



TOP TIPS

for producing a better CV

Think of your CV as a selling tool. It is the first point of contact with a potential future employer and therefore must effectively display your experience, skills and qualities in a very short period of time. The following tips will help you produce a CV that does just that.

Keep it short and clear

Before you start, choose the right structure for your CV. Your CV should also not exceed more than 2 pages in length! Most employers won't read a CV that is longer than 2 pages long.

The most important information, such as your key skills and recent experience, needs to be near the top, where it can be seen straight away. Sections you usually need to include are:

Personal Profile - A brief paragraph written about yourself, highlighting your personal strengths and key skills.

Key Achievements - A bullet pointed list of any work related achievements that you have attained. Only use this if you have several achievements worth shouting about otherwise keep achievements within the 'Work Experience' section.

Work Experience - Bullet point a few lines for each job you have had. Make sure these are in order of your most recent work experience first.

Education - List your education with any exam results with most recent first.

Training - Outline any training courses you have attended.

Interests - This section is optional depending on whether you have room or feel your interests are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Make it look good

We live in a world where image is everything, and that also goes for your CV. Take some time to pretty it up... Use bullet points and keep sentences short. Use the graphic design trick of leaving plenty of white space around text and between categories to make the layout easy on the eye. Alternatively, get creative with your job application!

Tailor it

We've all done it. Whizzed the same CV out to lots of employers to save time... Stop! Take the time to change your CV for each role that you apply for. Research the company and use the job advert to work out EXACTLY what skills you should point out to them. They will appreciate the obvious effort.

Keep it real

Never lie on your CV. It can easily backfire on you and may well come out in the interview or certainly, if you get offered the job

Be accurate

Always check for errors. Run a spelling and grammar check and ask someone else to read it for you. Read it aloud to the dog. The employer isn't going to believe you're a good communicator if your CV is full of mistakes

Not too many lists

Include specific skills, such as languages, administrative or computing skills, in a separate section in your CV. Don't re-list them for every job you've used them in.

This is particularly so for IT work - lists of tools and packages make dull reading and won't make you stand out from other people with the same abilities.

Sending a covering letter

Unless the advert tells you not to, always send a covering letter. This should highlight the two or three areas of experience from your CV that are most relevant to the advertised job. Never send your CV out on its own

