



the right person,  
for the right job

Recruitment agencies, industry publications and the internet are just a few of the places you can look for job opportunities. Casting your net wide and using as many sources as possible usually delivers the best results, but there are techniques you can use to find the right role for you.

## 5 Tips for improving your resume

### 1. Plan

Consider your audience and the purpose of your resume. Determine the format and structure of the document and establish the key messages that you wish to communicate. The most effective resumes are those that are focused and address the prospective employer's requirements. It is essential that you occupy a unique position in their mind.

### 2. Cover the basics

It is essential that you include your contact details, secondary and tertiary qualifications, professional and volunteer work experience, technical capabilities and professional referees. Make sure that your most recent experience appears first and that statements are prioritized by importance, impressiveness and relevance to the job you are seeking.

### 3. Sell the benefits

Outline how your skills will benefit the prospective employer's bottom line. For example, 'Delivered effective marketing and communications strategies' could be better stated as 'Managed \$10 million in group billings annually and achieved 300% growth through effective marketing and communications strategies'. Avoid the temptation to list out your day-to-day responsibilities.

### 4. Communicate effectively

Ensure that your resume is concise and to the point. Where possible, use power words such as 'accelerated', 'delivered' and 'uncovered'. Ensure that there are no errors – spelling, grammar, syntax or punctuation. Be consistent in your use of formatting and avoid using more than two fonts. Typography should be structured, balanced and easy to read. Don't be afraid to leave white space and limit your use of colour.

### 5. What not to do

Don't list personal information such as your age, marital status, height, weight or physical disabilities. Stay away from fluffy statements and complicated wording. Be wary of listing salary expectations and leave no time unaccounted for. If you took a six-month break to backpack throughout Europe, detail this in the timeline of events.

# 5 Tips for improving your design portfolio

## 1. Less is more

Your portfolio should only contain the most fundamental pieces. Employers are looking to see your technical capabilities, personal style and ability to adapt / be versatile across mediums. Anything else is decoration. Simplicity and clarity of message are testament to effective design.

## 2. Attention to detail

This is the single most requested skill in the employment sector. Be obsessive! It is the details that set you apart from other well skilled designers. Be consistent and double check all spelling and grammar. Poor attention to detail will affect the reader's experience and your chances of securing a position.

## 3. Principles of design

Your portfolio should be treated as a design project. Balance, proximity, alignment, contrast and white space are the building blocks to conveying your desired message. How your work is presented will determine the overall readability and effectiveness of your work.

## 4. Rationale

It is important to provide the reader with a rationale or explanation of your work. This does not need to be an essay. It can be as simple as the client's name and project title to provide context for the reader. If you are a senior designer, place and year of completion may be relevant.

## 5. Versatility

All designers should be versatile. No client or brief is ever the same and your portfolio should demonstrate an ability to adapt and be resourceful in different situations. A flexible attitude or approach in the workplace will always be favoured by potential employers.

# 5 Interview techniques

## 1. Research

Before attending a job interview, ensure that you are prepared by researching the organisation. The internet is a great source of information and will usually provide you with details such as the firms clients and competitors, years in operation, number of employees and organisational goals. Make sure you have read and understood the job description and prepare questions that will help further your understanding of the organisation.

## 2. Presentation and communication

Dress professionally, greet the prospective employer with a handshake, be aware of your body language and speak confidently and articulately. Listen intently and engage the prospective employer in conversation. Always remain relaxed and calm and assume a position that you are comfortable with. It is important that you act yourself and respond honestly and openly to all questions.

## 4. Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative

Describe your past responsibilities and the benefits to the organisation. Outline your style and approach, emphasise your past accomplishments and take responsibility for communicating your strengths. Concentrate on the questions and paint a clear picture of the reasons and thinking behind your actions. Outline characteristics that you believe will assist in your ability to fulfil the role.

## 3. STAR (Situation or Task, Action, Result)

STAR is a simple formula for responding to questions regarding professional experience. Explain the situation or task briefly. Spend time outlining what actions were undertaken to achieve the desired results. Finally, discuss the outcomes and the overall effect these had on the business / client. Be prepared to answer questions that may be difficult.

## 5. What not to do

Never arrive late or make excuses. Never dress inappropriately. Never lie, distort the truth or speak negatively of other people or organisations. Try to avoid being inconsistent or waffling on incessantly. Never react in a hostile fashion or have a poor attitude towards the prospective employer. Most importantly, don't be nervous or shy. Confidence is the key.