

Notes for Updating your Resume

Updating My Resume Video Training

Welcome to this online training presented by Swinburne Skills and Jobs centre and my name is Fiona Fowler. This training is for you if you have an existing resume and are needing to update and tailor it to look for new jobs. You may also be interested in other training sessions in this series; My first Resume and My first Cover Letter. Details as to where they can be found are shown at the end of this session.

Objectives

In this session you will learn about the purpose of a resume and learn how to update or tailor your resume for each job for which you apply. Using an example, we will show you the process and key points that you need to consider when updating your resume so that it matches the criteria that the employer is looking for. So that by the end of this session, you will have had the opportunity to update your resume that has been tailored to a specific role.

At the end of the session we will also let you know where you can go for further support and to help answer any of your questions.

What you will need during this session

To get the most from this session, make sure you have the following with you:

The blank resume template

Your current resume and just in case it's been awhile since your resume was last updated it is good to make sure that you have your details in relation to education, certificates, licenses, employment history and any volunteer experience.

You can also have with you a recent job ad for a role in which you are interested

It is also good to have with you the list of action words that have been provided to you.

You might also like a pen and paper to make notes as we go along.

There are opportunities within the video for you to stop and complete your own details. However, you may also like to stop the training at any time or rewind so that you can really take your time.

The purpose of a Resume

So, before we look at how to update your resume, it's a good idea to remind ourselves of the purpose of a resume

A resume is a document that you provide to potential employers that highlights your experiences, skills and achievements. It helps potential employers learn more about you and whether to invite you to an interview. With often many people applying for the one job, it is your resume that can help you stand out.

So, it's very important that your resume is updated to include key words from the job role, for each job for which you apply. This is your opportunity to show how your skills and experience match what the employer is seeking.

Remember this is your opportunity to show why you want this job and how you can provide value to this role and to the employer. A good resume will help you stand out from other applicants

Resume and ATS

Before we look at a Resume, we'll talk about the role of an ATS. Many companies and recruiters now use software to help them sift through a large number of applications that they receive. This software is known as an ATS (Applicant Tracking Software) and it save the potential employers and recruiters time, because it provides a first screen of all applicants.

Only once the application has passed through the ATS does it get to an actual person.

A resume is most likely to pass the initial ATS screening if you follow these points:

Don't include tables or fancy graphics as the ATS cannot read it and there is a good chance that you resume will not then get past the ATS.

Ensure you include Key words from the job ad – the ATS has been programmed to search for key words from the Job Ad to ensure that you have the skills and experience that the role is seeking

The layout needs to be simple and contain clear headings

Use easy to read font such as Calibri, Arial, or Helvetica.

Use the same font size throughout – with around size 14 for headings and font size 11-12 for all other text

Finally check for any spelling or grammar mistakes

Certainly not all companies use an ATS, but it is good practice to ensure that your resume has clear headings, easy to read font and contains key words from the Job Ad. This is why we recommend using the template provided as it has been designed to provide a clear overview of your skills and experiences.

However, it is your choice as to whether you use the template to update your resume.

Using the Template

Shown here is the template provided and this contains the main sections that your resume should include. We will be going through each of these sections in detail, in the coming slides. But for now, we will just provide an overview.

- Name and Contact details
- Professional statement
- Education include relevant certificates and licenses
- Employment History
- Volunteering experience that may contain relevant experience
- Skills – select the most relevant for the job
- Achievements

- Referees two to three preferred.

You might like to open the resume template now, as we'll be asking you to complete throughout this session.

Let's look at updating a sample resume

Let's now look at an example, using the case of a job seeker whose name is Ben. We will introduce Ben, the work and experience that he has, the type of work that he is looking for and then learn how to update the resume to the specific job role that he has found.

This is Ben

So, this is Ben who has completed his VCE in 2000 and has been working for the past 20 years in Delivery and Warehouses. He recently renewed his LO and LF Forklift licenses.

After Ben left school, he picked up work as a Delivery driver for Freight Express. He enjoyed this but after five years wanted something different. He then moved to the Smith Kitchen company where he obtained work as a Warehouse Assistant and this is where he learned a lot of on the ground skills associated with warehouse operations. Once again, he was in this role for five years before getting a job as Assistant Team Leader at Roberts Warehouse International. Ben has been working here for the past nine years and has some great skills relevant for the Industry but is looking now for more senior roles in the transport and logistics sector – specifically in Warehousing, Storage & Distribution. Ben has a resume so let's now look at it.

Ben's existing Resume

This is Ben's current resume; however, he knows that in today's competitive climate he needs to make sure that his resume stands out but is not quite sure what to do.

So, let's have a look at it.

Overall, Ben has included some good information, but it is hard to see it, in this current format.

He has included some contact details but is missing a phone number and email address

He has included his education from 20 years ago

His work experience and skills don't stand out making it hard for an employer to see whether he has what they need.

He has included skills in two places

His two referees are good and laid out well.

We will look at a better way to lay out all of Ben's details in the resume so that they really stand out to a potential employer

Before we do that, let's now look at what's generally included in the first section of a resume.

Let's check and update the Contact and Education sections

Let's look at the first section of your resume. 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. Having your name in a larger font size makes it easier for employers to see.

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 and if possible, 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.

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.

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 Diploma completed in 2019 and then the Cert IV in 2018.

You can also include any other relevant certificates that you feel may be relevant such as a white card, Forklift license or First Aid certificate.

Let's now look at Ben's example.

Ben's example

Ben has made changes to his first section and has now added in his phone number and email address. He decided to include his full address details as the job is located close to his home and he feels that this will be an advantage to him. You can see that Ben has also included a LinkedIn address as well. He has checked and can also see that many roles at the supervisory level, require you to have a LinkedIn account so he has created one and included the link here.

We will come back and complete the professional profile later.

The role does not state any required qualifications and as Ben has not completed any formal qualifications, he leaves this section blank. Previously he had included his Year 12, but it has been many years since he has been at school, so it is not relevant to include this on his resume.

Ben does include the renewal of his LO and LF Forklift licenses as having this license is a requirement of the new job role. He also includes that he has a manual Driver's license.

Time for you to complete the contact and education details

We're now going to pause while you start updating your Name, Contact and Education details. You may like to use the template provided so that you know that your resume will pass an ATS.

Remember to include any recent qualifications, short courses, certificates, licenses, white card etc See you soon.

Updating the employment section

Let's look at the next section of the Resume which is updating the employment section. Let's run through the basics first.

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 dot points that show your responsibilities and or achievements while in this role. Remember a responsibility is the task that you actually do at work e.g. Delivered goods. An achievement is something that shows that you have gone above and beyond. For example, you may have increased productivity 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 have provided 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.

If you have limited employment experience or gaps in our employment, then including any volunteer work is very important. Volunteering is highly regarded as it can demonstrate other skills and abilities that you have.

Ben's example – updating the employment section

This is Ben's original resume before any editing.

While he has placed the jobs in reverse chronological order (newest first) he also needs to include the month and year that he started and finished each job role. As he is still working in the most recent job, then he needs to show the end date as "current"

The job title and company name also need to be highlighted to distinguish them from the responsibilities

Dot points are needed for each new responsibility / achievement

He has described some key responsibilities starting with an action word, but some of the statements need to be changed.

What Ben needs to do now, is to look at the job Ad and pick out key words and ensure that these are included into his resume. So, let's now look again at the job Ad.

The new Job role

Before we update the resume, firstly let's look at the new job role that Ben has found.

Ben really enjoys working in Warehouses and has found a job on Seek working as a Team Leader for the company, Wilson and Bradley.

This role would be a good match for his skills and interests.

So now we will look at identifying and including key words from the job ad.

Highlighting key words from the Job Ad

Once you have selected a job, you need to carefully look at what the employer is looking for in an ideal candidate.

Go through the Job Ad, line by line and highlight the following.

Identify the tasks and skills – to do this find the words used to describe the skills. For example, the ability to use RF scanning or to train new staff

Also identify the personal qualities or attributes that shows the prospective employer what you can bring to the role. For example, communication skills, leading a team, problem solving.

Now you need to determine how well you fit the employer's needs

This is an opportunity to review your past experiences of employment, volunteer roles and education.

Using the key words from the job Ad, write down examples that show how your skills and attributes will meet the requirements of the role and be a good fit for the employer.

Remember that when an ATS is scanning your resume, it is looking for key words from the Job Ad to ensure that you have the skills and experience that the role is seeking. So, it is important that you make sure to use the prospective employer's key words to show that you are a good match for their requirements.

Key responsibilities

Let's look at Ben's job ad again and focus on the section dealing with key responsibilities. Ben will look at all the responsibilities and identify those where he has experience. Now when you are looking at a job role, you are not expected to include all of them in your resume, just those for which you have experience.

Remember when updating your resume to include the key words. For example, Ben has experience in the following and can adjust his statements to include key words/ phrases such as:

1. Replenishing warehouse items
3. Unloading containers
5. Responding to employee questions

6. Answer employee questions and train new employees

These are just some examples that Ben can include

The personal qualities and experience needed

Ben now goes through the personal qualities and experience needed section of the job ad. After looking at each of these points, to Ben's surprise he can include all of these in his resume as he can demonstrate this attribute or can show that he does have the work experience.

Ben will now demonstrate throughout his resume that he does have this experience or these attributes.

Ben's updated employment section

Ben has made the suggested changes and now shows the relevant months against each job

He has highlighted the job title and company name

He has included dot points against each responsibility and ensured that they all start with an Action word (to really highlight his achievements)

He has included many of the key words/ phrases from the job Ad.

He has also included other key words in other sections of the Resume which we will look at soon

Time for you to highlight the key words

So, you may have a job ad that you are interested in and would like to apply.

Go through it carefully to see if you can identify what you think may be key responsibilities, skills, and attributes that the company requires.

Doing this stage is very important so that you can ensure that you have included at least some of the key words in your resume. So that the employer (and an ATS) can see more easily that you have the necessary skills and experience.

We're now going to pause while you make a note while you highlight the key words.

Time for you to complete your work details

Welcome back and now that you have identified the key words, it is now time to see which of them you can include in your resume. Start by looking at your employment and volunteer sections. If you have the necessary experience, then include the key words as part of your dot points that describe your responsibilities. Remember to start each dot point with an action word as these will really help show an employer what you have achieved. To help you with examples of action words that you can include, look at the Action word provided.

We're now going to pause, and we'll see you when you've finished this section.

Skills method 1

Welcome back and the last section that we look at is Skills, Achievements, and referees.

We will start by looking at the skills section and we will look at two ways to show them.

The Skills section is an opportunity for you to provide evidence that demonstrates your skills in relation to a job role. As mentioned, there are a couple of different ways in which you can show the skills on your resume. The method that you choose really depends upon the focus of the role – is it the skills or the experience that may be more important?

For example, if we looked at a role in computing, one of the main priorities is to have technical skills in a range of programs. In this case, it makes sense to just list these and it is more likely to place these skills on the front page. Placing them after the Professional statement and any relevant education. In this way the potential employer can quickly see the desired skills.

Skills – method 2 using Ben's example

Another way to show skills is to select two to three key skills from the job ad and then provide an example for each that demonstrates that you have that particular skill. You may use this method when you believe that work experience is the most important focus of the role. So in this case, include your employment experience on the front page and then show examples of key skills later in the resume.

Let's look at Ben's skills section. Ben has chosen to highlight three skills mentioned in the job ad: communication, collaboration, and attention to detail. Ben has provided examples of when he demonstrated each of these skills.

It is also interesting to note that the skills that Ben has chosen to include are also called **Transferable skills**. In fact, many employers now focus on a candidate's employability or transferrable skills.

They are called this because they are skills that can be transferred from one job to another. Other examples can include Teamwork, Organisation, Time Management etc. Over your working life, you will continue to develop new skills that employer's value from across different industries and jobs.

Achievements and Referees

The last sections of the resume are Achievements and Referees.

Achievements are things that you have achieved over and beyond your normal duties. You would include these on your resume to demonstrate motivation, initiative, problem solving. For example, you may have won an award at work or increased sales for the company.

The last section that we look at is referees. Potential employers want to know your past work performance and will want to talk with someone who knows you. Think carefully about the people that you will choose to be your Referees. You want someone who can speak honestly about your skills and experience and will say very positive things about you. The best Referees are an ex employer or a Volunteer coordinator who know your capabilities. Ideally you should include two referees. If you don't have an employer and/or someone from a volunteer position, 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.

Ben's referees

Ben did not include any achievements so that his last section relates to referees

He has also chosen two work referees who he knows will speak glowingly about his performance.

Time to complete your skills, achievements and referee details

We're now going to pause while you start completing your details for your skills, achievements and referees. For the skills section try and include examples from the Job Ad such as Communication, Teamwork 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.

For achievements see if you can include any relevant awards or examples where you have developed or implemented new procedures or systems.

Include at least two Referees

Let's come back to the 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 snapshot 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 just a few sentences. You could describe your top three relevant skills that would be relevant for the job role.

Ben's professional summary

Ben has started his statement with an eye-catching action word and clearly identifies his years of experience and his area of expertise – warehouse operations. He also highlights quickly his experience using RF scanners and SAP. Both of which were essential to the role. He manages to incorporate his focus on customer service, experience leading staff and his focus on warehouse productivity. His summary description contains many key words from the job Ad and is completed within four sentences. It provides the potential employer with an overview of his experiences and skills. You may notice that the first sentence does 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 to complete your Professional Summary

We're now going to pause while you start writing your Professional Summary. To help you get started, think about the key skills that the role is looking for and ones that you can show examples. 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 to four sentences in length. Don't worry if you need to rewrite this section several times. It can sometimes take a while. The important thing is to get started and put down the basics. Then you can come back to it later and make changes.

Putting it all together

Now that we have updated all the sections, it is time to put them all together to check how well the whole resume reads. We want to double check that key words from the job Ad have been included and that we have provided examples of relevant skills and experiences. In this way we will know that we have provided a good match for what the employer is looking for and an ATS. It's a good idea at this stage, to give your resume to a family member or friend to read and they can provide feedback on how well the resume reads and whether they have picked up any spelling or grammatical mistakes.

Summary

We have now completed updating the resume. The main points to remember – keep it simple and easy to read. Use key words from job ad, so that a potential employer or even an ATS can see that you have the necessary skills.

Ensure that you use the same font and size throughout.

Check for any spelling and grammatical errors.

It is preferred that the resume length is two pages but if you have a lot of work experience then three pages is okay.

Remember to make sure that everything that you include on your resume is the truth.

Where to next?

It's been lovely sharing this journey with you today and I want to let you know that 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.