

How to pitch yourself with a well-rounded resume

There's no doubt your work history is key to your resume—but it's not all that counts. A great resume has to go beyond just listing the jobs you've held and give potential employers a broader look at what makes you right for their role. Your skills and education, awards you've received, and even your hobbies and interests all form part of the picture. Here's how take your resume from work history to a well-rounded profile of what you've got to offer.

What makes you different

The additional information you include needs to bring your resume to life, according to Melanie Barrett, Director at recruitment firm Tandem Partners. "Try to find ways to differentiate yourself from other applicants who are all using the same words or terms," she says.

Barrett says genuine information is best. "Really think about how you want to position your strengths and what you are known for," she explains.

Your key skills

Potential employers need to quickly see your core capabilities so listing your key skills is important. Skills are different from responsibilities and achievements—they're things you've learned to do along your career journey that aren't necessarily specific to a particular job or industry. For example, project management, change management, budget management, IT strategy development, negotiation, and organisation.

"When making your list, 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. Aim for at least three bullet points and a maximum of 10, and make sure you can back these up with good examples of your contributions," Barrett says.

Depending on the industry you work in, you could also include a separate list of technical skills such as experience with particular software.

Your education and training

Education is an important asset to promote, especially if you're entering the job market for the first time. "While certain qualifications may be a prerequisite for the job you're applying for, what you include in the education section of your resume is also an opportunity to demonstrate your determination and commitment, or your desire to enhance your knowledge in the particular area you choose to study," Barrett says.

To present your education, state the years you started and finished your qualification, followed by the course and institution. List your highest qualification first.

If you're still pursuing a degree, show that your education is in progress. For example:

Master of Business Administration – anticipated completion December, 2020

You don't need to include your high school qualification unless you're applying for your first job.

Ensure you get your dates correct, as most employers and recruitment firms will check these details, Barrett says. Likewise, if you didn't complete your education, state this upfront—honesty is always best.

If you have five or more years of experience related to the job you're seeking, put education after professional experience. Hiring managers will be more interested in your job accomplishments. If you're a recent graduate or have fewer than five years' work experience, put education before experience. If you're changing careers and have continued your education to support your new goal, education should also come first.

Should you include academic results?

You don't need to include academic results unless you've received an award for outstanding performance, Barrett says. "However, students and new graduates with little work experience may want to expand on their academic achievements, and also include extracurricular activities and special projects," she adds.

Professional Development

If you have additional certifications, it's a good idea to list them in their own section, titled Professional Development.

If you have been participating in ongoing training, it's also worth listing the courses, seminars, conferences and training you've undertaken.

Awards, memberships and hobbies

Finally, it's a good idea to insert a bit of personality into your resume. Your personal achievements, awards, memberships and passions can demonstrate some of the key skills you list in your resume and help to leave a lasting impression on your reader. If you've volunteered to build an orphanage in Vietnam, are the captain of a netball team, or part of your local gardening club, this is valuable information. It can show important soft skills such as leadership ability, determination, or teamwork.

"Including your hobbies, passions or interests is a great way to make your resume unique. It can

also be a great conversation starter which can be helpful when it comes time for the interview, especially if you share common interests,” Barrett says,

Remember, it's important to keep words to a minimum so only include information that's relevant or could add value to the role you're applying for.