## HOW TO WRITE A RESUME

Your resume is an important document, which a potential interviewer will use to make their first assessment of you. The information and template below will help you produce a resume that is easy to read and packed with facts.

**Contact details**

Add your contact details at the top of the page. Include name, address, phone number, mobile and email. Make sure your name and contact details are on each page just in case the pages get separated after being printed out in hard copy. Only use professional-sounding email addresses. An email address like drunk-n-drunker@ may give the wrong impression.

**Birth date and marital status**

You are not obliged to include either your birth date or marital status – it’s up to you.

**Layout**

There are many layout styles; our advice is to keep it simple. Pick a font style that is easy to read – not too flowery or ornate. Bold for headings are easy to read. Use dot points if you want, but just the one type. The content of the resume is the most important thing.

**Summarising your strengths**

You can do this two ways, either list your “Key Strengths” in dot points or include a section under a heading like “Career Profile”.

**Key Strengths**

Use dot points to highlight your key strengths. The aim of the section is to give the person reading your resume a quick snapshot of what you have to offer. For example:

* High level computer skills including Excel, Word and Powerpoint.
* Five years experience in customer service, both face to face and phone based.

Be specific about what you write, for example "Excellent communication skills" is vague, where as “Excellent written and verbal communication skills acquired through 9 years in customer service positions” is factual.

**Career Overview and Career Objective**

Including a career overview, career profile or career summary is an optional piece of information. If you choose to include an overview, it should provide the reader with a quick preview of what’s in your resume (one paragraph).

A career objective is making a statement of what you want; again, this is optional information. If you are going to including an objective, make it meaningful. For example "to utilise my skills in a professional environment for the mutual benefit of myself and employer" versus “whilst currently working in customer service, my goal is to move into general management”.

**Employment history**

Outline your career history in reverse chronological order, ie. your most recent job first. For each entry, follow the structure of employer, job title, employment start and end dates and your duties/responsibilities.

A lot of people tend to only include on-going or permanent jobs and leave out the short term or casual jobs, for example seasonal harvest work. Showing continuity of employment might be important to the interviewer so try and fill any gaps. For example:

*Jan 2006 – May 2007*

*Various casual labouring/admin/retail based jobs in the XXX area including...*

*Jan 2006 – May 2007*

*Various casual labouring/admin/retail based jobs in the XXX area including…, I also under took study for the XXX course/certificate (or completed the XXX course/certificate).*

*Jan 2006 – May 2007*

*Overseas travel.*

*Jan 2006 – May 2007*

*Maternity/paternity duties.*

**Description of employer**

Giving a short description of your employer might be necessary if their name is unknown or doesn’t necessarily describe their business, for example:

*The Heritage Lottery Fund – a UK based charity which funds heritage projects to non-profit organisations.*

**Responsibilities and My Duties**

When you get to the part of listing what you actually did in your previous jobs, you can chose to lead with either “My responsibilities were” or “My duties included…”. Some people make the mistake of believing the more responsibilities listed the better and some people include the bare minimum – it’s your choice, but keep in mind you are trying to express to the reader the full scope of your job.

**Achievements**

This is an optional piece of information where you can list the things that you did that you think are particularity noteworthy. For example, staff awards or special commendations. It is important to note that meeting a target is not an achievement - it's doing what you are paid to do, however greatly exceeding a target would be an achievement.

**Education and Training**This section can cover university, TAFE, industry courses, in-house courses and any other professional training. Start with your highest qualification first and then list in reverse date order (most recent first).  
  
**Professional Memberships**Include only those relevant to your career as well as an indication of how active you are in the organisation.

**Referees and References**Your resume should include at least two employment referees. A referee is a person who will be contacted by the interviewer, to provide information regarding your previous employment. Referees are generally your former employers/supervisors; however they can also include co-workers. If you are self-employed, your referees could be your clients or suppliers. A personal referee is a person who will vouch for you in a personal, not professional, capacity. If you are a school leaver with no work history, your can list a former teacher/career advisor as a referee.

On your resume list the referee’s name, company, title and phone numbers.

You should confirm with your referees that they are willing to be included on your resume.

A reference is an open letter written by a former employer/supervisor describing your time in their employ. You may choose to add a sentence: "Written references available upon request" if you wish.

## Overall Tips

**How long should your resume be?**Your resume should be somewhere between 2 and 5 pages long – long enough to show how your career has developed as well as some detail of your achievements, but not long enough to become repetitive or boring. Obviously the less time you have spent in the workforce (eg. school leavers), the shorter your resume will be.

A mature-aged candidate who has spent many years in the workforce may choose to list the most recent 10 – 15 years work history on their resume and then summarise your older work history. For example:

***Previous Work History***

***1982 - 1997***

***Labourer / Farm hand***

***Working for approximately 15 farmers in the Parkes, Bogan Gate and Trundle area.***

*My duties included:*

* *Shearing, fencing and general labouring*
* *Chemical handling (not ticketed)*
* *Operating machinery including: front end loader, backhoe, dozer, tractor and header.*

You can include a paragraph under the heading "Other professional/work experience" if you want to mention earlier work of particular interest or relevance. Finally, you can include a sentence such as "Full resume available upon request" to give the interviewer the opportunity to request you full resume.

**Good resumes are written. great ones are edited**

After you’ve written your resume, make sure you go back and read it again and again, tightening it up where necessary. Get a friend or family member to look it over. The more eye-passes it receives, the better it will be.

**Make your point**

Try to get across that you are a human being rather than a list of bullet points (not that there’s anything wrong with bullet points). But don’t get too clever.

**Don’t say what you did, say what you learned**

“Duties: Clerical administration, customer relations, answering phones.” Re-phrase that tired job description by describing how you grew rather than what you did. “In this job I gained excellent time management skills and learned how to better manage my company’s external customers. I developed my administration skills greatly, by re-organising the company’s filing system and answering phones punctually.”

**Tailor**

Always do a minor re-write each time you send off a resume based on the job you’re applying for. Emphasise the more relevant aspects and edit out the unnecessary.

**Other tips**

* Most interviewers prefer resumes submitted electronically, so create your resume in a common program such as MS Word.
* When formatting your resume, ensure there is plenty of white space. Don't place too much information on one page or use graphics and flowery or small fonts that are difficult to read, as they distract from the content.
* Spell check your resume! Remember, it is the first impression the interviewer will have of you. If possible, get someone to proof read your resume to check for any spelling, grammar, layout or typing errors.
* If you are submitting a job application via email, include your resume as an attachment and not embedded (pasted) into the email. Pasting text into an email sometimes distorts the text, making it difficult to read.
* If you are submitting you resume in hard-copy, select quality plain white A4 paper, check the print quality and only print on one side of the paper.
* Unless otherwise stated, you do not need to attach copies of certificates relating to educational and/or professional qualifications (including recent academic transcripts) or any references from previous employers. Instead, you should bring these to your job interview.

### Sample Resume:

**RESUME OF JOHN CITIZEN**

**Name:** John Mark Citizen

**Address:** 1 Gumnut St, Parkes NSW 2870

**Tel:** 0419 000 000 or 5555 5555 (ah)

**DOB:** 14 March 1971

**KEY STRENGTHS**

* Excellent customer service skills gained through five years experience in auto sales
* High level computer skills including Excel, Word and Powerpoint

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

**dd/mm/yy to present Company name  
Position**

Duties include:

* ????
* ????

**dd/mm/yy to dd/mm/yy Company name  
Position**

Duties included:

* ????
* ????

**EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

2003 Certificate II in Automotive Sales, TAFE

1991 Forklift licence

1989 NSW C Class Driver’s Licence

1988 HSC, Parkes High School

**REFEREES**

John Bloggs

Director, LCK Auto Sales

Ph: (02) 4444 4444

Bruce Smith

Service Manager, Central West Auto Sales

Ph: (02) 3333 3333