

# CURRICULUM VITAE PREPARATION



A well-prepared CV is often the key to a successful job hunt, and it must do justice to your abilities. It should be a concise, carefully thought out and well-presented document that provides the employer with an indicator of your potential worth. It should be an honest but positive reflection of your skills, experience, achievements, and goals. In short, it should make the reader want to find out more as opposed to consigning your details to the bin!

## PRESENTATION

The look and feel of your CV should be as simple and clear as possible, and although there is no hard and fast rule, you should aim to fit all your information within two pages of A4. Presentation counts for a great deal, and consideration should be given to details such as the typeface used, correct spelling and layout. Generally, it should be conveyed in an ordered and professional manner.

## STRUCTURE

There is no single, standard way of structuring a CV, but the main components are as follows:

- ✓ Personal details
- ✓ Personal profile
- ✓ Core skills
- ✓ Employment history
- ✓ Education and training history
- ✓ Interests that are professionally relevant.

Two particularly important sections are your personal profile and employment history (though the others should not be neglected), and it is worth discussing these sections in a little more detail.

Your personal profile section should very briefly detail the type of position (and possibly the type of company) that you are seeking and why you are right for the role. It also allows you to highlight the key strengths and attributes that you could bring to the role.

Your employment history section provides key employment information, such as, company, dates, responsibilities, skills and behaviours, and should demonstrate a clear development path right up to the present time. The whole section should link with and offer justification for your personal profile.

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY TIPS

Your employment history breakdown should always start with your current or most recent company listing your latest role within that company first. Greater detail should be provided about more recent and more significant roles. Whatever the role, concentrate on highlighting your achievements within it rather than simply describing your responsibilities.

It is often helpful to bullet point your achievements. You will find that sentences that start with words such as 'responsible' or 'accountable for', or 'initiated' or 'co-ordinated', for example, strike the right note. Remember that you should discuss your achievements in the employer's terms (i.e. how you actually helped your company) rather than purely your own.

Avoid the temptation of padding out your employment history section unnecessarily. If you are a recent graduate or you are applying for one of your first jobs, it is better to place a little more emphasis on other aspects, such as your qualifications and training. Avoid glossing over employment gaps. Long, unexplained career gaps can count against you, so, wherever possible, explain them in a positive light!

## FINAL POINTS

When you have completed your CV make sure that you re-read it on your own and preferably with a friend. Think about how well you have tailored it to the position on offer. For example, if the position is in an industry sector new to you, have you emphasised your transferable skills? If it is in the same sector, have you emphasised your industry knowledge? In a competitive situation, the attention you give your CV is vital.

It is also important to name your document appropriately. Saving it as 'CV' won't help employers find your CV quickly, so ensure to save it 'Your Name CV'.

## CV SUPPORT

You may want to consider making a LinkedIn account that reflects the information on your CV, as a lot of employers will research you once they have received your CV. LinkedIn is a great place to show off your professional skills! It is also worth ensuring all of your social media accounts are set to private to stop employers digging further than you would like! than you would like!