

# How to make your CV stand out



First impressions are lasting impressions. It takes less than 10 seconds for a recruiter to review your CV, so it's important to make it easy for them to locate the most relevant information, such as skills and experience, and ensure there are no red flags, such as inconsistencies in your employment history. When writing your CV consider the following pointers to make a lasting impression for all the right reasons.

## 1. Align your CV with the role

Ensure your CV aligns with the role you are applying for, matching your skills to the job description. Be aware that key words are essential for competency-based CVs, particularly to get past software scans which are becoming more commonplace in certain fields.

## 2. Structure your CV

Use structure to make it easy for a recruiter to identify what makes you a suitable candidate. Consider the following structured approach to writing your CV.

*Summary:* provide a brief and concise introduction about you and your background. Only include the most relevant and standout points that make you the ideal candidate with a couple of sentences about your experience and skills.

*Employment history:* this should be listed in chronological order, beginning with the most recent. Highlight key skills and achievements alongside each role and use numbers (dollars or percentages) to back up CV examples.

*Education:* list your education background noting the most recent or advanced degree first, working in reverse chronological order. If however you have a degree in engineering for example, but a course in marketing is more relevant to the role you are applying for, include this up front as this will be of more interest to the recruiter.

*Hobbies and interests:* don't underestimate the opportunity to show who you are by including examples of what you feel defines you beyond your work. Your hobbies can say a lot about you as a person and can influence employers who place emphasis on cultural fit, not just capability.

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*References:* these can play a critical role in a prospective employer's decision to consider you for a position. You can either list your referees or note that 'referees are available upon request'. Always seek permission before sharing your referees contact details.

### **3. Keep the length of your CV to a minimum**

The length of your CV should be no more than 2-3 pages unless there are role specific requirements such as including a list of publications you have authored.

### **4. Align your LinkedIn profile and your CV**

Once you've been identified as a potential candidate for a role, a recruiter will seek out your professional profile. Any anomalies could call your CV into question.

### **5. Take time to review your CV**

Seek out a second opinion and take care to spell check and grammar check before submitting. As a senior or executive level professional, there is an expectation that your CV is error free.

## Recommended reads

Harvard Business Review - Yes your resume needs a summary