



Writing a CV

A CV (curriculum vitae) is a short list of facts about you and your work history, skills and experience. A good CV is essential when looking for work and it is worth spending time getting it right so it sells you to an employer.

- be neat, typed if possible and to the best standard you can achieve in content and layout
- be short, two sides of a sheet of A4 paper is normally enough
- be positive, it should emphasise your achievements, strengths, successes and how you have contributed to your employers making a profit (add figures to support facts whenever you can and use positive action words, for example: 'consulting', 'negotiating', 'managing' and so on)
- make a good impression, this means presenting the facts about yourself in a clear and positive way

How to use your CV:

To apply to companies to see if they have any jobs available

You can send your CV with a covering letter or email asking if they have any current or future vacancies in your trade. You can find names and addresses of companies in newspapers or in trade or telephone directories.

To remind you what you've done

You can use your CV to help you remember all the dates and information each time you have to fill in a different application form.

To help with applications by phone

Having your CV handy when applying for jobs by phone can help if you are asked to give more information about previous jobs. If you have hearing or speech difficulties and use textphone or Tynetalk, having a copy of your CV can cut down the length of time you spend making a call.

At interviews

Having your CV with you while you're waiting to be called in can help you refresh your memory. It is also handy to leave a copy with the interviewer if they do not already have one.

Registering with recruitment agencies

Agencies may sometimes ask to see your CV before you can register with them.

What to include

How you present your CV is up to you. However, you should include at least the following:

- your name
- your address
- your phone number
- your email address (if you have one)
- your career history
- dates - employers will be more interested in what you have done recently. Don't leave gaps between dates, because employers will want to know what you did during those periods.
- If you don't have much work experience, you could include temporary, holiday, parttime or voluntary jobs too.
- If you've had many different jobs, emphasise the skills and experience you have gained across those jobs (for example, skills in dealing with customers or communication skills).

You don't need to include your date of birth

New laws on age discrimination mean that you do not need to put your date of birth, or your age, on your CV.

Here are some examples of things you may want to include:

A personal profile

This is a short statement at the beginning of your CV to sell yourself, to show your skills, experience and personal qualities. You could include positive words such as 'competent', 'adaptable', and 'conscientious'. Tailor the statement to the requirements of each job that you apply for, so that you make it clear to the employer that you're the right person for the job.

Achievements

Mention things you did well in your past jobs which could be relevant to the job you're applying for.

Qualifications and training

Include any qualifications and training from previous jobs (for example, training in health and safety or a certificate in food hygiene), put the most recent first, and include qualifications you got from school or college.

Interests

These can support your application if your hobbies and leisure activities highlight responsibilities and skills that are relevant to the job you're applying for, perhaps you belong to a club or society which you organise activities for, or you use leadership skills or teamwork as part of the activity.

Other information

It is up to you whether to include this, but it can be helpful if there are gaps in your CV. If you had a career break because you were caring for children or elderly relatives, make this a positive thing and think about the skills you used doing this. If the job you are applying for is different from what you have done in the past, explain why you are interested in the new type of work.

www.learning-opportunities.org.uk

Sourced from www.Directgov.uk and Careers Advisory Service: www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk

References

You may not want to include these details on your CV but it's good to have two or more people who can provide a work or personal reference. Ideally, one should be your most recent employer but if you haven't worked for a while it could be someone who has known you for a long time who can comment on your qualities in relation to the job. You should ask the person to agree to this beforehand.

Ask a friend or relative to read through your CV to make sure it is accurate and that it shows your skills in a positive way.

Which CV format should you use?

Different CV formats contain mainly the same information but worded in a different way, in different sections and in a different order. These might seem like small changes to make to your CV, but when employers have hundreds to sift through, every little improvement helps.

You can use different CV formats to:

- draw attention to your strengths
- target a specific job
- get across your career aims – to change career or get promotion, for example.

The answer to the question 'which format should I use?' is the format that suits your aims and shows you in the best light.

Bear in mind that in all CV formats the personal details, personal profile and qualifications sections remain the same. It's your work history and achievements that change in each format.

The different types of CV format are:

- Chronological or Performance
- Skills based or Functional
- Targeted
- Student or Graduate
- Alternative

There are pros and cons of each format so choose the one that best suits you.

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Sourced from www.Directgov.uk and Careers Advisory Service: www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk