

PUTTING A RESUME TOGETHER

Your Resume is one of the most important documents you're likely to develop. It displays your talents, experience, education and capacity for work and is in fact a summary of your working life, with some other relevant personal information highlighted as well.

Don't get confused between Curriculum Vitae (CV) and a Resume. They're the same thing.

The Resume is most often accompanied by your Covering Letter when applying for a job.

RESUME PURPOSE

The primary reason you put your Resume together is to help you get a job. Because you're not meeting the prospective employer in person initially, your Resume must make the best possible impression to enable you to get that chance.

Think about the company and the job you've got in mind and ensure your Resume (as well as your Covering Letter of course) are targeted to those requirements.

PRESENTATION

You cannot underestimate how important this is. You can be sure if you looked at fifty resumes from fifty people none would be exactly the same in appearance and layout. However they should all still have been composed with the same goal in mind: to get those people a job.

Here are a few tips to help you:

- Ensure the document is neatly typed (don't mix up a number of fonts, styles, or use 'decorative' typefaces)
- It should be coherent, flow seamlessly and be logical to the reader

- It should be factual and in date order from most recent leading back to earlier positions held. Be accurate
- Spelling and grammar are critical. Even in a well put together document they'll stand out like a beacon. Get someone to read over it for you, and don't trust the computer to pick up all errors or omissions.
- If you're taking it to an interview, make sure it's in a folder/portfolio that's neat and tidy.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I INCLUDE?

Here are some guidelines to make this a little easier for you. Remember the way the document 'flows' is vitally important:

- Open up with relevant personal details (name, address, contact details, education, ability to travel etc.) Other information may include things like hobbies, affiliations or interests, if it helps the employer to get an idea of who you are. Keep it short; dot points are fine
- You can include a 'professional/ work profile'. This can be just a paragraph or two to summarise the important strengths you may have and consequently highlight what you can bring to a position
- 'Summary of skills' can be just a few dot points pinpointing information of interest to the employer relevant to the position
- Your 'work history' should cover off your previous positions, most recent first. Include dot points about the roles, responsibilities and key achievements for each
- Include a reference to any further qualifications, training or experience you may have acquired in recent times that may be relevant to the position.

(More info overleaf)

- Include a list of three or four current referees at the end of the document. Make sure their contact details are up to date and they *know* you've included them in your resume!

Your referees need to be aware of your capabilities and have observed or worked with you in some capacity. The referee details should include their name, company, title and contact details.

- **Don't attach a photograph.** Although 'trendy' at one time it's not necessary or even desirable to do so
- **Check for bad grammar or spelling.** As mentioned earlier, this can bring your whole 'first impression' crashing down. Get someone who knows their spelling and grammar well to check over it for you
- **Don't go on and on and on.** Ideally your resume should only be two or three pages in length. Some employers e.g. government departments may specify the maximum resume length they will accept. Don't exceed this requirement as they will not read it all

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Your resume is a precious first impression. Therefore it's essential you're aware of any pitfalls or mistakes you could perhaps make.

- **Make sure you highlight relevant skills, strengths, skills or achievements.**
- **Don't leave out relevant career achievements.** Think carefully before you add or delete information from your resume. If you take something out for one job application because it doesn't 'fit' you may not remember to put it back for the next one when it does
- **Be specific and to the point when you explain previous positions.** The employer will have lots of resumes to consider, so don't take up space or time with things that are too general
- **Don't list less important career details ahead of important key experiences and achievements.** Getting a sense of order in the document is critical
- **It's a professional document, not a letter to a friend.** Your personal circumstances are not relevant to an employer
- **Always ensure the document is fresh, up to date and relevant.** Cast your eye over it regularly and get rid of old and irrelevant information