

RESUMÉS THAT WORK

How to write a professional resumé
that gets you the interview.



By Dr Edward Gifford Ph.D.; M.Ed.; M.A.
Angela Gifford M.Couns., M.Ed.

Resumés that Work

How to write a professional resumé that gets you noticed

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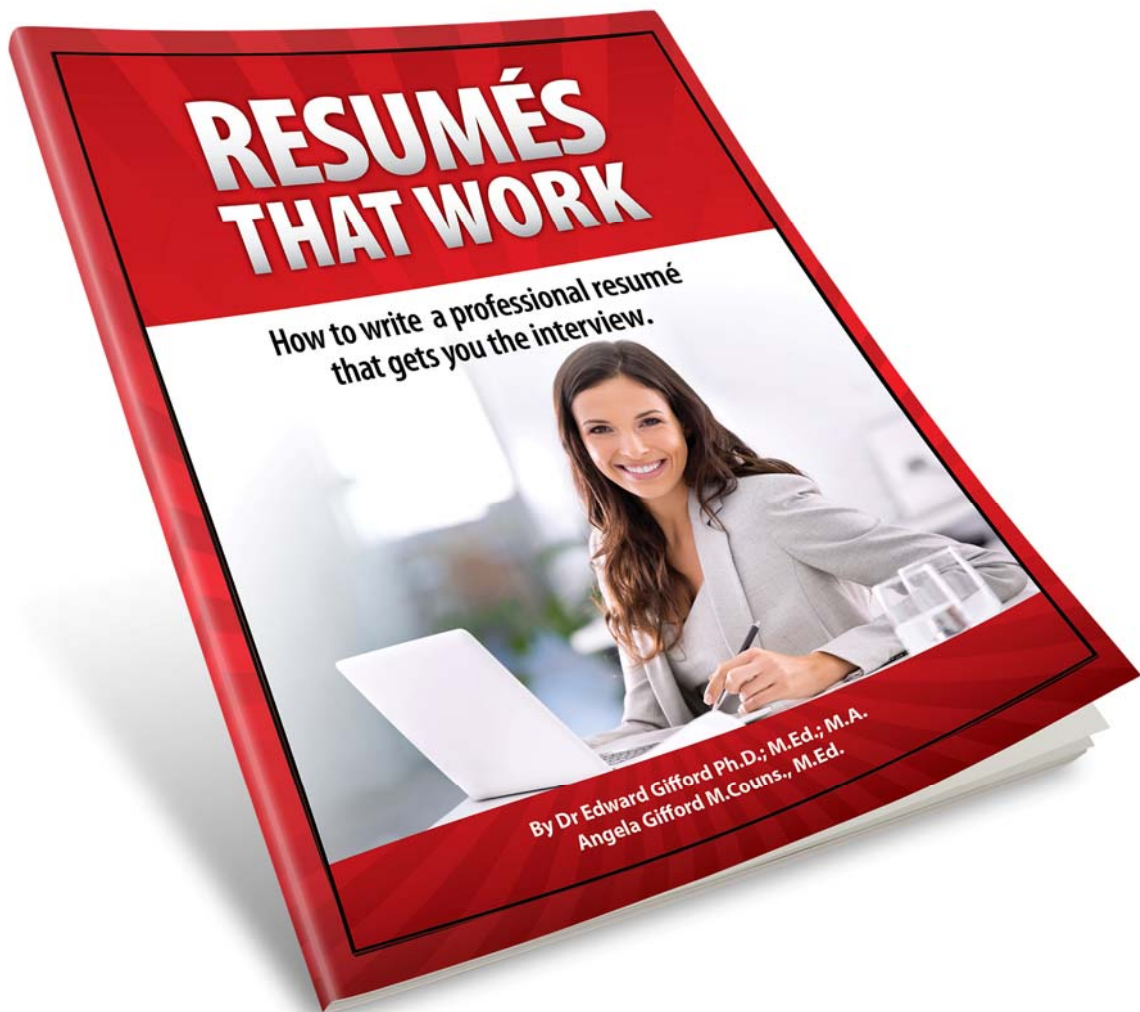
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Ph: +617 5502 6644
Email: edward@executivecareermove.com.au
www.executivecareermove.com.au

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Meet the authors

Dr Edward Gifford

Ph.D.
Master of Education (M.Ed.)
Master of Arts (M.A.)
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
Diploma of Education (Dip.Ed.)
Diploma of Management
Cert. IV Training and Assessment
Cert. IV Coaching for Life and Business
Advanced Training in ACT



Edward is a professionally-trained coach specialising in executive, leadership and careers coaching as well as workplace coaching. He is also a business adviser, mentor and coach. Edward's consulting services include a focus on leadership development, career transition, strategic thinking, team building, workplace engagement and work-life integration. He is also a business skills mentor and coach for the Qld Government.

Edward has been coaching full-time since 2000, and has over 3000 hours of personal, executive, careers and workplace coaching experience.

Edward is passionate about improving the purpose, performance and productivity of organisations through leadership and people development, team building and engagement, using an integrative work-life framework and "getting everyone on the same page". As evidence of his passion and ability, Edward has also led his coaching academy over the past 10 years, and has developed and implemented a number of highly acclaimed leadership and coaching products.

Edward is an experienced Public Speaker having presented over 50 keynotes and guest speaking addresses at conferences and professional association meetings. His highly developed inter-personal skills, enthusiasm, substantial experience and knowledge have significantly contributed to personal and organisational transformation.

Angela Gifford

Master of Counselling (M.Couns.)
Master of Education (M.Ed.)
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
Diploma of Education (Dip.Ed.)
Teachers' Certificate (WA) The Teachers' Higher Certificate (WA)
Cert. IV Coaching for Life and Business
Cert. IV Assessment and Workplace Training



Angela is a coach, trainer, researcher and writer with over 1500 hours experience in coaching and counselling.

Angela is passionate about the 'human factor' in partnering with organisations and individuals. She views each person in an organisation as having 'significance' and sees individual, group or organisational dysfunction as a symptom of meaninglessness and purposelessness. Her preferred career outplacement and coaching model – ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Training) – is a model for optimal psychological functioning. It lends itself ideally to educating toward behavioural change in a non-condemnatory manner.

The prospect of helping people find their way within their careers to what constitutes a full and meaningful life, lived in alignment with their values and despite what life might present to them, is most attractive to Angela.

As evidence of her energy and interest, Angela has been involved in running the coaching programs since 2001, undertaking a variety of roles. This includes administration, research, writing, presenting, proofreading and being a sounding board. Jointly, Edward and Angela have developed and implemented a number of highly acclaimed leadership and coaching products and services.

Foreword

If you are reading this you have probably been made redundant or are seeking a new career that is more meaningful and fulfilling.

The question is: are you Resumé Ready?

Whether you are in career transition, wanting to make a career move or experiencing redundancy, having a professional resumé that ensures you an interview is a vital step in taking control of and managing your professional career.

The primary function of a professional resumé is for you to gain an interview. No interview—no new position! Your resumé is a marketing and sales document designed to grab the attention of the recruiter or employer and encourage them to call you to further discuss your background and match for the position.

It is a short, succinct and clear professional account of your career, qualifications and achievements. Usually 'skimmed' through in a few seconds, it is reviewed against two simple criteria: *read again* or *no!*

If you are a professional or executive who has previously been "head-hunted" or has been in the same position for a long time, you will be very surprised at how writing a good resumé has changed.

Without exception, we have never viewed a resumé from a client that is already up-to-date and is achievement, results and benefits driven.

Writing a compelling resumé that will ensure you 'stand out from the crowd' and get you noticed is an art form requiring skill, creativity, and an understanding of psychology, as well as marketing.

In this book, we offer professional career advice on how to write and create an effective and compelling resumé that gets you the interview with your position of choice.

If you are seeking to re-enter the marketplace quickly, eliminate rejection, and find a stable career that utilizes your skills and ignites your passions then you need to be Resumé Ready today.

Our eBook is a great first step in getting you back into your position of choice.

With our eBook you will learn the following ways to get your resumé up to speed

- ✓ Discover the 9 key principles for creating a winning resumé that positions you as the expert in your field and secures your interview
- ✓ Use our tried-and-tested resumé templates and learn how to select the right one for the right position
- ✓ Learn how to adapt and 'tailor' your resumé to different career and job opportunities so your employer of choice feels it has been prepared especially for them!
- ✓ Learn the most up-to-date skills in how to address selection criteria – an art in itself – conquer this and your job opportunities open up considerably
- ✓ Refine your quantifiable achievement statements in order to market and 'sell' yourself positively to your employer of choice
- ✓ Learn how to write compelling covers letters and how to use them reactively and proactively
- ✓ Learn how to choose your referees and the best methods of sending out your resumé
- ✓ Learn how to use your resumé with executive search consultants

Thank you for reading our book. If you apply this information and knowledge on how to write a professional resumé, we are extremely confident that you will get noticed and maximise your chance of getting an interview for the position you are seeking.

Edward Gifford PhD

Principal Consultant, Executive Career Move

A note about the difference between the term resumé and curriculum vitae (CV)

The word *resumé* is used throughout rather than curriculum vitae (CV). So, what's the difference? The terms are used interchangeably in today's job search language, but there are some differences.

A resumé is a concise summary of your achievements, career history, qualifications and skills, and is usually no more than 3-4 pages; while a curriculum vitae is a longer and more detailed synopsis of your career.

As a "living document" (Latin for curriculum vitae is "course of life"), a CV reflects the developments in a professional's career and is generally used when applying for educational, academic, scientific or research positions. It includes your educational and academic background, as well as teaching and research experience, publications, presentations and speaking engagements, conferences, awards and honours, affiliations, and other details. While a resumé includes some of this information, a CV is a more elaborate accounting.



Introduction

Finding your *position of choice with your employer of choice* cannot be left to chance. Substantial preparation is needed before you launch straight into rewriting your resumé.

There is a tried and proven process here.

This book takes you through this process.

The first chapters will ensure that when reviewing your resumé, you will be very clear about your *transferable skills* and *career achievements*.

For you to be fulfilled and successful in your career move, you will need to find positions where you can do more of what you do best – more profitably!

You will have greater clarity and confidence in seeking new roles when you know your strongest transferable skills, strengths and passions. It is important to know these as you will communicate them both consciously and unconsciously in your resumé and job search.

You will also need to be very clear in the way you communicate the features and achievements of your previous roles and how these can be positively utilised to the benefit of your future employer.

The more self-aware you are in these areas, the greater the likelihood of these important factors emerging in your resumé.

So, you need to be a little patient in the first chapters. They are all about ‘preparing the soil’ rather than ‘displaying the fruit’.

If you just want to cut to the chase and get cracking on using the great information and templates we have provided, then you can go straight to Chapter 3.

But beware of the quick fix!



Chapter 1. What are my transferable skills?

You may be wondering *what* transferable skills are and *why* you need to be clear about them prior to writing your resumé.

These are two important questions.

Transferable skills are those skills you develop and acquire over many years through every day experiences both in and outside of work. They are not to be confused with personality styles or traits, such as ‘gives attention to detail’; ‘works well under pressure’; ‘self-motivated’; ‘dependable and reliable’ and so on.

They might include your ability in areas such as verbal communication, written communication, coaching, training, mentoring, interpersonal relations, research, analysis, project management, IT, administration and so on.

They are the things you do competently and with confidence. You are the “go to” person if someone wants a particular job done. You have a reputation, and your colleagues know you, as the expert.

Usually, functional or transferable skills fall into your skills with people, information, and things.

Richard Bolles, in his book, *What Colour is your Parachute*, is helpful in outlining the lowest to highest skills in these categories.

For example, your higher people skills could show an increasing level of sophistication from supervising→ instructing→ negotiating→ mentoring → coaching.

Information, data, or thinking skills, are commonly categorised from lowest to highest as remembering→ comparing→ understanding→ applying→ analysing→ evaluating→ innovating/designing→ synthesizing.

Your transferable skills to do with things would include handling→ tending→ manipulating→ operating→ driving→ controlling→ precision working→ setting up.

As a general rule, you usually learn these in a hierarchical way, with each higher skill requiring you to be able to use the skills below it.

The other important point to remember is that the lower skills are usually prescribed by your employer; while the higher skills are the ones you need to keep front of mind in your job search and when responding to positions of choice with your resumé.

These will help you stand out from the crowd and will be the ones you take to your employer of choice – even if they have not advertised a position!

When you are applying for positions in any of the following four situations, knowing your strongest transferable skills and being able to communicate them, is essential. This is particularly true if seeking a different job in a different industry.

Same job, same industry	Same job, different industry
Different job, same industry	Different job, different industry

A word of encouragement!

One of the authors, Edward, had to leave his tenured University position due to an unexpected medical condition. Being a Senior Lecturer in Education, he suddenly found himself out of work and was told he would never be able to re-enter the profession. That was pretty scary!

As it turned out, he was forced to seek employment in the fourth category – new position and new industry. Knowing his transferable skills was the key to giving him the confidence to start his own leadership and management consultancy in coaching, facilitating, training and speaking. Over the years as a lecturer, he had developed high transferable skills in compiling, analysing, evaluating and designing courses. These courses required continual innovation, as well as a high level of written and oral communication. Working successfully in leadership positions with colleagues and students for over 25 years also required a high level of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

So instead of having to completely re-train, these high-level skills were almost seamlessly applied to his new business. The only new thing required was content and knowledge, which he has successfully acquired.

Regardless of what you believe or what others might say, you have really well-developed skills and talents. Knowing your highest or strongest transferable skills will ensure you communicate these with clarity and passion when writing your achievement statements in your resumé.

It will also subconsciously draw you to positions that strongly utilize these skills, so you don't waste time sending out your resumé for positions that don't obviously engage your skills and strengths.

You may think you only need to know these in your job search and not for your resumé.

Not so!

The point is that you need to be able to identify and use the strongest of these to leverage yourself into your next career/role.

It is also important to include these in your resumé and embed them into your success "stories" when you are being interviewed.

A final question remains: How do I know what my highest transferable skills are? You can spend a day or so writing a list of these and get feedback from those who know you well.

The following exercises will help you with this and with laying the foundations for writing your all-important achievement statements.

1.1 Identifying my transferable skills from my career stories

This is a reflective approach to identifying your Transferable Skills. It is not prescriptive and there are no word banks to tick and jog your memory.

However, we do provide a common and useful framework to get you started.

Think about a project in your last role, and then write a short, concise story using the common STAR technique as framework:

S	situation
T	task
A	action
R	result

Not only will this help you write your Achievement Statements in your resumé (which we focus on in the next Chapter), but it will also be particularly helpful in responding to ‘performance based’ interview questions, such as: “Tell me about a situation in which you demonstrated your project management skills.”

Here is an example to get you started.

<p>SITUATION</p> <p>Define the situation or ‘set the stage’. It includes the goal to be achieved.</p>	<p><i>Business XYZ faced a financial crisis. Goal was to sell the business for \$250 million urgently to prevent bankruptcy</i></p>
<p>TASK</p> <p>Identify the task/project performed. Some kind of hurdle, obstacle, challenge or constraint you faced.</p>	<p><i>Needed to work with 7 lawyers, 14 companies, 3 States, restricted market and limited time frame</i></p>
<p>ACTION</p> <p>Describe the action that you took/initiated. This response should illustrate the specific skills you used in completing the task. A description of what you did, step by step. Be specific and use strong action verbs to begin each point.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Involved all stakeholders in developing a strategic plan</i> • <i>Communicated daily with all stakeholders via phone and email to ensure everyone was on the same page</i> • <i>Developed operational plan to meet deadlines</i>
<p>RESULT</p> <p>Summarize the outcome. A description of the outcome or result (key deliverables, measurable contributions from the organisation’s perspective, any measurable or quantifiable statement of that outcome).</p>	<p><i>Completed the sale within the time frame, at budget, within price and saved 2000 jobs</i></p>
<p>TRANSFERABLE SKILLS FROM THIS ‘STORY’?</p> <p>From this ‘story’, what are your Transferable Skills – things you are obviously good at and enjoy doing?</p>	<p><i>Project Management; Operational Planning; Written Communication; Verbal Communication; Aligning Teams; Setting Up; Negotiating; Driving-operating; Coordinating</i></p>
<p># 1 TRANSFERABLE SKILL?</p> <p>From this ‘story’ and your list, identify your favourite and strongest Transferable Skill.</p>	<p><i>e.g., Project Management?</i></p>

ACTIVITY: Identifying my transferable skills through self reflection

Now it's your turn. Write at least three 'stories' from your most recent roles (ideally within the last 5 years) using the STAR technique.

Remember: be specific! Employers claim that many job seekers give vague and indefinite responses. For example, if you claim that you have strong Project Management skills, demonstrate them by citing some actual 'stories' from your experiences. Put these in your resumé and be ready to speak to them in your interview.

Later in the book you will come back to these 'stories' to write your Achievement (or accomplishment) Statements.

In our coaching sessions, we ask the candidate to write at least six of these 'stories'. The payoff when writing your resumé is priceless. Copy and use this template as many times as you like.

Identifying my transferable skills through self-reflection – Project/Story 1

SITUATION &/OR GOAL	
TASK – CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES	
ACTION – ACTION STEPS	
RESULT – MEASUREABLE &/OR QUANTIFIABLE ACHIEVEMENTS	
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS FROM 'STORY'	
# 1 TRANSFERABLE SKILL?	

1.2 Identifying my transferable skills using a self-assessment tool

While the previous activity asked for an 'inside-out' approach of self discovery, this activity is more directive, working from the 'outside-in'. It will be useful to compare the results of both processes to see if there is any relationship between them.

The following Questionnaire summarises the candidate's skills under 9 categories:

1. Verbal Communication
2. Written Communication
3. Train/Consult
4. Analyse
5. Research
6. Plan and Organise
7. Interpersonal Relations
8. Project Management
9. Administrative/IT

Many of the above are Transferable Skills. Remember, these are the skills you develop and acquire over many years through everyday experiences both in and outside of work.

ACTIVITY: Identifying my 'Transferable Skills' tool

Instructions

1. First tick your estimated level of accomplishment for each skill
 1. No ability
 2. A small degree of ability
 3. Moderate ability
 4. Good ability
 5. Excellent ability
2. Put an asterisk next to what you like doing (* if you like, ** if like a lot, *** if you love doing)
3. Circle what you would like more training in.

1 - Verbal Communication		1	2	3	4	5
1.1	Speak well in public appearances					
1.2	Confront and express opinions without offending					
1.3	Interview people to obtain information					
1.4	Handle complaints ___in person ___over phone					
1.5	Present ideas effectively in speeches or lecture					
1.6	Persuade/influence others to a certain point of view					
1.7	Sell ideas, products or services					
1.8	Debate ideas with others					
1.9	Participate in group discussions and teams					
Verbal Communication Total /45						

2 - Written Communication		1	2	3	4	5
2.1	Write technical language, reports, manuals					
2.2	Write grant proposals					
2.3	Prepare and write logically written reports					
2.4	Write copy for sales and advertising					
2.5	Edit and proofread written material					
2.6	Prepare revisions of written material					
2.7	Utilize all forms of technology for writing					
2.8	Write Case Studies and Treatment Plans					
2.9	Demonstrate expertise in grammar and style					
Written Communication Total /45						

3 – Train/Consult		1	2	3	4	5
3.1	Teach, advise, coach, empower					
3.2	Conduct needs assessments					
3.3	Use a variety of media for presentation					
3.4	Develop educational curriculum and materials					
3.5	Create and administer evaluation plan					
3.6	Facilitate a group					
3.7	Explain difficult ideas, complex topics					
3.8	Assess learning styles and respond accordingly					
3.9	Consult and recommend solutions					
3.10	Write well organised and documented reports					
Train/Consult Total /50						

4 - Analyse		1	2	3	4	5
4.1	Study data or behaviour for meaning and solutions					
4.2	Analyse quantitative, physical and/or scientific data					
4.3	Write analysis of study and research					
4.4	Compare and evaluate information					
4.5	Systematize information and results					
4.6	Apply curiosity					
4.7	Investigate clues					
4.8	Formulate insightful and relevant questions					
4.9	Use technology for statistical analysis					
Analyse Total /45						

5 – Research		1	2	3	4	5
5.1	Identify appropriate information sources					
5.2	Search written, oral, and technological information					
5.3	Interview primary sources					
5.4	Hypothesize and test for results					
5.5	Compile numerical and statistical data					
5.6	Classify and sort information into categories					
5.7	Gather information from a number of sources					
5.8	Patiently search for hard-to-find information					
5.9	Utilize electronic search methods					
Research Total /45						

6 - Plan and Organise		1	2	3	4	5
6.1	Identify and organise tasks or information					
6.2	Coordinate people, activities and details					
6.3	Develop a plan and set objectives					
6.4	Set up and keep time schedules					
6.5	Anticipate problems and respond with solutions					
6.6	Develop realistic goals and action to attain them					
6.7	Arrange correct sequence of information and actions					
6.8	Create guidelines for implementing an action					
6.9	Create efficient systems					
6.10	Follow through, ensure completion of a task					
Plan and Organise Total /50						

7 - Interpersonal Relations		1	2	3	4	5
7.1	Convey a sense of humour					
7.2	Anticipate people's needs and reactions					
7.3	Express feelings appropriately					
7.4	Process human interactions, understand others					
7.5	Encourage, empower, advocate for people					
7.6	Create positive, hospitable environment					
7.7	Adjust plans for the unexpected					
7.8	Facilitate conflict management					
7.9	Communicate well with diverse groups					
7.10	Listen carefully to communication					
Interpersonal Total /50						

8 - Project Management		1	2	3	4	5
8.1	Manage personnel, projects and time					
8.2	Foster a sense of ownership in the project team					
8.3	Delegate responsibility and review performance					
8.4	Increase productivity and efficiency to achieve milestones					
8.5	Develop and facilitate Work Teams					
8.6	Provide training for development of staff					
8.7	Adjust plans/procedures for the unexpected					
8.8	Facilitate conflict management					
8.9	Communicate well with diverse groups					
8.10	Utilize technology to facilitate management					
Project Management Total /50						

9 - Administrative/IT		1	2	3	4	5
9.1	Help desk/technical support					
9.2	Security and risks systems					
9.3	Data centres					
9.4	Networking					
9.5	Human-computer interface					
9.6	General networking skills					
9.7	Programming & Application Development					
9.8	Wireless technologies					
9.9	Identify and purchase necessary resource materials					
9.10	Organise, improve, adapt office systems					
9.11	Track progress of projects and troubleshoot					
9.12	Achieve goals within budget and time schedule					
9.13	Hire and supervise temporary personnel as needed					
9.14	Demonstrate flexibility during crisis					
9.15	Oversee communication, email, and telephones					
Administrative/IT Total /75						

Summary of Total Scores

Transferable Skill	Score	Total	Transferable Skill	Score	Total
Verbal Communication		45	Plan and Organise		50
Written Communication		45	Interpersonal Relations		50
Train and Consult		50	Project Management		50
Analyse		45	Administration/IT		75
Research		45			

Scoring Guide:

You will notice that scores are out of 45, out of 50, and out of 75.

A score of 36/45 or more represents Very Strong Transferable Skills for these categories or

A score of 40/50 or more represents Very Strong Transferable Skills for these categories or

A score of 65/75 or more represents Very Strong Transferable Skills for this category or cluster

1.3 Incorporating my transferable skills into my resumé

Based on your results from each of the 9 categories, which are your highest and most consistent Transferable Skills? It will be this career evidence example that you will be able to modify and tailor to demonstrate your career achievements in your resumé.

An example is provided in the next activity to show how this relates to the 'sample' client's career 'story' to get you started.

ACTIVITY: Incorporating my transferable skills

1. Choose your 5 highest skills categories and write them in column 1.
2. Choose the highest skill elements and write them in column 2.
3. Write evidence from your career history/stories in column 3.

Skills Category	Skill Element	Career Evidence
<i>Example</i> Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage personnel, projects on time • Develop and facilitate work teams • Communicate well with diverse groups 	Completed a sale of business for \$250m on time, within budget through coordinating a diverse array of stakeholders in three States while saving 2000 jobs.

Summary

- Identifying and knowing your highest functional or transferable skills can have a positive impact in your new job search, writing a compelling resumé that gets you noticed, and excelling in your interview.
- Transferable skills are those skills you develop and acquire over many years through experiences both inside and outside of work.
- Your transferable skills fall into your skills with people, things, and information.
- As a general rule, you develop and use these in a hierarchical way.
- Lower skills are often prescribed by your employer, while the higher skills are the ones you need to “claim” and focus on to ensure you stand out from the crowd.
- We have provided two tools for you to help you identify your transferable skills.
- Once you have identified your highest transferable skills in each category, check these with someone who knows you well.
- You will embed your identified highest transferable skills within your achievement statements in your resumé.
- When seeking a new position, you will always look for one which allows you to use your highest transferable skills, so you can do more of what you do best more profitably, and with greater fulfilment and engagement.

Reference

- **Richard N. Bolles, *What Colour is Your Parachute – A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career Changers*. Berkeley, Toronto: Ten Speed Press, 2009 ed.**



Chapter 2. How do I write clear and compelling achievement statements?

“Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What’s a sundial in the shade?”

- Benjamin Franklin

2.1 Defining achievement statements

Achievement statements are one of the most important aspects of your resumé. The underlying assumption of achievement statements is that it will lead the reader of your resumé and/or the interviewer to the perception and conclusions you want formed about yourself.

Your achievement statements define what you have *achieved*, not just what you were employed to *do* in your previous positions. This is far stronger than merely telling the reader or the panel that you have *strong leadership qualities* or *strengths in strategic thinking and planning*. By preparing your achievement statements you are giving powerful evidence to support your claims.

You have to sell the ‘sizzle’ and not the ‘sausage’!

Using the acronym FAB (Features, Achievements & Benefits) you will build onto your career stories from Chapter 1. When writing and tailoring your resumé, these can be inserted into the appropriate section to give compelling quantifiable (and qualitative) evidence, rather than generalised *motherhood* statements.

2.2 Important principles in writing achievement statements

Here are some important guidelines to assist you in preparing and writing your achievements.

- Quantify your achievements wherever possible, but without revealing confidential information (Use percentages rather than raw data)
- If your role/project makes it difficult to quantify or identify your achievements, the following question may help: “What positive changes have I brought about in this role/job from when I arrived to when I left?” (Qualitative evidence)
- If you worked as part of a team, you cannot claim the team results as your own, but you can say: “As a key team member...” or, you could ask yourself the following question: “What would have happened if I had *not* been part of the team?”
- Use strong action verbs such as led, managed, increased, mentored, or transformed to describe your accomplishments. There is a list of these under section 2.6.

2.3 Developing achievement statements using FAB (Features, Achievements & Benefits)

Features

These are the

- roles you have performed
- challenge(s) you have faced
- projects you have undertaken
- project objectives
- circumstances surrounding the achievement, such as limited budget, staffing levels, low staff/team morale, fast pace, changing environment, and so on (e.g., within tight time frames and within a fast paced changing environment, while staffing levels were at 50%, following a disastrous fire, facing the loss of substantial business)

Here is an example of an achievement statement which clearly frames the situation:

- Facing the loss of substantial business following a change to tender terms and conditions, successfully lobbied State Government to alter the contract allowing the items to be relisted.

You will notice that there is a strong link between 'Features' and 'Situation' under the STAR model.

Achievements

Here you describe

- actions (what you did and how your strengths were demonstrated)
- results (business impact of actions)

These achievements are the key deliverables, 'measurables', standards achieved, contributions and so on. Where you can, it's important to quantify. If the job or project does not lend itself to quantitative measurement, you need to identify the gap *before* and *after* the project, and how you achieved your objective. These two things then become the achievement.

There are 2 ways or formats in which to write your Achievement Statements.

1. **Achievement from action** – Here you specify the result first, and then link it to the action with the word *by* (e.g., achieved a 55% increase in sales within the first 12 months *by*...).
2. **Actions leading to achievement** – Here you specify the action first, and then link it to the result (e.g., by mentoring the team leaders, and ensuring that they and their teams developed a clear strategic plan in alignment with the project goals, we were able to...).

Benefits

The benefits are dualistic in terms of their focus. In your resumé, you need to consider the benefit of your achievement to your organisation within the context of your project. For example: *The increasing of Sales by 55% in the first 12 months meant that the company could expand its marketing budget and retain 15 staff members, who would otherwise have been made redundant.*

The following table explains how Features, Achievements and Benefits work and fit together.

2.4 Example of an achievement statement developed from FAB's

FEATURES	ACHIEVEMENTS	BENEFITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong business development and management skills Sales & Marketing team was at 50% due to the market downturn 	<p>Increased sales by 55% in the first 12 months by developing and implementing a research driven marketing strategy and mentoring the business development team leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowered business development teams ensuring greater commitment and responsibility in future projects Greater alignment of teams to the corporate vision and goals ensuring a 'can do' culture Boosted team morale <p>Transferable Skills and Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic business development Results orientated Strong management skills inclusive of team mentoring



Position – Director of Business Development, ABC company

While staff levels were at 50% at ABC Company, I increased sales by 55% in the first 12 months by developing and implementing a research-driven marketing strategy and mentoring the business development team leaders. The benefits to the company were an increase in revenue, an expanded marketing budget and additional staff development.

Notice how the achievement statement has integrated elements from the FAB table.

Here are some other tips to help you think of and write your achievement statements.

Think about the times when you have...

- Improved operations or made things easier or better
- Resolved a critical problem or situation with little or no increase in resources, time, energy, dollars, people, etc.
- Undertaken something for the first time, such as computerising an inventory
- Initiated a new project or system
- Streamlined a process
- Handled a difficult client/supplier/employee that had a beneficial outcome
- Taken the initiative in confronting any problems, opportunities or challenges
- Developed something new or improved an existing system, product, process
- Created or designed a program, procedure, plan, service, or product
- Identified a need for a plan, program, product, service, or procedure
- Prepared original reports, papers or documents
- Implemented (directly or indirectly) any administrative or procedural recommendations
- Implemented or participated in sales and/or profit and/or cost saving recommendations
- Actively participated in any major management decisions or organisational changes (hiring, terminating, salary review, business mergers, new projects, etc.)

Using the CARS formulae as an alternative to STAR and FABS

We find that some candidates find the CARS formulae a helpful way to write achievement statements. So, as you consider your previous employment, write down a **Challenge** you faced, **Actions** you took, the **Result(s)** of your action, and the **Significance** for the company. Once you have this information, re-word the points into one or two clear sentences. As with the previous examples, don't forget to use an action verb as the first word of the sentence, as this clarifies the part you played in the achievement.

Here is an example using the CARS formulae:

- Reduced expenses (C) by 3.5% (S) each year for three consecutive years, resulting in a net profit improvement of \$150,000 per year (R) by using customer and staff input to (A) redesign the ordering process.

Use this template to assist in brainstorming your career stories for your achievement statements.

CHALLENGE	
ACTION	
RESULT	
SIGNIFICANCE	
Now condense into one or two sentences.	

ACTIVITY: Achievement statements

Using what you have just learned, circle the best achievement statement from the examples below. Why is it the best?

- Conducted more than 45 service technician training programs throughout eight offices, reducing customer complaints by 22% in six months.
- Conducted many training programs in several offices, which reduced many problems.
- Reduced customer complaints by 22% in a six-month period by conducting more than 45 service technician training programs through eight offices.
- Raised the company profile by successfully engaging a client base of 13 public and private hospitals that had previously not had access to any form of account management, resulting in significant ongoing business.

2.5 Further examples of achievement statements

Leadership Ability

...Aligned stakeholders by clearly defining and communicating a joint vision for the XXXX City development, and appeased the conflict between individual JV partners by raising awareness of the others' strategic objectives. Several champions emerged, which helped promote the development of the project.

Communication skills

...Secured a \$2.7m lease account through communicating a clear vision for the XXXX City development by focussing on tangible benefits for the client and developing excellent business relationships.

Recruitment and induction

...Established, implemented and managed all recruitment for the companies IT division (327 employees), which within two years, enhanced skill level competencies and substantially reduced turnover levels.

Customer engagement

...Facilitated the creation of a distribution hub within XXX (State) Health, resulting in alignment between manufacturing, existing distribution networks, and ordering patterns.

Examples of an engineer's key achievements taken from his resumé

- *Participated in the scoping and detailed design phases of a project to remotely control an existing offshore oil and gas platform. Managed the construction and commissioning phases to meet all critical project parameters. This project resulted in a net annual savings of over \$1.7m.*
- *Managed the scoping, design, construction and commissioning phases of a project to implement control of a subsea production facility in an existing platform distributed control system, producing annual savings of over \$70,000.*
- *Organised and participated in factory acceptance testing of control and switch gear equipment in order to significantly reduce facility downtime and site commissioning effort (in one case from an estimated three weeks to four days).*
- *Managed and supervised (including site supervision) a variety of multi-disciplined construction projects on offshore oil and gas production platforms to meet cost, quality, safety, and timely completion criteria.*

Here are some further examples of achievement statements. They are not perfect, but will give you additional insights as you develop your own.

Career achievements (Seeking management position of an existing small business)

- **Management**

Successfully managed and grew a privately owned family business; taking a 70% national market share of the Apple iPod distribution business. Strong management and leadership skills led to smoother operations, higher customer loyalty, targets consistently exceeded, and the achievement of the national "Sales Excellence" award for 20XX.

- **Strategic thinking and planning**

Successfully conducted strategic planning meetings with the Board and senior executives of an ASX listed company to develop a strategic direction for the organization and its subsidiaries. This allowed the organization to realize synergistic benefits such as enhancing distribution channels and improved return on investment to shareholders.

- **Staff management**

Significantly increased staff morale and reduced staff turnover to zero by using a psychological contracting and mentoring approach to staff management. Business processes and productivity were enhanced while costs were contained.

- **Operational change**

Improved the operational efficiency and effectiveness of a leading computer distribution company; reducing key operational costs by up to 20%. This was achieved through the application of strong analytical skills and best business practices (including credit and risk management strategies), and against a background of entrenched views, with limited resources and opposition to change.

- **Planning and implementation**

Working within slim margins and against opposition to change from existing channel partners, analysed, developed, and implemented a new reseller pricing structure to more effectively align sales outcomes to business goals. This resulted in improved cash flow, a more flexible pricing structure, and allowed for recruitment of several new national resellers.

- **Sales**

Consistently gained sales achievement awards with Apple Computer Australia in recognition of outstanding sales performance, including the Golden Apple Award (3 years running) in recognition of Australia's top national sales representative (1 of 4 nationally) and member of the 100% Club over 9 consecutive years.

- **Customer relationship management**

Attracted and retained key customers though building trust and exceeding customer expectations at a time when investing in Apple technology was considered a risk. Benefits to Apple included the retention of key customers and reference sites for a number of leading solutions.

2.6 Action verbs to assist writing your achievement statements

Here is a list of action words that will help you write compelling achievement statements that will help get you noticed.

Accomplished	Earned	Mobilised	Solved
Accelerated	Edited	Modernised	Sparked
Achieved	Eliminated	Modified	Staffed
Acquired	Encouraged	Monitored	Started
Administered	Enhanced	Motivated	Structured
Advised	Enlarged	Negotiated	Streamlined
Analysed	Established	Obtained	Strengthened
Applied	Exceeded	Opened	Stressed
Approved	Expanded	Operated	Stretched
Assigned	Formulated	Organised	Succeeded
Attained	Founded	Originated	Summarized
Budgeted	Fostered	Participated	Superseded
Built	Generated	Performed	Supervised
Calculated	Guided	Persuaded	Terminated
Centralised	Headed	Planned	Tracked
Chaired	Hired	Produced	Traded
Coached	Identified	Processed	Trained
Completed	Implemented	Programmed	Transferred
Communicated	Improved	Proposed	Transformed
Conceived	Improvised	Promoted	Translated
Conducted	Installed	Provided	Trimmed
Consolidated	Increased	Purchased	Traced
Consulted	Integrated	Recommended	Turned Around
Controlled	Initiated	Recruited	Uncovered
Converted	Innovated	Redesigned	Unified
Created	Introduced	Reduced	Unravelled
Decreased	Instituted	Reorganised	Utilised
Defined	Invented	Researched	Vacated
Delivered	Investigated	Refocussed	Verified
Developed	Launched	Renegotiate	Widened
Devised	Led	Revised	Won
Demonstrated	Maintained	Scheduled	Withdrew
Designed	Managed	Simplified	Worked
Directed	Marketed	Set up	Wrote
Doubled	Merged	Sold	

2.7 Achievement statements in context

This abbreviated resumé has been provided to help you conceptualise the placement of achievement statements in your resumé. Your FABs/Achievement Statements should relate to each role you have held which show key professional strengths. They should appear in two places in your resumé: on the first page and under each job role in the career history. We will revisit this in the next Section.

JOHN CITIZEN

Address: 15 Sample Rd. Melbourne VIC 3000

Email: jcitizen@isp.com.au

Work phone: (03) 9999 5678

CAREER OBJECTIVE

A position in senior marketing management with an internationally focussed premium food, wine or produce company. Seeking to expand management and team-building skills and build solid brands throughout the world. Available to relocate locally or internationally.

SUMMARY

Nine years in sales and marketing with a broad range of experience from ground-floor sales and merchandising to marketing management with an international producer and exporter of fine food and wine.

CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

• MANAGEMENT

Managed a marketing team of 18 people, telemarketing teams of 75 people, and was responsible for a \$15 million dollar advertising budget. Responsible for the client/agency liaison between mainstream, below-the-line and data management agencies. Responsible for the overall profitability of five brands, four of which are market leaders in both share and volume.

• PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Launched two brands onto the national market with each brand gaining a market share of 15% and 22% respectively within two years.

• FINANCIAL

Prepared quarterly and annual budget reports. Presented and reviewed the forecasts to senior management and represented the Australian management team at the International MIA Conference held in Chicago last December.

• MARKETING RESEARCH

Co-ordinated focus groups (24 per year) and managed a team of 75 in-store market researchers to conduct field demonstrations. Presented research findings to management teams, which used the information as the basis for their product development plans, resulting in the extension of a brand that brought in sales of \$2.1 million in the 2001-2002 financial year.

• SALES

Ground floor experience in sales and merchandising with international fast-moving packaged goods company. Territory Manager for North Western region covering 78 stores, 12 product lines, and approximately 28 sales promotional events per year.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Marketing Manager (Melbourne)

2000-present time

The Wine and Food Emporium

Duties:

- Manage a staff of 18 people
- Liaise with advertising agencies (above and below the line) and brief in all campaigns
- Responsible for \$15 million dollar advertising budget and \$80 million turnover

Achievements:

- Launched two new brands onto national market gaining 15% and 22% market share respectively within two years, earning the MIA's 2001 Award for Best New Product.
- Generated over \$200,000 of free trade-journal publicity

EDUCATION

- University of Queensland, Bachelor of Business (Marketing), 2000
- Seacliff TAFE, Associate Diploma in Marketing, 1991

REFERENCES

Available on request

2.8 Writing your own achievement statements based on FAB

ACTIVITY: FAB achievement statement practice

Using 'FAB', write at least four of your own achievement statements ready for incorporating into your resumé.

FAB Example 1

FEATURES (Role/Project/Situation Challenge/Responsibilities)	ACHIEVEMENTS (Action & Results)	BENEFITS (To the organisation)



Achievement statement

Heading showing area of strength (e.g., Project Management)

FAB Example 2

FEATURES (Role/Project/Situation Challenge/Responsibilities)	ACHIEVEMENTS (Action & Results)	BENEFITS (To the organisation)



Achievement statement

--

FAB Example 3

FEATURES (Role/Project/Situation Challenge/Responsibilities)	ACHIEVEMENTS (Action & Results)	BENEFITS (To the organisation)



Achievement statement

--

FAB Example 4

FEATURES (Role/Project/Situation Challenge/Responsibilities)	ACHIEVEMENTS (Action & Results)	BENEFITS (To the organisation)



Achievement statement

Heading showing area of strength (e.g., Project Management)

Congratulations, you have now completed your 'due diligence' in preparing to create, review or rewrite your resumé.

If you are having a challenge doing this, please contact us and one of our consultants or career coaches will assist you. www.executivecareermove.com.au

A final comment for this section:

In all the resumés we review, we have NEVER come across a candidate that has been able to concisely express professional achievements. Most professional resumés we see are very roles and responsibilities focused (the 'sausage'), but surprisingly, achievements or accomplishments are not evident (the 'sizzle').

There are a number of reasons for this. Here are three common ones we encounter.

- First, many people have not been taught how to do this. Often we find that resumés have not been updated for a long time and professionals like you may not have kept up to date with current trends.
- Secondly, we find that many candidates are self-conscious. "We don't want to brag" is a comment we typically hear. Of course, writing your achievements is not bragging (providing you do it with integrity), but rather showing a potential employer that you have the solutions to their problem.
- Thirdly, you may have obtained your previous roles and positions by being head-hunted and therefore have not had the pressure or necessity of keeping your resumé up-to-date.

At the end of the day, your resumé is a sales document and needs to show not only your features (roles and responsibilities), but also the benefits you will bring to the organisation (achievements and accomplishments).

Summary

To this point you have:

1. Identified your transferable skills using the STAR technique from your 'career stories' and through completing the self-assessment test in Chapter 1.
2. Written concise and compelling achievement statements, using the FAB technique, ready for inclusion into your "generic" resumé (not tailored or targeted to a particular position).
3. Understood the absolute importance of writing effective and compelling achievement statements, seen examples of these, and have written several of your own.

You are now well prepared to write or review your achievements to ensure your resumé really *will* 'stand out from the crowd'.





Chapter 3. How do I write a compelling resumé that will get me the interview?

Introduction

In this section, you will write or rewrite your resumé using the structured framework provided.

Before you get started, it is important to be aware of several myths about resúmes.

Myth 1 - The recruiter will read my resumé and see that I am a perfect fit for the role

The reality is that you can't assume that the person reading your resumé understands what you do and shares your vision. You must clearly articulate why you are a fit for the position. Include a profile in the beginning of your resumé that states why you are right for the role. You will also need to customise your resumé for every role for which you apply.

Myth 2 - If the person recruiting likes my resumé they will call me to discuss my suitability for the role

The reality is that internal and external recruiters are often overwhelmed with the volume of resúmes they receive. Although you may get noticed, and the recruiter has every intention to contact you, your application may get lost in the paper work or email trails. Follow up the recruiter, expressing your interest again, to ensure you stand out or get noticed.

Here are the outcomes of what you are going to cover in this chapter

- Have a clear understanding of the role your resumé has in achieving your career goal
- Apply the key principles and guidelines for writing a resumé
- Review/Rewrite your *master* or *generic* resumé in accordance with the new insights and knowledge and skills gained in Chapters 1-3.
- Tailor your *master* resumé to your position of choice using a Job Table Template
- Learn how to write a Cover Letter and when to use it
- Learn how to address Selection Criteria



3.1 The key principles and guidelines for writing my resumé

- Your resumé is a marketing and sales document to get you an interview. If it achieves this, it has done its job!
- It is a short, succinct, and clear professional account of your career, qualifications and achievements.
- It is usually skimmed through in 30 seconds and reviewed against two simple criteria: “*Read again*” or “*No*”!

Even more unnerving is the globally famous ‘3-second rule’, where material has essentially 3 seconds to engage any reader or site visitor. This being the case, your resumé had better grab the attention of the hirer – somehow – within 3 seconds of their eyes hitting the first page. A sobering point!

- You should have a generic or *master* resumé containing all your experiences and accomplishments and your qualifications. This document will be for your use only and it will be tailored to each job for which you apply.
- You will rewrite and tailor your resumé every time you apply for a new position. That is, *each application needs to be targeted to that specific position*. Relying on a cover letter for this purpose is insufficient.
- There is no *right* length. The current preference for a standard resumé, as part of a job application, is 3 to 5 pages.
- An Addendum or Appendix can be prepared for specific projects, experience, publications, and patents. (This may be useful for the interview if not required as part of your job application)
- It is better that you write your resumé yourself. The key to building a resumé that you feel confident to speak about in the interview is to build your own. This will make you much more convincing in the interview than if you were simply providing answers someone else has prepared for you.
- The use of fancy fonts, boxes, unique spacing and layout is discouraged. Many organisations scan resúmes they receive and place them in a computer databank, so the more straightforward the presentation, the better.

3.2 How to structure my resumé

Your resumé will usually be presented using 5 categories: These are

1. Heading
2. Career Objective
3. Career Summary (or Executive Summary)
4. Professional Experience (or Career History)
5. Other Categories (including education qualifications, professional affiliation, accreditations)

This may not always be the case, but we will follow this format to start.

1. HEADING (name, address, home and office telephone, mobile, email, fax).

This should either be centred or top right. Your name should be on the top line by itself. Since your resumé is likely to be copied or scanned, your name and page number should appear (as a header or footer) on the right hand side of every page.

Example

WALT ZING
3 Matilda Drive
Jumbuck, VIC 3963
E-mail: banjo.paterson@jumbuck.gov.au
Tel: (07) 2222222 BH (07) 2222221 AH
Mobile: 0404 354 829

2. CAREER OBJECTIVE

This is short, succinct statement of your career goal (not in *first person*). Often, the acronym SMART is used to help formulate this.

Specific	Has the <i>actual</i> position/role of field been identified?
Measurable	Are the criteria (conditions, strengths, personal and professional alignment, environment, values, etc.) being met?
Achievable	Do I have the strengths, skills, experience, qualifications to get this job?
Relevant	Is this relevant and consistent with my career wants and my 'season of life'?
Time Bound	When do I want to have this new role?

An alternative to using SMART goals is to ensure your Career Objective reflects most of the following:

- Where (location)
- What (role or position)
- When (time frame)
- Who (type of employer, culture, values)
- Strengths and skills

The following graphic may assist you to brainstorm your career goal.



Career objective examples

Example 1

A position in senior marketing management, with a progressive internationally-focused premium food, wine or produce company. Seeking to expand management and team building skills and build solid recognisable brands globally. Able to relocate locally or internationally within a flexible time frame.

Example 2

Seeking CEO or GM's role with an organization based in South East Queensland. Ideally the position will be with a progressive organization in the SME sector, which is looking for strong leadership, increased productivity and growth, and values and which respects its people.

3. CAREER SUMMARY OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This section contains 1-3 paragraphs demonstrating your Career Strengths and Key Achievements (FAB's), specialist knowledge, and what makes you stand out.
- Bullet points give clarity.
- It is not a historical recap of your experience, but your key points position you strongly for the role and for the remainder of your resumé.
- It must demonstrate your specialist knowledge, your strengths, and the value you can bring to the organisation.
- This section could be in two parts: **Career/Executive Summary** and **Key Achievements/Accomplishments**. You will then draw on these to tailor/target the advertised role and the selection criteria.

Example

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nine years in sales and marketing with a broad range of experience from ground-floor sales and merchandising to marketing management with an international producer and exporter of fine food and wine.

CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

Management

Managed a marketing team of 18 people, telemarketing teams of 75 people, and was responsible for a \$15 million advertising budget. Responsible for the client/agency liaison between mainstream, below-the-line and data management agencies. Responsible for the overall profitability of five brands, four of which are market leaders in both share and volume.

Product Development

Launched two brands onto the national market with each brand gaining a market share of 15% and 22% respectively within two years.

Financial

Prepared quarterly and annual budget reports. Presented and reviewed the forecasts to senior management and represented the Australian management team at the International MIA Conference held in Chicago last December.

Marketing Research

Coordinated focus groups (24 per year) and managed a team of 75 in-store market researchers to conduct field demonstrations. Presented research findings to management teams, which used the information as the basis for their product development plans, resulting in the extension of a brand that brought in sales of \$2.1 million in the 2001-2002 financial year.

Sales

Ground floor experience in sales and merchandising with international fast-moving packaged goods company. Territory Manager for North Western region covering 78 stores, 12 product lines, and approximately 28 sales promotional events per year.

4. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE OF CAREER HISTORY

This section is presented chronologically (most recent first) and is a clear demonstration of achievements and strengths (so that it can be targeted for each new position). Provide the most detail for the past 10-15 years. For employment history over 15 years, it would be more appropriate to just list the Employer, Position, and Date.

Employer Name:

Date (worked for employer)

Position:

Organisation: (Optional: can include a brief description of organisation and what it does)

Responsibilities/Duties: (bullet points)

Achievements: (bullet points)

Example

EMPLOYER: ABC	
Marketing Manager (Melbourne)	2000-present
Organisation: The Wine and Food Emporium	
Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage a staff of 18 people• Liaise with advertising agencies (above and below the line) and brief in all campaigns• Responsible for \$15 million advertising budget and \$80 million turnover	
Achievements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launched two new brands onto national market gaining 15 per cent and 22 per cent market share respectively within two years, earning the MIA's 2001 Award for Best New Product• Generated over \$200,000 of free trade-journal publicity	

Checklist for my professional experience section

Have I:

- Presented my past work experience in a clear, informative and organised way?
- Used only years in showing the dates of my employment?
- Ensured that readers, unfamiliar with my past employers, understand what kind of organisations they were?
- Ensured that readers understand my job titles and levels of responsibility?
- Described the role and scope of each job clearly and accurately?
- Used powerful action verbs to describe my achievements?
- Used up-to-date terminology that is well known and accepted in the industry being targeted?



Checklist for writing my achievement statements

Have I:

- Clearly illustrated/documented my strengths with at least one strong achievement?
- Begun each achievement with a strong action verb? (refer to list of verbs in Chapter 3)
- Used language that is professional, clear and compelling?
- Quantified results with numbers, dollars, and percentages wherever possible and appropriate?
- Included the Feature (and challenge if appropriate), Achievement/Result, and Benefit(s) (FAB's) in each statement?

5. OTHER CATEGORIES

The last page of your resumé will include the following information, as required. In some instances, you may prefer to insert your qualification under your header, especially if the advertisement stipulates a certain qualification requirement.

- Education (highest level attained comes first)
- Professional Affiliations (Relevant professional memberships, affiliations and leadership positions)
- Professional Development (if relevant)
- Technical Skills (if relevant)
- Licences and Certificates (if relevant)
- References (usually available on request)

3.3 Examples of different resumé types

Several examples of resumé follow. They are abbreviated, but do present a range of possibilities to suit your professional area. Our personal preference is example #3, the *hybrid* format, as the achievements are clearly stated on the first page to grab the attention of the reader.

Example #1 - Chronological Format

The chronological resumé is the most commonly used way of structuring your information. It lists your work experience and achievements in each job, beginning with the most recent.

JOHN CITIZEN Address: 15 Sample Rd Melbourne VIC 3000 Email: jcitizen@optusnet.com.au Home phone:(03) 9999 1234 Work phone:(03) 9999 5678	
CAREER OBJECTIVE A position in senior marketing management with an internationally focussed premium food, wine or produce company. Seeking to expand management and team building skills and build solid brands throughout the world. Available to relocate locally or internationally.	
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	
Marketing Manager (Melbourne) The Wine and Food Emporium	2000-present
Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage a staff of 18 people• Liaise with advertising agencies (above and below the line) and brief in all campaigns• Responsible for \$15 million advertising budget and \$80 million turnover	
Achievements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launched two new brands onto national market gaining 15 per cent and 22 per cent market share respectively within two years, earning the MIA's 2001 Award for Best New Product• Generated over \$200,000 of free trade-journal publicity	
EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• University of Queensland, Bachelor of Business (Marketing) 2001• Seacliff TAFE, Associate Diploma in Marketing 1991	
COMPUTER SKILLS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Platforms: Apple, IBMSoftware: MS Windows 2000, MS Word 7, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, Adobe InDesignTyping: 65 WPM	
TRAINING <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Train the Trainer Accreditation	
SPECIAL SKILLS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-author of seven articles for "Marketing Management" magazine• Keynote speaker at the International MIA Annual Conference attended by 2,500 industry professionals• Board Member for "Life Skills For Youth" organisation and head of Mentoring Programme• French (fluent in speech and written)	
REFERENCES Available on request	

Example #2 – Functional format

The functional resumé groups your work experiences according to your skills and abilities, rather than specific positions. It is used most often by people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history.

JOHN CITIZEN

Address: 15 Sample Rd. Melbourne VIC 3000

Email: jcitizen@optusnet.com.au

Mobile phone: 0411 123 456

CAREER OBJECTIVE

A position in senior marketing management with an internationally focussed premium food, wine or produce company. Seeking to expand management and team building skills and build solid brands throughout the world.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Results-oriented, high-energy, hands-on professional with a successful record of accomplishments in the FMCG industry. Experience in large marketing team management, product launches, research and development, management of third-party suppliers, advertising, internet and e-marketing, packaging design, and production for high-end consumer products.

Major strengths include strong leadership, excellent communication skills, competent, strong team player, attention to detail, dutiful respect for compliance in all regulated environments, and supervisory skills, including hiring, termination, scheduling, training, payroll and other administrative tasks.

SKILLS & ACHIEVEMENT SUMMARY

MANAGEMENT

- Managed a marketing team of 18 people, telemarketing teams of 75 people, and a \$15 million advertising budget. Responsible for the client/agency liaison between mainstream, below-the-line and data management agencies. Responsible for the overall profitability of five brands, four of which are market leaders in both share and volume.
- Senior Brand Manager responsible for a team of four, including a researcher, advertising coordinator, and two marketing coordinators.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Responsible for the launch of two brands onto the national market with each brand gaining a market share of 15 per cent and 22 per cent respectively within two years.
- Working with a market research company prepared the initial research and development for the focus groups on brand A and brand B, repositioning them into the market.

FINANCIAL

- Prepared quarterly and annual budget reports. Presented and reviewed the forecasts to senior management. Represented the Australian management team at the International MIA conference held in Chicago, December 20XX.
- Prepared the total budget from research and development through to market introduction, including market research, advertising, and product packaging. Total budget of \$10 million.

JOHN CITIZEN

Address: 15 Sample Rd. Melbourne VIC 3000
Email: jcitizen@optusnet.com.au
Mobile phone: 0411 123 456

MARKET RESEARCH

- Co-ordinated focus groups (24 per year) and managed a team of 75 in-store market researchers to conduct field demonstrations. Presented research findings to management teams, which used the information as the basis for their product development plans, resulting in the extension of a brand that brought in sales of \$2.1 million in the 2013-2014 financial year.
- Working with XYZ market research led the research and development stage incorporating focus groups. Total budget for product A launch was \$3 million.

SALES

- Ground floor experience in sales and merchandising with international fast-moving packaged goods company. Territory Manager for North Western region covering 78 stores, 12 product lines and approximately 28 sales promotional events per year.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

- Keynote presenter at the 2205 Annual MIA Conference
- Regular guest speaker at CPI Award nights 2000 to present
- AMI guest presenter 2006 lunch series

COMPUTERS

- Fluent in both Apple and IBM platforms; Proficient in MS Excel, MS Word 6, MS PowerPoint, Adobe InDesign. Typing = 65 WPM.

WORK HISTORY

Marketing Manager (Melbourne) ABC Company	2000-present
Senior Brand Manager (Melbourne) DEF Company	1997 – 2000

EDUCATION

- University of Queensland, Bachelor of Business (Marketing) 2001
- Seacliff TAFE, Associate Diploma in Marketing 1991

REFERENCES

Available on request

Example #3 – Hybrid format

The hybrid format highlights your strengths by placing your skills, experience, and abilities at the beginning, and a chronologically ordered list of experience toward the end.

JOHN CITIZEN Address: 15 Sample Rd. Melbourne VIC 3000 Email: jcitizen@isp.com.au Work phone: (03) 9999 5678	
CAREER OBJECTIVE A position in senior marketing management with an internationally focused premium food, wine or produce company. Seeking to expand management and team building skills and build solid brands throughout the world. Available to relocate locally or internationally.	
SUMMARY Nine years in sales and marketing with a broad range of experience from ground-floor sales and merchandising to marketing management with an international producer and exporter of fine food and wine.	
CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS	
• MANAGEMENT Managed a marketing team of 18 people, telemarketing teams of 75 people and was responsible for a \$15 million advertising budget. Responsible for the client/agency liaison between mainstream, below-the-line and data management agencies. Responsible for the overall profitability of five brands, four of which are market leaders in both share and volume.	
• PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT Launched two brands onto the national market with each brand gaining a market share of 15 per cent and 22 per cent respectively within two years.	
• FINANCIAL Prepared quarterly and annual budget reports. Presented and reviewed the forecasts to senior management. Represented the Australian management team at the International MIA Conference held in Chicago, December 20XX.	
• MARKETING RESEARCH Co-ordinated focus groups (24 per year) and managed a team of 75 in-store market researchers to conduct field demonstrations. Presented research findings to management teams, which used the information as the basis for their product development plans, resulting in the extension of a brand that brought in sales of \$2.1 million in the 2001-2002 financial year.	
• SALES Ground floor experience in sales and merchandising with international fast-moving packaged goods company. Territory Manager for North Western region covering 78 stores, 12 product lines, and approximately 28 sales promotional events per year.	
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	
Marketing Manager (Melbourne) The Wine and Food Emporium	2000-present time
Duties:	
• Manage a staff of 18 people	
• Liaise with advertising agencies (above and below the line) and brief in all campaigns	
• Responsible for \$15 million advertising budget and \$80 million turnover	
Achievements:	
• Launched two new brands onto national market gaining 15 per cent and 22 per cent market share respectively within two years, earning the MIA's 2001 Award for Best New Product.	
• Generated over \$200,000 of free trade-journal publicity	
EDUCATION	
• University of Queensland, Bachelor of Business (Marketing), 2000	
• Seacliff TAFE, Associate Diploma in Marketing, 1991	
REFERENCES Available on request	

3.4 My resumé template

Example 1

ACTIVITY: You are invited to use this template as a guide to structuring your resumé

<p style="text-align: right;">YOUR NAME</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Address: Email: Work phone:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Qualifications (or after Career History under education)</p> <p>CAREER OBJECTIVE</p> <p>CAREER SUMMARY</p> <p>CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS (OR SELECTION CRITERIA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AAAA• BBBB• CCCC• DDDD	Page 1
<p>EMPLOYMENT HISTORY</p> <p>Employer: 2007-present time</p> <p>Position:</p> <p>Duties/Role:</p> <p>Achievements:</p>	Pages 2
<p>EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (Cont.)</p> <p>Employer: 2005-2007</p> <p>Position:</p> <p>Duties/Role:</p> <p>Achievements:</p>	Page 3
<p>EDUCATION</p> <p>Qualifications: (highest level attained comes first, location and date)</p> <p>Professional Affiliations (Relevant professional memberships, affiliations and leadership positions)</p> <p>Professional Development (if relevant)</p> <p>Technical Skills (if relevant)</p> <p>Licences and Certificates (if relevant)</p> <p>REFERENCES (usually available on request)</p>	Page 4

My Resumé template – Example 2

Without doubt, you will have come across many different ways of laying out your resumé.

Nearly all will suggest you include:

- Key personal details: name, address, contact details
- Career Summary/Executive Summary/Career Profile (use whatever heading you prefer)
- Education/Qualifications
- Relevant training courses/professional development
- Employment history of previous positions held (companies/organisations and dates of employment)
- Main responsibilities of these roles (for more senior and professional roles this may take the form of a précis of the role, its scope and impact)
- Major achievements relevant to the advertised role (what you did and how you did it)
- References (“Available upon request”)

You may also be requested to provide additional information, such as:

- Career objective (the type of position you are seeking)
- Career highlights or major achievements (a front page summary)
- Accreditations/licences
- Skills Statement/Profile and/or competencies (a list of skills and competencies you have that reflect what can you do for a company, what value you offer)
- Professional Memberships or Affiliations; Leadership roles (paid or voluntary)
- Community involvement/participation (voluntary activities which speak of your transferable skills and community contribution, if relevant to the advertised role)
- Publications (those you have authored or co-authored); and Speaking Engagements (where you have been a paid or voluntary guest speaker)

It would be remiss of us to show only one way. In recent times, we have been using the following template with success.

The main difference to the previous examples is that the first page is a summary page. The advantage of this is that it gives you a much better chance of passing the ‘30 (or 6) second rule’.

As you see in the example below, the first page includes:

1. Personal Details
2. Major Achievements (varies for each position applied for and taken from the achievements of the main body of the resumé under Career History)
3. Career Summary (summary of your career history going back no more than 10-15 years)
4. Education Summary
5. Key Training Courses
6. Personal Details (optional, but may include personal interests)

Robert Citizen

Resumé

Home:

Mobile: 0407 666 666

PO Box XXX

Email: citizen10@bigpond.com

Starbucks East QLD 4814

Major Achievements

Large Account Management

- Successfully led the team for the XXXX Pharmaceuticals tender and retained sole supply over 4 successive tenders totalling 12 years.
- Wrote and signed Preferred Supplier agreements with 5 separate large private hospital or Pharmacy customer groups and re-signed each at the end for subsequent terms.

Contract Negotiation:

- Facing the loss of substantial business following a change to tender terms and conditions, successfully lobbied State Government to alter the contract allowing the items to be relisted.
- Long term application of Miller Heimann, Shipley, ROGEN SI, DISC, SPIN and PSS selling skills in tender and preferred supply situations, resulting in revenue exceeding \$70M over a 12 year period.

Customer Engagement

- Raised the company profile by successfully engaging a client base of 13 public and private hospitals that had previously not had access to any form of account management, resulting in significant ongoing business.
- Established the reputation with senior healthcare figures as the first point of contact during environmental disasters to ensure continuity of supply, enabling hospitals to continue to service their areas.

Career Summary

2002 - 2014	Area Business Manager, XXX Healthcare Pty Ltd
1997 - 2002	Head of Distribution, XXXX Newspapers
1995 - 1997	Assistant to the Manager - Distribution, North XXXX Newspapers
1994	Casual Scientist (PO2-02) - Chemical Pathology Laboratory, XXXX General Hospital

Education

Bachelor of Science with Honours in Zoology and Ecology, XXXX University.
Thesis: "Cannibalism and Kinship in the Mosquito fish, *Gambusia holbrooki*."

Key Training Courses

Miller Heimann, Account Management
SPIN/PSS & DISC Selling
Rogen, SI and Presentation Skills
Shipley, tender-winning methodology

Personal Details

Interests Martial Arts Instructor, Promotions, Security Consultant with Class 1 License and completion of all armed and unarmed courses. Taught and trained all aspects of the Security Business.

Note: (These are optional, but may include interests, community involvement, volunteering activities, papers published, speaking engagements, hobbies)
Sometimes these can go onto your last page (typically page 4, if there is insufficient room on your Summary Page)

(Page 2, 3 and ...4)

Career History

Aug 2002 - Oct 2014

XXXX Healthcare Pty Ltd

Area Business Manager XXXX

Executive Sales Manager XXXX

BXXX International Inc. is an American health care company with headquarters in Deerfield, Illinois. The company primarily focuses on products to treat haemophilia, kidney disease, immune disorders, and other chronic and acute medical conditions.

Achievements

Large Account Management

- Successfully led the team for the Northern Territory Pharmaceuticals, tender and retained sole supply over 4 successive tenders, totalling 12 years.
- Wrote and signed Preferred Supplier agreements with 5 separate large private hospital or Pharmacy customer groups and re-signed each at the end for subsequent terms.

Contract Negotiation:

- Facing the loss of substantial business following a change to tender terms and conditions, successfully lobbied State Government to alter the contract allowing the items to be relisted.
- Long term application of Miller Heimann, Shipley, ROGEN SI, DISC, SPIN, and PSS selling skills in tender and preferred supply situations, resulting in revenue exceeding \$70M over a 12 year period.

Customer Engagement

- Raised the company profile by successfully engaging a client base of 13 public and private hospitals that had previously not had access to any form of account management, resulting in significant ongoing business.
- Facilitated the creation of a distribution hub within Queensland Health resulting in alignment between manufacturing, existing distribution networks, and ordering patterns.
- Successful engagement with associated businesses, such as Biomedical Engineering firms, to streamline service and purchasing procedures for hospitals. These efficiencies resulted in reduced ordering time and allowed the equipment to be certified safe prior to introduction to the hospital.
- Represented the company at various conferences in the critical care space, leading to extensive lead generation and additional sales.
- Launched company involvement at educational seminars highlighting locally-based research projects, such as the James Cook University of Nursing seminars.
- Established the reputation with senior healthcare figures as the first point of contact during environmental disasters to ensure continuity of supply, enabling hospitals to continue to service their areas.

Management Skills

- Managed the clinical team at various hospitals for changing infusion technology and systems, anaesthetic gases and equipment, bio surgical agents, and acting as primary liaison with all stakeholders.
- Facilitated and managed senior level health meetings with both internal and external stakeholders to improve company profile and increase understanding of executive level partnerships.
- Project managed and coordinated a team of 9 interstate specialist representatives over 10 years in challenging environments and geographies.

- Facilitated all aspects of ordering, supply and delivery of products during environmental disasters, such as flooding, cyclones, and bushfires, allowing hospital planners to incorporate delivery models into future planning.
- Managed the data entry and maintenance of multiple CRM platforms to provide consistent internal visibility of customer interactions.

Teaching and Mentoring

- Successfully in-serviced and taught on a range of therapeutic and scientific subjects to doctors, nurses and other hospital staff monthly over a 12 year period. This included IV fluid therapies, inhalational anaesthesia, parenteral nutrition, renal therapy, and antibiotic and analgesic infusers.
- Assisted with the on-boarding and mentoring of new specialist representatives on both territory-specific issues as well as specialist medical knowledge.
- Utilised and mentored specialist representatives in executive level meetings in order to gain executive approval for product introduction, and allow the specialist representatives to gain experience at a higher level.

Innovations

- Educated on and subsequently converted a number of public and private hospitals to a new generation IV therapy, allowing better patient outcomes and shorter stay times.
- Sold and implemented generic anaesthetic gases attaining 30% market share, assisted by the acquisition of new capital equipment.
- Pioneered discussions on PVC recycling across hospitals within my territory.
- Introduced bio-surgical sealants into the North Queensland Hospitals, building a new business that rapidly exceeded \$1M per annum and continued to grow.
- Introduced a new inhalational agent to all operating theatres in North Queensland, building a new business exceeding \$250k per annum.

Key Responsibilities

- Managed overall XXXX's business and sales for the XXXX and Northern XXXX
- Represented the company at all levels from supply to executive in territory
- Acted as primary liaison in emergency scenarios
- Educated on products from all portfolios
- Managed all aspects of business in region
- Managed multiple instances of senior level health meetings with both senior and junior company representatives
- Managed specialist representatives in their dealings with target hospitals

Feb 1997 - Jun 2002

XXXX Newspapers

Head of Distribution

Dec 1995 - Feb 1997

Assistant to the Manager - Distribution Section

The XXXX Company Pty Ltd is a subsidiary of News Limited. News Limited is Australia's largest newspaper publisher and a subsidiary of News Corporation.

Achievements

- Managed a team of 300 contractors under 27 supervisors delivering a total of 50,000 papers via a self-managed distribution network
- Managed a weekly payroll for 300 contractors, including all aspects of complaints, promotion, interviewing, employment and termination
- Developed a letterbox distribution plan of 273 separate areas totalling 50,000 papers, allowing weekly distribution to be completed within an 18 hour period, with a saving of 20% per annum. Weekly complaints of failed delivery rarely exceeded 0.05%

Key Responsibilities

- Weekly management of the distribution spreadsheet ensuring that all rounds were filled and working to satisfaction of readership
- Weekly management of payroll, and all aspects of contractor employment
- Reports on spend and success of system

Apr 1994 - Jun 1994

XXXX General Hospital

Casual Scientist (PO2-02) - Chemical Pathology Laboratory

The XXXX Hospital is a public tertiary care hospital in the city of XXX and serves patients from the entire XXXX region, with patients from as far as XXXX and XXXX being air-lifted or transported to the Hospital on a daily basis.

Achievements

- Successfully on-boarded the Beckman CX7 to the pathology department
- Successfully assisted with the transition of the existing database to use the Beckman diagnostic instruments

Key Responsibilities

- Responsible for the daily calibration tests on the equipment and report to NATA
- Processed and sampled all bodily fluids (blood/urine/pleural) and ran required pathology assays
- Reported assay findings to Doctors as required
- Worked in a busy pathology laboratory within all stated safety guidelines

References: Available upon request

To receive your template using this format please email us at success@executivecareermove.com.au

3.5 My resumé checklist

Once you have completed your resumé, check it against the following 5 critical criteria.

1. Is it compelling?

- Make a compelling case in your Career Summary or on the first page, if using the second template. This is where the 30-second rule comes into effect. (Some say 3 seconds!)
- Choose strong action verbs that highlight and showcase your strengths, achievements and skills. (Refer to Chapter 2 for list of action words)
- Avoid using personal pronouns (I, me, our, my, we, and so on). Instead of: “I developed and managed six enhancements...” simply state: “Developed and managed...”. This is stronger and more professional.

2. Is it consistent?

- Don't confuse your reader. All your statements must consistently support your goal, strengths, achievements, and transferable skills. If you want to manage a large power station, it is irrelevant that your first job was a salesperson or that you are good at bowls!
- Use vocabulary that is consistent with the industry you are seeking to enter.
- Ensure that you are consistent with the truth. All details must be accurate. Checks are often made to verify information.

3. Is it clear and concise?

- Clearly explain abbreviations or acronyms
- Avoid jargon
- Use up-to-date terminology
- Use bullet points for your achievements and responsibilities
- Group the points so that similar activities follow each other

4. Is it clean?

- Keep the look clean, crisp, and simple by using margins, bold type for headings, short sentences, bullet points, and white space
- Avoid coloured paper, fancy fonts, folds, and photographs
- Use the left-hand margins for your titles
- Make sure that it is attractive and easy to read

5. Is it conforming?

- Don't include age, family situation, religion, marital status, etc.
- Don't include references unless the advertisement specifies
- Don't leave employment “gaps”
- Do discuss roles you have applied for with your references
- Do choose references that you have reported to or a senior colleague who has worked with you on projects
- Do use a ‘spell check’ on your resumé

- Do have an objective friend evaluate it
- Do include a brief cover letter explaining why you are suited to the role

Key Question: If you were reading this resumé from the employer’s perspective, would it achieve your goal of getting to the interview stage?

3.6 How to write a cover letter

It is essential that you write a cover letter to go with your application. Nowadays, the cover letter is often in the form of an email, with the resumé attached either in Word or PDF format. We outline an exception to this below.

As your resumé is a more factual document, the cover letter personalises your application.

There are many ways of writing cover letters, but we recommend just two categories.

The first cover letter is used when you apply for a specific position that is advertised or that you know about. In this instance, you are reacting or responding to a specific position and you will be sending your *tailored* resumé for this position.

The second cover letter is when you are being pro-active in your job search. You are not applying for a specific position that has been advertised, but are informing the organisation that you are seeking a position with them.

In this instance, we recommend that you send your resumé and cover letter as a hard copy by post as firewalls and ‘gate-keepers’ often prevent emails getting to the correct personal.

We have included samples of these categories under Sample Cover Letters.

Here are some general guidelines for your cover letters. Generally, it will consist of up to four simple paragraphs.

- If you are applying for an advertised position, you must state the basis of your letter. (e.g., the position title, date, and source where you saw the advertisement)
- The second paragraph contains your two-minute summary (refer to the section on interviewing skills for more details). Basically, it is a statement of who you are, what your previous position was, how long you worked there, what position you held, the sort of work you have been involved in, and any relevant work experience. A brief outline to highlight your achievements, strengths, main skills and competencies.
- Close your letter by asking for a meeting as an opportunity to explain how your experience and skills can benefit the company.
- Always type your letter, unless the advertisement requests it to be handwritten.
- Type your name at the end of the letter, beneath your signature.

Date

Name

Address

Suburb

State, Postcode

Phone Number

Email

Re: Job Title

Dear X (always address the person by name rather than “Dear Sir/Madam” or “To whom it may concern”)

Paragraph 1

- Explain why you’re applying, what you have to offer, why the role caught your eye, and why you are interested in it. Be clear and concise about what attracted you. This sentence needs to grab the readers’ attention.

Paragraph 2

- In one sentence, briefly describe your current or previous role and responsibilities.
- Explain what you have to offer the employer in terms of experience and expertise.

Paragraph 3

- Highlight several of your achievement statements that match the job criteria.
- Show that you’ve truly read the position advertisement by drawing specific parallels between the requirements listed and your own proven abilities and achievements.
- Keep the text reader-friendly. (Not too long – use short paragraphs or bulleted lists)

Paragraph 4

- Provide the practical information that the prospective employer/recruiter will need to know, such as availability for interview and quick reference contact number.
- Thank the recipient for their attention and specify how and when you intend to follow up.

Closing and signature

[Address] [Suburb, State, Post Code]

[Date]

[Name of Hiring Manager, Title] [Name of Company] [Address] [City, State Post Code]

Dear [Mr or Ms] [Last Name],

Write a brief explanation of your experience in the particular field and interest in the role advertised. Make sure there is a great hook. You want to draw the reader in so that they want to know more about you. This section should be limited to one paragraph only.

(e.g., I wish to express my interest in your advertisement/current opening for a... and submit my resumé for your review. Having served in sales and operational leadership roles for the past 8 years with continued success in meeting business/operational goals, I can make a valuable contribution to your organisation's future projects and initiatives.)

Sell yourself! Point out why you would be best for the role. Use examples or, as a guide, your current or most recent position. Provide a detailed summary of the role's key responsibilities and accountabilities.

(e.g., I bring a combination of team leadership, strategic planning, and business development skills that I have leveraged to meet and exceed expectations to this position. Most recently, I have analysed core operational/business functions and implemented the most appropriate solutions to drive continual business growth.)

(e.g., I have demonstrated proficiency in all core office administration functions, including document preparation, internal/external communications. I can manage the office environment without supervision, juggle multiple tasks effectively, and maintain the confidentiality of highly sensitive materials. Examples of results from my experience with my current employer Hunter Pty Ltd, include the following...)

Provide details of your key achievements in the role as separate bullet points (i.e., targets/KPI's met and/or exceeded). Do not exceed 3 points, as you can go into more detail in your resumé. Examples below are for a sales role.

- *Achievement of profit, sales volume, net price, and net revenue objectives as General Manager*
- *Average of over 20% sales growth across 4 years as Territory Sales Manager*
- *Implementation of programs to achieve quality and risk mitigation goals*

Closing paragraph. Briefly explain the key aspects of working in sales and why you will make a good addition to the company. Thank the person hiring and invite them to discuss any additional information with you at their convenience.

(e.g., In previous positions, I increased sales performance and motivated teams to meet employer objectives. Because my success in these areas covers multiple environments, I am confident I can do the same as a member of your team. My resumé contains additional details regarding my career achievements. I would welcome an opportunity for an interview to discuss your organisation's needs and the results you can expect from me in addressing these.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely)

Name

3.7 Sample cover letter templates

Example 1 – Advertised position

This example would be used when you are sending your resumé for a position that has been advertised or one that you know about. It's a real job opportunity that you are responding to here.

To receive your template using this format please email us at success@executivecareermove.com.au

Example 2 – Non advertised position

This example would be used when you are pro-actively sending your resumé to a position that has **NOT** been advertised. This application is being sent to organisations that represent your employers of choice. You are either out of work or are seeking a career move. It's best to post this.

(You will need to have researched the organisation and ensure that you have a contact person to send the cover letter to. You must not address it To Whom It May Concern or to Dear Sir/Madam. Do that and it won't even pass the 3-second test!

To receive your template using this format please email us at success@executivecareermove.com.au

My Cover Letter Check List

Once you have written your cover letter, check it against the following questions.

Have I:

- Addressed my letter to a person, and not "To Whom it may concern" or "Dear Sir/Madam"?
- Carefully researched the company or organisation to tailor my skills and achievements?
- Ensured that my claims have been supported with specific examples of achievements?
- Kept the letter to one page, unless the job advertisement required me to address some selection criteria in the cover letter?
- Really "sold" my achievements and relevant experience in a compelling way with integrity and without being "over the top"?
- Proofread and reviewed it for correct spelling and grammar?
- Ensured that I have the right letter in the right envelope when pro-actively marketing to multiple organisations?
- Refrained from repeating my resumé parrot-fashion, but rather interpreted relevant pieces of it that highlight and demonstrate their relevance to the position?
- Omitted unrelated information, such as age, marital status, children details, employment dates, references, and salary expectations, which are inappropriate for a cover letter?
- Been positive in my approach and avoided being negative in the way I express myself – especially in relation to current or previous employers or organisations?
- Closed my letter by asking for a meeting?
- Signed each letter with an original signature?
- Typed my name underneath my signature?



3.8 How to tailor my resumé

Once you have written your 'generic' or 'master' resumé, you will re-write and tailor it every time you apply for a new position. That is, *each application needs to be targeted to that specific position.*

Relying on a cover letter for this purpose is insufficient.

This re-writing will occur mainly in two places – your cover letter, and the first page of your resumé where you highlight your Career Objective and Career Achievements. Your Career Achievements will have the same thrust, but will be adjusted to match the criteria sought in the advertisement.

For example, in your 'master' resumé, you may have written an achievement statement that reads as follows:

Leadership ability

Aligned stakeholders by clearly defining and communicating a joint vision for the XXXX development and appeased the conflict between individual JV partners by raising awareness of others' strategic objectives. Several champions consequently emerged which helped promote and complete the development on time and within budget.

If the advertisement you were applying for wanted someone who could demonstrate abilities and achievements in areas such as **General Management**, **New Business Development**, or **Communication**, any of these headings could be placed above the career achievement and the text tweaked slightly to meet the requirements of the advertisement.



Chapter 4. How to address selection criteria

Applying for a Government position or a position within a large private-sector organisation is a very different process. The application looks different, the interview looks different, the process is different, and the outcome is often very drawn out.

There are a number of reasons for these different recruitment processes, but the main reason is that salaries for Government employees come from our taxes; and the Government has an obligation to show the public that they are spending their money wisely and employing the right people. The process is set and documented, and appeals against decisions can be made in certain situations.

If you apply for a role in the Public Service or in a large corporation, you are likely to be required to lodge an application that addresses specific or **Key selection criteria**.

Applicants are short-listed based on their ability to convince the Selection Team that they have the capabilities required to perform the role—capabilities articulated in the Selection Criteria. It means that people with different backgrounds can be evaluated based on their experience and achievements, and it opens roles for individuals outside the Government sector.

In your written application, you need to address the Key Selection Criteria to show and demonstrate specifically how your knowledge, skills, and experience make you not only eligible, but *the superior applicant* for the vacancy.

All applicants must address Key Selection Criteria. Any applicant who has not sufficiently addressed them is unlikely to proceed to the interview stage of the selection process. Your statements addressing the Key Selection Criteria, therefore, are the most important part of your application, together with your resumé.

What are key selection criteria and how are they used?

Key Selection Criteria, (*criteria* is plural, *criterion* is singular) sometimes also referred to as *KSC*, represent the personal qualities, skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, and qualifications a person needs to perform a role effectively.

Key Selection Criteria set out standards by which each candidate will be assessed during the recruitment process, providing a fair and transparent selection process.

Key Selection Criteria are used to assess written applications and provide a framework for the interview. In the end, the applicant who is able to demonstrate that they meet the Key Selection Criteria to the highest standard is the one who is successful.

Key Selection Criteria are sometimes divided into *Important* criteria and *Less Important* criteria.

Important criteria are weighted equally (unless explicitly stated otherwise). *Less Important* criteria are rated equally, but have a lower weighting than *Important* criteria. However, your chances of progressing through the selection process (e.g., being short-listed) will be greater if you meet all the Selection Criteria, as you may be competing against many applicants.

Selection Criteria can also be divided into *Essential* ('must have') criteria and *Desirable* ('nice to have') criteria. The selection advisory committee will rate applicants against the criteria in order to select the right applicant.

You must meet all of the *Essential Criteria* in order to be seriously considered for a role. It is not necessary for you to have the qualifications, skills, and knowledge outlined in *Desirable Criteria*. However, your chances of progressing through the selection process (e.g., being short-listed) will be greater if you meet **all** the Selection Criteria, as you may be competing against many applicants.

How to address selection criteria

The key is to

- demonstrate capability by providing evidence of how you meet the Selection Criteria
- provide specific details
- include an indicator of success or a result (if possible)

An easy way to do this is to brainstorm using the STAR model that we used to develop your 'career stories' in Chapter 1. Here they are again, as a reminder.

Situation - provide a brief outline of the situation or setting

Task - outline what you did

Approach or Action - outline how you did it

Result - describe the outcome(s)

As an example, take the Capability of Written Communication Skills. The associated Selection Criterion could be:

Well-Developed Written Communication Skills. This includes the ability to

- structure written communications, such as reports, to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience
- express opinions, information, and key points of an argument clearly and concisely
- write in an engaging, convincing, and expressive manner

Example: Selection Criterion 1 – Well-Developed Written Communication Skills

Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role as Research Support Officer at Department of XYZ
Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needed to ensure that managers were kept informed of policies and procedures
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiated monthly newsletter, which was emailed to each manager. Took responsibility for writing the main articles. This involved obtaining ideas and input from other stakeholders to ensure that the articles reflected managers' needs (in terms of content and language).
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback was consistently excellent. Received divisional achievement award for newsletter quality. Led to improved lines of communication between managers and the Research Support Unit.

You are now ready to write the draft paragraph in full. For example:

Key Selection Criterion 1

I possess strong written communication skills, which I have developed over the course of my career.

As Research Support Officer at the Department of XYZ, I needed to ensure that managers were kept informed of policies and procedures. To do this, I initiated a monthly newsletter, which was emailed to each manager. I took responsibility for writing the main articles in each publication. This involved obtaining ideas and input from other stakeholders to ensure that the articles reflected the needs of managers, both in terms of content and language. I received consistently excellent feedback in relation to this newsletter from these internal clients and my own manager. I also received a divisional achievement award for the quality of this newsletter from management. Importantly, this initiative resulted in improved lines of communication between managers and the Research Support Unit.

From this example you will note the following steps were demonstrated.

1. A clear understanding of the selection criteria
2. An opening sentence that clearly states your claim to this criterion
3. Brainstormed ideas for each criterion from your recent work life (last 3 years) as evidence for your claim in step 1
4. Provided evidence by expanding your brainstorm ideas ensuring that you meet the specific requirements of each criterion including the outcomes
5. Conciseness –250 words is generally an appropriate length for each criterion
6. Preparation, time, and effort are all essential ingredients for writing effective responses to selection criteria

You should read through your resumé and check the following points to check you have addressed the Key Selection Criteria.

You may also want to try using the CARS formulae we outlined in Chapter 2 to develop and write your response to the Selection Criteria.



Checklist for key selection criteria

Have I:

used positive and specific language?

It is important that you avoid ambiguous or unclear expressions such as ‘involved in’ or ‘assisted’. These expressions make it difficult for the reader to understand exactly what you did. For example, instead of ‘I assisted the process through a monthly newsletter’; this idea has been phrased as ‘I initiated a monthly newsletter’. Words and phrases that could reduce credibility should also be avoided (e.g., some, a little, limited, somewhat).

used strong action (doing) words?

Avoid using passive language when describing your experience. For example, ‘I received consistently excellent feedback in relation to this newsletter from these internal clients and my own manager’ is better than simply stating ‘Feedback in relation to this newsletter was consistently excellent’.

strong evidence to support my capabilities?

For example, rather than simply saying: ‘The newsletter was received well by others’ this assertion is better substantiated by writing: ‘I received a divisional achievement award from management for the quality of this newsletter’.

addressed all aspects of the criterion?

At this stage, it is important that you go back to the wording of the particular selection criterion. As mentioned earlier, *Well Developed Written Communication Skills* includes the following components:

- structure written communications, such as reports, to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience
- express opinions, information, and key points of an argument clearly and concisely
- write in a convincing, engaging, and expressive manner

In reading the paragraph written earlier, it is clear that its content refers mainly to the first descriptor, that is, ‘Structure written communications to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience’. Therefore, it will be important that the applicant addresses the remaining two descriptors in additional paragraphs, which will comprise the full statement for the criterion, *Well Developed Written Communication Skills*.

paid attention to the language of the criterion?

For example, writing a paragraph around an example which demonstrates *Well Developed Written Communication Skills* requires the applicant to focus on actual experiences that show the extent of their skills in this area. However, if the criterion was phrased as *Knowledge of effective written communication skills and techniques* it would require different examples, which do not necessarily rely on the applicant describing their actual performance in the workplace.

embraced the correct mindset?

Assume that all applicants are well-qualified for the job and make your application the marketing document that describes why your

- *skills* are the most relevant
- *experience* is the most beneficial
- *understanding* is the most developed
- *personal qualities* are the best for the position

Be aware that applying for Public Service positions will normally take at least three times as long as a *normal* application. The interview will be in front of a panel, who will question you against the Selection Criteria. The *best person* doesn't always get the job. Often, the best *application writer* will get the job.

Review Consulting conducted a study and found that **80% of applicants were not shortlisted for an interview simply because they did not make the most of their written application**. These applicants may have had all the skills required for the position they had applied for, but they did not communicate this in their applications. With a little more time and effort on their written application, they could have been selected for an interview.

Next Steps

For further information on how we can assist you with your Outplacement, Career Transition or Career Move, please contact us on +61 1300 701 124 or email edward@executivecareermove.com.au

View our website: www.executivecareermove.com.au for further resources

