

HOW TO WRITE A GREAT RESUME



FIRST IMPRESSIONS MATTER

If the thought of writing a resume makes you break out into a deep sweat, don't worry, you're not alone. Many find it challenging to condense their entire career and achievements into a single document, while ensuring it is clear and impactful. Luckily, with the tips we have compiled in this guide, you will be on your way to having a well-crafted, professional resume that is sure to knock the socks off any potential new employer.

As recruiters, we have seen thousands of resumes pass our desk over the years, and, as such, have accumulated a wealth of knowledge about what works, and what doesn't.

A well-crafted resume can significantly impact whether you get invited for an interview or not, as it demonstrates your ability to present yourself effectively on paper. Your resume also contributes to your personal brand and well all know that first impressions matter, so this is your chance to make a good one!

THE BASICS

03

[Purpose]

The purpose of your resume is to get you an interview – it doesn't actually get you the job.

Your resume should be a succinct overview of your career history with enough information to demonstrate your key competencies and achievements, without overloading it with too much detail. It is, in some respects, your own "Professional Marketing Document," so it should represent you accurately and professionally. Your resume needs to be factual, objective, well laid out and easy to read. It's basically, you on a page!

THE FIRST THING TO CONSIDER: FORMATTING

→ Use simple formatting with a contemporary font large enough to be easily read.

→ Utilise bullet points, plenty of white space, and bold the headings.

→ Avoid making it too "fancy" with fonts and layouts that are difficult to read and print. Although a hard copy is often printed out for an interview, these days most resumes are initially read on a screen (or phone) so it needs to present well for both.

→ Ensure your name and contact details (phone, email, LinkedIn profile link) are at the top of the front page and easily identifiable – you don't need to include any other personal information.



HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR RESUME

04

THE FRONT PAGE

This is the most critical page. It ensures that the rest of the resume will even be read! Sometimes a Recruiter or Hiring Manager will make a decision to interview just based on the front page because they can readily see the candidate has the right background, qualifications and experience for the role. It should include:



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / CAREER PROFILE:

This is your opening statement and a chance to describe what makes you, YOU. It should state who you are and the key attributes you offer a new employer, tailored to the type of role you are seeking. In essence, it's your "elevator pitch" that you can use anytime someone says: "tell me about yourself."



KEY COMPETENCIES:

In point form, list between 5 to 10 key competencies that you feel will lend themselves to the role you are applying for. These need to be factual, tailored to the level of your role and include a mix of both technical and non-technical competencies (e.g. project management, managing P&L, people leadership, executing vision and strategy).



CAREER SUMMARY:

If you have had a reasonably linear career progressing steadily to more senior roles and working for well-known brands, include a career summary on the front page. If your career has been more "checkered" and for some reason, there have been lots of roles, or you had lots of breaks, sometimes you are better to leave this off and move straight into the career history.



EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Often it is recommended that your education and qualifications are listed at the end of the resume, and sometimes, that is more appropriate, but if you have 1 or more degrees and a couple of professional qualifications relevant to the role you are applying for, it is best to put it on the front page. For example, a Hiring Manager probably wants to see that a Program Manager has a technology degree plus a business degree, and the relevant professional qualifications. Keep the education brief though, and if there are lots of relevant professional development courses, then put your degree on the front page and the rest at the end.

ADDING THE DETAIL: YOUR CAREER HISTORY

05

This is where you can provide the detail of your key responsibilities and achievements in each role.

You should list your roles in reverse chronological order (i.e. the most recent first), and provide progressively less detail on each role.

It is generally your last five years or so that is most relevant for your next role, although you will still need to provide some detail for roles in the last ten years. Make sure you edit your resume each time you update roles to keep it relevant and drop off some of the detail on the earlier roles.



THE STRUCTURE

→ **Company Name, Position Title and Dates (month and year)**

This information should go first and be bold, so that it stands out and is easily read. We recommend including a very brief (one to two lines) summary of the company, unless you have spent your whole career in a well-known organisation.

→ **Context of the role**

This is a brief statement that provides clarity as to the purpose and function of the role within the organisation. For example: "Company X was undergoing considerable transformation and I was hired to build a new centralised transformation function." State who you were reporting to, the scope of the role and your team size.

→ **Key responsibilities**

These should be reasonably high level and brief. Don't list every task in your job description, keep it to the most important aspects of your role that will lend itself to the position you are applying for.

→ **Key achievements**

These can be a little more detailed, to demonstrate what you actually delivered. It is important to keep them measurable and to demonstrate the impact you had. For example: "developed 20+ websites over 4 years, grew customer database by X% by..." Do this for each role, although once you are past that 10-year point, just a line or two overviewing either responsibilities or achievements on each role is probably sufficient.

SAMPLE RESUME TEMPLATE

06

JOHN SMITH

Executive Summary

- "Elevator pitch about yourself"
- 2 to 3 concise sentences stating who you are
- Key attributes you offer a new employer which is tailored for your role
- Can be creative in saying who you are but still needs to be factual

Key Competencies

5 to 10 key skills that are a mix of technical and non-technical competencies

(can be in 1 or 2 columns)

Eg. System Implementation

Business Analysis, Process Design

Client Engagement & Stakeholder Management

Executing Vision & Strategy

Change Management & Communication

Critical Thinking & Leadership

Career Summary

Month YEAR – Present	Company Name, City; Job Title held
Month YEAR – Month YEAR	Company Name, City; Job Title held
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Education and Qualifications

List any relevant degrees/qualifications needed for the role you are applying for (keep it brief)

Eg.

Master of Business, University of Sydney

Nov 2018

Master of Business Administration, Corporate Finance

Sept 2006

Prince2® Practitioner 2017 Certificate in Project Management, ILX Group Australia

August 2017

Personal Details



+61 412 345 678



yourfullname@email.com.au



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/yourfullname>

SAMPLE RESUME TEMPLATE

07

JOHN SMITH

Career History

Company Name Pty Ltd

Position Title

Month YEAR – Month YEAR

Brief summary (1-2 lines max) of the company (what they do, annual turnover, number of employees) and provide context to your role (who you were reporting to, the scope of the role, team size)

Key Responsibilities

- *List in point form*
- *Reasonably high level and succinct*
- *Don't list every single task you do only those pertinent to role*

Key Achievement

- *List in point form*
- *Include more detail (a couple of brief sentences is sufficient)*
- *Demonstrate what you actually delivered*

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- *Include more detail (a couple of brief sentences is sufficient)*
- *Demonstrate what you actually delivered*

BUILDING OUT YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

Your LinkedIn profile should align with your resume but can be much briefer and more succinct. It should be easy to read.

Attach a professional photo, keeping in mind that prospective employers and recruiters may make decisions on whether to interview you based on your photo.

We recommend making your profile accessible – when you are job searching, you want people to easily be able to find you. Ensure you connect with all the people you have dealt with professionally as well as people you know – the more connections you have the more likely you will come up in related searches.

Profile heading

Under your name, put the key titles/expertise/skills that help promote your brand – for example:

CA qualified | Finance Manager | FP&A Specialist | Process Improvement.

About

Provide a brief description of who you are and the value you bring – build your brand statement into the description. Whilst it needs to be short, concise and relevant to the roles you are seeking, you can also say a bit more about you – what you are passionate about in your job and what you love to contribute to a business so that anyone looking at it gets to know a bit more about you as a person.

Career history

Your LinkedIn profile doesn't need to be as detailed as your resume. List out each of your roles with a brief 1-2 line description of the role and 3-4 key achievements in point form.

Additional information

- Include your education and qualifications/certifications.
- Populate the skills section so recruiters and hiring managers can find you.
- Ask managers and ex-colleagues for recommendations.
- Adding in volunteer work and community involvement also helps round out your profile.
- Join groups that people in your target roles are likely to be in.



ABOUT [AXR]

We're a proudly Australian specialist recruitment consultancy established in 2003. We've built a team of experienced and passionate specialist recruitment consultants who are inspired by the impact exceptional recruitment has on careers and teams.

We see things a little differently at [axr]. Our mission is to prepare people to have better career conversations, to make great career decisions, to enable individuals and organisations to get the best return out of their relationship. This philosophy and approach helps professionals to have strategic career conversations which means better retention of high-potential talent, the right level of staff-turnover and optimised staff attraction and recruitment.

We achieve this by creating pathways between future and current leaders. We have an active talent network who engage with our career incubator programs: The CFO Incubator, Finance to Leadership Incubator, our career podcasts, Your Future in Sales & Marketing, and From Go to CFO to help to build this pathway and, ultimately, create better careers and teams.

At [axr], we focus on building careers not jobs, teams not hires, because if it matters to you, it matters to us.

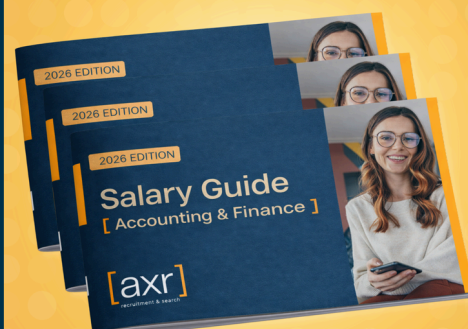
CAREER PROGRAMS



PODCASTS



BLOGS & NEWSLETTERS





It's your career, not a job
It's your team, not a hire
If it matters to you, it matters to us.



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