

# PREPARING YOUR RESUME

A resume or CV (the terms are interchangeable) is NOT a complete record of everything you have ever done. A resume is primarily a marketing tool – it is the promotional document which allows you to match your skills and experiences to the needs of an employer. There is no point in sending out the same resume to a dozen different employers. Like any marketing document it needs to sell the 'benefits', and be targeted to the particular recipient. The aim of the resume is to get you to the interview stage where you can further 'sell' your skills and abilities.

The resume format recommended, especially for those with little work experience in Australia, is the **skills based resume**. This type of resume style tends to be more effective in getting across to potential employers 'what I can offer your organisation'.

## **How to Start**

Before constructing a resume you need to list all the activities you have been involved in over the past few years. Include paid work, volunteer work, work placement / work experience, academic studies, cultural and sporting activities etc. From this list identify the skills that you have developed through participating in these various activities. It is helpful to work with a friend when doing this as an outsider can identify a talent you have that you take for granted (eg. being a good listener, always available to help others, good time management and organisational skills).

## **Transferable Skills**

Group together similar skills which you may have developed across a range of activities eg 'teamwork' may have been developed in your sporting activities, community service and part time job.

You should end up with quite an extensive list of 'transferable or employability skills'. For each skill briefly describe how, and in what situation, you have demonstrated that skill. This will now be your '**master list**' of skills that you can present to a potential employer. Each time you change/update your resume to submit to a potential employer, you will need to select (as a guide) the 5-7 most applicable skills and include them in your resume.

**This skills section in your resume is really the core of the document. Coming after your personal details and profile, it presents in a clear and concise manner, just what it is you have to offer. It should run to approximately 1-2 pages.**

## **Match your skills to the job advertisement**

It is very important that you check to ensure that skills you have to offer are a good match for the skills that are required for the job you are applying for. Use language that reflects the language of the employer eg. if they refer to 'client contact', change your skill title of 'customer service skills' to 'client contact'.

**Careful attention to the format as well as the content of your resume will significantly enhance your chances of gaining an interview.**

Your resume should be as long as it needs to be to provide the employer with a comprehensive, yet concise, picture of how you will be an asset to their organisation. Generally your resume should be 3-4 pages in length.

**Aim for visual appeal –**

- Clear headings
- Point format
- Large margins
- Wide spaces between categories

**Be consistent with headings and fonts.**

**Use spell check and proofread. Have someone else proofread as well.**

### **RESUME CHECKLIST**

- Is it well organised?
- Is the presentation professional and of high quality?
- Can the employer identify the benefits you have to offer as an employee?
- Can you talk about every item in your resume?
- Are you happy that the employer is getting the total picture of you as an employee?

**The onus is on you to demonstrate your value** – it is not up to the Selection Panel or employer to decipher this from your resume. The format for a skills based resume is given on the following page. Use this as a guide to compose your own resume.