



PREPARING YOUR C.V.

We regard your CV as your personal sales brochure and your passport to a new career. It is therefore essential that your CV is clear, concise, contains up-to-date relevant information and most importantly, is an honest and accurate reflection of your educational and work attainments.

CV Layout and Content

There are no hard and fast rules here but it should be well spaced out and contain the following details:

- **Personal:** Name, address, telephone numbers, marital status, nationality, driving licence status and where applicable your eligibility to work in the country.
- **Personal Statement:** All too often personal statements can be bland and unoriginal i.e. that you're honest, hardworking, a team player, etc. Written well, however, this can be a valuable tool – an opening sales pitch stating your suitability for the role applied for.
- **Education:** Reverse chronological order, dates followed by name of establishment, followed by qualifications and grades achieved. Secondary and further education only.
- **Training Courses Attended:** Give a one line overview including course title and dates attended together with any qualification gained i.e. MCSE, CCNA, MCDBA
- **Technical Skill Set:** Best in list format, relevant to your current skills and in the order of strongest skill first. If it will not fit onto the front page and you feel it is your best selling point, you may want it to swap places with education.
- **Career History:** Put in reverse chronological order with dates, company name and job title. Talk about the technical environment you worked in and include your achievements in addition to your responsibilities. Huge paragraphs of text generally will not get read, so keep them concise and relevant. Bullet points can be useful to detail your responsibilities and the technologies used.
- **Hobbies and Interests:** These are important to many employers and may often be the only thing to distinguish you from other candidates with very similar career histories and academic backgrounds. Keep this section short though and only refer to current interests and activities, as telling an employer that you used to play football for your school when you're now in your mid-40s is unlikely to impress!
- **Referees:** Names, addresses and ideally phone numbers and email addresses of two suitable referees. One should be your current employer, with the other a past employer or academic tutor if you have only recently left education.

Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** make it clear and easy to read.

- **Do** pay attention to presentation. It must be a well produced business like document, using either 10 or 11 point typesize, and in a clear, professional font such as Arial or Tahoma
- **Do** make it waffle free and relevant. Describe what it was that you did personally as opposed to what the responsibilities were of the team you worked in.
- **Do** tailor your CV to each role you applied for. This doesn't take long, ensures that only the most relevant information is displayed, and could well make all the difference in gaining yourself an interview.
- **Do** include the month and year for each major entry under education and career history.
- **Do** try to keep it to between two and four pages.
- **Do** explain any gaps in education and experience.
- **Do not** add your photograph - employers will judge the person, not the face!
- **Do not** use fancy graphics, images, type styles or symbols.
- **Do not** use complicated formatting. Using different boxes, sections, bullet points and tables all on one CV make it cluttered and hard to follow. Ensure consistency of style, font type and size throughout.
- **Do not** include any non essential information such as the occupation of your partner, the names of your children, your passport or NI number, etc.
- **Do not** exaggerate your skills and achievements – you will be found out at interview!