

CV Writing Tips

This help sheet explains how you can write a professional CV. Your CV should reflect your strengths and be unique to you.

Whilst writing your CV you need to consider formatting as follows:

- The maximum length for a CV should be two sides of A4
- The font size should be 11 or 12
- Choose a simple and readable font, for example this font is **Calibri**; other suitable fonts are **Times New Roman** or **Arial**.
- Try to keep the formatting simple
- Avoid using large blocks of text, using bullet points can make things a lot easier to read
- Double check spelling and grammar and check again!

A typical CV has the following sections: Professional Profile, Career History, Education & Qualifications, Hobbies & Interests and Additional Skills/Other Qualifications. There are other sections that can be added but these are the most important. See below for tips on how to write each section.

Personal Details

- Start your CV with your name
- You will also need to include your address and telephone number (mobile and/or landline). Tip: make sure that you have a professional voicemail message!
- Email – ensure that your email address is professional
- If you are moving location, you should state this
- You **DO NOT** need to include: your age, marital status or a picture of yourself.

Personal Profile

- This is your opportunity to write a couple of paragraphs about you as an individual, around 200 words is an ideal length. This includes the skills you have gained and your strengths e.g. *A well presented and enthusiastic graduate with a passion for...*
- You may also want to include your career objectives, especially if relevant to the job you are applying for.

Career History

- You should start with your most recent employer
- Your most recent role will need to be the most detailed
- Head each entry by including your job title, company name and employment dates
- Under each heading you need to write about your duties. Using around 5 – 6 bullet points, keep it simple and easy to read, but make sure you include all of the important duties you do.
- You can also add any achievements you have gained whilst in employment e.g. *I gained Apprentice of the Year during my employment*
- It's important to make sure there are no gaps in your employment. If there are times when you have been out of employment you should explain why, as this cuts out any awkward conversations during an interview e.g. *March 2016 – May 2016 – Travelling*
- If you have undertaken a large number of similar jobs, including various temporary roles, it may be easier to group them together and then describe skills gained through these roles e.g. *Various catering roles or Various administration roles.*

If you have no previous employment history then you may want to consider including any work experience you have done with your school or university, voluntary work or work you have done for friends and family e.g. babysitting or dog walking (something that shows responsibility).

Education

- Here you can list the qualifications you have gained; this could include GCSE's, A-levels and degrees
- You may want to list key modules or highlight projects you did that helped you gain certain skills e.g. *problem solving, team work, project management*

Hobbies & Interests

- This includes anything you may do outside work including hobbies, clubs, school/university activities and voluntary work etc.
- Try to keep it to a maximum of 3 or 4 activities that you have gained relevant skills from
- Just remember the potential employer will be reading this, so don't include any hobbies that could be detrimental to your job application!

Additional Skills & Qualifications

This is a section where you could include information like:

- IT skills
- Language skills
- Driving licence(s) held
- Any special equipment used or machines operated
- CSCS card (*used in the construction industry*)
- Special equipment licences or training (*i.e. forklift truck*)
- Courses attended e.g. *First Aid training, Food Hygiene certificate*

References

It is not necessary to include the contact details for your references. On most CVs you will see the statement "References available on request" which is perfectly acceptable.

It is important to remember that your CV is your first impression to a potential employer.