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The Right Process for the Right IT Staff

CV Writing Masterclass

Whether you are applying for your first job role or you want to tailor your existing CV to complement a new position you are applying for, your CV is the best way to market yourself. Here is a step-by-step guide to creating a successful CV that will help you get through to that crucial interview stage.



How to write a CV

Knowing where to start when creating a professional CV can be daunting. With this in mind, here is a comprehensive list of what to include on your CV and where to include it.

Personal Details

- The first step to creating a professional CV is to include your contact details at the top. Include your full name, address, mobile telephone number and personal email address. Including your date of birth on your CV is a personal choice rather than a necessity.
- Remember to adapt your personal details to the role you are applying for. For example, if you are going for a creative job, include links to your personal website, online portfolio or personal blog, as well as your social media profiles if relevant.
- Keep this section short and sweet and if you choose to include a personal email addresses ensure it is appropriate. For example do not invite your recruiter to contact you at totaldude@hotmail.com.

Personal Statement

- This section of the CV should include a short introduction that provides relevant information about you and your employment background.
- Keep this section brief, mentioning key points only that relate directly to the job description.
- Include a couple of sentences about your previous experience and skills, as well as one standout achievement to make your CV unique.
- Avoid making vague statements and make sure you illustrate how your skills relate to the industry you are applying to work in.

Key Skills

- Don't make your recruiter hunt for information. List your key skills and achievements in bullet-point form.
- This will instantly inform a potential employer of the value you could add to the company so be specific when talking about your achievements.
- When providing examples of recent responsibilities and achievements, always list the most senior responsibilities first.

Work Experience

- In order to demonstrate your suitability for a role, you must list your work experience starting with the most recent.
- It is important to think strategically when deciding which roles to include. When looking at your work history, keep the hirer's needs at the forefront of your mind and question whether the experience gained in that role is relevant to the job you are applying for.
- For each job role include the job title, company name, skills required and employment dates.
- Unexplained gaps in your employment history are a red flag to recruiters. Whatever your reasons are for being out of work, remember that honesty is always the best policy.

Education

- Begin with your most recent qualification and list the name of the institute, the exact time period and the qualifications acquired.
- Again the aim is to condense the relevant information down to two pages or less so focus on your largest and most recent qualifications such as a University Degree and go into less detail when it comes to GCSE and A-Level qualifications. A simple summary is sufficient when it comes to Secondary Education.

Interests and Hobbies

- Including information about your interests and hobbies can show the recruiter what makes you unique as a candidate, but only include this section if pursuing a particular interest aligns with the job role. For example, include sports that will show you are a team player but perhaps avoid mentioning your passion for techno music and partying until the sun comes up!
- Also include in this section any volunteer programs or charity work you have completed.
- Leave out any generic hobbies i.e. reading, cycling or swimming unless they benefit your application and make you stand out.

References

- Get in touch with former employers and colleagues to request a reference. You should aim to obtain at least two references but always get permission before you submit their contact details on your CV.
- Before you include references from previous employers on your CV, make a note of the document's length. If your CV is already taking up 2 pages, simply save valuable space and finish the document by letting your recruiter know that references are available on request.
- If you are successful, it is wise to contact your referees and inform them that the company will be in touch.



CV Top Tips

Collating relevant information is only the first step of creating a stellar CV. Your CV should help you stand out in a sea of qualified candidates. These tips will ensure that your CV stands out for all of the right reasons.

- **Be Selective** - Your CV should be short, punchy and to the point. While it is tempting to include a full run-down of your employment history, leaving out irrelevant work experience, like temping jobs whilst you were studying is sensible. Only include the jobs that are relevant to the role that you are applying for.
- **Tailor it** - A generic CV will show off your skillset but it won't highlight your suitability for a specific job role. Have a copy of the job description in front of you and incorporate keywords into your application.
- **Avoid Large Blocks of Texts** - Use bullet-points to highlight your skills, qualifications and achievements and make it easier for the recruiter to scan it with ease.
- **Spelling and Grammar** - Always proofread your CV before you send it off to a company. Get somebody else to check the document for mistakes before you click send and don't be afraid to ask for feedback.