

CV Guidance

What is a CV?

Curriculum Vitae (or CV) is Latin for “Course of Life”, it is a showcase of your skills and experience to date, a summary of you as a person, and what you have to offer. It is often the first phase in getting you noticed by potential employers, and the first opportunity to sell yourself. It is a tool employers use to match your skills to the skills they require for their current role and their organisation’s future objectives.

You need to make it *count* and make it *memorable*

What do Recruiters Look for in a CV?

A recruiter or hiring manager could spend as little as 30 seconds scanning a CV before making the decision of whether or not to call the prospective candidate, so it goes without saying that your CV needs to grab their attention immediately.

The key to ensuring your CV has the desired impact is make it *Relevant*, *Concise* and *Clear*

Making it Relevant:

Tailor your CV for any roles that you apply for. Make sure that you are highlighting aspects of your previous roles, experiences, skills and responsibilities that are relevant for the role you are applying to. Make sure, if you can, that your most recent role can showcase some of the skills the recruiter is looking for, and try to use similar language to their job description so that the CV “talks” to them.

Make it Concise:

Our advice would be to keep it simple, by highlighting relevant skills, responsibilities, achievements, results and qualifications in a bullet pointed format using key words to draw attention to your most desirable abilities and characteristics in line with the job description. Try to avoid lengthy paragraphs giving full details of all you do from the minute you start to the minute you finish your working day, as many recruiters will not read what looks like an essay. Try to keep your CV to two A4 pages.

Make it Clear:

Make sure you stick to the same font throughout, and use a professional font that is easy to read. Ensure your layout is consistent throughout your CV, using bullet points and clear headings to each section. Avoid using any industry slang, or abbreviations that some people may not understand. Also make sure you check, check and check again for any grammatical or spelling mistakes, as even though it may seem like a small error, it could be the difference between you getting an interview or not.



How Do I Format It?

There isn't really any right and wrong here, however the following format is very typical of a well laid out, easy to follow CV.

Personal Details: You would be amazed at how many people forget to put contact details on their CV. Please include you full name, address, phone number and email address, visibly displayed at the top of page 1.

Personal Profile: This should be a short, to the point paragraph consisting of a few sentences that will make you stand out to the recruiter. It is the first thing that they will read and you need to grab their attention. Detail your skills, your abilities and what you can bring to your new role, be concise and make yourself look suitable for the specific role you are applying for.

Employment History: Here you should detail your career history to date starting with your most recent and working backwards. Include the name of the company you worked for, your job title, the dates you were employed and bullet point a summary of your key duties and responsibilities, and how you made a contribution to the business. Please ensure you explain any gaps in your work history for example travelling or raising a family.

Skills/Achievements: This is your time to highlight relevant skills you gained through your previous experiences, and any achievements that you are proud of, your computer skills, any language skills you may have and show how they can be beneficial to future employers. This is also a good place to highlight any charity or volunteer work you may have undertaken.

Education: List here the education and qualifications you have gained, and the dates they were undertaken. Dependent on your personal situation and what stage of your career you are at, it is not always necessary to list your A Level Qualifications, but to focus on further education and any work based courses undertaken relevant to the role you are applying.

Hobbies and Interests: It's always good to mention your hobbies and interests as they can often back up many of the skills you have listed in your CV. Its also another way to make you memorable and make you stand out form the crowd. It can often lead to a talking point at interview stage, especially if there are common interests there. However if you don't feel it is relevant, then leave it out.

References: References available on request is completely acceptable for your CV, however if you do have written references it's a good idea to take them to an interview as it can make you look really attractive and may save the interviewer a job themselves.



First Name Last Name

Address

Phone number

Email address

Personal Profile

This is where you write a few short, to the point sentences to immediately excite the reader and highlight why you are good for their role. Use language that will speak to them directly, mirroring the language from their advert. The purpose of this paragraph is to persuade the reader that you will be good for their role and make them continue reading your CV.

Employment History

Company Name

Job Title

Dates of Employment

Write a brief explanation of your position within the company, and a snapshot of what industry the company is in.

Followed by bullet points of your responsibilities

Any achievements you are proud of

A showcase of the skills you both used and developed

Details of any of your new ideas/processes that were implemented

Tailor this to the requirements of the role you are applying for

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Skills and Achievements

Bullet point any key skills that you have

Detail any additional languages

Detail experience on all computer systems

Detail any particular achievements, volunteer or charity work

Education and Qualifications

Date qualification Gained

Qualification Gained and Grade

Date qualification Gained

Qualification Gained and Grade

Hobbies and Interests

Make yourself sound interesting, but be truthful. If it's not relevant leave it out.

References

Available on request