

How to write a winning CV

Introduction

There are many documents available on the World Wide Web that will tell you how to put together a winning CV.

You need to consider your CV submission, as your first interview. You will only secure a face-to-face interview if the potential employer or recruitment agency considers your CV of a suitable standard.

Your CV has to therefore stand out and has to be individual to YOU.

Many of these websites are generic and don't take time to understand what is individual about YOU and therefore do not offer the most tailored advice.

CVs are all about opinions of those putting them together.

You have to decide how you want your CV to represent you, your work history, your skills, your education and your ambitions.

Hints and tips

- Do not make any spelling / grammatical mistakes
- Do your best to keep your CV as close to 2 pages as you can; this should not be difficult for a jobseeker with minimal employment history
- Use bullet-points to break down the information, rather than writing long paragraphs. A CV is not a story, it is a statement of facts
- If you are writing a CV or covering letter, please be sure to amend it for each role that you are applying for
- You do not have to include your date of birth (optional)
- It is optional whether you decide to add a photograph to a CV. In our opinion, this is not necessary, as the information held in your CV, i.e. skills and experience should be enough to get you a face-to-face interview or job offer
- It is important that a CV looks well formatted and symmetrical. Have the same format type and size throughout your CV and stay away from overcomplicating your CV with boxes
- Avoid leaving gaps on your employment history. If you were out of work for a period of time, please tell the reader this
- When saving your CV, it is advisable to save it as a Word document
- Avoid talking in the 3rd person, unless you are going to do this throughout the whole CV.

Constructing a CV

There is a basic layout that needs to be followed. You need to include the following:

Name

Contact details

- Full address incl. post code, contact numbers and email address.

Personal Profile

- This is your opportunity to sell yourself, this should be no more than 4-5 lines.

Aims and Aspirations

- Your opportunity to tell the reader what you're looking for and why you're suitable. This needs to be amended for each role that you're applying for.

Skills / PC Literacy

- You may want to add a few lines in regarding your relevant skills for your target job
- You could also include your level of PC literacy i.e. MS Excel – Intermediate.

Employment History

- Starting with the most recent first
- Please include months and years of employment
- When giving the duties for each role, go into detail. A potential employer should not be expected to guess your duties / responsibilities
- Please include any achievements. This is what potential employers are interested in
- Please include your reasons for leaving previous roles and also why you are looking to leave your current role.

Education History

- Please start with your most recent / highest level of education
- Please always include grades and ALWAYS be honest, as it is likely that you may be asked to provide copies of your results
- For higher education, please include any relevant modules to the job you're applying for
- If you have recently finished education (at any level), with minimal work experience, it may be advisable to put your 'Education History' before your 'Employment History', especially if your qualifications match those of the target job.

Hobbies & Interests

- Some sites ask you not to include this information as it isn't relevant. It is relevant. An employer can gauge a degree of your personality from this. Keep it brief. Don't use the usual suspects **such as:**

- Socialising
- Reading
- Swimming
- Attending the gym.

AS EVERYONE USES THESE!

- Go for something more interesting such as:
 - Keeping fit – I attend my local gym 2-3 times per week
 - I study French at evening classes; I hope to be fluent in the next 5 years
 - Days out with my wife and 2 children
 - I am a member of the National Trust and regularly visit UK National Trust sites
 - I have been a Scout Leader for 8 years
 - For the past 2 years, I have managed a men's football team.

Again, it is up to you to decide what you include in your 'Hobbies and Interests', our only advice would be to make it interesting for the reader. If you like socialising don't just include the word 'Socialising', go into more detail i.e. I enjoy eating out with friends, hosting dinner parties, going to my local pub and attending music gigs and festivals.

References

– You do not need to include the details of any referees here. Most employers will not check references until after an offer of employment has been made, especially from your current employer! We recommend that you include the following; 'References are available on request'.

Please see our CV template on the following pages.

Our CV Template

Name
50 Churchill Square Kings Hill Business Park West Malling
Kent ME19 4YU
Tel 01732 523515
Email recruitment@pearsonwhiffin.co.uk

Personal Profile

I am a self-motivated and driven individual. I enjoy working to targets and often exceed any targets that are set for me. I enjoy working in a team but am equally capable working on my own. I possess first-class communication skills and am comfortable dealing with colleagues or customers at all levels.

Aims and Aspirations

After 4 years working as a Recruitment Consultant, I am now looking for my next step. I have been a very successful Consultant during my career to date and am now looking to pass on my skills and knowledge.

Skills

- Experienced recruiter
- Accomplished salesman
- High achiever, on target to bill over £250K this year
- Highly PC literate

Employment History

Pearson Whiffin Recruitment **Recruitment Consultant** **Sept 2007-Present**

Pearson Whiffin Recruitment is a Kent-based independent recruitment agency, specialising in the provision of temporary and permanent staff within the commercial, IT and Accounts & Finance sectors.

- Working within a team of 8
- Managing a Permanent Commercial desk
- Carrying out sales activities such as telephone cold-calling, prospect sales visits, door-knocking and service review visits
- Proactively searching various job boards to find suitable CVs
- Registering candidates that are actively looking for work

Our CV Template continued

Achievements

- Set up new division in Sept 2007
- In my last full year (to Dec 2010) I achieved annual revenue of £241K
- I am on target to beat this in 2011; currently on £204K with 3 months remaining
- I won the xxxxxx, xxxxxx and xxxxxxxxx accounts for Pearson Whiffin, resulting in over £250K of business within a 3 year period
- I have been the highest biller in Pearson Whiffin for the past 2 years, across all divisions (Accounts & Finance and IT)

Reason for wanting to leave: Career Progression, looking for management role.

Education History

Pearson Whiffin School, Maidstone

2000 – 2007

A' Levels

Business Studies A

English A

GCSEs

Physical Ed A

History A

French A

Maths A

English Lang A

English Lit A

Science AA

Religious Studies A

Hobbies and Interests

- I am an active member of my local gym, attending 3-4 times per week
- I manage a men's Sunday league football team
- I enjoy eating out, hosting dinner parties for friends, visiting my local pub and attending music festivals
- I have just started French evening classes and I hope to be fluent within 3 years
- I enjoy spending time with my wife and 2 children

References

References are available on request.

The above CV is for training purposes only. None of the information held within the CV is factual to that of a jobseeker. The postal and email addresses are that of Pearson Whiffin Recruitment Ltd and have been used only to demonstrate the layout of the CV.

Our CV Template continued

Summary

You must take time putting together your CV. Your CV is the first impression made on a potential employer / recruitment agency and first impressions last!