

## CV Tips

Putting together a good CV is perhaps one of the most important steps in securing yourself a good contract/permanent position.

Here are a few pointers:

[What You Should Include](#)

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### What you should include in your CV

Putting together a good CV is perhaps one of the most important steps in securing yourself a good contract/permanent position.

Your first page should include personal details, such as **education/qualifications** and all relevant telephone/fax numbers

- Detail your **employment history** - describing most recent employment on the first page and then working backwards chronologically. Do not leave gaps, if you have been travelling/or working in an unrelated field describe this time in **just one sentence**.
- Describe your periods of employment in **short concise bullet point format** - detail systems/versions etc. used and technical achievements. (Managerial skills/responsibilities may not be as relevant for a contract role).
- **Be honest** in the representation of your experience - remember that you will be judged by your CV and will waste time going for unsuitable jobs/contracts if you have exaggerated your skills.

Do not use I, he, she etc. and do not go into detail about your interesting hobbies! You will not have enough space.

Keep your CV **up to date** - do not just add chunks onto the end of it - reformat it and make sure that **you are proud of it**.

#### It is your main marketing tool.

If you have sent in your CV by post, fax or E Mail and do not receive a response within five working days, please contact us to check that we have received your details.

#### How you should present your CV

Ideally, send your CV in by [Email](#) or on a floppy disk. Alternatively, [fax or post](#) it.

If sending a hardcopy, please bear in mind that we scan CV's with OCR, so please use **standard A4** white paper and an **easy-to-read typeface**.

Complete a skills summary – this will show which versions of products you have used/how good you are - do try to be objective and honest. **Managers often read this before your CV!**

Many Managers also use the information from these forms but adding it all onto your CV will make it too lengthy.

Keep your CV to two/three pages - more than this and research shows that the client will probably **not read it!**

If you have sent your CV and do not receive a response within five working days, please [contact the company](#) to check that they have received your details.

**Mention all your skills**, as your CV may be sent to other departments.

## Writing your CV

Many people make the mistake of thinking that the CV is a mere formality. On the contrary, it is your personal sales brochure and your best passport to an interview. It is remarkable then, that there are so many bad ones around - CVs with spelling mistakes, CVs which ramble, CVs which miss out crucial points.

Writing a CV is a delicate business. You cannot assume that one CV will suit everyone you send it to. Often you will have to tailor it to the specific employer and that means cutting out irrelevancies.

If you bear in mind the following points you shouldn't go far wrong.

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[Length](#)

[Style](#)

[Personal Details](#)

[Qualifications](#)

[Employment History](#)

[Interests](#)

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### **Presentation**

It should go without saying that you will check your CV for spelling mistakes, but you need to make your CV distinctive. Slightly coloured paper will make your CV noticeable in a pile and using different styles of type will help emphasise points which you think are important. But don't overdo it. Lack of subtlety implies that you are new to computing and still astounded by all the clever things your machine can do.

### **Length**

Keep it as brief as possible. Faced with a hundred similar CVs, the last thing an employer wants is to have to read through five pages of drivel about the badges you were awarded in the Cub Scouts. Make sure that you do not repeat yourself. Look at every point and ask yourself: 'Will this really help me get the job?' If not, cut it out. Your CV is many things. It is a formal declaration of your qualifications. It is your opportunity to shine. It is a key to the door of your career. It is not, however, an autobiography.

### **Style**

For reasons known only to themselves, some people choose to write their CVs in the third person (While at university, John was treasurer of the knitting society...). Do not do this. You are not writing yourself a reference. Ideally, you should not even write it in the first person (At university I was treasurer of the knitting society). Keep it simple and concise (University: treasurer of knitting society).

### **Personal Details**

Name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date of birth, marital status. If you are applying for a job hundreds of miles away from where you live, it might be worth mentioning that you are willing to relocate. Employers are usually not too concerned at this stage to know the ages of your children.

### **Qualifications**

If you say that you have done an A-level or a degree but you don't put the grade, then employees will assume that you did not do very well. That is bad enough. But it will also look to them that you think they are stupid enough not to notice that you haven't put your grade. This will not work in your favour. Be honest about what you got. Don't put qualifications just

for the sake of it. If you are going for a job as a bilingual secretary, the employer is unlikely to be interested in your Bronze Award Life Saving Certificate.

### **Employment History**

Always put your current, or most recent job first. Employers tend to be interested in three facts apart from what you have done: how much you earned, how long you were there and why you left. In general this will tell them everything they need to know about your employability. Unless you are very young, don't put details of every job you have ever had: if you are applying for a job as a Financial Director it probably won't matter that you did two paper rounds a week when you were twelve. Don't leave gaps in your employment history - it could lead to some awkward questions in an interview. And never criticise a previous employer, no matter how acrimonious your split.

### **Interests**

These matter, so think carefully about what you write. It is not a good idea on CVs to write 'I work well in teams' because, of course, you would say that. Better to imply it in your 'Interests' section by saying, for example, that you play hockey for a local club. A wide range of interests always looks good because the employer will want to see that you can fit in to different environments. If you must say that you enjoy reading, at least make something of it - a particular interest in, say, 19th Century French Literature sounds much more positive than 'reading'.

### **Finally**

Check through your CV and make sure you can answer 'yes' to the following questions:

- Is it me?
- Am I proud to send this off?
- Have I eliminated irrelevant information?
- Have I included everything that could help me get this job?
- Is it easy to read?

The most important thing about your CV is that it should leave the employer keen to find out more about you. If you think yours will do that then get it in the post.