

A practical guide to preparing for employment

Studying with TAFE SA is the first step towards your future job and career.

Knowing what you really want out of your job is not always easy. It can be challenging to work out the types of jobs you might be suited to and what the best choice is for you. Understanding more about your goals, qualities, strengths and work preferences is a good place to start.

However, gaining practical skills and knowledge with TAFE SA is not the only important part of that process – this resource will help you to improve your chances of success by preparing yourself to take the next step into the employment market, by creating your resume and cover letter, and attending job interviews.

Use this guide to get hints and tips in the following areas:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Job seeking | Page 2 |
| 2. What is a resume | Page 4 |
| 3. What makes you employable | Page 5 |
| 4. Creating your resume | Page 9 |
| 5. Creating your cover letter | Page 12 |
| 6. Preparing for job interviews | Page 13 |
| 7. Example resumes (x 3) | Page 16 |
| 8. Example cover letters (x 2) | Page 21 |





There are many things that may affect your opportunities to find and secure work. You might be feeling a little bit unsure about where to start; you may have been applying for jobs for a while without success; or you might be getting interviews but not being offered the job. Either way, now could be a good time to think about your job seeking techniques.

How do I prepare myself for job hunting?

There are many ways to find a job, which can be quite a challenging thought. Whilst many jobs are advertised & published online, there are also many other ways to look for work. You may need to consider a variety of strategies, including the advertised job market (websites, social media, newspapers etc), as well as the hidden job market (directly approaching employers, networking with people, interviewing people to research jobs & pathways).

Networking strategies to explore the hidden job market may involve talking to people you know who work in your chosen field already, to help you learn more about the job, the skills required, and career pathways. You might not know people in the career, but talking to family and friends could give you some ideas, or talk to people at your local sporting club and community events, and even in places you visit frequently such as cafes, gyms, and retail stores etc.

Explore opportunities to **get some experience in a working environment**. There are a range of opportunities to do this, which could be anything from **paid work** (casual, part time or contract), **work experience** or vocational placement (often undertaken as a requirement of your study), and even **volunteering** your time to help other people.

Some benefits to getting experience in a working environment:

- Strengthen your employability skills, and you can add these experiences to your resume
- Get experience which is relevant to the course you are studying
- Develop networks with people in a professional setting
- Gives potential employers the opportunity to see if you are a 'good fit' for jobs they may have available
- Show motivation and initiative to potential employers

And remember, first impressions count, so make sure you **make a wonderful first impression** when you approach potential employers & networks. It can take less than a second to create a first impression! Employers consider personal presentation to be very important. Think carefully about what you wear, how you compose yourself, your body language, and your personal grooming. Think about how your appearance might come across to a potential employer who you are wishing to impress.

JOB SEEKING – QUICK TIPS

Tip #1 **Look in different places for advertised jobs**, i.e. jobsearch.gov.au, seek.com.au. Consider expanding your research to include social media platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn. Go to company websites, government agency websites, and industry news sites. And don't forget to look 'offline' in places like community noticeboards, local newspapers and shopfronts.

Tip #2 **Tap into the hidden job market by networking.** Talk to family, friends, co-workers, fellow members at sporting and community clubs. Networking involves getting out of your comfort zone and talking to people about yourself and what you are looking for.

Tip #3 **Spend time looking at job advertisements.** Identify the common skills and attributes employers are seeking; compare this to your list of skills and attributes to see how they match up & explore ideas for improvement.

Tip #4 **Get some experience.** Experience = skills + knowledge. You could consider doing some volunteering to gain experience and confidence in your career pathway. Employers view volunteering as a credible way of gaining real-work experiences to add to your resume. It also gives you the chance to build more networks and explore more opportunities!

Tip #5 **Undertake professional development courses or study to update industry knowledge.** This can assist to keep abreast of industry changes.

Tip #6 **Improve or update your resume and cover letter.** Tailor make them for each job application.

Tip #7 **Seek feedback.** Whilst feedback can be a scary thought sometimes, it can help us to identify where we can make changes to improve our chances of success. Ask for honest constructive feedback from potential employers, your Job Network provider, academic staff, and family & friends.

What is a resume?



What is a resume?

- A resume is basically a picture of your life in words, written and presented in a certain way to get an interview for a specific type of job.
- A resume is a short, professional account of your career, qualifications and accomplishments. Its purpose is primarily to get you a job interview.
- Can also be referred to as CV – Curriculum Vitae.

Why do I need a resume?

- The times of walking into a business premises asking to see the boss and saying, “I’m looking for a job, when do I start?” are over. These days employers don’t have the time for this type of approach. They want to see a written record of your skills, experience and education.

How does a resume work?

- A resume is a marketing document which tells a potential employer about you and what you have to offer them BUT its only words on a piece of paper if you don’t know how to use it to SELL yourself .
- Taking the time to get your resume right can dramatically improve your chances of getting an interview and winning a job.

What’s the best format of a resume?

- There isn’t really any one correct way, or template for preparing a resume, choose a format which suits your purpose. In the following pages there are tips and examples that you may find helpful to use as a guide.
- The most important 2 pieces of information in your resume are your capabilities (skills, knowledge, attitude, etc.) and what you have accomplished or achieved in the various positions you have held in your career.

What makes you employable?



Employers usually look for a combination of three things when they are hiring: Personal Attributes, Technical Skills (also referred to as “hard skills”), and Employability Skills (also referred to as “soft skills”).

Your personal skills and attributes are what makes you a valuable employee – they are needed to get most jobs. However every stage of your career planning process requires you to identify, analyse, describe and improve your knowledge and skills. You need this for career planning, creating your resume and applications, going to job interviews, asking for a promotion or to undertake new duties at work, and identifying professional development opportunities.

TECHNICAL (JOB) SKILLS	EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS	PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES
“Hard Skills” Skills/knowledge that you may need, related to the specific job	“Soft Skills” Essential skills, values and personal qualities that enable you to thrive in any workplace	These contribute towards your overall employability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquired through formal education & training programs• Learnt on the job• Examples:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Computer programming- Law and legal knowledge- Machine operation- Video Production- Cutting hair	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good Communication• Teamwork• Problem Solving• Self Management• Planning & Organising• Technology• Learning• Initiative & Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loyalty & Commitment• Honesty & Integrity• Enthusiasm• Reliability• Personal Presentation• Positive Self Esteem• A Sense of humour• Deal with pressure• Motivation• Adaptability

Knowing and identifying your employability skills (both technical/career specific, and generic/soft skills), will help you to identify what your strengths are, what jobs are most suited to you, what training or development opportunities may assist you, and to understand what employers are looking for in hiring you.

The following TAFE link will provide a deeper exploration into knowing yourself and career planning:
<https://www.tafesa.edu.au/services/career-services>

ACTIVITIES: Use the following tables to identify our own personal skills and attributes – circle, highlight or list words that describe you in each section.

The better you know yourself and can identify these skills, and how they can be transferred between different jobs, the better prepared you are for moving through the world of work. Use the following tables to identify your own attributes and skills, in order to get to know yourself better.

The words you identify in the activities below will be useful ideas and language to add to your resume in section 3 of this guide.

Know Yourself: Identify your Technical Skills (“hard skills”)

Computer Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Office Suite • Social media • HTML • Analytics • Pivot tables 	Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data mining • Data presentation • Resource management • Data engineering • Database management 	Project Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agile methodologies, such as Scrum ▪ Project management software, such as Trello and Zoho ▪ Stakeholder engagement ▪ Coordination of activities ▪ Finance and budget control
Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search Engine Optimization (SEO) • Search Engine Marketing (SEM) • Marketing Campaign Management • Google Analytics • Content Management Systems (CMS), such as WordPress 	Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and interpret financial statements and other accounting reports • Develop efficient financial reporting mechanisms • Plan and implement accounting controls • BAS/GST reporting • MYOB/Zero software 	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User Interface (UI) Design • User Experience (UX) Design • Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, InDesign, etc.) • Digital Product Design Software, such as InVision and Zeppelin
Cloud Computing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud Architecture • Storage and Data Management • Networking Communication • Cloud Middleware Technologies • Cloud Applications, such as JSON, Rest, and RPC 	Mobile & Web Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software Revision Control Systems • Android Development • iOS App Development • Web Architecture and Development Framework • Angular and Node Apps 	Network Structure & Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encryption Algorithms • Authentication Systems • Risk Assessment • Cryptography • Virtual and Host-based Firewalls
Horticultural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying plants and pests • Propagation • Using pesticides safely • Revegetation techniques • Pruning and shaping 	Hairdressing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash, colour, lighten, and condition hair • Chemically change hair textures • Cut, dry, and style hair • Cut and style wigs • Identify scalp conditions and recommend products 	Community Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Advocacy • Disability support • Identify clients at risk • Identify and maintain networks • Counselling skills • Communication skills • Accurate case notes
Administration/clerical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception skills • Phone and switchboard • Organising travel/accommodation • Computer programs • Word processing • Accounts payable/receivable • Database creation • Stock processing and inventory 	Nursing/Health Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal hygiene support • Washing and grooming clients • Meal preparation • Wound preparation • Medication preparation • Community support • Advocacy 	Certifications and Licenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning management systems, such as Blackboard, Canvas, or Eagle • Data management systems, such as Colleague • Healthcare related licenses • Certificates, awards, badges, and industry-recognized credentials
Other - explore & list the technical skills that relate to your field of work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 		

Know Yourself: Identify your Employability Skills (“soft skills”)

<p>Communication depending on the job, communication is about being a good talker, good listener, or a good writer. It involves being confident about speaking to people (face-to-face or over the phone), including customers and other employees. It also involves expressing your ideas concisely and speaking clearly and directly to individuals or groups of people.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to others and understanding what they are meaning • Speaking clearly and directly to people • Being independent with your reading and writing • Showing empathy to the needs of others • Using math's and numeracy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the needs of customers • Speaking and writing in languages other than English • Being able to create and use networking skills • Being assertive & negotiating with people • Sharing information openly • Being able to speak persuasively
<p>Problem solving is about being able to find solutions when faced with difficulties or setbacks. Even if you can't think of a solution straight away, you need to have a logical process for figuring things out. This requires a range of skills including researching and identifying relevant information, exploring underlying causes, proposing possible solutions, assessing solutions, and making decisions.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solving problems as part of a team • Being creative and innovative with your ideas • Showing initiative and independence in identifying problems and considering solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a range of problem solving strategies • Resolving customer concerns or complaints • Using mathematics to solve financial or budget issues • Checking the suitability of solutions to problems • Developing practical solutions to problems
<p>Self-management is about getting on with your work without someone having to check up on you every five minutes. You should also be able to stay on top of your own deadlines and be able to delegate tasks to other people to make sure things get done on time.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing and articulating your own goals and visions • Being able to monitor and evaluate your own work performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for your behaviour, actions, and outcomes • Being confident with your ideas and visions
<p>Initiative & Enterprise are about being able to think creatively and to make improvements to the way things are. They're also about looking at the bigger picture and how the way you work fits into that. Some of the skills include being able to adapt to change and new situations, considering many ideas and formulating a logical plan, identifying innovative ideas.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being creative in your thinking • Generating a range of ideas and options • Identifying opportunities which are not obvious to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating innovative solutions • Showing you can adapt to new situations • Having a strategic, long term vision • Translating ideas into actions
<p>Teamwork means being good at working with people - both the people you work with and other people that meet through your work, or in other settings. It can include giving constructive feedback to other people, working alongside others to achieve a common aim, and empowering and supporting others to achieve goals.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work independently as an individual, and as a member of a team • Understanding your role within the team, and how you can contribute • Identifying the strengths of other team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching and mentoring other people, and giving feedback about their work • Working with people across different ages, genders, races, religions or political backgrounds
<p>Planning & Organising is about things like working out what is required to get a job done, and then working out when and how you'll do it. They're also about things like developing project timelines and meeting deadlines. You demonstrate this by being able to manage timelines and prioritise your tasks, coordinating tasks for yourself and others, anticipating future needs, and making plans towards achieving things.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing your own time and priorities • Taking initiative, and making decisions • Creating project goals which are achievable • Being able to explore options, evaluate effectiveness, consider alternatives, and make decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting and organising information Actively participating in planning and improvement processes • Understanding how business operations and the relationships between organisations • Coordinating and delegating tasks for yourself and with other staff
<p>Learning is about wanting to understand new things and being able to pick them up quickly. It's also about being able to take on new tasks and to adapt when the way things are done in the workplace change. This involves being able to identify your own learning needs, and seek opportunities to participate in learning new things.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to identify your learning needs, and manage your own progress • Contributing to the leaning of others in your workplace • Using a range of options to learn – courses, networking, peers, IT/online research, mentoring • Being open to exploring new ways to do things, ideas, and techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning about different aspects of work – both technical (ie products and services) and interpersonal (ie cultural and people) • Being willing to learn both on and off the job • Being willing to invest time and effort in learning new skills • Accepting the need for change and learning as part of your job
<p>Technology general technology skills that employers want include things like being able to use a computer for word processing and sending email, using phone systems, or knowing how to use a photocopier. It also requires you to know about online safety and security of information. Other technology skills relate to hardware, like knowing how to use EFTPOS, a cash register, a photocopier or scanner, a camera, or recording equipment.</p>	
<p>What is important to employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a range of basic computer and IT skills • Being willing to learn new technologies & computer skills • Having the physical capacity to use the technology needed for your job (ie: manual dexterity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using IT and computers to manage your time and/or workload • Using IT to organise information and data • Understanding the OHSW knowledge that relates to the technology you use • Knowledge of technology specific to your job • Being able to use a range of different software packages and hardware devices

Know Yourself: Identify your Personal Attributes (values, qualities & strengths)

Kind	Sensitive	Caring	Positive	Persistent
Imaginative	Optimistic	Organised	Brave	Confident
Analytical	Creative	Out Going	Intuitive	Easy Going
Curious	Calm	Energetic	Enthusiastic	Friendly
Strong	Forgiving	Spontaneous	Generous	Active
Wise	Responsible	Logical	Zesty	Loving
Collegial	Fair	Humble	Grateful	Careful
Appreciative	Hopeful	Spiritual	Committed	Serious
Loyal	Follower	Assertive	Disciplined	Bold
Flexible	Nurturing	Respectful	Stubborn	Introvert
Risk Taker	Balanced	Visionary	Serious	Reliable
Determined	Funny	Open Minded	Adaptable	Love Learning
Ambitious	Practical	Insightful	Supportive	Patient
Hard Working	Responsible	Motivated	Leader	Independent
Common Sense	Deal with pressure	Adaptable	Positive Outlook	Honest
Integrity	Sense of Humour	Balanced attitude	Hard Working	Other

Know Yourself: Explore additional questions to gain better self-understanding

- What does my dream job look like?
- What are my short and longer-term goals and priorities?
- What do I like doing?
- What am I good at?
- Do I want to work and live locally?
- Am I prepared to move to a different location? Where would I go?
- What are my family's needs?
- How many hours per week would I like to work and what times would I be available?
- Am I prepared to accept a lower rate of pay for a job that offers more flexibility or enables me to do something that interests me and is strength focussed?
- Do I want to start my own business or buy a franchise?
- What study to I need to undertake to get my dream job?
- What does success mean to me?

Creating Your Resume



Your Name (First & Last)

Your Address | Your Phone Number | Your Email

CAREER OBJECTIVE and PROFILE

The career objective highlights what the applicant is seeking. This section also is a marketing statement and highlights the applicants experience and background.

Edit for each job application, where possible using the language used in the job description. Use 3 or 4 sentences, no more than 5 lines.

Sentence 1: explain who you are & your experience.

Sentence 2: explain the skills you have.

Sentence 3: explain what type of work you are looking for.

KEY SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES

This section includes the key professional skills and attributes that the applicant brings to the position. These skills should align to the applicant's proposed career direction and identify immediately what the applicant brings to the position based on their capabilities. Use a mixture of employability skills and technical skills. Tailor for each job application by prioritising your skills against those required by the employer and/or the industry.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Include 2 to 4 bullet points – explain how your contribution benefited your employer, and back up with statistics or facts where possible. Tailor for each job application by prioritising your achievements against those required by the employer.

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

State your most recent qualifications first, and, summarise the older education. Think about the relevance to the job you are applying for.

Tip: If you have limited or no work experience, a description of skills and achievements gained during your most recent studies can help.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Keep to *relevant* skills, training (short courses, not full qualifications) or languages only. If a job requires specific skills you may wish to elaborate on your abilities e.g. Fluent Arabic speaker; capable of delivering business proposals.

EMPLOYMENT/CAREER HISTORY

Only include employment history for the last 10-15 years. Ensure relevance of all employment history and identify years and length of employment service. The following information may be highlighted throughout the employment history:

Company name, job title & dates. Include a brief description of the business and position brief.

Include your responsibilities, contribution, accountabilities and achievements.

Tip: If you've worked for the same company for a long time doing a number of different roles, consider having one header with the company name and sub-headings with the roles and dates.

REFEREES

Decide whether to state "Referees available on request" or to insert the details of two relevant professional references. Include a description of their professional relationship to you, and their contact details (phone number and/or email).

NOTE: See resume examples at the end of this document.

POWERFUL “ACTION WORDS” TO ENHANCE YOUR RESUME

Acknowledged	Completed	Enhanced	Made	Published
Accelerated	Composed	Enlisted	Maintained	Put together
Accomplished	Computed	Established	Managed	Quantified
Achieved	Conceived	Estimated	Mapped	Raised
Acquired	Conducted	Evaluated	Maximised	Rebuilt
Acted	Confirmed	Examined	Measured	Recognised
Acted as	Constructed	Executed	Mediated	Recorded
Adapted	Consulted	Exhibited	Melded	Recruited
Administered	Contributed	Expanded	Mentored	Redesigned
Advanced	Controlled	Expedited	Merged	Refined
Advised	Converted	Explained	Mobilised	Regulated
Advocated	Conveyed	Explored	Moderated	Remodelled
Aided	Convinced	Facilitated	Motivated	Reorganised
Aligned	Coordinated	Fashioned	Moulded	Reported
allocated	Corrected	Fielded	Navigated	Represented
Altered	Corresponded	Finished	Negotiated	Researched
Amplified	Counselled	Fixed	Observed	Resolved
Analysed	Counted	Forecasted	Operated	Restored
Anticipated	Crafted	Forged	Orchestrated	Restructured
Applied	Created	Formulated	Organised	Revamped
appraised	Cultivated	Fostered	Originated	Reviewed
Approved	Cured	Gathered	Outpaced	Revised
Arranged	Customised	Generated	Overhauled	Saved
Assessed	Decorated	Grew	Oversaw	Secured
Assimilated	Defined	Guided	Participated	selected
Assisted	Delegated	Harmonised	Partnered	Set up
Assured	Delivered	Headed	Patched	Shaped
Attended	Demonstrated	Helped	perceived	Slashed
Audited	Designed	Hired	Perfected	Solved
Authored	Determined	Hosted	Performed	Stimulated
Authorised	Developed	Identified	Persuaded	Streamlined
Blended	Devised	Ignited	Piloted	Strengthened
Boosted	Diagnosed	Illustrated	Pioneered	Structured
Briefed	Directed	Implemented	Planned	Studied
Budgeted	Disbursed	Improved	Predicted	Succeeded
Built	Discovered	Influenced	Prepared	Supervised
Calculated	Diversified	Informed	Presented	Surveyed
Chaired	Documented	Initiated	Prioritised	Taught
Checked	Drafted	Inspected	Probed	Tested
Clarified	Edited	Inspired	Produced	Tracked
Classified	Embraced	Integrated	Progressed	Trained
Coached	Enabled	Invented	Promoted	Undertook
Collaborated	Enacted	Investigated	Proposed	Unified
Collated	Encouraged	Joined	Proved	Updated
Communicated	Energised	Led	Provided	Verified
Compiled	Engaged in	Lifted	Publicized	Volunteered

RESUME PREPARATION – QUICK TIPS

Tip #1 **A resume is living, breathing, working representation of you.** The resume must be structured in such a way that it is easy to read, says what you want to say without waffling and paints you in the best possible way.

Tip #2 **KIS – Keep it Simple** – Remember that whoever is reading your resume only has a limited time and potentially hundreds of others to read through. If it's too fancy or hard to read it more than likely will be overlooked.

Tip #3 **Keep your resume to up to a maximum of four pages and easy to read** – use fonts like Arial, Calibri, Verdana, Garamond or Tahoma. Font size no smaller than 10 or bigger than 12.

Tip #4 **Make sure your resume is tailored for each job you apply for.** Match your skills and abilities to the job (use the activity in section 1 to help identify your strengths!).

Tip #5 **List education and work experience with most recent on top.** Where you do not have much experience list other jobs you have performed or volunteer work.

Tip #6 **Choose referees carefully and always ask referees before listing them.** Tell them about any job you have applied for so they are aware they may be contacted. List at least 2 people who can say good things about you.

Tip #7 **Always proof read your resume and ask someone else to check also.** Ensure spelling and grammar are correct.

Tip #8 **Use a standard structured format for your resume.** This makes it easy for employers to read and find the information they are looking for.

Tip #9 **Use action and key words in your resume** to describe the impact and level of involvement in relation to your achievements, activities and employment history.

Tip #10 **It is not necessary to include:** date of birth, marital status, gender, health status or address – it's completely up to you to decide what to include.

Tip #11 **Only include hobbies** if it links directly to the industry or position you are applying for.

Tip #12 **Bullet points are a good way to capture information** in as few words as possible whilst capturing the reader's attention.

Tip #13 **Look up industry associations and websites** associated with the job you are applying for to see what tips they provide, specific to your industry.

Creating Your Cover Letter



What is a cover letter?

- The main role of a cover letter is to clearly outline how you fit what the employer is looking for.
- Each job vacancy will attract many applicants. To stand out to the prospective employer you need to demonstrate how your skills, experience, attributes and abilities match the job.
- If you tailor make your cover letter to the role you are applying for you are more likely to trigger the employer's interest in reading your resume and hopefully get shortlisted for a job interview.
- Cover letters accompany a resume and are usually read before the resume.
- Make both your cover letter and your resume strong and standalone documents aimed at convincing the reader that they should meet you for an interview.

COVER LETTERS – QUICK TIPS

Tip #1 Many organisations now require you to also complete a separate statement addressing the selection criteria for the position.

The most important things to do when preparing this type of document is to read the organisations guidelines for preparing the document and to very carefully read each criterion to ensure that you cover what is required in your response.

Tip #2 Only make claims about your skills and experience which you can back up with examples and evidence.

Tip #3 If a job advertisement does not provide enough detail, ring the contact officer to find out more information.

Tip #4 Fit into one page.

Tip #5 Make it upbeat and positive.

Tip #6 Use keywords from the job advertisement. For more information on how to do this check out the Australian Employment Guide website:
<https://www.employmentguide.com.au/resume.html>

Tip #7 Read through to make sure there are no spelling mistakes, typos or grammatical errors.

Tip #8 Check out the example cover letters at the end of this guide.

Preparing for Job Interviews



Congratulations to making it to this stage – the job interview.

Being well prepared to attend job interviews will help you to build your confidence, alleviate any pre-interview nerves and promote yourself well to employers.

Every time you interact with a potential employer you have an opportunity to communicate who you are and what you have to offer.

How do I prepare for a job interview?

- Prepare your clothing & personal presentation. Plan ahead to ensure you dress appropriately for the job role. If in doubt, dress up rather than down. Ensure clothing is clean & ironed, and that your personal hygiene is taken care of.
- Organise your transport. Know how you will get to your job interview and how much time it will take. Carry the employer's contact details with you so you can contact them if you are running late.
- Find out as much as you can about the employer and the job role. Research the company's values and achievements. Think about how you can support these achievements and how you can demonstrate these at the job interview.
- Plan your answers to potential interview questions. While you cannot predict every question, you can anticipate some of the more frequently asked questions (refer later in this guide for examples).
- Practice out loud. Rehearse interview questions with another person such as a friend.
- Present yourself in the best possible light on the day.
- Follow up. If it turns out you are unsuccessful this time round, that's okay – better luck next time. If you think you could benefit from receiving some feedback on how you performed at the interview you can always call or email the contact person and make a time with them to talk about how you went.

PRACTICE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Q: Can you tell me a little about yourself?

A: Talk about your professional and employability skills – your experience, your education, your community involvement, your passion and enthusiasm for this line of work.

Q: How did you hear about the position?

A: This can provide insight into the way you research information, your knowledge and contacts in the industry, and your commitment to the job. If you heard about it through network contacts, let them know & name-drop! If you saw it on their website, tell them as it shows you look beyond the standard job-seeking sites.

Q: What do you know about the company?

A: Employers want to see that you take an interest in their organisation and the services they provide. Make sure you have done some homework about the company – talk about products or services, awards they may have received, recent news or changes to the industry.

Q: Why do you want this job?

A: This is about finding out if you really want this job, or do you just want “any job”. This is your chance to explain that there is a good opportunity for you to use your skills more broadly and continue to develop further professional knowledge and skills.

Q: Why should we hire you?

A: This is your chance to talk about your strengths (have a few in mind, ready to talk about), and about how the position advertised aligns with your skills and abilities. You are aiming to show the employer that you have the skills to do the job, that you will fit in well with the organisation and culture, and that you are a better match than other people they may be interviewing.

Q: What do you consider to be your weaknesses?

A: Only ever give one point when answering this question and try to frame it in a positive light. e.g. *“I’m not a fan of public speaking, however I have done some training, and am building up my confidence in this area”*. Have a second weakness up your sleeve “just in case” they ask anything further.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

A: It’s good to be honest and specific by talking about your future goals and relate them back to the job you have applied for. Employers are looking for people with realistic expectations, ambitions for the future, and goals which align with the job you have applied for. If this job is going to be a ‘temporary gig’, it’s ok to say you’re not sure what the future holds, and this job will give you the opportunity to further explore your options.

Q: Why are you leaving your current job?

A: your answer can give away a lot about you as a person, so focus on what you seek to gain or learn by taking on a new job.

Q: What did you like/dislike about your previous job?

A: This can give employers an insight as to whether you have a “half full” or “half empty” outlook. It is best to focus on what was good about your previous role – talk about the organisations products or services, or the culture that you enjoyed.

Q: What are you looking for in a new position?

A: Ideally you would respond by describing the same things that this position you applied for is offering – be specific and give examples.

Q: What type of work environment do you prefer?

A: Employers are looking to make sure that your preferences and goals are matched to the job you have applied for - be specific in describing some of the aspects of the job you have applied for.

Q: How would your boss and co-workers describe you?

A: It's best to be honest here, remembering that if you get the job, they are going to be calling your referees. Talk about strengths and traits you haven't already discussed - maybe your strong work ethic, or great teamwork by helping with projects as needed.

Q: How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?

A: Your answer to this will demonstrate that you have healthy coping strategies and can self-manage situations. Talk about techniques you use for stress reduction & professional self-care. Follow this up by giving an example of a stressful situation you have dealt with professionally (don't give examples from your personal life).

Q: Do you have any questions for us?

A: It's always good to have a couple of questions in preparation for this – you may like to ask about some specific details about the role, about workplace culture, or about future opportunities in the organisation. Or, you might like to learn more about their role in the company, what is their favourite thing about working for the organisation, or what areas the company seeks to grow or improve in the future.

JOB INTERVIEWS - QUICK TIPS

Tip #1 **Socially, there is nothing wrong with piercings or tattoos** but think about whether they will enhance or hurt your chances of securing a particular job.

Tip #2 **Create a list of mock questions** and then practice playing the role of the interviewer and the job seeker.

Tip #3 **When you are in the interview** - stand, walk and sit with good posture. Don't fidget. Turn your phone off.

Tip #4 **Project confidence by having a firm handshake**, being polite, making eye contact, smiling and speaking clearly.

Tip #5 **Arrive on time, or a little early.**

Tip #6 **Use people's names.**

Tip #7 **Show you are well organised** by taking a pen and refer to notes if you need. Take a copy of your resume.

Tip #8 **Ask for clarification** if you don't understand an interview question.

Tip #9 **Be prepared for different interview panel types** – some interviews are one-on-one, others may include a number of interviewers. If there is more than person interviewing you, speak directly to the person who has asked you the question.

Tip #10 **Nobody likes to talk about it, but your personal hygiene may be the difference between whether you get a second interview, or the job.** First impressions count, so think about things like showering on the day, having clean teeth, hair and nails, using deodorant (but not excessive or overpowering fragrances), and wearing clean, ironed clothes.

RESUME – EXAMPLE 1

Annabel Palmer

Mobile: 0437 099 3455

Email: annabelpalmer@gmail.com

Career Objective:

I wish to be employed on a part-time casual basis as a waitress where I can use my excellent customer service skills and experience. I am committed to creating a friendly and welcoming environment ensuring that customers receive the best possible service. I am a hard worker with a proven track record for being flexible, reliable and work at my best in a team environment.

Skills:

- **Customer service** - casual sales assistant, Kalingula Fish Markets, Saturdays and school holidays. Was known and appreciated by many customers for the quality of my service and my friendly manner
- **Food and beverage handling** - Won the branch prize for most consistent quality in hamburger production at McDonalds
- **Teamwork** - Member of school netball team for each age group, 2010-2015. Won premiership in Under 16 division and runners up in Open division, 2015
- **Presentation** - Modelled summer fashions from Young Fun Fashions to raise money for Camp Quality in October, 2017

Employment record:

February-November 2006

Front-of-house and kitchen hand (casual); McDonalds, West Cotteringham

Responsibilities:

- Customer service
- Cashier and money handling
- General cleaning

April 2014 - September 2015

Sales assistant (casual); Kalingula Fish Markets

Responsibilities:

- Customer service
- General cleaning
- Cashier and money handling

Education and training:

2015 Year 12 - Mornington High School

2016 Introduction to Food and Beverage Course, Penguin Hospitality Training Centre

Referees:

Konstantin Marekanos

Owner/Manager, Kalingula Fish Markets

Mobile: 0433 939 4567

Perry Downtown

Manager, McDonalds, West Cotteringham

Mobile: 0456 545 6767

RESUME – EXAMPLE 2

RESUME

Benjamin Day

Telephone: 0448 833 292
Email: benday123456@gmail.com

Education and Training:

2013 Year 11, Cambra High School
2013 Certificate II in General Construction
2013 White Card
2015 Full License and own car

Employment History:

Warradale Cabinetmakers

2015 – Current

Trades Assistant

- Supervising factory floor team
- Coordinating weekly tool box meetings
- Reporting to Operations Manager on work output and scheduling
- Checking and monitoring quality of workmanship
- Measuring and cutting up plasterboard
- Assisting tradesperson to assemble finished cupboards
- Continuous maintenance of workspace by sweeping, collecting offcuts and storage of tools and equipment

G and N Plumbing Services

2013 (1 week)

Work Experience

- Attended domestic jobs on site with tradesperson
- Assisted with problem solving around hot water system breakdown
- Dug trenches for new pipes

Interests:

Surfing

Member Port Noarlunga Football Club since 2015

Home Maintenance

Referee:

John Smith (Manager/Owner)

Tel: 0573 389 739

David Gray (Trainer)

Tel: 0444 990 399

RESUME – EXAMPLE 3

Suzie Carer

1 My Street, Mytown 5000 | 0400 000 000 | suziecarer@email.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE

I am a caring compassionate and responsible individual with a strong commitment to providing quality care so that the elderly and disabled can live with maximum dignity, comfort and independence. Versatile personal carer with experience in both residential and community based care for aged care and disability sector clients. Well-developed interpersonal skills and engaging personality with the ability to build relationships with clients and colleagues. Seeking work in home and community care in an autonomous and versatile environment.

KEY SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES

Communication & negotiation skills – negotiated with various community services providers to ensure advice and resources for clients were the best solution to meet the needs of client

Project Management – led a small team in implementing a community centre for an aged care residential environment. The program involved five service organisations visiting on a regular bases to provide recreational and personal care services, and provided service to over 110 residents.

Teamwork – worked as part of a team in a busy residential care centre, often under great pressure. Flexibility was essential in providing responsive individualised service and helping colleagues to ensure great care for all residents.

Other Key Skills and Attributes include, but limited to:

Conflict Resolution	Change Management
Service Design & Delivery	Strategy & Business Development
Workforce Recruitment	Interpersonal Skills
Stakeholder Management	Community Engagement
High impact presentations and public speaking	Coaching & Mentoring
Continuous Improvement + Excellence	

ACHIEVEMENTS

Nominated for XYZ Aged Care Excellence Awards (2018)

Speaker at “RUOK day” conference – Melbourne (2016)

Most Improved Team Award (2007)

QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Nursing , UniSA	Current Enrolment
Certificate III Aged Care , TAFE SA	Graduated: 2010
Certificate III Retail Supervision , ABC Training Group	Graduated: 2006
Year 12 South Australian Certificate of Education , Adelaide High School	Graduated: 2004

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Advanced First Aid, St John Ambulance	Completed: 2017
Manual Handling (update) Workshop, TAFE SA	Completed: 2016
Dementia and Palliative Care Workshop	Completed: 2010
SA Drivers Licence	

CAREER HISTORY

XYZ Aged Care | Personal Carer **May 2016 - present**

(A busy 120 bed residential aged care facility in inner Sydney, servicing clients with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Providing services from low care to high care needs as well as dementia wards)

Responsibilities:

- Assisting residents with bathing, feeding and dressing
- Accompanying residents on daily walks
- Assisting with general facility maintenance and food preparation
- Providing general care and emotional support to clients

ABC Home Care Services | Personal Support Worker **Oct 2010 - May 2016**

(A non-government organisation providing not-for-profit support to clients with disabilities and barriers to community engagement. Service provides a range of personal care and social support to eligible clients)

Responsibilities:

- Assisting clients with personal hygiene needs including bathing and dressing
- Accompanying clients to attend social and personal activities including medical appointments, shopping and community centre activities
- Assisting with general home maintenance and food preparation
- Providing general care and emotional support to clients

FAQ Variety Store | Retail Assistant **Jan 2005 - Sept 2010**

(A busy retail variety store in a large metropolitan shopping centre, selling novelty and household items)

Responsibilities:

- Provided customer service, operated cash registers, assisted with store maintenance and cleaning, inventory stocktake and record keeping

REFEREES

Jo Smith – Care Manager

XYZ Aged Care

Email: josmith@email.com

Phone: (08) 1111 2222

Lisa Hanson – Director, Community Support

ABC Home Care Services

Email: lisahanson@email.com

Phone: (08) 3333 4444

COVER LETTER – EXAMPLE 1

Insert date

Insert name of person

Their job title

Organisation

Suburb SA 5xxx

Dear (insert person's name),

RE: Name of job, job reference number

I am extremely interested in the advertised position and I am confident that you will find that I have a range of capabilities which will enable me to make a meaningful contribution to your organisation (or business, or this role).

Following is a brief summary of the experience I would bring to this position:

Key attribute (should be the most important of the selection criteria). Make a supporting statement about this attribute. You might need to add another point if you have something to say about this attribute.

Another key attribute and supporting point.

Another key attribute and supporting point.

A copy of my resume is attached for your further information and evaluation.

I look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you during an interview where I would like to further outline my ability to perform this role to your complete satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

Your Name

COVER LETTER – EXAMPLE 2

22nd May 2018

Ms Julie Under
Manager, ABC Aged Care
55 Chapel Street
Adelaide SA 5000

Dear Ms Under,

Re: Team Leader – Staff Wellbeing

I am writing to apply for the position of Team Leader – Staff Wellbeing as advertised. From your website I can see that you are an organisation with a strong focus on service excellence and continuous improvement. I'm committed to developing a successful career within an Aged Care focussed organisation and very enthusiastic about working for ABC Aged Care.

Throughout my career, I have been described as a positive, high-energy force that leads with contagious passion and delivers on goals in the face of entrenched complexities. Underpinning my success is the ability to develop and maintain robust relationships with clients, stakeholders, staff and agencies with leadership skills, innovation and strategic vision.

My organisational development and leadership competencies were consolidated through my experiences in the programs, People Opportunities and ABC Home Care. Over the past five years, I have integrated professional development in Positive Psychology and Wellbeing, into the teams and organisations that I have led.

As a leader, I build mutual generosity between management and personnel; utilise front-line worker perspectives to inform strategic and operational matters; and build workforce capacity by ensuring time, expertise and professional development to all staff and volunteers. I have excellent communication and interpersonal skills and an empowering management style.

I am a passionate advocate for the causes I lead and have strong interpersonal and communication skills. I'm known for my ability to bring people and teams together, and through coaching, training and mentoring, to lead them to unprecedented levels of performance. I engender pride in my teams. I get things done, and I get results.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this position with you. I have attached my resume in this application. I am grateful for your consideration and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Jan Smith