

How to Write a Successful CV

Professional Development – Job applications

In most companies, applicants are asked to send a digital copy of a CV for many reasons first to be eco-friendly, storage is much easier and it might be an automated search for key words, so experts suggest applicants ensure mandatory requirements in the job advert are included in a CV. The subsequent lines give you tips to write a successful CV and stand out from the crowd.

Tips

Font - Corinne Mills, managing director of Personal Career Management, which provides career coaching, says that digital CVs should be in a simple format and font so readability is not affected on different screens. Make it easy for hiring managers and potential interviewer to read through your entire resume. You may feel tempted to make the font on your resume very small, so you can include more information about each job, and still have your resume fit on one page. Choose a font size that is between 10 and 12 using bookprint fonts like Arial, Verdana, Calibri, and Times New Roman.

Tailor a CV to a specific job - it is vital to ensure the script is relevant to each job application, rather than sending the same generic CV to hundreds of employers. Consider what skills the employer might be looking for, and highlight your most relevant experience.

Keep it simple - it should be easy to read and use active language instead of passive language, starting with I projects an image of a “doer” rather than someone who was just involved. Include summaries of your employment and education, rather than lots of details. Use formal (no slang or abbreviations) and well-written language, writing simply and clearly. Two pages of A4 is enough with a mini profile included in the first half page.

Include key information - personal details, including name, address, phone number, email address and any professional social media presence should be clear.

A date of birth is no longer needed, owing to age discrimination rules. A photo is only essential for jobs such as acting and modelling, otherwise it is a matter of choice

Showcase achievements - offer evidence of how targets were exceeded and ideas created, Phrases like 'responsible for ordering stock' can make your CV read like a job description. Instead, describe what you did and what the positive outcome was, like, 'by closely monitoring sales trends and stock levels, I reduced out of stock instances by 21%'.

Proofread - Mistakes can make it seem like you haven't put the time in, or you don't think details are important. Avoid sloppy errors, take a fresh look the next day and ask for a second opinion from a trusted friend or colleague even if your language skills are very good.

New trends - Some employers are asking for video CVs, where applicants describe their skills and experience on a short video filmed on their smartphone, or requesting jobseekers complete application forms online. So make sure you are preparing yourself to show your best face!.

What to include

The following are examples of information that can be included in your curriculum vitae. The elements that you include will depend on what you are applying for, so be sure to incorporate the most relevant information to support your candidacy in your CV.

Personal details and contact information

Most CVs start with contact information and personal data but take care to avoid superfluous details, such as religious affiliation, children's names and so on.

Education and qualifications

Take care to include the names of institutions and dates attended in reverse order; Ph.D., Masters, Undergraduate.

Work experience/employment history

The most widely accepted style of employment record is the chronological curriculum vitae. Your career history is presented in reverse date order starting with most recent. Achievements and responsibilities are listed for each role. More emphasis/information should be put on more recent jobs.

Interests and achievements

This section may be a bit tricky as you need to include only hobbies, interests and achievements that are relevant to the job. If you're involved in any clubs or societies,



this can show that you enjoy meeting new people or provide services for the community. Interests like sports and physical recreation activities can also show employers that you are fit and healthy.

References

At least one referee should be work-related. Or, if you haven't worked for a while, you could use another responsible person who has known you for some time.

You can list your referees on your CV or just put 'references available on request'. If you decide to include their details you should explain the relationship of each referee to you – for example “Nicholas Allen, Director RosEA.

*adapted from <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-15573447>