

# Writing a Eulogy or Tribute

A **Eulogy** is a speech or piece of writing that praises someone; it is usually a tribute to someone who has just died. It may be written as a life story, outlining highlights of the person's life, education, traits, personality, school, sports, hobbies and interests, for example.

A Eulogy is not the same as an **Obituary** (*a tribute or notice usually placed in a newspaper*) or an **Elegy** (*a poem or song to lament the deceased*).

## *Considerations*

### **Who is going to deliver the eulogy?**

A Eulogy may be delivered by family or friends or the Funeral Celebrant at a funeral or memorial service. Ask the person if they are willing to read the eulogy and ensure they have a copy as soon as possible to allow them to practise their delivery.

### **How long should a eulogy be?**

This should be discussed with the person arranging the service. Some chapels operate to very strict and tight time allocations. Sometimes there will be another family booked to use the chapel immediately after your service.

Booking a double timeslot is an option for timed services. Ensure you discuss this promptly with the service arranger.

Once you know the overall service time, your Funeral Celebrant will guide you as to the length of the eulogy, usually gauged in time (minutes), rather than word count.

### **Other Tributes?**

Are other people going to speak at the service, for example, a work colleague, a friend connected through hobbies or sport, for example.

It is important to identify all speakers at the early planning stages of the funeral service. When there are two or more speakers, it is important to ensure that each is clear about their content and time restraints, to avoid content duplication or the service running over time.

## *Tips*

Eulogies and tributes are delivered orally. They should be written for vocal delivery rather than reading. When you have written your draft, read it aloud, or read it to a friend, for feedback on delivery and content. See also our help sheet on **Delivering a Eulogy** or tribute.

### **Copies of Eulogies and Tributes**

It is important to email a copy of your eulogy/tribute to the Funeral Celebrant well before the service. This allows the Celebrant to:

- ensure the best 'flow' for the service
- determine the best order for the speakers
- discuss and avoid any content duplication
- fact check content such as dates, and
- give a full copy of the service to the family.

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## *Eulogy inclusions*

There are no rules for Eulogy content. Strive to make your eulogy interesting and resist simply writing a cradle to grave story – add a true sense of the person to your storytelling.

*The eulogy may include:*

- Full name and nicknames
- When and where the person was born
- Parents' names
- Siblings – brothers and sisters
- Schools attended, achievements and memories
- Qualifications gained – school, tertiary, trades, other
- Childhood memories
- War/military service
- Marriage/s, divorces and significant relationships
- Where they lived as an adult
- Children, grandchildren, great grandchildren
- Other significant family influences in their life
- Where they worked
- Sporting achievements
- Favorite hobbies and interests
- Favorite sayings, quotes, books, music, tv shows, colours, flowers etc
- Like and dislikes
- Community and club memberships
- Memorable stories
- Characteristics – what will you miss, what did you admire?
- Legacy – how have they left their mark on the world?
- If you could say one more thing to them, what would it be?



*Want more ideas?*

Type eulogy samples  
in your favourite web browser  
for more ideas.

