

CV writing tips

Keep your curriculum vitae simple. Your curriculum vitae must be concise and must be easy to read. It must sell you and be tailored to what the reader is looking for.

Having a good CV is essential for full-time jobs, part-time, internal, external, promotions, new jobs, career changes, internships and work experience placements - wherever an employer or decision-maker is short-listing or interviewing or selecting applicants.

Short-listed and successful candidates are invariably the people who provide employers with the best CVs and best covering letters.

CV writing is a form of marketing or advertising, when the product is you.

Put yourself in the shoes of the employer: write down a description of the person they are looking for. You can now use this as a blue-print for your CV. The better the match the more likely you are to be called for an interview.

If you find it difficult to match your own CV description to the requirements of the role, then perhaps the role isn't for you. There's little or no point distorting or falsifying yourself in order to get a job. If you falsify yourself in your CV you'll be unlikely to provide the necessary proof of your claims at interview, and even if you manage to do this and to get the job, then you'll not be able to do the job enjoyably without stress.

Blow your own trumpet, emphasise your characteristics, your capabilities and achievements. Positive emphasis and strong presentation is good; falsehoods are not.

The marks of a good curriculum vitae!

- A Curriculum Vitae should be a well-written concise document that is no longer than two to three pages.
- Well presented and laid out, with lots of white space. Avoid complex formatting, shading, boxes and stylised fonts.
- Avoid using long paragraphs and sentences.
- Keep your CV honest and factual.
- Sell yourself and be positive.
- Include a personal profile of three to four lines that sums up your key experience, skills, achievements and motivations. Ensure that a little of your personality is also conveyed.
- Employers are interested in how you can solve their problems! Work experience should therefore focus on your achievements and accomplishments, and should highlight the benefits that your work has had for an organisation. These should be backed up by facts and figures if possible.
- Start your career history with your most recent employment.
- No misspellings or grammatical errors.

Avoid including unnecessary information such as:

- Titles and headings - it should be obvious as to what document this is.
- Salary details - this can knock you out of contention before you have started.
- Photographs - unless it is applicable to the type of work you are involved in e.g. modelling.
- Weaknesses - never tell readers what you do not have or what you have not had the opportunity to do yet.
- Jargon - ensure your Curriculum Vitae is reader friendly to as many people as possible.
- References - you can state that they are available on request, but it is inappropriate and unprofessional to include them in your CV.
- Marital Status, Religion, Nationality, Children etc. - this has no bearing on your ability to do the job.