

CV Tips and Advice

Your CV is an advert for your skills and experience. Its main purpose is for employers to see what you are capable of and if you have the experience to consider for an interview. An employer wants to be able to read through your CV quickly and get an understanding of your skills and history which is why your CV should be truthful and laid out correctly. Your CV will be the first opportunity you have to impress your potential employer (First impressions count). Make yours stand out from the crowd and follow our tips on what employers are looking for in a CV. Avoid Bright colours and big tables keep it simple and short.

Below you will find some tips on how to create the perfect CV and what prospective employers are looking for:

Looking Good

How you present your CV is just as important as how you present yourself. First impressions count, and a badly formatted CV with lots of Bright Colours, borders or boxes can be distracting and a little over the top. Keep it simple, neat and remember to stick to no more than three pages in length. Employers like to skim through CV's if all the words they are Skimming is what they are looking for then you will be successful!

- A CV should be written in a clear and easy to read font.
- Typically it should be no longer than 2-3 pages of A4 paper.
- If printed, a CV should be printed out on good quality white paper and placed in a clear folder ready for presentation.

Tailor Your CV

Look at your CV, read it thoroughly and even get someone else to double check everything is ok before sending. What does it say about your relevant experience or skills for this position? Does it match the employer's job spec? Your CV should be tailored to each job that you apply for. Create an idea of how you fit into the structure of each company, including the size of the business, team and who you reported to.

Personal Information

Your full name, address and contact numbers should be at the beginning of your CV. Your date of birth and email address are optional.

Personal Profile

This should take the form of a short, catchy paragraph to give a quick summary of yourself and ambitions. This should be tailored to the role you are applying for. Look at the job description and then list your related experience in relevance to the job that you have applied for. If you have been involved in any special projects, or use specific systems that would be beneficial to the role, then ensure these are stated.

Career History

To make the best impact you should always start with your most recent role with the dates, and then work backwards chronologically. By doing this, you ensure that a potential employer does not mistake your level of experience based on your very first role. Make sure that any relevant projects and training are included as well as work in specialised areas. Don't forget to sell yourself so highlight your skills and strengths.

Achievements

Bring your CV to life by adding two or three strong work achievements to the document. Your potential employer then has a good idea of your success, and it provides a positive talking point should you be chosen for interview remember to be truthful as you may be asked questions in your interview. In this section you could again highlight any other skills (both personal and professional) that you feel will help the job application.

Summary

Summarise your strong points. Keep it simple and list your key skills and achievements; ensure that it is relevant to each job that you apply for, keeping it to around three or four lines in length. Avoid filling it with clichés – instead, keep to the point and where appropriate make sure you can back up your claims with examples as you may be asked to explain in your interview.

Education

Keep it clear, keep it simple. Note the names of your school, college and/or university and include the town or city in which they are located. Under each establishment, list your exam subjects and results. If you have any vocational certificates or further qualifications then follow this format, too.

Reasons For Leaving

Whatever your reasons for leaving your current role, it is important to reflect on it in a positive manner. When a potential employee talks negatively about a past employer, regardless of the circumstances, you risk casting yourself in a negative light. If you are a contractor, then this is your opportunity to detail your contract durations.

Interests and Hobbies

Include any personal interests and hobbies. These will help to give an example of your overall persona. Remember though not to exaggerate as you may be asked questions on any aspect of your CV.