

How to write a great CV



Today's jobs market is a tough one. It has never been more important to stand out from the crowd when seeking a new role.

I work mainly with large blue-chip organisations, helping them recruit senior personnel. But my tips for making sure your CV is picked out apply equally to all career moves – senior, junior or in-between.

There is always a temptation to focus on telling potential employers all about your experience. This can be useful, to an extent, but what they really want to know, is what strengths you have that match those required for the job.

My advice is to write a template CV and adapt the content to highlight your suitability for each different post applied for. The reason this is important is that CVs are usually read by someone looking for key words that match their hiring criteria.

It is worth bearing in mind too, that a CV is only scanned on the first read, so if your key strengths stand out and are easily found, this can increase its chances of further consideration.

Another useful tip is to provide a little bit of information about the company you work for, because the recruiter may not know of them. So, include a line or two about the sector they operate in, how many employees they have and provide a short description of what they do. This helps put your experience and strengths into context.

It is also vital to list your key responsibilities within your current role – in other words, what you were employed to do. Then list what you have achieved within this role. This gives

a clear indication of your ability to do the job and where you have exceeded expectations. Repeat this format for your previous roles too.

Keep your CV concise, but not too short, as limiting the volume of content could potentially undersell you. It is a fine line, but a recruiter would rather have a little more information than too little.

After you have written your CV, test it out by giving it to your partner or a friend to read, for an objective and helpful opinion.

In more than 20 years of recruiting, I have never yet met anyone who enjoys writing their CV. But there is no escaping the fact that a good CV is a must, to gain access to a face to face meeting, where you have the opportunity to shine in person – and get the job.

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