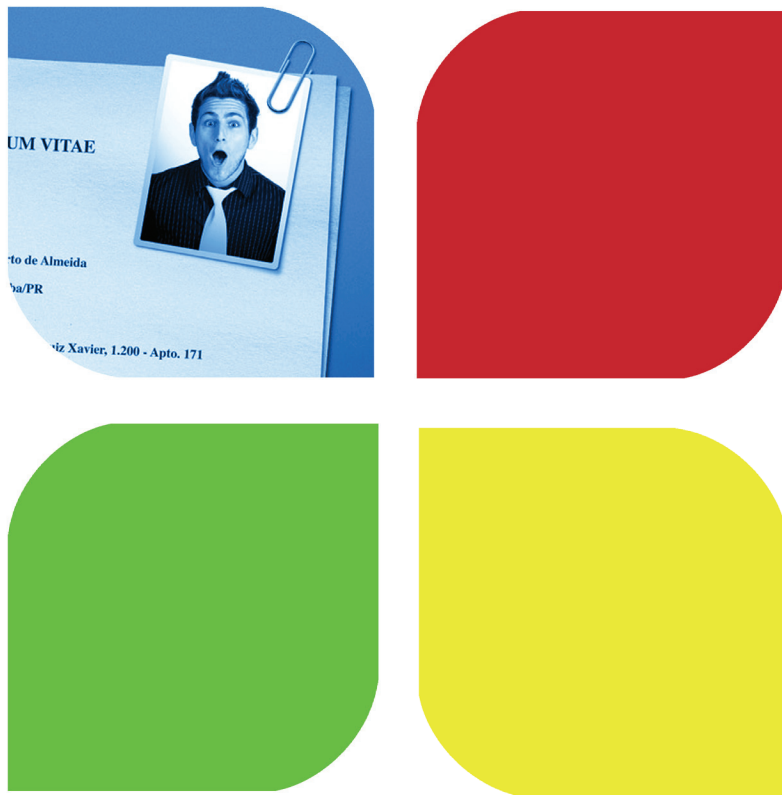


# How to make the most of your CV





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A CV is to illustrate your professional experience and qualifications to someone you have probably never met in order to get an invitation for interview. Therefore, simplicity and first impressions count. It is well worth spending some time in tailoring your CV to ensure that it is maximising your chances of reaching the next stage.

### Content

Your CV is a representation, which should reflect your personality and what is important to you. When applying for a job, it is likely that you will be one of many candidates. Presenting an effective CV is one way of getting noticed from the outset. Interviewers may decide whether or not to see you on the strength of your CV. Do not just think of it as a list of facts; it should be a resume of your personal, educational and career history, showing your strengths and achievements.

### Step 1: Your personal details

Structure your CV by writing a list of important headings. Include your name, date of birth, address, telephone number (evenings and daytime), qualifications (include examination results), work history, any major achievements, hobbies and interests. It should be a resume of your personal, educational and career history, showing your strengths and achievements.

### Step 2: Your personal profile

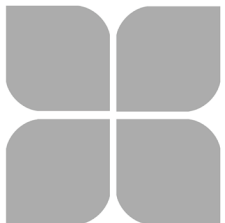
Your personal profile should be a four or five line synopsis about you, your key experience and your unique skills. It shouldn't contain any more information than that. That's what the rest of your CV is for. Think of it as a subheading. It should succinctly summarise what is to follow.

### Step 3: Employment history and work experience

If you've been working for a while, you could put your employment history first; if you're younger and don't have much work experience, you might like to highlight your education and training.

In this section you should start with your present or most recent job and work backwards. You should include employer, the dates you worked for them, job title and your main duties. Provide more detail on the relevant jobs you've had and give examples of the skills you used and what you achieved. Use bullet pointed lists.

Try to relate your skills and experience to the job description or what you think the employer is looking for, if you're sending your CV on spec.



Also include any relevant temporary work and volunteering experience.

Avoid unexplained gaps in your employment history. If you had time out travelling, job seeking, volunteering or caring for a relative, include this along with details of what you've learned.

#### Step 4: Education and training

Start with your most recent qualifications and work back to the ones you got at school. Using bullet points or a table include:

- the university, college or school you went to
- the dates the qualifications were awarded and any grades
- any work-related courses, if they're relevant.

#### Step 5: Interests and achievements

You can include hobbies, interests and achievements that are relevant to the job. For example, if you're involved in any clubs or societies this can show that you enjoy meeting new people. Try to avoid putting activities like cooking or reading, as these activities are too general and widespread to be of interest to an employer. Make them specific and interesting!

#### Step 6: Additional information

You can include this section if you need to add anything else that's relevant, such as explaining that a gap in your employment history was due to travel or family reasons. You could also include other relevant skills here; such as if you have a driving licence or can speak any foreign languages.

#### Step 7: References

At least one referee should be work-related; or if you haven't worked for a while, some other responsible

person who has worked or known you for some time. You can list the contact details of your referees on your CV or just put 'references available on request'. If you decide to include their details you could also state the relationship of each referee to you – for example 'John Turner, Manager'.

### General CV Advice

#### Presentation

- Always type your CV.
- Use good quality paper. It creates a good impression.
- Avoid gimmicks, elaborate designs, or fancy typefaces.
- Your CV represents you and should not arrive looking tatty.
- Lay out your CV so it is easy to read and understand.

#### Top tips to ensure you stand out from the crowd...

- Ensure the information is correct and relevant. Most companies will reject a CV with spelling or typing errors.
- Do not omit any vital information such as your age. It will be obvious that you are trying to hide something.
- Never lie on a CV, or you will undermine yourself from the onset, and may be found out in the future.
- If you have worked somewhere for a few years, explain briefly how your job title and responsibilities have changed. Show how you have developed since joining the company.
- Highlight major achievements, especially those made most recently. Have you successfully managed any projects or brought in new systems or increased sales? Show on paper that you are an asset to your present employer.
- Do not ask for your CV to be returned many companies do keep them on file.
- Keep a copy of your CV, read it before your interview

and take two clean, crisp, unfolded copies to the interview (one for you, and one for the interviewer).

- Where possible, make the CV relevant to the position you are applying for.
- Avoid industry jargon.
- Use space constructively; omit irrelevant experience, examination failures, etc.

#### Length of CV

There is no absolute right or wrong way to write a CV and styles vary greatly from different continents. Your CV may also reflect some individuality and can say a lot more about you than purely the wording. However, it is generally accepted that a CV should be approximately two to three pages. It should be detailed enough to capture the attention of the reader and arouse their interest for interview, but not so lengthy that becomes tiresome to read. You will need to have plenty of detail left to discuss during the interview.

#### Use simple 'Key Words'

Almost every recruitment consultancy utilises special recruitment software to store your details into a large database system. To ensure that you maximise your chances of being included in 'key word' searches it is worth writing your CV in such a way that your text is easily understood by recruitment consultants and database administrators.