

Resume Writing



A Tipsheet on Writing Resumes @ VICSES

The purpose of a resume

A resume, or a curriculum vitae (CV), can be daunting to write especially when starting from scratch. However, it can be helpful to be clear on the main purpose of a resume. Ultimately a resume has one job:

To help you get an interview.

To help you get that interview there are several key elements to your resume that you may want to include. These are:

- Your contact information
- An opening statement
- Your recent and relevant work experience
- Your relevant skills and achievements
- Education and referee information.



Each of these sections will be explored below.

This is a good way to structure your resume. Start with the most relevant information first. Who are you? What value do you bring to the role?

Things to remember when writing your resume

There can be a lot of information that you may want to include in your resume to give yourself the best chance of being selected. Yet, a common mistake people make is to put too much information in their resume.

The best thing you can do is remember several key points:

1) Most recruiters will spend an average of 6 seconds looking at each resume. This means, you want to be able to show off your key skills as quickly and easily as possible.

This is called the 6-Second Rule.

2) Your resume is a chance to show off. Think of it like a sales pitch. You don't go through every detailed element of the product you're selling, instead focus on the most relevant and most flattering information. If your resume does a good job, you can then go into detail in the interview.



The 6-Second Rule - can your main skills and experiences be read in 6-seconds?

Formatting Tips

In order to give your resume the best chance of being read and understood, it's helpful to create a clear, simple, and easy to read format. The following tips can help:



Formatting Do's

- Choose a simple, professional layout
- Use a simple font. Arial or Times new Roman are recommended
- Divide you CV into sections, and use clear headings
- **Use bold text to highlight key points**
- Use dot points!
- Keep to short, simple statements

Formatting Don'ts

- Use very creative or flowery designs and fonts
- Use long, winding sentences and paragraphs
- Fill up all the white space
- Include photos or 'fun' contact details



A Note on Your Contact Information

Easily accessible contact information is key. Your resume should include:

- Your full name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Include your name, in bold, on each page of the resume

Make sure you look professional.

- If using a fun or cute personal email change it to something more serious
- Check your voicemail to ensure that also sounds professional

A Note on Your Education Information

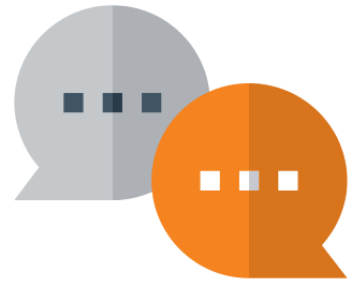
When listing your education and professional certifications, the main thing to remember is relevance.

If there are certain qualifications, certifications, or registrations that you will need to do the role list these at the top of your resume, underneath your contact information.

If you have educational achievements that you want to include, but aren't as relevant to the role, put them toward the end of your resume. This may include educational achievements like a Year 10 certificate, or first aid certificates.



Writing an Opening Statement



An opening statement helps to paint a picture of who you are as an employee. It sets the scene for the resume and is a chance to summarise the skills and experiences you can bring to the role.

An opening statement should:

- Be 3-4 sentences max. This is a concise summary of you as a professional.
- Outlines relevant work experience and key responsibilities at a high level (quantify if possible).
- Includes core skills that you have and which are relevant to the role.
- Details notable accomplishments that you intend to repeat in the role.



Examples & Practice

Relevant work experience

Talented graphic designer with 5 years of professional experience in graphic design. Looking to leverage solid knowledge of production methods such as vinyl graphic application and the ability to work on multiple projects in a fast-paced environment.

Relevant skills and abilities

Service-oriented individual with excellent time management, organisational, and prioritising skills, interested in an Electrician position at Louisiana-Pacific Corporation. Bringing 10 years of electrical experience, expert knowledge of electrical functions, and the ability to perform complex troubleshooting and take appropriate action.

Positives you can bring to the role

Energetic and passionate Project Manager with proven skills and knowledge to manage projects on-time, on-budget, and with maximum customer satisfaction. With 3+ years of experience in fast-paced environments, Emma has developed a strong eye for detail and a passion for promoting a team culture of safety.

Practice writing your own Opening Statement

An opening statement should:

- Your work history in 1 sentence:
- Your skills that will help you do the role well:
- Positives you can bring to the role:



Detailing your Work Experience



Arguably one of the most important parts of a resume, your work experience, or work history, outlines the key roles and responsibilities you've had over the past years.

Again, the goal is to ensure that your work experience can be read as easily as possible. It is recommended to:

- Use reverse chronological order (the most recent experiences first)
- Use dot points
- Outline relevant responsibilities and skills
- 10-15 years maximum

Highlighting Your Key Skills



A well written resume should clearly identify the skills that you gained, or demonstrated, in your previous roles. In particular, it is helpful to highlight skills relevant to the role you are applying for.

Identifying Role Specific Skills

1. Look through the job description for the role you're applying for
2. Identify what skills and qualifications are wanted in the new role
3. List all of your current skills, look for matches
4. Those that match should be detailed and clear to see in the CV, as these are the skills you bring to the new role.

Identifying Your Best Skills

It can be tough identifying your own skill set, however the following questions can help:

- Where or when have you excelled in the role?
- Have you ever received an award? What talents helped you be successful?
- Where would your peers say you're especially practised?

Use Action Language when Listing Responsibilities

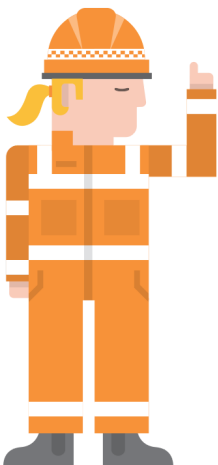


A top tip when writing job responsibilities is to use 'Action Language'. Action words help show what you did or achieved. They describe how you used your skills, which is what the recruiter is most interested in.

For example, non-action language might be:

"A promotion to team leader was awarded to me after only six months of service". This is not as direct and links the promotion to someone else (who ever awarded it to you).

Instead: "I was promoted to team leader after only six months". Is more direct, and links the promotion to you. You received the award.



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Example Skills



Communication skills

Communication skills are the abilities you use when giving and receiving different kinds of information. Communication skills involve listening, speaking, observing and empathising.

- Active listening
- Constructive conflict management
- Public speaking
- Verbal/Non-verbal communication
- Providing feedback

Problem-solving skills

Problem-solving skills are qualities that help you determine the source of a problem and quickly find an effective solution.

- Attention to detail
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Patience
- Research

Time management skills

Time management skills allow you to complete tasks and projects before deadlines while also maintaining work-life balance. Deeply understanding your individual, team and company goals can provide a starting point when deciding how to manage your time, while staying organised can help you allocate your work day to specific tasks by importance.

- Delegating tasks
- Focus
- Goal setting
- Organisation
- Prioritisation

Project management skills

Managerial skills are qualities that help you govern both tasks and people. A good project manager is organised, empathetic and communicates clearly to support a team or project.

- Decision-making
- Project planning
- Task delegation
- Team communication
- Risk management



See how this skill is written on the next page

Leadership skills

Leadership skills are those you use when organising other people to reach a shared goal. Whether you're in a management position or leading a project, leadership skills require you to motivate others to complete a series of tasks, often according to a schedule.

- Ability to teach and mentor
- Flexibility
- Ability to support others
- Team building
- Workload management

Technical skills

Technical skills, or hard skills, are specific qualifications or tickets. There are some technical skills that employers may consider as prerequisites to employment, like using spreadsheets or knowing a certain coding language.

- Typing/Word processing
- Fluency in coding languages
- Systems administration
- Use of specific equipment

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Example Action Language



Instead of long sentences describing key responsibilities and tasks in your work experience history, aim for short, action-oriented language. These are called Action Statements. For example:

- “Developed a new training manual which was adopted by the entire company.”
- “Established new safety targets for the team.”
- “Maintained and repaired fleet vehicles on a rotating roster.”

Project Management

- analysed
- conducted
- communicated
- coordinated
- directed
- evaluated
- facilitated
- implemented
- integrated
- led
- mentored
- planned
- recruited
- reviewed
- streamlined
- supervised

Sales & Marketing

- arranged
- collaborated
- created
- documented
- generated
- increased
- identified
- launched
- negotiated
- organised
- presented
- purchased
- researched
- trained

Technical

- assembled
- built
- calculated
- constructed
- detected
- engineered
- enhanced
- examined
- introduced
- identified
- installed
- maintained
- operated
- repaired
- tested

Administration

- administered
- compiled
- developed
- drafted
- distributed
- edited
- filed
- liaised
- organized
- planned
- prepared
- processed
- recorded
- scheduled
- supported



*See how this is
used below*

Teaching and Training

- assessed
- coached
- counselled
- delivered
- designed
- evaluated
- facilitated
- instructed
- moderated

Examples & Practice

Practice writing your own work history responsibilities and skills:

- What core skills do you demonstrate every day in your role? (review the example skills page and circle the ones that are relevant to you)
- Write a short action statement that explains how you use that skill, starting with one of the example action words on this page.

For example: In my role I make a lot of decisions to keep people safe.
My Action statement is: Reviewed multiple data sources to ensure effective risk management decisions are made.



Outlining your Achievements

One of the best ways to ensure you stand out from the crowd is to include an achievements section under each relevant role you've listed on your resume. This gives an employer a sense of the things you might achieve for them. It's also a chance to include things that you are proud of, that might sit outside of your usual role.

When writing an achievement statement remember:

- Keep it direct and action-oriented
- Give numbers to your skills, strengths, achievements and experience. Include profits, budgets, number of employees supervised, sales made, clients managed.
- Be specific about your accomplishments. Actual facts and figures are more convincing than a generic description of your work tasks and performance.

1 Identify your achievements

As you seek to identify your achievements, it can be helpful to ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I received awards, special recognition or a promotion?
- Have I developed a new system or procedure?
- Have I identified and resolved a problem that others didn't see?
- Have been involved in a team effort that produced a specific result?
- Have I reduced cost, reduced time, or raised money?
- Have I helped others achieve their goals through my leadership?
- Have I helped improve communications or relations between groups?

Write your achievements

2

Once you have 1-2 achievements for each relevant role you are listing, write them out using action language. Aim for each achievement to be 1-2 sentences.

For example:

- Hosted 15 networking events, drawing an attendance of more than 2,000 community members that resulted in a 30% membership increase.
- Created an equipment maintenance register that resulted in saving \$5,000 annually on unnecessary repairs.

Helpful Achievement Action Words

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| • accomplished | • increased | • saved |
| • eliminated | • launched | • simplified |
| • established | • maximised | • strengthened |
| • implemented | • reduced | • streamlined |



Finishing Touches

As a last step, it is always helpful to review and proof read your resume. This step is often overlooked because by the time you're written your resume you're sick of looking at it! Still, one small spelling mistake or typo can make a big impression.

- Ask a friend to proofread it as well. Another set of eyes often picks up what you do not.
- Give yourself a day or two away from your resume, then come back and ask yourself the following questions: Have I highlighted the skills that are relevant to the role I'm applying for? Is my eye drawn to the most important information through headings and achievement statements?
- A good proofreading tip is to read your resume backwards. This eliminates text blindness by breaking your reading pattern.



Questions to Ask Friends and Family:

The following directions can be useful when asking trusted people to review your resume:

- Was it easy to read and understand?
- Could they identify your most relevant skills?
- Could they identify your key achievements from your previous roles?



A Note on Your Referees

Previously, the accepted approach was to list several referees, perhaps two professional and one personal. However, that is no longer recommended. Instead, the recommended approach is to use the phrase:

"Referees available upon request."

This is for several reasons:

1. It keeps referee contact information safe and ensures it is only provided if needed. It lets you know that you've made it through to the next round of selection! You can then notify your referees that they are going to be contacted. This helps them prepare for a conversation with your recruiter, ensuring they say all the right things!



SUPPORT SERVICES

24/7 Support Options



Lifeline

Anyone having a personal crisis
lifeline.org.au
13 11 14



Open Arms

Veterans and families counselling
openarms.gov.au
1800 011 046



Beyond Blue

Anyone feeling anxious or depressed
beyondblue.org.au
1300 224 636



1800 Respect

Sexual assault and domestic violence
1800respect.org.au
1800 737 732



Mensline Australia

Men with emotional or relationship concerns
mensline.org.au
1300 78 99 78



Directline

Alcohol and drug counselling and referral
directline.org.au
1800 888 236



Kids Helpline

Counselling for young people aged 5 - 25
kidshelpline.com.au
1800 55 1800



Suicide call back service

Anyone thinking about suicide
suicidecallbackservice.org.au
1300 659 467