



Improve your résumé

Taking your time and getting your résumé right will dramatically improve your chances of winning a job. Your résumé is a marketing document of ideally two to three pages selling what you have to offer an employer.

Always include.....

Your contact details

- Your name (if you have a difficult to pronounce name consider helping an employer with the correct pronunciation by providing phonetic spelling in brackets after your name).
- A professional sounding email address such as your name (rather than a nickname).
- A phone number where an employer can leave a message.

A summary of your work history and education

- Start with your most recent job and then work backwards in time (showing months and years).
 - If you have been working for many years consider going back 10 to 15 years in time.
 - Always include your position title, organisation name and describe your work responsibilities and tasks.
 - If you have worked overseas or if past employers in Australia are not well known, consider including a line of explanation using the heading "About ABC Company".
- Include your volunteer work, work experience placements and training and education. If you've been out of the workforce (caring for small children, an ill family member, travelling, unemployed or studying) it's important to explain why and provide the relevant dates.
- Include any qualifications, accreditations, licences, registration and certifications relevant to the job vacancy. Describe each item by its full and correct title; name the institution that awarded you the qualification, your key areas of study and the date of completion. For licenses, include your date of currency.
- Tailor your résumé by linking what you achieved in the education and training system or through volunteer or paid work to what the employer needs (such as "I established reliable work habits", "the ability to learn and apply new skills", "I provided accurate written reports and summaries").

Think about including your.....

Residential or postal address

Including an address is optional.

Referees

You need at least two referees for every job application. Ideally referees should be people you reported to in a work role, including in a volunteer capacity or work experience placement. Always ask permission before including anyone as your referee. You can protect the privacy of your referees by only providing their details on an employer's request.

Key skills

This is a list of your top skills that match the job ad. A list of 'key skills' helps an employer quickly see what you have to offer. This can be placed after your contact details.

Recent achievements

Including "achievements" helps tell an employer how you made a job your own. You only need to do this for your last couple of jobs. A few dot points are enough. Recent achievements can be listed in your work history after your work tasks and responsibilities. An example of an achievement is receiving a staff award or a promotion. You can also try quantifying your achievements to get the employer's attention, like "created a new filing system that saved five hours of work a week".

Hobbies and interests

Including hobbies and interests (like travel, music, sport, learning, current affairs, photography) can help an employer see you are the right person to hire if you include items relevant to the job. For example, being part of a sporting team or being a volunteer working with others demonstrates "teamwork".

Checklist - My résumé:

- has my contact details
- has an easy to read font and a simple layout
- is no more than two pages (or no more than 3 pages if referees are included)
- uses dot points and short factual sentences
- uses keywords from the employer's job ad
- is an accurate summary of my work and education history and is free of unexplained gaps
- is free of irrelevant information
- is saved in a common format (such as Microsoft Word) with a professional sounding title
- is free of spelling errors, typos and jargon (such as abbreviations)