

Writing your resume

Resume writing is a skill that often needs more mastering than the writer thinks! Whether you've got years of experience under your belt or are newly joining the workforce, your chance of landing an interview is much more likely if you have a killer resume to show off your education, skills and experience.

After all, a resume is often the very first point of contact between you and your next potential employer. It's the first impression you get to make, and with a well-written professional resume, it could be one of many more to come.

If you don't follow any other tips for writing a resume, follow these...

- **Take out the objective.** Seeing that you're already applying for the job, it should be obvious you want it. You can cover your desire for the role in your cover letter, or if you're changing industries, it may be useful to include a brief introductory summary in the resume.
- **Brief is best.** While you may have aced making milkshakes at the cafe you worked for in high school, it's time to get rid of that clutter if it's not related to the role you want to pursue now. Give more space to detail about your current or recent jobs and less about the past. If it doesn't fit on one to two pages – it's not worth writing about! Make sure you include specific skills that are relevant to the job you're applying for, even if that means adjusting your resume for each new application.
- **Take a pass on unnecessary info.** That includes your age, marital status, religion or nationality. This might have been the standard in the past, but all of this information is now illegal for your employer to ask you, and there's no need to include it. For security reasons we suggest that you don't include your date of birth, and definitely not your bank account details. As for an address, a suburb and postcode will suffice.
- **Make it clear and straightforward.** Use simple text in one modern, standard font that is easy to read, and that everyone can understand. As everything in your resume is about your experiences, avoid writing in first or third person. For example, instead of writing "I managed a team of three", or "Sarah managed a team of three" rather write "responsible for managing a team of 3" in concise bullet points below headlines where necessary.

Avoid using cluttered or complicated layouts with headers, footers, tables or

other items that may not look right when viewed on different computers with varying software versions. Make sure you also run a spell check to pick up any errors - a big mistake that is easy to avoid!

- **Be professional and discreet.** You may still be using the same email address that you set up when Hotmail came about in the 90's, but if it's anything that looks unprofessional, it might be worth your while setting up a new one for the purpose of your job applications. Avoid using your current work email address, or phone number for that matter, unless you want to get yourself into trouble!
- **Keep to the employer's submission requirements.** Above all, you won't get noticed if you don't follow all of the specific requirements that have been instructed in the job description. Often both resumes and cover letters are requested in a certain file format (doc, pdf, docx, rtt). Sometimes advertisements request applications be sent or addressed in a particular way. Adhere to these, and you'll be one step ahead of any other applicants who didn't bother to tune into this detail!

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