



# ADVICE FOR JOB SEEKERS

**SHARP & CARTER**  
SPECIALIST RECRUITMENT



# CONTENTS

## JOB APPLICATION ADVICE

PAGE 2 – 5

- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Managing Your Online Reputation
- Example Resume

## LINKEDIN BEST PRACTICE

PAGE 6 – 8

- The Reality of Job Seeking
- The Importance of LinkedIn
- Think Like a Recruiter
- LinkedIn Profile Best Practice
- Position Yourself for Relevant and Growing Industries
- Position Yourself for that Dream Job
- General Job-Searching Tips

## OPTIMISE YOUR WORKING FROM HOME SITUATION

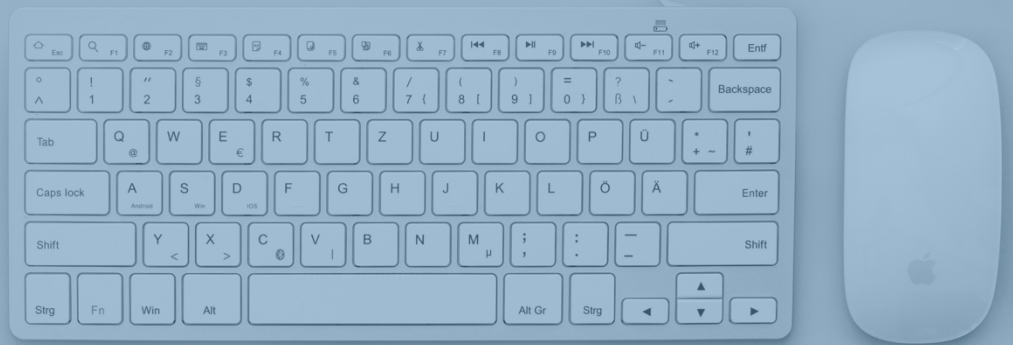
PAGE 9

## CONNECT WITH US

PAGE 10

# JOB APPLICATION ADVICE

**SHARP & CARTER**  
SPECIALIST RECRUITMENT



When crafting your resume and cover letter, keep in mind that it is a marketing document you are using to pitch yourself and relevant experience to a prospective employer or recruiter.

When getting started drafting your documents, think about your key achievements in both your current and previous positions.

*Tip: Your Job Description is not the same as your resume.*

Below is an overview of the sections to include in your job applications:

## COVER LETTER:

- A cover letter is a one-page document, with the same layout as a letter used to introduce yourself and highlight how your previous experience aligns to the role you are applying for
- It should be kept clear and concise
- A cover letter demonstrates that you have read and understood what the role entails and that you are committed to taking the time to outline why you would be a good fit
- It will also encourage recruiters to read your resume

## RESUME:

- Your resume should include your contact details, including your name, phone number, email address and personal address
- A personal statement outlining your career objective and soft skills
- A snap shot of your strategic skills and qualifications
- A summary of your career history

*Tip: Resumes can sometimes be briefly read, therefore it's imperative you format the document in a clear and succinct layout.*



### Outlining your Career History

*Tip: Keep your career history to a maximum of 5 current and past roles.*

#### Company Description:

- Be brief and include information on what the business is, industry and business size
- Highlight how you supported the business, the people you worked alongside and your direct team size

*Tip: A company description is important as it provides the recruiter or prospective employer understanding of the environment you have previously worked in.*

#### Responsibilities and Achievements:

- When listing your key responsibilities, make sure you include the most relevant points that align to the role that you are applying for. Keep it to a list of 5 to 8 of the most important duties
- Achievements can help reflect the impact you have made in a previously role. It can be as simple as implementing processes and procedures that allowed a business to work more efficiently

*Tip: Be strategic with the responsibilities and achievements you list in this section. You want to highlight how your previous experience aligns to the role you are applying for.*

Resume writing is notoriously difficult, and there is no specific methodology. You may receive varying opinions on format and while one expert may recommend a limit of two pages, the next will tell you it should be five. While there is generally no right or wrong answer, you need to decide on a format with which you are comfortable, and that you believe promotes you in the best manner.

Therefore, your resume should not be the same as your job description. You need to spend a lot of time thinking about your achievements in your current and previous roles. To assist, we have included an example Resume on page 5. More information on Resume writing can also be found on our Sharp & Carter website: [www.sharpandcarter.com.au/cv-advice](http://www.sharpandcarter.com.au/cv-advice)



## EXAMPLE RESUME

Name:

Harley Thomas

Contact details:

Mob: 0400 481 000

Email: [hthomas@sharpcarter.com.au](mailto:hthomas@sharpcarter.com.au)

Profile:

I am a Finance Manager with 3 years of Chartered experience at a 'Big 4' firm and 10 years of experience in the industry. I have a strong technical Financial Accounting skillset and have a history of adding commercial value with proven analysis and Management Accounting skills. I have had hands on people management experience gained while working in a fast paced and dynamic environment where I have been able to develop the capability of my team. Having been the Finance Manager of a \$250M organisation for the last 2.5 years and been with the business for 6 years I am now looking to take the next step in my career.

Professional Qualifications:

Member of The Institute of Chartered Accounts in Australia.

Education:

- 2008 Certificate IV in Public Safety (Military Leadership)
- 2009 Completed at The Royal Military College Duntroon
- 2012 Majors in Accounting and Finance  
Completed at The University of Melbourne

Systems:

SAP, Oracle, Advance MS Excel (Macros), Sage, Accpac

Career:

**Sharp & Carter, Finance Manager**

Feb 2013 – Present

**Sharp & Carter, Senior Financial Accountant**

Feb 2009 – Jan 2013

**KPMG, Audit - Senior Auditor**

July 2007 – Jan 2009

Key Skills & Achievements

- Managed a Finance team of 7
- 2IC of Finance \$250M organisation
- Implemented a new ERP system (SAP)
- Successfully reduced month-end procedures from 8 days to 3 days
- By focusing on cost reduction in insurance and other overheads, I was able to reduce costs by \$450,000
- Developed new budgeting and reporting packs allowing for improved analysis, accountability and KPI reporting

## EXAMPLE RESUME

Date:  
Employer:  
Industry:

February 2009  
Sharp & Carter Recruitment (Current)  
Specialist recruitment firm. Sharp & Carter specialises in assisting companies recruit Finance, Legal, Property and Construction and Sales staff, from entry to executive level for both interim and permanent opportunities. In the financial year ended 30 June 2015, sales revenue was \$250M.

Position:  
Report To:  
Systems:

Finance Manager (February 2013 - Present)  
Chief Financial Officer  
Microsoft Office Suite, SAP

Responsibilities:

- Overall Management of the Finance team (4 qualified or part qualified accountants and 3 clerical staff)
- Preparation of forecasts and budgets
- Manage and review all statutory tax requirements including BAS, FBT, and Payroll tax
- Preparation of monthly reporting package for the Board of Directors
- Commercial analysis of potential business expansion pathways
- Cash flow management
- Balance sheet reconciliations, journal entry, cash flow report preparation and fixed asset register maintenance

Achievements:

- Identified duplication of processing in regional and head offices resulting in a \$375,000pa saving to the business
- Evaluated Work Cover policy and negotiated reduction of the company's work cover rate by 50%
- Developed dashboard reports to better highlight business unit performance

Position:  
Report to:

Senior Financial Accountant (February 2009 - January 2013) Finance Manager

Responsibilities:

- Prepared monthly management accounts
- Annual budget preparation
- Executed rolling profit forecasting
- Developed a new KPI model of division performance
- Prepared all financials for the external Auditors
- Provided analysis of results for a range of individual business units
- Data analysis utilising MS Excel to model a range of 'what if' scenarios
- Created new budget reporting packs for individual business divisions allowing for improved analysis, accountability and KPI reporting
- Automated the revenue recognition process to improve accuracy and efficiency



# LINKEDIN BEST PRACTICE

## THE REALITY OF JOB SEEKING

Many we speak to are enjoying success in their current roles but are often on the lookout 'passively' for opportunities that might arise. Others have reached a point in their careers where the number and quality of opportunities they have become accustomed to aren't there anymore, or the number of adverts on job boards appear to be declining. Whilst not actively looking for a role, plenty also find themselves falling behind 'where the market is at' and after sitting in the same role for several years, the new recruitment landscape can be challenging and unfamiliar. And of course, more recently, there are those who have experienced structural changes, redundancies and prolonged periods out of the workforce.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LINKEDIN

Many people report signing up to regular emails from job-boards but are not really getting anywhere or experiencing the 'success' or traffic they have had when they were looking previously.

One of the primary reasons for this has been the changing nature of the recruitment landscape and an increased reliance by recruiters (both agency and inhouse) to utilise a more pro-active or traditional "headhunting" approach when targeting talent. Most recruitment processes or 'job briefs' follow strict parameters (around industry exposure, company size, years of experience etc) and job boards can no longer be solely relied upon to find the ideal candidate profile. This has led to a considerable shift away from the traditional job boards towards LinkedIn and its extensive database. The advantage of LinkedIn is that with a strong profile you can be found by anyone seeking talent, not just the limited number of recruiters you might know, or roles being advertised. This gives you the chance to turn down roles that don't fit your criteria and for opportunity to find you, rather than the other way around.



## LINKEDIN PROFILE BEST PRACTICE

- A professional, or at least high-quality profile picture
  - A tagline (under your name) that holds meaning to the audience. e.g. "Financial Accountant with FMCG and ASX Listed Experience"
  - A good 10-line summary with key industries, ownership structures and transferrable skills such as the names of ERP systems
- A brief description outlining each company that you have previously worked at. Recruiters will typically try to quickly identify a candidate's brand and/or industry experience. i.e. "ABC Limited is an ASX Listed FMCG business with a turnover of X and employing X staff"
  - Notable achievements as per a good CV
  - If you're 'very active' in your job search, change your settings/status to outline you're 'open to opportunities'

People often ask whether 'endorsements' and constantly updating posts etc. is useful. Generally, in our experience the answer is no, and so doing these other than as a hobby makes no difference to most recruiters who are more concerned with the experience.

## POSITION YOURSELF FOR RELEVANT AND GROWING INDUSTRIES

Industries that are currently experiencing growth include IT (software and digital), healthcare/aged care, 3PL logistics/warehousing, telcos, utilities, not for profits, FMCG/food beverage and pharmaceuticals.

Additionally, there are plenty of smaller start-ups or Mum and Dad businesses which have gone beyond the initial growth phase and are now needing a Financial Controller/Head of Finance (where they once had a Bookkeeper/Company Accountant) to help take them through their next stage of growth. The advantage of these newer industries is that often the level of experience with 'relevant industry fit' simply isn't required as they are more open to differing industry backgrounds. Therefore, if your career has links to these industries, ensure you're highlighting them in your CV and LinkedIn profile.

## POSITION YOURSELF FOR THAT DREAM JOB

A common frustration with LinkedIn is being approached for a similar, if not identical role to that you're currently doing but for one of your competitors. I.e. you're currently a Finance Manager for Coles and you've been approached for the Finance Manager vacancy at Woolworths.

This is inevitable, however, to help overcome this and broaden the amount of searches you appear in it is critical to highlight on your LinkedIn profile what recruiters typically focus on.



- Industry Experience - (Health, Retail, FMCG, Consumer Goods, Property are often quite specific)
- Ownership Structure - (ASX Listed, Multinational, Private/Family, Private Equity, NFP)
- Transferrable Skills - (IPOs, Mergers and Acquisitions, Systems Implementations, Growth stories)
- Progression - (Consistent progression, promotions and added responsibilities)
- Relevancy - (Experience within the past ten years is generally considered most relevant)

The more commercial a role tends to be, the more weight is usually placed on relevant industry experience. As the technical aspects of the role increase, ownership structure often becomes a consideration.

Another common issue is not being approached for roles that are the 'next step up'. i.e. you're currently a Financial Controller wanting to become a CFO or you're a Senior Financial Accountant wanting to move laterally into a more commercial role as a Finance Business Partner/Commercial Analyst. The important thing to consider is that recruiters are increasingly using LinkedIn and their respective databases like a Google search, so ensure you have relevant position titles, acronyms, keywords and skills listed so that you can be found.

Examples below:

- Financial Controller
  - Reporting into the **CFO** or Acting **CFO** or 2IC to the **CFO**
- Senior Financial Accountant
  - Working alongside the **Finance Business Partner/Commercial Analyst**

#### GENERAL JOB-SEARCHING TIPS

- When approached for a role on LinkedIn, ask the recruiter - "Why do you think I'm a good fit for this role?", this will help you manage your own expectations
- For any role you speak to a recruiter about asking, "Why has this role come up?" is often a useful question to get a sense of where the company is heading
- When the option exists to pick up the phone to apply for a role, take it - you can position your experience and avoid getting lost in the influx of applications
- Think 12 months ahead - if it looks like your work situation or preferences are changing, don't wait until the critical moment comes. Looking for the right role can take beyond six months of searching in many cases, and it's not uncommon to miss out on several jobs along the process through no fault of your own
- Don't close the door too early on job processes. Many people report saying no to good opportunities because they are told they are 'close' with opportunities they are working through, only to find out that the situation at the back end has changed
- Use LinkedIn to re-connect and build your network. Start with your old team members and managers but make sure to utilise the great relationships you built outside of finance (supply chain, marketing, HR etc) and outside of work (friends, family, neighbours, sporting clubs etc)

# OPTIMISE YOUR WORKING FROM HOME SITUATION

Click [here](#) to read our latest blog on some simple tips to help you get the most out of your working from home situation.



## PLAN YOUR WORK

Plan your schedule the day before. Create a checklist and set a goal for each day.



## RECOGNISE OTHERS

Make an effort to connect with colleagues to praise them for their efforts, hard work and time.



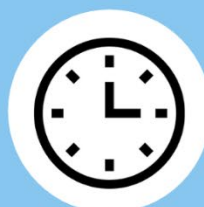
## CREATE A WORKSPACE

Dedicate a specific room or surface in your home to work that's away from distractions.



## TAKE A BREAK

Schedule your breaks and take them away from your desk. Re-charge, keep hydrated, move around and create healthy eating habits.



## MAINTAIN REGULAR HRS

Set a schedule of your working hours. Have clear guidelines and stick to it.



## STAY ACTIVE

Stay moving to get your endorphins flowing, whether it's a work out, going for a walk or yoga.



## STAY CONNECTED

Communicate with colleagues on a daily basis. FaceTime with colleagues and continue to build and maintain relationships.



## GET SUPPORT

Call or text Lifeline for support on 0477 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636. Both services also offer online chat options.



## CHILDREN AT HOME

Capitalise on *nap time*. Plan wisely with activities to keep children occupied. Also spend quality time during breaks.



# CONNECT WITH US

Follow Sharp & Carter social pages for regular business posts and updates.



MELBOURNE: +61 3 9616 2600

SYDNEY: +61 2 8315 8800

BRISBANE: + 61 7 3018 3840

**SHARP & CARTER**  
SPECIALIST RECRUITMENT