

CV Advice

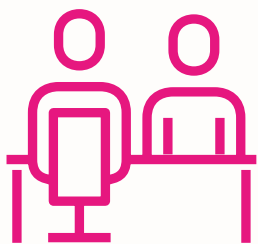
To support you with writing or updating your own CV, we have compiled a brief guide below. There are often no hard rules with writing CVs, and sometimes a 'good' CV is more about personal taste than anything else. That said, if you follow the guidelines below, you will be able to produce an incredibly useful document to help get you started.

Firstly, you need to accept that the modern-day CV is not a 'one size fits all' document. You may have many variations and adaptations to suit different roles or industries. It is also a document you will need to update regularly. In many cases it will just be a guide, or place to store information, as many jobs (even at entry level) request the completion of application forms in place of CV submissions.

Relevance

It is rarely enough to write a CV and then use that unedited document to apply for multiple jobs/roles. It requires a lot more effort. Prior to applying for a job, ensure your CV is relevant and appropriate to the job in question. Make sure it addresses key criteria outlined in the job description, and that you draw attention to any skills or experience that are of particular importance to the role.

Make sure you take the same approach with a covering letter (if requested). It is this care and attention to detail that will help you make the cut. you do. Having a plan to follow keeps you on track and motivated. Knowing what you are doing next prevents procrastination and fear setting in. On a side note, although it is a good idea to set your sights high, bear in mind there is a difference between arrogance or even lofty ambitions. Balancing realism and optimism is key to your success when completing the tasks below.



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Spelling & Grammar

Check the spelling and grammar carefully before hitting send! This sounds obvious, but we all forget on occasion. It is a must as modern forms of communication (such as texting or using social media) have encouraged us to become lazy and form bad writing habits. Use any spellcheck programs you can access, and if you know this is a weakness of yours, always ask trusted friends, family or colleagues to check it for you.

Tone & Language

Separately from spelling and grammar, it is important to understand the tone in which you write. It must be job or sector appropriate. A chatty, friendly tone may be fine for smaller or creative businesses, but a more professional and straight-laced tone would be required in other scenarios. Leaning towards the latter would be a safer approach to take.

Utilising the language of a particular sector or organisation is beneficial and will show you have done your research ahead of applying for the job. This might include particular words, phrases, acronyms etc., many of which you will find on employer websites and social media platforms. This language may also influence the tone you use throughout your CV.

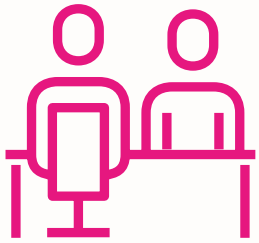
Colloquialisms, although not completely redundant, should not be used to avoid confusion or misunderstanding. The same applies for humour. Remember that in the majority of instances, the person reading your CV does not know anything about you, and although it is important to get your personality across, it will be much easier to do that in an interview setting.

Length

There is no definitive answer here that can be applied to all job applications. The general rule of thumb for entry-level positions is to avoid exceeding two A4-pages. This will require you to consider what information is truly important or relevant, and you may need several edits to ensure you do not go over two pages in length.

Personal Statement

Traditionally this takes the form of a couple of lines towards the top of your document, briefly outlining important characteristics and personal values. If you choose to include one, keep it brief, and consider what details might make you stand out as an individual. Sometimes personal statements are saved for covering letters, leaving them out of your CV in favour of other information such as further detail on your relevant job experience.



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Format/Layout

Following on from the length of a CV, is the format. It is important to balance clarity with detail. Many modern CV layouts favour the former, and traditional formats tend to be word heavy. Again, consider the organisation/employer when addressing this subject. A CV should have an easy-to-read layout, allowing the reader to navigate between sections and paragraphs swiftly, with key information available at a glance. Consider the following:

- Avoid small or illegible fonts.
- Define sections with titles/headers, lines and spaces.
- Favour short paragraphs over long, and be succinct when possible.
- Use bullet points to retain clarity and save space.
- Make sure impressive or relevant skills and experience take priority.
- Back statements up with proof.
- Place employment and education in reverse chronological order.

Contact Information & Links

Ensure any contact information you provide is up to date and can be regularly checked (if you are called, sent an email or letter). If you do not have a professional email address then set one up. You will not make the best impression if you provide an address you set up at school (e.g. p_oke_m_o_QJ]la_d S_@_b_o_tm all.m_[]]).

When providing digital CVs, be sure to include web links to relevant work or experience. This may help

demonstrate your skills, and support statements made in your CV. Include links to portfolios, videos, biogs or social media channels (if appropriate). If you provide links, make sure they work, and in the case of private links, make sure they stay active beyond any submission dates.

File Type

When sharing your CV electronically (e.g. via email) ensure it is provided in an accessible file format. PDF is preferable, as it is a universal file type that will open in the majority of operating systems and devices. Other benefits include:

- Most word processing software gives you the option to save your document as a PDF.
- PDF files rarely reformat when saved. Always check that the formatting and layout has not changed when sharing or saving as a different file type.
- They are much harder to edit (by mistake) than other file types.

You should avoid using Pages files, as those using a Windows operating system will not be able to open them.

Printing

If asked to provide a printed CV and personal statement, make sure they do not separated. You do not want your chances at success hindered as a result of shuffled or missing pages. A simple staple, paper clip or folder will suffice.