

Putting together your CV is the first step towards securing your new position. The power and impact of this single document should not be underestimated, as it will frequently make the difference between you being invited along to your chosen company for an interview or being filed away with the other 50 forgettable CV's. There is no right or wrong way to structure your CV but no matter what your profession or what stage in your career you have reached, there are certain guidelines that every job seeker should adhere to;

- **First impressions count:**
You have approximately two minutes to sell yourself on paper! Your CV must be well presented and 'easy on the eye' Proof read your CV for spelling and grammar mistakes then ask an independent eye to re-check it. A single spelling mistake can be off-putting to a potential employer.
- **Keep it simple:**
No busy employer has the time to read through paragraph upon paragraph of work history. Keep your CV as short as you can without cramming information or leaving it out. A college leaver may reasonably stick to one page but several years work experience may spill onto two, three or occasionally four pages. Be precise and concise; consider using bullet points rather than paragraphs and remember that many prospective employers will make judgements based on scan reading your CV. **Key skills** and **Achievements** must be highlighted in order to grab attention.
- **Structure your CV:**
Make sure you follow a logical, well laid out structure in order to enable the reader too quickly and grasp your background. **Headings** effectively guide readers through your CV. Remember: *reverse* chronological order for your employment history is a must.
- **Paint the full picture:**
Don't leave prospective employers guessing! Give them a concise outline; possibly bullet pointed, of the duties you performed in your previous roles, targets you hit and achievements you can attest to. Date your employment and education history and never leave unexplained gaps in your CV. Whether you were travelling, studying or bringing up your family, be proud of transferable skills and record them!

Need help writing your CV?

When putting together your CV, *check your spelling*. Make sure your spell checker is set to English UK. Check subtle differences such as Licence and License. Try and include as many "buzz words" as possible – this makes finding your CV amongst millions far easier!

Start with your **Personal Details**: Full Name, Address, home telephone number, mobile number and email. You will be surprised how many people miss off their contact details.

Next include a **Personal Statement**: check your spelling and sentence structure – you may also want to use bullets points.

Highlight your **Key Skills**: keep it relevant to the job you are interested in, you could also include your languages and academic interests (personal interests can be recorded under Interests). If you are IT/Software/Electronics bias, it may be a good idea to split your key skills and have a separate heading such as Computer/Software/Electronic Skills etc.

Provide full information on your **Education and Qualifications** – keeping most recent first. Include the name of your University/College/School and dates you attended. List your Academic and Vocational Courses, AS/A Levels and GCE/GCSES. If you have top grades – shout it out loud and clear!

If you have **Trade related Certificates** that are required for you to operate in your current and future role(s) – list as a separate heading including expiry dates.

If you have attended work related Training Courses you may also want to include under a separate heading of **Training and Development**

Now you are ready to promote your **Work Experience**. Keep your *most recent employment first – keep all in the same format*. Examples below:

Dates to and from

Position

Employer

Responsible for:

- You should bullet point details of your duties
- Don't write a book though

Duties

- You should bullet point details of your duties
- Keep them relevant to the role you are interested in

Projects details and values (if relevant to the role)

Key achievements (if relevant to the role)

Include any **Hobbies & Interests**. Although not imperative it can provide an employer with an insight into your personality and can also be a conversation starter. It will also provide common interests to the hiring manager and provide more information on your professional skills. Try to list hobbies and interests relevant to your application and avoid personal information that will detract from your CV. If you include any sport such as golf, make sure you can back it up – you might be invited to play!