

TEN TOP TIPS FOR WRITING A PROFILE

| Tip | Explanation | Example |
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| 1. Set the context | There must be a reason <i>why</i> you are writing a profile. You didn't just wake up one morning and decide to do it. What has happened to make you write the profile now? | <i>It can't have escaped anyone's notice that there have been some changes in our company recently. That's because our newly appointed CEO has just joined us from...</i> |
| 2. Begin in the present | Begin in the present: talk about what's happening now before you go back to talk about the person's life. | <i>Today we say goodbye to our popular caretaker, Mr Liu. Mr Liu joined the school back in 1968...</i> |
| 3. Then move to the past tense | When talking about someone's achievements in the past, use the past tense. | <i>Sam Chan didn't have an easy life. He grew up in a poor family and didn't go to school until he was ten years old.</i> |
| 4. Stick to the highlights | We don't need to know every detail of the person's life. Just the key details are enough. Stick to their education, their key achievements, their life-defining moments etc. | <i>Mr Tsang did well at school. [Mr Tsang first went to school on a cold September day. Whilst there, he had two girlfriends and kept a pet mouse. He got top marks in English and maths, but only a 3 in Chinese]</i> |
| 5. Use chronology | There are lots of ways to structure a profile, but if you're unsure, use chronology: start with events further back and gradually move into the present. | <i>Ms Corfe began life as a cleaner, but as she showed great entrepreneurial talent, she was soon promoted to manager. From there, it wasn't a big jump to become CEO.</i> |
| 6. Use adjectives to describe people | Profiles are usually positive documents, where we want to highlight the good things that people have done. So a list of positive adjectives will be of help. | <i>Mr Phillips was a visionary leader, whose gregarious personality made him popular among the rank and file.</i> |
| 7. Use quotes | Show that you've spoken to the person your profiling by using quotations. | <i>"I never expected that the company would make that much money so quickly," Sin said.</i> |
| 8. Formal but friendly | Profiles are formal documents, but don't make them too formal. They should have a 'human' side too. Consider using humour and personal anecdotes. | <i>Whilst at university, he met his now wife, Geraldine. "I don't think I did much study at uni," says Parsons. "I had interests elsewhere..."</i> |
| 9. Say what the future holds | Finish by talking about the person's plans for the future. | <i>Now that he's retired, Mr Sun intends to spend more time playing golf and gardening.</i> |
| 10. End with a short sentence. | A short polite sentence is often a good way to round off a profile. | <i>We wish him all the best for the future. Don't be surprised if you see a few changes around here.</i> |