

Quick Tips

Resumes

A resume is a marketing document that tells the employer three main things: what you have accomplished, what education you have and where you have worked.

Employers look at your resume and cover letter to decide whether or not you will be short-listed for the job. Typically, an employer takes 30 seconds to form an opinion about a person. This means that you have a very short time to make them aware of your key selling points.

Please note: this information is based on Australian resume conventions. If you are writing a resume for another country, check that country's conventions in the Careers Toolkit at Going Global (student login required). emedial.rmit.edu.au/careerstoolkit/goingglobal

Planning your resume

- It is essential that your resume is a very good match with the job and the company. You want an employer to immediately think, 'This person has everything we want and lots of potential'.
- Make sure your resume matches up with the education, skills, experience and characteristics the employer wants.

Content

Contact details

Contact details must be current and professional. You only need to include:

- your name in bold larger lettering
- address
- mobile and landline
- email address
- citizenship*.

*Citizenship is optional. In general, if you have Australian Citizenship or permanent residency put this on. Otherwise, if you do not, put in the visa that you have and a brief sentence explaining when this allows you to legally work in Australia.

Career objective

This is very important for professional work. It is usually two or three sentences long:

- Describe the type of work you are looking for: job title or tasks.
- Describe the type of company you would like to work for: international, corporate, government or non for profit.
- Add a sentence telling the employer what your key skills are and a bit about yourself, e.g. 'I am a person who...'

Education

- Major education only: Tertiary and VCE or equivalent. Put in chronological order from the most recent.
- The years you did the qualification.
- Full qualification title.
- institution you attended.
- Major/specialty.

Professional experience

This section gives the employer a snapshot of the key skills you have.

- List in reverse chronological order.
- Select three or four of your skills that the employer is asking for.
- List these skills as sub-headings.
- Provide two examples for each skill that are evidence of that ability. Use the S.T.A.R. (Situation, Task, Action, Result) model when explaining your examples. Provide examples for each skill that are evidence of that ability. State where and how you have demonstrated the skill.
- Wherever possible, include specifics (data, names, percentages, facts).
- Detail your experience in placements, industry projects and/or Work Integrated Learning (WIL).

Employment

- List employment in chronological order, starting with the most recent.
- Highlight industry related employment by putting this first under the heading Industry-Related Employment.
- List other unrelated employment under the heading Additional Employment.

- include: months and years you worked.
- Job title, company name (not address).
- Job responsibilities: keep it brief, focus on achievements and avoid repetition.

Community involvement (optional)

- List any volunteer work/ community work you have done.
- Set out as per the employment section above.

Additional training

- List any further training, short courses, you have completed that you would like the employer to know about.
- Set out exactly the same as the Education section of your resume.

Extra-curricular activities

These are activities/ topics that you are interested in outside of work and study:

- They tell the employer more about who you are.
- List three or four activities and provide brief details of each.

Referees

Referees are generally people who have worked with you, normally in a more senior position:

- Include two or three referees or the number requested in the job advertisement.
- Include: name, job title, company, telephone number and email address. Details must be current and contactable. Alternatively, you can state 'available on request/at interview'.

Layout (the look of your resume)

- Remember, as always, first impressions count.
- Typically only use two or three pages.
- Size 12 font, black only. Choose an easy to read font.
- No photograph (unless employer requests and it is appropriate).
- Key selling points are highly visible, e.g. Work Experience.
- White space between each section and in the margin.
- No page breaks in the middle of a major section.

Structure

Traditionally, the resume format has been either chronological, skills-based or a combination of both.

In conclusion

- Do not use any abbreviations.
- Proof-read your resume. Spelling or grammar mistakes are not allowed.

Further information

Visit the Careers Toolkit for links, videos and more.

www.rmit.edu.au/careers/toolkit

Sample resumes and details about a resume-checking service can be found at Application Express. Application Express is an online tutorial designed to help you develop your own resume.

www.rmit.edu.au/careers/applicationexpress