



Australian Government



ABORIGINAL
HOSTELS LIMITED

Writing a Successful Resume



Key factors when creating your resume

Make sure tailor your resume to the job you are applying for.

This includes adjustments to things like your:

- career objective to match the role you are applying for
- emphasising highly relevant skills in a key skill list
- employment history so it emphasises relevant duties or achievements.

Thing to remember

Your resume is a living document. It is not a static, historical document that once created is sent out for every job you come across.

Your resume is also a marketing document and it represents who you are. Poor presentation, spelling or grammar mistakes and inaccurate editing leave a lasting impression.

Employers want to see demonstrated career progression, steady employment history and indications of loyalty and hard work. Don't leave unexplained gaps in your story. These typically lead to misunderstandings or disqualifying you from contention altogether.

Always edit

The most common mistakes in a resume typically come from not enough attention during the proofreading process.

It is critical that you:

- use your spell check, but avoid using the replace option blindly
- have more than one person with strong written English skills review your resume in fine detail
- use plain English, your resume is not the place to impress with your extensive vocabulary.

How long

If you can keep the resume to 2 pages and it covers all the necessary details, that is preferable but don't weaken your content or formatting by trying to squish things into 2 pages.



Overall structure and content

Career objective

Although not essential, stating a career objective at the start of your resume allows you to focus the attention of your reader. It creates a snapshot for the reader and provides a summary of key relevant information in your resume.

Personal details

Your contact details are an essential part of your resume however it is not recommended to include personal information such as marital status, religion or your age.

Essentials include:

- your full name (noting preferred first name in brackets if different)
- mobile phone number
- email address
- citizenship, visa status or eligibility to work in Australia
- government Security Clearance (if applicable).

Education and professional qualifications

List your education and professional qualifications in reverse chronological order detailing the educational institution, the location and the year completed. If the course is still being completed, we recommend stating in this format:

Bachelor of Laws (ANU)
2009 – current (5 units for completion)

Avoid including outdated or irrelevant education and awards.



Skills summary

The skills section should summarise core transferable skills relevant to the role you are seeking. This can include grouping your skills. For example:

- systems or IT skills
- personal characteristics
- technical skills or capabilities
- specialist capabilities.

Employment History

This is the focus of your resume and the section employers most readily skip to first. It should be a detailed account of your most recent employment history, with details summarising your prior work history.

This information should be clear and succinct. Make sure your employment history is in reverse chronological order, your most recent job should come first.

Details relating to the employer should include:

- dates of when you worked there (include months)
- the employer name
- job title (s)
- details of if the role was a contract or permanent if you have done a mix of both.

Provide important context such as:

- who was your employer and what they do
- where did you fit in and what was your progression
- who did you report to and Who reported to you is appropriate
- job duties with a broad description of what you were responsible for.

Relevant key achievements

Make sure to:

- tailor these to the opportunity you are applying for
- align these underneath your job duties/to a specific role rather than being their own section in the body of the resume.



References

Include 2 work references of people who have directly supervised your work or who have a clear managerial perspective of your work.

Include the following details:

- their full name
- the organisation where you worked with them
- their job title
- the nature of your relationship with them
- how long you worked with or reported to them.

Do not include friends, family, former lecturers, or character referees, in the majority of cases these are not appropriate.

It is also best practice to make sure you have advised your referee that you have submitted an application along with their details so they are prepared.

Things to avoid

Make sure you:

- don't copy a job description blindly into your employment history
- don't embellish the truth or lie, you are likely to be caught out
- don't use large blocks of text, use a combination of headings, subheadings and bullet points to create easy-to-understand content
- don't include a picture of yourself
- don't include detailed personal information or stories about your personal life
- don't use a 3rd person narrative approach to writing your resume
- don't include meeting deadlines or achieving KPI's as an achievement, these are meeting the requirements of your role not exceeding them
- don't hide your Employment History, it should be close to the front.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I address short-term stays in permanent roles (e.g. 3 months)?

If these are in the most recent years of your employment it is best to include them and state a clear reason for leaving.

2. Gaps in your employment history

If you were on holiday or extended leave, you were studying or having children, or you were working on a personal project, put this in your resume noting clear dates so the gap is addressed.

3. Sudden career changes, unusual career transitions or moving to roles of significantly less responsibility

Leaving these unaddressed leaves your fate to the subjective analysis of the reader. Clearly articulate why you have made such a move in your resume.

4. Incomplete qualifications

If you are not planning to complete a qualification, it is a tight call whether or not to include them. As a general rule, it is best not to include these unless the experience gained with that study is highly relevant to the job you are applying for.

If you have any questions concerning employment in AHL, please contact the AHL Recruitment Team on (02) 6212 2001 or applications@ahl.gov.au

