, quick tests are often used in the beginning of the application process when candidates are only willing to invest a short time in an initial application given a lack of any certainty for consideration.

To further narrow the applicant pool, the candidates who score high on the preliminary tests can be asked to complete more complex tests farther along in the process. Only the best-suited applicants will score well on all of the tests given, thus reducing the number of candidates the hiring manager has to consider for the job.



“The smartest business decision you can make is to hire qualified people. Bringing the right people on board saves you thousands, and your business will run smoothly and efficiently.”

***Brian Tracy, Trainer, Author and Public Speaker /
CEO Brian Tracy International***

5. Single-point Oversight of Entire History



When integrated with skills assessment tests, ATS systems offer key features that are crucial in today's tech-driven HR world. From the days of paper applications to the present electronic processes, HR solutions these days require automation to be considered complete—not to mention effective! An ATS database can safeguard the entire testing history of every candidate, so hiring managers can see which candidates have taken which tests, and how many times. This allows hiring managers to automatically manage the candidates and the tests.

Hiring managers can also automatically manage the testing system through their ATS. They can determine which tests to administer to candidates applying for specific positions, and at which point in the application process to administer the tests and make any changes needed, such as changing the order of the tests or even the subjects themselves.



"As a business owner or manager, you know that hiring the wrong person is the most costly mistake you can make."

**Brian Tracy, Trainer, Author and Public Speaker /
CEO Brian Tracy International**

6. Legitimized Hiring Decisions



Integrating skills assessment tests with an ATS system allows hiring managers to standardize the application process for everyone, which can help legitimize hiring decisions. Before anyone has met a candidate and knows their demographic background, your system can already have gathered objective skills data about each one.

In conclusion, skills assessment testing can increase selection accuracy, reduce costs of manual screening and hiring mistakes, accelerate time-to-hire, and reduce legal exposure due to unsupported, subjective decisions. In conjunction with the powerful data management tools of an ATS, skills assessment is the next logical extension.



eSkill, a leader in online skills assessment, and Acuity Cloud Solutions, an expert in HCM cloud-based application support and services, have partnered to combine the best talent management and assessment solutions available to help recruiters simplify and optimize their complex HR processes.

Both companies are Oracle Gold Partners, with a focus on Taleo Enterprise Edition and Taleo Business Edition, and provide expertise to extract the highest performance from your well-chosen systems.

About eSkill

Since 2003, eSkill has been an expert provider of effective online skills testing for applicant screening and staff training to thousands of companies globally, including Zappos, GE, Randstad, LG, and many others.

eSkill lets clients easily select or customize job-based tests from more than 5,000 modular subjects and subtopics across a wide range of disciplines such as IT, programming, office software, accounting, healthcare, legal, call center, retail, and more. eSkill's leading-edge job simulations recreate software programs and work environments to assess how well candidates perform actual job tasks.

➤ Visit www.eSkill.com for more information.

About Acuity Cloud Solutions

Acuity Cloud Solutions is an Oracle Gold Partner specializing in HCM cloud-based application support and services with a focus on Taleo Enterprise Edition, Taleo Business Edition, and Fusion. Acuity's experienced team provides expert knowledge and support with implementations, migrations, upgrades, remote system administration, training, end user support, project management, and more.

Drawing from hundreds of successful client engagements in a wide variety of industries, Acuity's experts deliver innovative solutions and best practices to ensure systems are aligned with business processes, implemented and supported efficiently, and optimized to their highest potential.

➤ Visit www.acuitycloudsolutions.com for more information.