

Notes for My First resume

Introduction

Welcome to this online training presented by Swinburne Skills and Jobs centre. My name is Fiona Fowler. This training is for you if you are either looking for your first job or have had jobs where you haven't previously needed a resume.

Objectives

In this session you will learn about the purpose of a resume and, using a sample resume, we will also describe the importance of each section. So that by the end, you will be able to complete your own resume. To help you do this, you may also like to stop the training at any time and complete your own details as we go. At the end of the training we will also let you know where you can go for further support, to assist you with any questions that you may have.

What you will need for this session

To get the most out of this session, you will need the following;

- Open the My first resume blank template which is available in a word doc. Make sure that you have it open on your computer as we go along.
You may also like to have the List of Action words provided as a pdf
- You might like to stop and take notes, so a pen and paper will be very handy.
- Gather your details in relation to your education, certificates, licenses, employment history and any volunteer experience.

Resume Purpose

You may be wondering why you even need a resume. A Resume is a document that you provide to potential employers when looking for work. Its purpose is to highlight your experiences, skills and achievements and it helps potential employers learn more about you and whether to invite you to an interview. There can be many people applying for the one job, so it is in your best interest to prepare the very best resume that you can. A good resume will help you stand out from other applicants. So, let's look at what a good resume needs to include.

Resume Basics

Now you may think, that by using a fancy design and special fonts you are making your resume stand out. However most potential employers or recruiters will only spend seconds or just a few minutes looking at your resume. For this reason, you need to ensure that your resume is clear so keep the layout simple and use clear headings so that the reader can see at a glance where to find the information that they need.

Use the same font throughout. The font size for the text should be 11-12 and for headings 14. Use a classic and easy to read font style such as Calibri, Arial, Verdana or Helvetica. Write clear sentences and once you have completed your resume, check for any grammatical or spelling mistakes. Many employers have been put off by simple typing errors and simply discard your resume. Some believe that if you don't check your resume carefully, this may be an indication of your attitude towards completing work tasks.

Australian resumes don't include photos as potential employers may have a conscious or unconscious bias around what someone looks like, or their potential age. You want to ensure that you have the best possible chance of getting to the interview and impressing the Interviewer.

Lastly, make sure that your resume is only 1-2 pages in length. This will also assist in encouraging employers to read your whole resume.

Resume Sections

Let's now look at a simple resume layout. We will be describing each of these sections in the next few slides, but for now, let's look at the different sections that make up a resume;

- Name, contact details,
- Professional Statement,
- Employment history, volunteer and work experience,
- Key Skills and achievements,
- Interests
- and at least two referees.

Over the rest of these slides, we will explain in detail each section of a Resume, then show an example, and then stop and get you to complete this section of your own Resume. So that by the end of the session, you will have a Resume.

Completing a sample resume

Using an example, we are now going to start completing what's called a Master resume. This is a Resume that contains all of your qualifications, experience, skills and achievements. As you start applying for specific roles, then you will tailor your resume that highlights the required skills and responsibilities required of the role that you are applying for.

This is Simona

- Simona is a young woman who did not complete Year 12 but completed a Certificate II in Sport and Recreation while at Secondary school. This is her highest educational qualification.
- In 2020 she completed the Responsible Serving of Alcohol (RSA) and obtained her Victorian Driver's license.
- Simona has worked for a range of people as a babysitter for the past two years.
- In Year 10, she did two weeks work experience at the local Sports Centre and also volunteered at a sports tent at the local festival. Simona is a keen member of the Flames Netball team.

Let's see how and why we will be including all of the above on Simona's resume.

Completing the sections of a Resume

Contact details

Your name and contact detail are placed at the top of the page. Research has shown that centring your name and contact details, helps them to stand out.

You need to ensure that employers can contact you, so do include your phone and email address. Please ensure that your email is Professional sounding. Having a gmail account is fine but having an address that you think may be funny such as "I am sexy" is not and can put employers off. If possible, try and create a simple email address that includes your name.

Regarding your home address there are differing viewpoints. Traditionally, your full address was included on your resume. However current practice is to show only the suburb or to not include the

address at all. The reason for not including the address is if you feel that there may be a potential bias working against you. For example, if you apply for a job in the Northern suburbs but live in the South, some employers may wonder if you can regularly get to work on time. Now you may know that you can do this, but you may decide to leave your address off the resume and wait until you get to the Interview and impress the Interviewer there. On the other hand, sometimes your address may be an advantage. The job may be located in your local area, and you want to highlight how close you are to this job. Ultimately it is your decision as to whether you include a full address, just the suburb or no address details at all.

Professional Statement

A Professional summary is a two to three sentence statement that includes your strengths, skills and achievements. We're going to come back to this after completing the rest of the resume as it can take some time to really think about what you want to include here. It is this section that may determine whether a potential employer continues reading through your resume. So having a concise Professional statement that really highlights who you are, is important.

Education / Certificates

Many jobs require some sort of Educational qualifications. They need to be listed so that you are showing the most recent Education that has been completed or in progress, first. Then list any other qualifications in reverse order. e.g. You would first list a Cert III completed in 2019 and then the Cert II in 2018.

You can also include any other relevant certificates that you feel may be relevant. Some jobs require you to have a Driver's license, so including this is a good idea. You may also want to include any other certificates such as a RSA, white card, Fork Lift license or First Aid certificate.

Let's now look at Simona's example.

Simona's Sample Resume

We will complete the Professional Statement later in this session. Simona left school before completing Year 12 but has completed a Cert II in Sport and Recreation while at school. So she includes the Cert II as her highest qualification.

She also got her Victorian Driver's license in early 2020 and obtained her RSA as both of these may be relevant for future work.

Time for you to complete your Name and Contact details

We're now going to pause while you start completing your details for the Name and contact details, and Education section. Remember to include any relevant certificates or licenses. See you soon.

Employment History

Let's now look at how to include any jobs that you have had, whether it has been paid work or volunteer roles.

Show the most recent job first and include the month and year that you started and finished the job role. If you are still working in the job, then you show the month and year you started to "current"

Include the position title and the name of the company.

Next you will include 3 or 4 dot points that show your responsibilities and/ or achievements while in this role. A responsibility is the task that you actually do at work e.g. Stocking the shelves. An

achievement is something that shows that you have gone above and beyond. For example, you may have increased sales by 20% over the past week or you have been awarded employee of the month.

It is very important to ensure that each point starts with an action word. There are many Action verbs that you can use, and we can provide you with a sample Action Word list. Some examples of Action verbs include; demonstrated, prepared, solved, presented etc. Action verbs show an employer what you actually did, and this helps them to better understand your achievements.

Including volunteer experience is invaluable as it can demonstrate other skills and abilities that you have. Volunteering can include volunteering at special events, at local organisations but it can also include informal volunteering. For example, you are asked to help a relative or neighbour build a new fence. You could show it on your resume as Labourer Assistant. Then including dot points that may say

“ Prepared site for new fence by clearing vegetation. Assisted in pouring foundations for new fence. Built fence using timber materials.”

If you don't have much employment or volunteer experience, you can also include any work experience that you may have done at school. Once again, include the job title and company where you worked. Then show several dot points, starting with an Action word, your main duties or achievements.

Simona's example

Simona describes her responsibilities as a Babysitter making sure that each dot point starts with an Action word. Providing specific details as to how many children and details of the responsibilities provides a clearer picture for the employer.

The same is true for her Volunteer role where she assisted at the Sports tent at the Maroondah festival. Including the details of her responsibilities on the day, shows employers other examples of her experiences. Simona completed a two-week work experience while at school. As Simona is interested in finding work in Sports, including examples relating to this field is good.

Time for you to complete your work details

We're now going to pause while you start completing your details for your employment, volunteer and if relevant, work experience. Remember to include three to four dot point that describe your responsibilities. Start each dot point with an action word. To assist you, look at the list of Action words.

Skills

The Skills section is an opportunity for you to provide evidence that demonstrates your skills in relation to a job role. When you are completing your first resume and looking at a range of jobs, you may like to include several of the most commonly sought-after skills. The ones shown above are called **Transferable skills**, because they can be transferred from one job to another. Other examples can include; Team Work, Organisation, Time Management etc. You may already have many of these skills, but over your working life, you can work on strengthening them and developing new ones that employers value across industries and jobs.

Achievements

You may also like to include an example or examples of Achievements. These are things that you have achieved over and beyond. Choose achievements that would demonstrate motivation, initiative, problem solving. For example, receiving an award in sport, school work or in another activity.

Interests

You can include interests that you think may be relevant. If you have limited employment experience, your interests may show another side to you that demonstrates your broader skill base. For example, if you play sport, it's about showing that you are able to work in a team.

Referees

Think carefully about the people that you will choose to be your Referees. You want someone who says nice things about you and can speak honestly about your skills and experience. The best Referees are an ex employer or a teacher who know your capabilities. Ideally you should include two referees. If you don't have an employer and/or Teacher, then you can include a personal referee. Someone who has known you for a while and can talk about your character and skills from their experience.

Simona's example

As we have discussed transferrable skills are highly valued by employers. Simona has selected three examples of Transferrable skills and provided specific examples that demonstrate her ability in each of these areas. In relation to team work, she has selected key words such as cooperative and collaborative. This shows a potential employer that she can work well in a team. The Problem-solving example clearly describes the issue and the outcome. A potential crowd control issue with children pushing and shoving, was identified and by introducing a new system, she was able to restore order and safety.

She has shown her role as Vic- Captain of the local netball team which highlights her leadership skills.

The interests show a fuller picture of Simona's abilities.

She has included two referees – one from School and one from an employer (the babysitting parent).

Time for you to complete your details

We're now going to pause while you start completing your details for your skills, achievements, interests and Referees. For this Master Resume you may like to choose to include examples of three of the common transferrable skills such as Communication, Team work and problem solving. Remember to provide a concise example for each skill shown. For problem solving, describe the example, the action you took and the outcome.

- Show achievements at work or in sports
- Include 1 or 2 interests
- Include at least two Referees

Professional Summary

Now we're going to come back to the Professional Summary after completing the rest of the resume. As we said earlier as it can take some time to really think about what you want to include here as often potential employers will scan this section first to see if you have the key skills. Remember it can be this section that may determine whether a potential employer continues to read through the rest of your resume.

By completing all the other sections first, it means that you have now identified your key skills and provided demonstrated examples. So, you can confidently write your professional profile and ensure that the potential employer has a true snap shot of your top skills.

So let's describe the Professional Summary.

It provides an overview of your skills & achievements and you need to be concise and use both action and descriptive words. The summary should be around 50-80 words in length or 2-3 sentences. You could describe your top three relevant skills that would be relevant for the job role.

Recap of Simona's skills

We are now going to look at the Professional Statement for Simona but first, let's summarise her key skills as described in her Resume. These are; Communication Problem solving and Teamwork. Let's now look at her completed statement.

Example Professional Statement

Simona's has started her statement with an eye-catching action word and clearly identifies the type of role that she is looking for. As it is a customer service role, she has focussed on relevant transferrable skills such as communication, problem solving and team work. Her description is short and to the point and is completed within three sentences. It provides the potential employer with an overview of her skills. You may notice that the first two sentences do not include the word "I". This is so the action and description words really stand out, rather than continually saying "I" did this or "I" did that.

Time for you to complete your details

We're now going to pause while you start writing your Professional Summary. To help you get started, list two to three skills and think about the type of roles that you would like. Remember to include action and descriptive words. You can refer to the Action word list to help you.

Try and keep the summary to a maximum of three sentences in length. Don't worry if you need to rewrite this section several times. It can sometimes take awhile. The important thing is to get started and put down the basics. Then you can come back to it later and make changes.

Completed example

Putting all the sections together, we can now see what the completed resume looks like.

Summary

We have now completed the resume. The main points to remember – keep it simple and easy to read. Ensure that you use the same font and size throughout. Check for any spelling and grammatical errors. Your total resume should only be between one to two pages. Do ensure that everything that you include on your resume is the truth. You can get caught out if you are not honest and this does not look good to potential employers.

At the end of this session, take some time to ensure that you have completed all the relevant sections. Check for typing or spelling errors and ensure that your font style and size is consistent throughout.

What next

It's been lovely sharing this journey with you today and there are supports that we can offer you at the Swinburne Skills and Jobs centre. We offer a free service where we can help you with your resume, cover letters, offer interview assistance and a range of other services. You can also email your resume to us and we can check through it and provide suggestions. Shown here are our contact details and we look forward to helping you.

Further training sessions are available, please check our website or contact us for details.

All the very best and we look forward to seeing you in the next session.