

Resource Centre - How to Write a CV

Presentation

- CVs must be typed, not hand written. Use good quality A4 paper and ensure there are no spelling or grammatical errors. Ask a friend to proof read it for you to make sure.
- Use a plain typeface and avoid any decorative flourishes.
- Use plenty of subheadings to make the cv easy to scan - remember yours may well be one of many so make it easy for the recruiter to find the information they require as quickly as possible.
- No CV should be longer than 3 pages - you must be ruthless with the information you include and discard. Ideally try and keep your CV to no more than 2 pages.

Structure and Content

Personal Information

- Begin with brief details about yourself with your name, address and contact details easily located at the top of the page. Always include your age and or date of birth. Include any languages spoken fluently (not school boy/girl French) and other relevant information such as driving license.

Education

- Education history and work history should both be in reverse chronological order starting with the most recent first.
- For most applications there is no need to list grades for GCSEs but A levels, and degrees should have the accompanying grades listed. Include any relevant vocational qualifications and/or professional memberships.

Employment History

- Always begin with your most recent employment and work backwards. The amount of copy allocated to each position should bear a direct relation to how long you spent in that position and how relevant it is to the post to which you are applying.
- Use bullet points rather than lengthy prose both to cut down on the overall length of your CV and to make it easy for the recipient to understand your experience.
- Always include whom you reported to and who you were responsible for to enable the recruiter to understand where you fitted into the company structure.
- Never leave unexplained gaps in your CV, as these are open to employers making unfair assumptions. If you took time out to go travelling or had a period of unemployment say so.
- Make sure your employment history provides a good explanation of your role - remember the first recipient may not themselves have any expertise in your field so the rule is always to ensure that a lay person can read your cv and understand your experience. Keep the language reasonably plain and straightforward whilst ensuring that the relevant jargon (for example key skill sets or software packages) is included

Leisure Interests

- This section should be last and reasonably short. Your interests should contribute to how you may be perceived by your prospective employer, for example member of your local hockey team would show you are a good team player whilst captain of the team might indicate your leadership abilities. Climbing Mount Everest would demonstrate a desire to succeed and so on. Do not be tempted to make up your hobbies and interests however as you run a high risk of being caught out during the interview.