

Writing an Effective Resume

Your resume will be used to sell your skills and background to prospective employers. It needs to be clear and unambiguous, outlining your work history and IT experience, along with other relevant information.

Constructing a great resume requires careful planning and preparation. It is not something that can be created in a short time - remember that this is an investment for your future so dedicating time and energy upfront will pay dividends later. There is a great deal of advice available on submitting an effective resume, some of which is outlined below. Although these are basic guidelines to adhere to, you should also allow your individuality to shine through.

- Do not write a novel. We suggest you keep it to three to five pages (seven max). It should concisely paint a picture of you and your job history. Key points should be highlighted to develop interest and excitement about you as a potential candidate. Include the kind of information you would like to know if you were hiring someone. The reviewer must be drawn to wanting to meet you in person.
- Page 1 - personal details (name, address, mobile, email, followed by education and career highlights).
- Pages 2 - 7 reverse chronological work history (starting with the most recent and working backwards) - make sure that you address the brief for the position you are seeking.
- Ensure date / organisation / role / length of employment are on each position listed.
- No photos or long paragraphs – keep it concise.
- Anything over 10 years ago needs very little detail.
- Don't use a narrative style. Highlight your accomplishments in a bullet point format, then you don't need as many complete sentences - that's how you get it into three to five pages. But be warned: brief points must be carefully thought out. At the interview stage, your statements must be backed up by evidence, based on your track record or education.
- Write in clear, concise terms, using active words (eg. accomplished, created, enhanced, launched, negotiated, etc) and keeping pronouns (I, we, they) to a minimum or avoid them altogether. If you don't feel comfortable with this, write a bold statement such as: 'Achieved sales objectives of 250 units per month'.
- Layout and design should be legible, consistent and easy to follow, with good clear headings, large easy-to-read type face such as Arial or Times Roman or Courier, and no typographical or grammatical errors. If you are required to print off copies, use good quality, plain paper. (Coloured paper or a fancy border doesn't add anything unless the position in question requires a demonstration of that sort of creativity).

- Avoid initials and jargon. Write in plain English so you are understood. There is a general consensus by good interviewers that people who really know their subject write and speak clearly and don't try to complicate issues.
- Keep it succinct. Highlight particular personal achievements. For example: 'During my period as manager, turnover increased 120 per cent'. If your professional experience is limited, it might be wise to include memberships of clubs or organisations that show commitment to being involved.
- Keep it honest. Don't exaggerate your experience to make it sound more impressive. If it can't stand up to scrutiny in the interview, you will blow your chances of getting the job.
- Be specific in your CV. Use numbers or percentages to illustrate your successes or the impact you can have. Avoid claiming complete responsibility for achievements, implying no-one else deserves any credit, which is usually not the case.
- Orientate your CV towards specific (and quantifiable) achievements rather than duties and responsibilities. It should tell prospective employers everything that might interest them and nothing that will waste their time.
- Leave out all details of past salaries, bonus payments, superannuation contributions. This will be covered in the interview stages. Without knowing all the details of the organisation and the job, you might inadvertently send a message that you are too cheap or too expensive.
- People who receive CVs often use them for screening you 'out' rather than 'in'. Be aware that the first person to look at your CV for a specific job is not likely to be the person who will do the interviewing; the person screening out inappropriate CVs may only have a list of criteria to match. Your CV will have to get beyond this point to ensure you are considered for an interview.
- When you get to the interview, your CV can act as the agenda for your discussion, giving the interviewer a springboard from which to launch the inquiry. Yes, it is acceptable to keep it in front of you but only refer to it as, and when, you need to.

***'Remember, your resume is
your personal brochure, a 60 second
commercial if you will...
Use it to convince others of your ability
to meet the needs of the position.'***

Finite also recommend that you check out **iProfile** – this is the electronic CV of the future. You can either email your current CV to sydney@finite.com.au and allow us to create an iProfile for you, or alternatively build your own by visiting <http://au.iprofile.org/>