



Australian Government



# How to write a tailored résumé

In the same way a brochure tells potential customers what's great about a particular product, your résumé should show potential employers what you have to offer them.

## Important things to keep in mind when preparing a résumé include:

- Always tell the truth. In a job interview, employers will ask questions to check the claims you make in your résumé.
- Tailor your résumé to each job to show the employer that you can meet their needs.
- Identify your skills and achievements and explain why you are right for the job and how you can benefit the business.
- Check for spelling mistakes and typos. Ask someone else to proofread your documents too.

## What does your résumé say about you?

Your résumé provides employers with valuable information about you - both directly and indirectly.

### Direct information:

- Skills you have gained through paid employment, volunteer roles and through work experience.
- Knowledge you have gained through study and training, both at work and through community and sporting activities.
- Your personality traits that will help you at work.

### Indirect messages you could be sending an employer:

- Humorous email address e.g. evilpixie@bigpond.com = “they are not serious about our job”
- Spelling errors = “careless about their work”
- Unexplained gaps in your work history = “hiding something”
- Error free résumé featuring relevant key words = “shortlist this person”

Hint: Use simple job titles so employers can understand your job history. For example, “Receptionist” is much clearer than “Director of First Impressions”.



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### Exercise 1

What are three direct messages an employer could get from your résumé?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

What are three indirect messages an employer could draw from your résumé?

1. ....
  2. ....
  3. ....
- 

### Know the difference

Know the difference between skills and experience, personal attributes and qualifications.

**Skills and experience** – Knowing how to do a task required in the workplace. For example, managing others, customer service and computer skills.

**Note:** a skill can also be an area of experience. For example, customer service is a valuable skill but also an area of experience.

**Personal attributes** – These are the positive personality traits that show the employer you will be an asset to their business. For example being reliable, honest and enthusiastic.

**Qualifications/courses** – Certifications that show your level of education and/or prove you are able to do a particular job or activity. For example, Year 12 certificate or drivers licence.



## Exercise 2

Place the words below in the correct columns below.

**Note:** One of the terms listed below can be placed in more than one column. Hint - the term has two words.

- Certificate IV in Accounting
- Time management
- Well presented
- Fast and accurate typist
- Driver's licence
- Supervising others
- Punctual
- Certificate III in Aged Care
- Reliable
- Keen to learn
- Software tester
- Responsible Service of Alcohol/  
Responsible Service of Gambling
- Writing and editing
- Hard working
- Australian Red Cross First Aid certificate
- Customer service
- Microsoft Office Specialist (Excel)
- Enthusiastic

Personal attributes	Skills/Experience	Courses/Qualifications



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## Exerciser 2 - Answers

(Time management could be a personal attribute and a skill)

<b>Personal attributes</b>	<b>Skills/Experience</b>	<b>Courses/Qualifications</b>
Reliable	Writing and editing	Certificate III in Aged Care
Punctual	Time management	Certificate IV in Accounting
Well presented	Software tester	Australian Red Cross First Aid certificate
Hard working	Fast and accurate typist	Microsoft Office Specialist (Excel)
Enthusiastic	Customer service	Driver's licence
Keen to learn	Supervising others	Responsible Service of Alcohol/ Responsible Service of Gambling

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## Reviewing job ads

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### Exercise 3

Visit an online jobs board and find two job ads that interest you and that you think you might be suited to. Review the job ads and highlight the key words.

Hint: Key words describe the required personal traits and/or skills that the employer is looking for.

List the key words in the tables below in the relevant column (i.e. does it refer to personal attributes, skills and experience or training/qualifications) for each job:

Job 1 – Title .....

Personal attributes required	Skills and experience required	Training/qualifications required
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....

Job 2 – Title .....

Personal attributes required	Skills and experience required	Training/qualifications required
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....



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### Exercise 4

Using the same two job ads, think about your work, training and other experiences and list your examples:

**Job 1 – Title** .....

<b>Personal attributes required</b>	<b>Skills and experience required</b>	<b>Training/qualifications required</b>
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....

**Job 2 – Title** .....

<b>Personal attributes required</b>	<b>Skills and experience required</b>	<b>Training/qualifications required</b>
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....



## Referees

You will need at least two relevant referees. Always ask permission before listing someone as a referee. Once you have their permission, you can include their name and contact details at the end of your résumé.

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### Exercice 5

Reviewing the job ads you have selected, list two relevant referees. Choose people who supervised you. If you have lost touch with former managers, use the Internet (try social media sites like LinkedIn) to find their current contact details. People who have supervised you could be from paid employment, a work experience placement or a volunteer role. If you have worked for a family business, it is a good idea to find a manager who is not related to you. If you only worked with family, you may need to find someone else who can act as a referee.

### Character Reference

If you have never had a job, you could ask a school teacher, sports coach, neighbour, or someone from your religious or community group for a character reference.

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### Referee 1

Name: .....

Current title: .....

Business they work for: .....

Contact details: (Direct phone and email)

.....  
.....

Name of the business where you worked together, if this is different from the referee's current employer:

.....  
.....

Dates you worked together.....

Work relationship: (e.g. Your manager or another senior manager)

.....



**Referee 2**

Name: .....

Current title: .....

Business they work for: .....

Contact details: (Direct phone and email)  
 .....  
 .....

Name of the business where you worked together, if this is different from the referee’s current employer:  
 .....

Dates you worked together.....

Work relationship: (e.g. Your manager or another senior manager)  
 .....

**Résumé checklist**

Use the checklist below to ensure your work is error free. When you write a document it can be hard to find mistakes so give your résumé and this checklist to a friend to review for you.

Task	You	Friend
Only use professional sounding email addresses such as your name. Does your email sound professional?		
Is your name, phone and email included on each page? Even if you send your application via email, an employer may print out a hard copy and the pages could get separated.		
Have you included your key skills and personal attributes on your résumé? Do these match the key words used in the job ad that describe what the employer is looking for?		
Is all the information 100% correct? Can you answer questions at a job interview about everything you have included in your résumé?		
Are there any typos or spelling mistakes?		
If you have included hobbies or interests, do these support and strengthen your application for the job? If not, remove them.		
Have you included two relevant referees? Are their contact details current?		

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