HOW TO WRITE A RESUME

Your resume is your **brand.**

Writing a CV can be a stressful task, especially if you're starting from nothing.

Take your time preparing a **rigorous** and **methodical** CV; it defines your value.

Keep it short! The standard length is **one to one-and-a-half pages.**

What information should I include on my CV?

1. Personal details:

It may sound obvious, but you'd be surprised how many people forget to include their name, email, contact phone number and address. To avoid any awkward moments, make sure these are clearly presented at the top of your CV. 'Curriculum Vitae' is an unnecessary title – your name is not.

2. Personal statement:

As it's the first thing that's shown on your CV, a personal statement is an essential part of standing out from the crowd. It explains who you are, what you're offering, and what you're looking for. Aim to prove why you're suitable in one short and concise paragraph.

3. Work experience:

This section should include all of your relevant work experience listed with the most recent first. Include your job title, the name of the organization, time in post, and your key responsibilities.

4. Achievements:

This is your chance to show how your previous experience has given you the skills needed to make you a suitable candidate. List all of your relevant skills and achievements (backing them up with examples), and make it clear how you would apply these to the new role.

5. Education:

Your educational experience and achievements should be listed here, along with dates, the type of qualification and/or the grade you achieved. **If you have more educational achievements than work experience, placing an emphasis on this section is a good idea.**

6. Hobbies and interests:

You don't always need to include hobbies and interests in your CV, but mentioning relevant ones could back up your skills and help you to stand out from the crowd – not to mention give you something to talk about at an interview. Just don't say you enjoy socializing with friends just for the sake of including something. If it's not going to add value, leave it out.

What words should I include in my CV?

Figuring out what words to use on your CV can be tough – especially when you're trying to fit a lot of skills and experience into a short document.

Appropriate keywords for your CV could include:

- Accurate
- Adaptable
- Confident
- Hard-working
- Innovative
- Pro-active

- Reliable
- Responsible

In addition to using the right words, you should also back up your attributes up with genuine accomplishments. Not only will you stand out from others with identical skills, you'll also be able to prove your suitability more effectively.

After all, anyone can say they're hard-working – but not everyone can prove it.

What should I leave out?

When it comes to your CV, there are certain words and phrases you should try to avoid – and they mostly consist of overused clichés.

Here are just a few of the worst CV words:

- Excellent communication skills
- Goal driven
- Flexible
- Independent
- Motivated
- Detail oriented
- Multi-tasker
- Self-motivated

Obviously, exceptions can be made if any of the above were included in the job description as an essential skill – but using examples to back them up is still crucial.

How should I present my CV?

Your CV is the first thing an employer will see when hiring for a vacancy, and how it looks at first glance will be the reason they decide to read it in more detail. Even if your skills match the role perfectly, a messy and confusing CV probably won't even get a second look.

To ensure you're painting yourself (and your skills) in the best light, you should always:

- Keep it short and succinct – two sides of A4 will almost always suffice.

- Choose a clear, professional font to ensure that your CV can be easily read

- Lay it out in a logical order, with sufficient spacing and clear section headings (e.g. *Work experience, Education*)

- Order your experience and education in reverse chronological order to highlight your most recent experience and achievements

- Check your grammar and spelling thoroughly

Final thoughts

Once you've put together your CV – don't assume it's finished. Every job is different and tailoring your CV accordingly is vital to standing out. Edit it in line with the job description whenever you make an application, and you'll be able to ensure it matches the specifications every time.

Highlight that you're the right match for the job by outlining:

- The specific skills you have to offer the employer

- Relevant accomplishments and achievements

- The work and educational experience you have in their field

- Personal qualities that will make you right for the role

- An understanding of the job requirements