



## Constructing a Resume

In an ever changing environment, where individuals move between roles with ease, many people still ask the question; what makes a resume stand out? There are many answers to this rhetorical question, however, one thing remains true, a good resume provides a solid foundation. Remember, a resume is only a vehicle to obtaining an interview; your foot in the door, a resume will **not** secure you a role. Only you, with your unique blend of skills and personality traits can secure that.

Before we get started it seems an appropriate opportunity to reinforce some facts about the recruitment industry. A professional Recruiter on average will only spend about 30 seconds reviewing each resume. Although this may seem shocking, in a world where hundreds of resumes pass over a Recruiter's desk each and every day, you only have a moment to stand out. Standing out could mean the difference between securing the position of your dreams, or watching it slip through your fingers. The question therefore is how do you produce a resume that stands out? Here are a few helpful hints.

### Introduction

Remember, a resume is normally a company's first introduction to you - their new employee. Consequently, it is imperative to take the same amount of time constructing a resume that you would in preparing for an interview. A resume that includes spelling mistakes, poor grammar, irregular formatting, offensive email addresses and greetings or mobile numbers where message bank are not active are all pieces of a puzzle that together serve to build either a positive or negative picture of you in the eyes of your potential new employer. Your personal brand is as important as the skills and personality traits that you bring to a new work environment. As such, treat your brand with care. Think of it as taking out an insurance policy for your career!

Now that we have addressed some housekeeping issues, let me take the opportunity to discuss what are the do's and don't's in drafting an award winning resume.

### Resume – Building The Foundation

When constructing a resume a key thing to ask yourself is – will including this information assist me in reaching my goal of securing my dream role? If the answer is no, then don't include it. If your resume includes a seemingly endless amount of redundant material, recruiters and hiring managers might miss the relevant information that has been included. The end result is you may not secure your dream position. As such, the key is keeping it simple. The first page of your resume should include the following;

#### Personal Details

This should include your full name and contact details including your address, phone number, visa status and email address. Make sure that your details are not in the header/footer of the documents as these will not show when the document is printed. When providing an email address as a contact make sure it looks professional for e.g. use [bobsmithjob@hotmail.com](mailto:bobsmithjob@hotmail.com).

#### Positioning Statement

This should be a brief statement that will catch the attention of the reader. This should outline what you are looking for, the skills and knowledge you can bring and your future career goals. A positioning statement should only be a couple of lines. There is no need to write a book.



## Education and Training

This should include a list of your qualifications and relevant training courses you have completed that are specific to the role you are applying for.

## **Resume – Adding the Steel Beams**

The steel beams of your resume; the structural integrity of your resume is the way in which you articulate the skills that you would bring to an organisation. A key component on this journey is your employment history. Remember, a prospective employer is interested in more than the key responsibilities of your current role. They are interested in how you performed these key responsibilities differently to people that have occupied a similar role previously. This is the opportunity to sell yourself, however, don't completely show your hand. You want something new that you can reveal at interview.

## Employment History

Structure the employment history section with your most recent work experience being outlined first and then work backwards. Include the following:

- Company name and dates – make sure you highlight this in bold text
- Responsibilities - Make this brief. Include around 4 bullet points explaining your main responsibilities in the role, then list your achievements within the role. You should have double the amount of achievements compared to responsibilities. Make sure to include the reason for leaving from your previous employer. Make sure you include everything that's relevant to the position

Contrary to popular belief, a break in your employment history does not automatically mean that your resume is put at the back of the queue. The key is taking the opportunity to explain why the break occurred. For instance, if you took a break after receiving a redundancy, then outline this in your resume. Redundancy no longer has a stigma associated with it.

## **Resume – Adding the Roof**

A key ingredient that solidifies your resume is the addition of supporting documentation. Some organisations will request this documentation from the outset. However, be prepared to provide this documentation if requested.

## References

We live in a fragile world where we need to protect our information. As such, refrain from providing referee particulars until requested. When providing referee particulars please include the name of the referee, company they work for, occupation, contact details and your relationship with them – were they your manager? You should always ensure that you get permission before including them as a referee.



### **Resume – Additional Features**

It is more than acceptable to personalise your resume. Now remember that making things too personalised can be detrimental. It's a bit like selling a house. You might like bright colours, but potential buyers may not. As such, you may wish to include the following, however, keep it simple.

- Skills – This is based around core skills that you have acquired – project management skills
- IT skills – The programs you have used and your level of proficiency
- Hobbies and Interests

### **Resume – Food for Thought**

Always remember to be honest. Make sure there is no criticism in your resume regarding your past employer even if you did have a bad experience. Make sure you spend time making your resume presentable with the right content. Also, make sure you check your spelling and grammar. This is your own personal brand after all.

Remember if you are sending your resume, send it as an attachment so the formatting stays as you intended. Use basic word fonts and try to make sure the formatting is simple and easy for the reader to follow. Do not include photos, company logos, date of birth, ethnicity, creed, marital status or political statements on your resume. Remember this is an organisations first impression of you, and including redundant information is not necessary.

Your new career opportunity awaits. Good Luck with the job search.