

C.V. tips

Your C.V. needs to grab an employer's attention in less than 30 seconds. An employer may have over 100 C.V.s to look through and little time to do this thoroughly. All an employer really wants to know is why they should invite you to an interview.

First Impressions may be all you have...

It is important that the layout of your C.V. is clear so:

- Always type your C.V., though a hand written C.V. may appeal to you as an original alternative, an employer will not have the time to decipher your writing which may lead to your C.V. being discarded.
- Use white, good quality paper (preferably 100grams)
- Use the same font throughout. You should simply embolden, underline or enlarge font size for headings.
- Keep length to a minimum – this means 2-3 pages unless a longer C.V. is requested from the employer or you have extensive, relevant experience.
- Header new sections (e.g. work experience, hobbies and interests) to make whatever information the employer requires easy to find.
- Keep paragraphs short. Include only relevant information and make it as concise as possible. If necessary, use bullet points to keep the length to a minimum.
- Proof read. Make sure there are NO spelling or grammar mistakes.
- Do NOT make things up. If you get an interview partly based on a lie on your CV, it will be difficult to maintain that lie in a face-to-face situation. Furthermore, your potential employer will more than likely check your claims and discovering a lie will make a terrible impression.
- Ensure that dates are accurate and that all gaps are filled (the interviewer will be looking for gaps in C.V.s). Dates should be recorded to an accuracy of at least month and year if not date.

Make it a lasting impression...

Separating personal information into sections will give you a clear understanding of what to include and also make information easier for the employer to find. Try to use the following:

Personal details: This should include your name and address, phone number and email address.

Education: Starting with your most recent level of study, list your qualifications. If you have a degree, most employers don't need to know what G.C.S.Es and A-Levels you

achieved, just write how many A-C passes you attained and add a little more detail to your degree (the level you were awarded and the skills it helped you to develop.)

Work Experience: This should be listed in reverse chronological order with your most recent at the start. Make sure you embellish the relevant work experience, giving an overview of day to day tasks, but stay brief about less relevant jobs.

Major Achievements: This should be 3-6 of your most important achievements. This does not include academic qualifications (they have already been discussed) and remember, the golden rule is to keep them as relevant as possible. Indicate *how* they were achieved. This section can be very important in selling yourself.

Other Experience: This section should indicate any skills you have that would be beneficial to the role e.g. languages (though be sure to state the level of fluency), I.T. training, first aid and so on.

Hobbies and Interests: Keeping as brief as possible, write about any interests you have. This could be travelling, playing sport, charity work, clubs or societies you are a part of and so on. List any current levels of responsibility.

References: One reference should be your current employer (or the last employer worked with if currently unemployed). Your second reference should be either another previous employer, an academic reference (up-to-date, there's no use having a teacher from secondary school as a reference if you are a university graduate) or a professional reference.

Stay positive...

Be aware of the language you use. Use action words and keep positive.

Action words you could use include: 'created', 'managed', 'planned', 'coordinated', 'developed', 'trained', 'organised', 'challenged', 'negotiated', 'constructed', 'produced', 'built', 'generated', 'established', 'encouraged', 'instigated', 'represented', 'executed', 'influenced', 'initiated'