

people 4 property

Structuring Your CV

A CV is normally issued as a 2 or 3 page document with a covering letter that highlights your specific skills and abilities and the previous experience you have to offer to the prospective new employer. To present yourself successfully you will need to think about what the employer is looking for in a candidate and arrange your most significant skills and experiences as early as possible in the CV to demonstrate how you meet the most important requirements of the job.

Your CV should ideally be no longer than 2 or 3 pages. The prospective employer will initially scan your CV for suitability within the first 30 seconds, so to ensure you have the most impact, it is advisable to follow this structure of presenting key points:

Your Full name

Your Contact Details

Your full address, telephone number(s) and email address.

A Personal Statement

An employer will usually be impressed if you itemise a focused idea of where you would like your career to be headed. Although this is not essential, it is normally a good idea to include a statement along these lines.

Education/Professional Qualifications

List your academic successes. Include dates, type of institution, location and principal subjects and examination results. List your highest qualifications first. Remember to include memberships of professional bodies.

Technical Expertise/Skills Summary

Provide a bullet-point guide to the technical skills you possess and those you have been trained in. This will allow the prospective employer the chance to see immediately that you have the key matches to his vacancy.

Work Experiences

Provide a chronological list of company names from present or most recent job backwards, a description of each of their areas of business, a description of your duties and responsibilities at each, the key technical terms associated with your work and the equipment used, including specific computer system experience. Ensure that each section of employment is clearly headed up with the employing company name and your title(s) at each.

Other Responsible Positions

It is worth detailing any appointments you have held in professional organisations, whether they are related to your technical background or not. Employers like to see evidence that you have managed to command the respect of your peers.

Leisure interests

List a few of your principal leisure activities, so that the employer can get an idea of the sort of person you are. Be careful not to list too many however, as you could imply that your leisure pursuits are of higher priority than your job.

Referees

It is not advisable to state the full contact details of your referees at this early stage of application. It would be better to state "Referees available on request", allowing you to provide referees suitable to the application.

Points to Remember

Reasons for leaving jobs

We would not advise that you put this on your CV. The decision to move is a complex and emotive issue and your statement might easily be misinterpreted. It is best to keep the CV positive and factual and leave this topic for discussion in an interview.

Salary

It is advisable to omit your salary details from your CV. This is something that can be discussed at a more appropriate time, such as if you are granted an interview. Salary levels are dependent on many variables and they can be easily misconstrued, if you are not careful.

Work Experience

Include work experience that highlights your skills and cover any gaps in your experience with an indicative comment, as these are often questioned. Provide a factual explanation for the gap time. If you are a recent graduate with little work experience, consider skills learnt at university through group projects, your own dissertation or thesis project and any volunteer work etc. Any job will require skills that are not technically-orientated and will be dependent on the person involved, such as being able to communicate, meeting objectives, solving problems and fulfilling daily duties and responsibilities. Provide your honest opinion of your strengths in these areas - don't be afraid to assess yourself and to say you are good at something if it truly is one of your skills. Focus on how you can make a positive contribution to the new business with your personal skills.

Presentation of your CV

Finally, ensure your CV is written in a suitable font that is clear and easy to read. Use bold fonts to enhance particular points, especially those like skills summaries and educational achievements that are at the front of the CV. Carefully proof-read and spell check the document. When reading through your CV, try to place yourself in the position of an employer reading the document - **does this CV really give you the information you want in the best possible way?**