

The Essential CV Writing Checklist.

Everything you need to know to get your CV to the top of your interviewer's pile.



How to make your CV work for you

Think of your CV as a brochure designed to sell you.

Done well and you'll have job opportunities flooding your inbox – done badly and it will end up in the bin.

If the content is clear, engaging and relevant, people are much more likely to take the time to read it. Statistically, you've only got about 30 seconds to grab a potential employer's attention with your CV. So think about your strongest attributes and make them stand out a mile.

Don't be afraid to talk about yourself – what you've accomplished, your strengths and personal qualities.

But keep it relevant to the job you're applying for.

Unnecessary details can detract from your core messages, and may give the impression that the job is just one of hundreds you've applied to.

You've got more chance of making an impression by **a)** including a covering letter, and **b)** tailoring your CV to highlight your relevant strengths and achievements

General Information

Your name. First and second name will do.

Location. Including your postcode will definitely help, but a general location (e.g. city) is a must.

Contact number. For obvious reasons. You wouldn't believe how many people don't include contact details.

Email address. In case the recruiter can't get hold of you via your contact number, or there's further information to send over.

Personal Statement

Answer the question: Who are you and why would I want to hire you?

3 Attributes the recruiter will be looking for. Then put them into sentences - how do you prove you have those attributes?

AVOID terrible clichés and buzzwords. (for example, dynamic, innovative, creative... AVOID AT ALL COSTS!)

Work Experience

Include ALL of your previous work experience.

Start with your most recent and work backwards.

Every noted experience must include:

Include start dates and end dates. This should be the year and the month minimum.

The company name. Recruiters might want to do some research on the company.

Your job title. Simple, but a lot of people forget it.

A one-liner about the company. E.g. what they do, what the industry is that they work in.

Roughly 5 bullet points about your key responsibilities. Stick to facts and figures here.

Explain any gaps. If you went travelling, mention it. If you were made redundant, explain the situation (briefly)

Try to fill any gaps. If you took part in volunteering, a course, learning a language... Just anything productive! (Don't lie though)

Education

Again, start with the latest and work backwards.

State the name and location of the institution.

Include your start and end date. Again, month and year as a minimum.

The grades you achieved.

Key Skills

Optional bonus, are you going to include it? When I say optional, it could make a real difference if you lack experience/education.

If you don't have relevant skills, think of transferrable skills. E.g. Communication, dealing with conflict

Back every claim with an example. E.g. Organisation - Organised events as part of a social club.

Interests and Activities

DO NOT INCLUDE: "I enjoy socialising with my friends"

Only list relevant interests to the role. E.g. Volunteer at a charity shop, captain of a football team, etc.

References

Include two former employers.

Provide company name, contact name and contact information.

The Intangibles

Personality. Don't be arrogant, don't be boring. Be fun and down-to-earth (and ask someone to proofread it).

Attention to detail. Nothing is worse than a CV riddled with mistakes. Don't be lazy - triple check it.

Passion. Customise each CV you send out, tailor it to every role and make it passionate and personal.

Scrap the ridiculous email address. No one is going to be impressed by Groovychick101@hotmail.com, keep it professional.

Name the file something sensible. Make it specific to the role you're applying to. "[Your Name] CV - [Job Application Company Name]"

Check that personal information is up to date. Wrong numbers are really irritating.

Get someone to proofread your work.

Don't depend on your cover letter. Your CV should be just as good.

Format

Order. Stick to the order we've gone through so far. It really does make a difference.

Use a sensible font.

Don't go bullet point crazy.

Keep paragraphs short and snappy.

About Response

Response is a flat fee recruitment business that allows its clients to recruit incredible people for a fraction of the price they'd pay through a traditional recruitment agency.

Based in Sutton Coldfield in the UK, we create and manage award-winning online recruitment campaigns that get the best people applying for our clients' vacancies, before manually vetting every application and submitting a shortlist of the top candidates.

Want to see how we do it? See our process in full at responsewebrecruitment.co.uk.