

The Career Sherpa's Résumé Guide

What is a résumé?

Your résumé is your primary marketing tool through the job search process. It tells your story, regardless of what stage you might be at in your career – a new school or university graduate, career changer or new opportunity seeker.

What is the purpose of a résumé?

When we ask people this question, they often say the following:

1. To highlight my skills and experience
2. To make me stand out from other job seekers
3. To show the potential employer my formal education, along with any other courses or learning that I've completed
4. To show my fit to the company or organisation

All of those answers are correct. However, there is only one **purpose** for your résumé, LinkedIn or any other online jobseeker profile, and that **is to make the phone ring**. To get the reader interested enough to start a conversation with you.

If your phone isn't ringing, then your résumé isn't working.

Is a résumé the same as a CV?

Unlike a CV, which can have more detail, your résumé should be a brief summary of your work history. It is an introduction that **tells a potential employer WHY they need to meet you in an interview**. It is not an invitation to give them enough information to decide without interviewing you.

A CV is now used only for academia or in some professions like the legal and accounting industry.

What about a video résumé?

A traditional résumé should do a great job informing the reader of your experience, qualifications and skills in an easy to read and quick format. A video résumé has quite a different effect and quickly lets a recruiter or employer not only see you but to get a real feel for your personality.

Video résumés are certainly growing in popularity – but not as much as video interviews and even automated video question responses as part of the recruitment process. If you decide to make a video résumé, then remember to look at your video production just like you would a face-to-face meeting with a recruiter for a job. Make sure you introduce yourself clearly and in a friendly manner. If your video résumé is a generic one, focus what you have been doing, what you're proud of in your earlier roles, and how others would describe you. If your video résumé is for a particular role, make sure you

tell the viewer why you are a good fit for the organisation and to the role. Either way, remember you only have a short amount of time to engage and interest them, so keep it light.

What should be in your résumé?

Now that we have some of the frequently asked questions answered, let's take a look at the critical components of your résumé and how to get it to work best for you.

The top of the document should contain your name, home address, email and mobile contact details.

The middle of the first page should have a personal overview or summary. Use this section to describe yourself and highlight your 'soft skills' – the kind of person you are, how you work, and what your values are. Using third party descriptions like, "described by my work colleagues as someone who is self-motivated, independent and has great attention to detail" can be a good way to communicate this.

On the lower part of the first page, include a summary of your employment history and a list of your key skills. We call these skills your "Employability Skills". They include a mix of hard skills (like a trade, qualification or competency) and soft skills (your personality traits like honesty, punctuality, reliability, integrity, problem-solving ability and other languages).

Ideally, what you will end up with is most of the detail a potential employer might need to assess your suitability for a job on just one page. The rest of the detail around each previous role – including key responsibilities and work accomplishments can be on the following 2-3 pages.

At the end of your résumé is where you'll place all the final details. This includes a brief summary of any roles that are more than ten years ago – remember you're trying to keep to 2 or 3 pages in length. The end of your résumé is also the right place for your education, qualifications and training to be briefly summarised.

Finally, any interests or hobbies that you want to show. These can be optional depending on how you're going for space, and of course, whether they are relevant for the role or organisation and shed more light on you as a person.

The last section of your résumé should talk about your referees. Unless you have been asked to provide referee details as part of the application process, we'd suggest you state that **"Names and contact details of referees will be provided on request."**

If you're a graduate or a new employment market entrant your résumé should be one or two pages, if you are a more experienced employee, then between two and four pages works well in most markets.

So, to recap your résumé should include:

- Your home address, unless there's a reason not to
- Contact details – both mobile and email
- A list of all your employment, with more detail around the last 3-4 roles or the previous ten years
- A summary paragraph or statement that describes you (third-party descriptors for most impact)
- Accomplishments are what makes your résumé appealing to the reader and makes them think "we need some of that around here."
- A summary of your education
- Any relevant training, licenses, memberships or accreditations

What your résumé does not need to include:

- Your age or date of birth
- Your marital or family status
- Your ethnicity or country of birth
- Copies or extracts from any certificates or course that you have completed
- A photo of you
- Salary expectations
- Every job you have ever had
- Your referee details unless asked for as part of the application process
- A 'career objective' - an employer really doesn't care about what you are looking for, they want someone to help get things done in their organisation
- Samples of your work, unless requested or perhaps for a marketing or creative role

Remember, keep it short. It is a résumé, not a novel.

Why your résumé needs to be customised for each job – the rise of ATS

Recruiters only look at most qualified applicants and on average spend less than 45 seconds on each résumé. They are also often assisted by an Applicant Tracking System (ATS), a software application that enables the electronic handling of recruitment.

What does this mean you might ask? When you apply for a job online, your résumé is more than likely passing through an ATS before it gets to a recruiter or potential employer. As a result, your ability to get your résumé in front of a human could depend highly on how well you have optimised your résumé for ATS algorithms.

With more and more applicants applying for jobs, with many unqualified for the job and just "giving it a go", ATS help to save recruiters and employers time in the recruitment process by automatically highlighting the top candidates who are in line with keywords in the job description.

How do you write a résumé that gets you through an ATS?

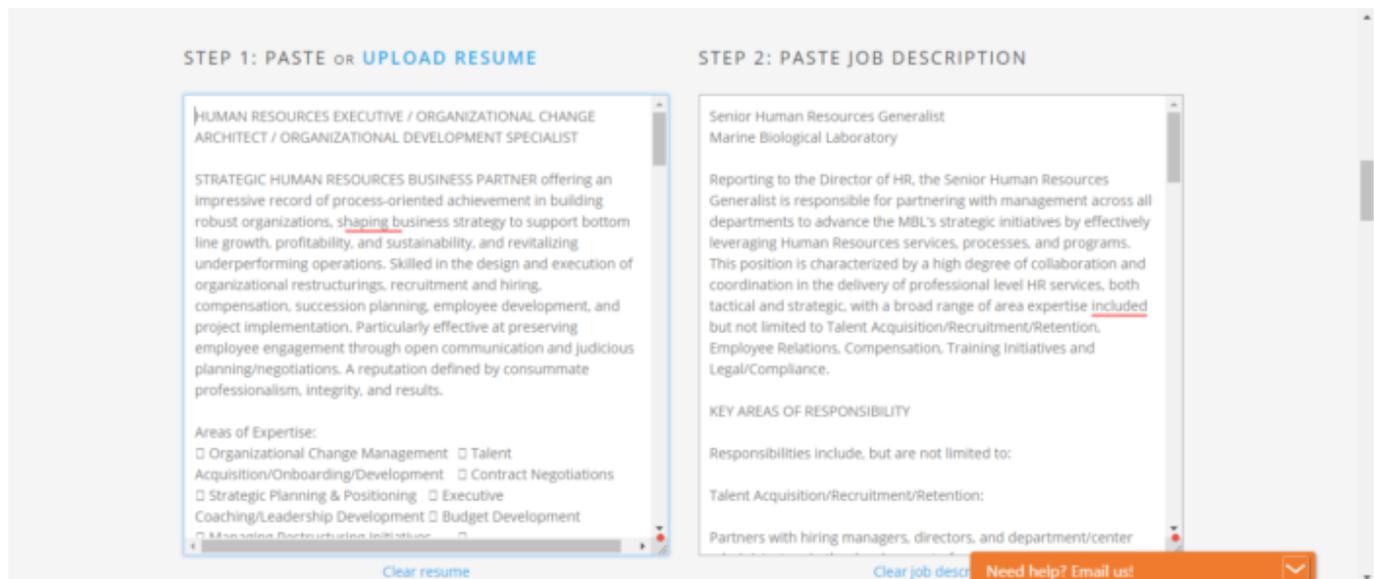
It starts by identifying the keywords used in the job description. We recommend using a WordCloud software program. Paste the job description or ad into the program to create a word cloud. The bigger the word is in the diagram, the more frequently it has been used through the ad. These are the terms you will want to include in your résumé. See the image below as an example.



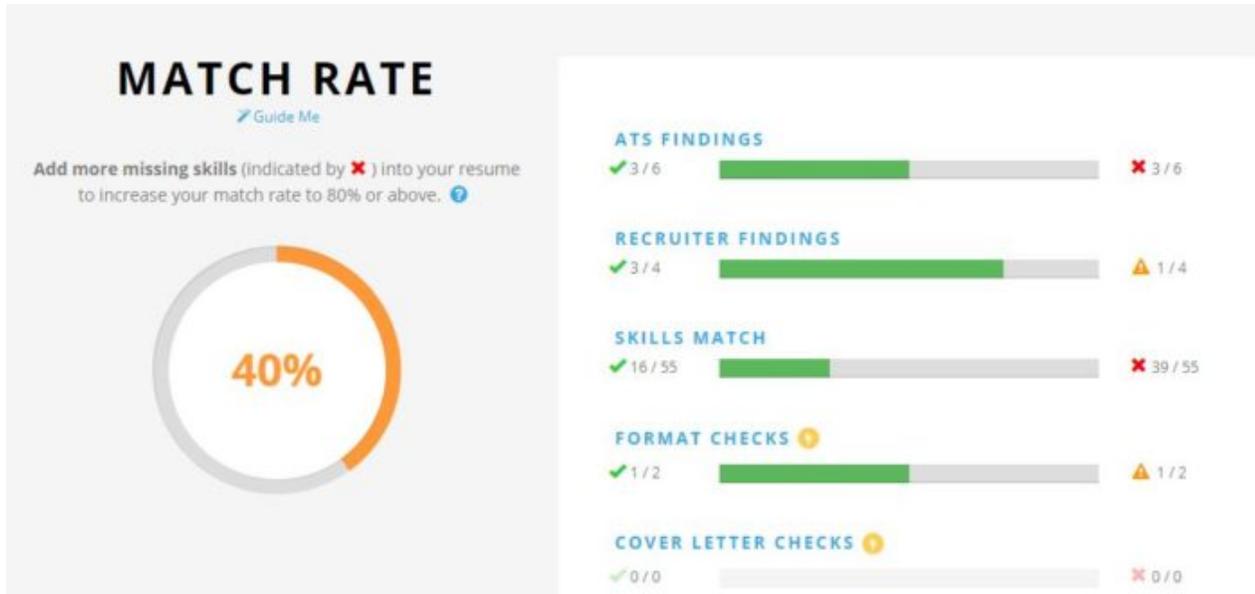
Another useful tool is www.jobscan.com, which will help you review how well your resume matches a job advertisement. You can test-drive the basic application for free, and if you want to evaluate and edit your résumé in real-time, there is a monthly or quarterly cost.

Here's what you need to do to evaluate your résumé – it's super simple.

Step 1: Copy and paste your résumé and the job description or ad into the relevant box.



Step 2: Click the scan button to see your results.

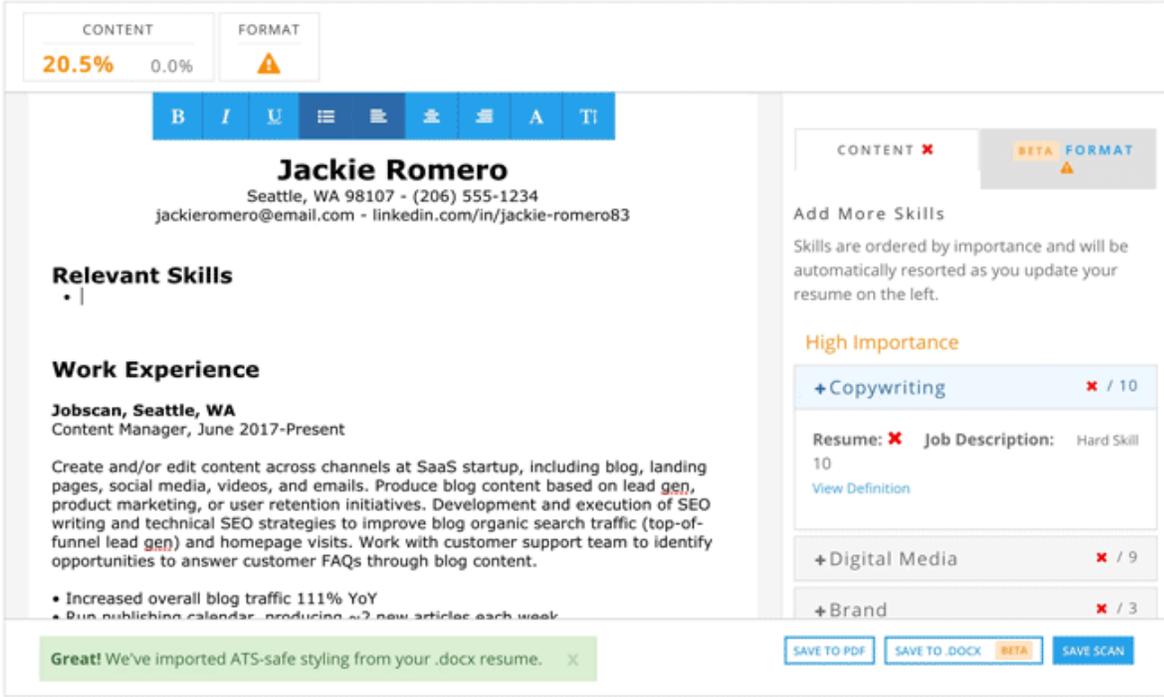


Step 3: Scroll down through each section of the report to see what your résumé is missing. Here's what it looks like. The words with a red X in the résumé column are the ones that are missing in your résumé.

SKILLS COMPARISON		HIGHLIGHTED SKILLS	
SKILL	VARIATIONS ?	RESUME	JOB DESCRIPTION
Human Resources	○	13	6
Legal		X	5
Compliance		1	4
Employee Relations		1	4
Recruitment	○	1	4
Payroll		X	4
HRIS		X	3
Talent Acquisition		2	2
Strategic initiatives		X	2

Step 4: After making changes to your resume, you can rescan it.

With the free version, you get five scans a month. With the paid version, you get unlimited scans and the ability to see changes to your score based on the changes you make in real-time through Power Edit



The screenshot shows the resume editor interface for Jackie Romero. The top navigation bar includes 'CONTENT' (20.5%) and 'FORMAT' (0.0%) tabs. Below this is a rich text editor toolbar with options for Bold (B), Italic (I), Underline (U), Bulleted List, Numbered List, Indent, Decrease Indent, Text Color (A), and Text Background Color (T). The resume content includes the name 'Jackie Romero', contact information (Seattle, WA 98107 - (206) 555-1234, jackieromero@email.com - linkedin.com/in/jackie-romero83), a 'Relevant Skills' section with a single bullet point, and a 'Work Experience' section for 'Jobscan, Seattle, WA' (Content Manager, June 2017-Present). The job description details content creation across channels and SEO strategies. A green notification bar at the bottom states: 'Great! We've imported ATS-safe styling from your .docx resume.' On the right side, there is a 'High Importance' skills list: '+ Copywriting' (10), '+ Digital Media' (9), and '+ Brand' (3). A 'View Definition' link is provided for the Copywriting skill. At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'SAVE TO PDF', 'SAVE TO .DOCX', 'BETA', and 'SAVE SCAN'.

Where to next?

Looking for some more resources that will make your job search easier? Just head on over to www.mycareermymove.com.au and check out our affordable [Starting Out](#), [Starting Over](#) or [Starting New](#) online career coaching programs that will give you a greater understanding of yourself, the job search process and the recruitment practices.

“It’s your career, make it your move”



We hope that you found this Career Sherpas résumé guide a useful tool and we wish you every success in your new job!