



1. Overview

This guide provides information on:

- writing a resumé
- writing a cover letter.

2. Writing a resume

A **resumé**, or **curriculum vitae (CV)**, is a document that outlines your work experience, education, skills, and achievements to date.

2.1 Information to include

Everyone's resumé will look different, reflecting their own individual style and employment history.

Outlined below is the information generally included in a resumé:

• Contact details

Your contact details include your full name and contact information, such as your phone number and email address.

You do **not** need to include personal details such as your date of birth, a photo, where you live, your sex or gender, or marital status.

• Career profile

A career profile is a summary of your experience and skills that are relevant to the role you are applying for. Your career profile should be tailored to the job you are applying for. It should be short and include no more than five key points.

While it is not essential to include a career profile in your resumé, it can provide a helpful snapshot of who you are at the start of the document.

If you are new to the workforce you can use this section of your resumé to highlight your skills, interests, and other unique contributions that you can bring to the role.

• Work experience

In the work experience section of your resumé, list your most recent work or employment experience first.

You should include the following for each role you have held:

- the title of the role
- the name of your employer
- the dates you worked in the role
- your duties
- details of your experiences and achievements in the role.





Tip

When describing your work experience, it can be helpful to use bullet points and achievement statements.

Achievement statements highlight what you did and achieved. Use active verbs such as:

- Led...
- Managed...
- Created...
- Communicated...
- Negotiated...
- Trained...
- Researched...

Your listed work experience can include paid work, unpaid work, any relevant internships, and volunteer work.

You may also wish to list your qualifications and education before your work experience if your education is more recent or relevant.

Below is an example of how you could structure the work experience section of your resumé:

Work Experience

Retail assistant **The Shoes & Clothes Company**

January 2020 – May 2020

Duties and achievements:

- Communicated clearly with customers by listening and responding to enquiries.
- Revised the layout of the store to increase the space available for customers, resulting in increased sales.
- Created a satisfaction survey to send to customers after they had shopped with us to collect feedback and improve service.

• Education

In the education section of your resumé you should list your most recent education experience first.

Below is an example of how you may structure the education section of your resumé:

Education

Certificate III in Early Childhood Education

January 2020 – ongoing

*Technical and Further Education (TAFE)
NSW, Ultimo*

Achievements:

- First in class for *Introduction to Hands-on Learning*.

Higher School Certificate

Awarded in 2019

Chatswood High School

Achievements:

- Year 12 Sports Captain.
- Awarded the School Spirit Medal.
- Volunteered after school at local day care centre.

Here are some ways you can incorporate your referees' details:

1. Contact details available on request
2. Name, job position, organisation, and contact details available on request
3. Name, job position, organisation, and phone/email
4. Name, job position, organisation, phone/email, and relationship (for example, former supervisor).

A minimum of **two** referees is usually recommended.



Tip

Before including your referees' details in your resumé always check with them that they are happy to act as your referee. This way, they will be prepared to talk to your prospective employer about your skills, should they receive a call. You should also provide them with a copy of the job description, your cover letter and resumé so that they have all of the relevant information.

• Referees

A referee is a person who can provide feedback to your prospective employer about you. They should be someone you know well and who can attest to your professional skills and work performance.

Your referees' details are usually listed at the end of your resumé. You can choose to include the name and contact details of your referees in your resumé, or you can indicate that you will provide this information on request.

• Optional resumé inclusions

Other things you may wish to include in your resumé, but do not have to:

- **Interests:** only write about your interests if it adds value to your application or if it is relevant to the role.
- **Memberships:** if you are a member of a profession, committee or board, you may wish to include this information.
- **Awards:** general or community awards.
- **Publications:** if you have published a conference paper, or article, write about it or list the publication.

2.2 Sharing information about your disability

If you have a disability, it is entirely **your choice** whether you wish to share this information in your resumé or not.

However, if you are applying for a new job, you may wish to let the employer know that you have a disability to ensure reasonable adjustments are provided in the interview and recruitment process.

You may also wish to share information about your disability with your prospective employer so that you can more easily discuss any reasonable adjustments that you require if you are successful in securing the role.

More information about this can be found in the IncludeAbility guide on *Identifying as a person with disability in the workplace*.

2.3 Addressing gaps in your resume

Some people may be concerned about 'gaps' in their resumé. Gaps are periods of time away from education or employment.

You may have gaps in your resumé for a variety of reasons (for example, parental leave, travel, leave of absence, study, medical treatment).

You **do not** have to explain or disclose the reason for the gap in your resumé, although it may be helpful to be ready to address it if it is raised in your interview.

You may also wish to include information about other things you did during this time such as online courses, attending seminars, volunteer work, or any other activities that you may have participated in during your time away from formal education or employment.



Key resumé tips

- Keep it short: 2 pages or less if possible.
- Use concise bullet points: try and keep your bullet points on one line.
- Use headings and subheadings: be sure to make your headings stand out, use bold, underline or use the heading style in Word.
- Structure: make sure the most relevant and recent information appears first.
- Proofread: ask someone you know to proofread your resumé for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- White space: make sure there is enough white space on your resumé—use standard margins.

3. Writing a cover letter

A cover letter is a one-to-two-page letter tailored to the job you are applying for.

A cover letter is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your skills, experience, interests and values, and why you would be a good fit for the advertised role.

Some organisations will ask you to address a suite of selection criteria in your cover letter. Selection criteria are the core skills required for a role and can be found in the job description or in the job advertisement.

When writing your cover letter, make sure you have read the job advertisement and position description carefully.



Key cover letter tips

- Address the cover letter to a person where possible.
- Use the first line to introduce yourself.
- State what attracts you to the organisation or job.
- Outline how you meet the selection criteria. Use examples from your experience.
- Provide a brief summary of why you are a good fit for the role.
- Thank the addressee for considering your application.

4. Resources

For more information on writing a resumé or cover letter see:

- Monash University: monash.edu/career-connect/build/job-workshops
- University of Sydney: sydney.edu.au/careers/students/applying-for-jobs.html
- Seek: seek.com.au/career-advice/job-hunting
- JobAccess: jobaccess.gov.au/home
- Headspace: <https://headspace.org.au/young-people/how-to-prepare-for-job-search>.

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This guide is part of a suite of resources developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission as part of IncludeAbility to assist:

- employers provide meaningful job opportunities to people with disability
- people with disability navigate barriers to employment.

Further resources are available at www.IncludeAbility.gov.au.