

CV CREATION TIPS

The term 'Curriculum Vitae' literally translates as 'the story of your life'. The words Curriculum Vitae are usually abbreviated to CV or C.V. and you will sometimes see it incorrectly written in lower case as c.v. or cv.

Once you have gained an interview, your CV will continue working in your favour. It can help you at an interview by carefully focusing the interviewer's mind on your good points and achievements and once you have left the interview the interviewer is likely to reread your CV before making a decision, either on who should be invited to the second interview stage or who the job should be offered to.

A well-written CV can also be beneficiary when it comes to salary negotiations. If your CV conveys your full worth you are likely to get a higher salary offer than you might have done with a poorer CV. With all this riding on a CV it is vital you do not skimp on the time you spend writing it.

To write a good CV you need to collate on the information listed below. You may not use all of it but it will provide you with useful reference material when it comes to preparing for interviews.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Your full name, address, home telephone number, marital status (put only single or married down on your CV, if you are divorced then put single, if you are separated you are still married) and nationality (you may want to include this if you are applying for jobs abroad). Do you have a full driving licence? Is it clean?

EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS

List your qualifications and education history, for example:

BSc (Hons) 2.2 in Biochemistry at the University of Warwick, 1980 - 1983.

GCE A Levels: Maths [C], Biology [B], Chemistry [C] at Farnham School,

1978 – 1980 GCE O Levels (or GCSEs if you did them): Maths [B], English Language [C], History [C], Geography [C], French [C], Chemistry [C], Biology [C] at Farnham School, 1973 - 1978.

If you have a degree you probably will not need to list all your O Levels/GCSEs; just listing the number is probably sufficient.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

List your professional qualifications, membership of professional associations and professional ID numbers. If you recently completed a college or university degree or HND or Diploma, etc, then you may want to list the courses you studied if the subject you studied was relevant to your target job.

TRAINING COURSES

List any work related training courses, which you attended, including company courses and any you attended on your own initiative. If you obtained a qualification on any course please list it. You only need to list the important courses you attended.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Start with your most recent or last job and work backwards. For each position (treat internal promotion as a new job and record the dates separately) list your job title (e.g. Manager,

Supervisor, etc), the job title of the person you reported to (e.g. Director, Manager, etc) and when you started and finished in each job. Give the name of the company and include a brief description of the service they provide (using the terms they would use to describe themselves). Set out your main responsibilities, achievements, duties, and skills that could be transferred to another employer. Be specific and positive about your skills, e.g. 'good written skills' may be a better description of your abilities rather than 'good communication skills'.

Include your level of responsibility if any, e.g. 'responsibility for departmental budget of £100K and managed 10 staff'. In particular list any achievements you had in each position, including increases in sales/productivity and cost savings made. Quantify your achievements if possible. 'Increased sales by £100K' is more interesting and positive than just saying 'Increased sales'. You should try to include some achievements such as meeting deadlines, budgets, etc, and any information that may be relevant to your next job.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

If you have foreign language skills, which may be relevant for any jobs, which you are applying for, list them and indicate whether your skills are spoken, written, business or technical. Please also indicate your level of fluency: fluent, good working knowledge, etc.

You should only list these skills if they are relevant to the jobs you are applying for as no one really wants to hear about a French language course you did at school a long time ago.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

When you are listing your achievements in this section, only list 3 to 6 of your most important work achievements; your other achievements can be described under the work experience section. You should only list achievements, which are relevant to your next job and indicate how you achieved them.

This section is very important, as an employer will only invite you for an interview if they can see a benefit in doing so. Your achievements may sell you to an employer and make them choose you for an interview rather than someone else. For this reason it is vital that you think carefully about your achievements.

INTERESTS/HOBBIES

List your interests, hobbies and any sports you play. List any positions of responsibility you hold or have held in any club or organisation, and say what your responsibilities and achievements were.

REFERENCES

You do not normally need to list referees on a CV, but it is a good idea to think about whom you could ask now. For some professions however it is normal to list referees; these include the teaching and health service (NHS) professions - your referees in these professions are often asked to provide you with a reference before you are even asked to an interview.

SUMMARY

List your major skills, strengths, personal qualities and achievements. Be specific, e.g. good team player, excellent written skills, versatile, able to motivate others, etc. Look at your staff appraisals or at your references.