

CV writing advice

CV writing can be daunting and increased competition levels mean employers and recruiters are frequently skim-reading entire piles of applications. You need to ensure that your CV immediately stands out as professional and succinctly conveys your suitability for the role...

General pointers

3rd person perspective: communicate a confident and professional voice throughout by avoiding the use of 'my', 'I,' and 'our.' This also makes your writing more emphatic e.g. *'I feel I am qualified...'* becomes *'A qualified...'*

Smart and simple: your CV should be clearly structured, with the use of headings and bullet points. The font should be between 10 to 12pt, dependent on the chosen typeface. Avoid the inclusion of creative imagery, unless you are applying for a design related role. Never include a photograph of yourself.

Length: a 1 or 2 page CV is often declared the ideal; however candidates with more specialist experience may wish to break this rule. Either way, make sure to avoid waffle!

Tailored content: always tailor the content to reflect the application you are making. If you're applying for a specific vacancy use the job specification as a checklist for relevance. Never leave anything to assumption – it might make all the difference to you being shortlisted for interview.

If you're submitting your CV as a general candidate for a recruitment agency, your CV can be more broadly tailored to focus on the industry or roles that you may be applying for – i.e. administration, HR or finance.

Recommended Layout

While there are many possible formats, we recommend the following:

- Full name
- (Current!) contact details including postal address, email address and telephone numbers
- Education and professional training
- Profile section
- Key skills summary
- Employment history
- Key career achievements
- Reference details

Education and professional training: this section should include your qualifications, training courses and professional memberships. It does not need to include any qualifications relating to your hobbies (e.g. scuba diving or musical prowess), unless they are relevant to the job role that you are applying for.

Profile: this should be a pithily written summary expressing what makes you particularly appropriate for your desired role or industry. Avoid clichés (never mention anything about '100%', or worse '110%!'), if you can't think of anything original to say it is sometimes best to omit this section in favour of a well-written employment history and some impressive achievements.

Key skills: this should be a bulleted summary of your key skills and attributes; again, if you're applying for a specific role, ensure relevance!

Employment history: always detail your career in reverse chronological order, starting with your current or most recent position. Name the company, the industry it operates within, your job title and dates of employment. Outline your responsibilities and achievements in bulleted sentences or brief paragraphs.

Career achievements: this is the place to summarise any awards, results or responsibilities that you are particularly proud of. These can be taken from your whole career, although ensure to include a few more recent achievements.

Read thoroughly!

Firstly run a spell-check to highlight any spelling/grammatical errors and then take the time to read (and re-read) your CV. Try to read slowly and pay particular attention to words which could have a duplicate spelling (or meaning!) and any other such errors that could prove embarrassing.

A covering email

CVs are now more commonly delivered electronically, which requires a professional sounding email...

Opening: ensure to spell the recipient's name correctly and open with an official 'Dear...'

Concise: You only need a paragraph to express the reason for your contact, the fact your CV is attached and how you can be contacted for further information. (Your carefully tailored CV should do the rest of the talking for you!)

Closing: always thank the recipient for their time and conclude your email formally.

Before you hit the send button: re-read, spell-check and ensure your CV is actually attached!

**For any queries or further CV advice, please call the office:
01225 313130**