

"3 years" is a wish, not a rule.

THE POST

"3 years experience"	a wish list line, not a gate
must-have	the first 3 bullets. read those
nice-to-have	the rest. one or two is enough
12 tools listed	← the job uses 3. find them

THE APPLICATION

the 3 must-haves	one line of proof for each
the task	one project where you did it, linked

WORTH MEMORIZING

01 A real post, decoded

Four lines that appear in most data job posts, and what each one is actually telling you.

"3+ years as a data analyst"	The number the manager would like. Posts asking for 3 get people with 1 and with 6. Apply if you can show the task.
"SQL, Python, Tableau, dbt, Airflow, Snowflake..."	Someone listed the whole stack. Find the three in the must-have bullets; the rest is where the team already is.
"You will build the weekly sales report"	This is the job. One sentence, one verb. Everything you send should answer it.
"Reports to the Head of Marketing"	Not an engineering team: a DA job with business questions, whatever the title says.

THE TASK

the actual task	← the sentence after "you will"
who you report to	the team tells you the real role

02 Trap: answering the wrong line

Three applications that read the post and still answer the wrong thing.

the full tools list	Claiming all twelve reads as none. Three with proof reads as a hire.
years, restated	The post asked for 3, you wrote "2.5 years": the number is now the subject. Show the task instead.
no link	A line that says "built dashboards" is a claim. A link to one is proof. The second one gets read. → Three lines of proof for the must-haves, one link for the task, and nothing about the nice-to-haves you do not have.