

Your CV and Our Advice

Your CV needs to be more than a simple list of your previous responsibilities and job titles. It must promote you by showing WHAT you can do, as well as WHERE and HOW you have done it.

In other words, it describes your achievements and skills as well as former job titles and functions. Your CV should be:

- Truthful
- Relevant
- Interesting
- To the point

The Basics - CV Format Checklist

Tip: You can tailor your CV every time you apply for a role – use key words picked from the job description to make it relevant

- There is no right length for a CV – get all the information down without waffling
- Keep the look simple and clean
- Your name should be at the top of the page
- There is no need to write 'CV' at the top of the page – it wastes space!
- Set off your achievements by solid bullet points and with action words or phrases
- Date ranges (i.e. years at a company) should be on the same line
- Make your point quickly in the upper third of the page
- Avoid using personal pronouns i.e. instead of 'I managed a team of four', write: 'Managed a team of four.'
- Include links to the companies that you've worked for if it's not immediately obvious what they do
- Use the past tense
- Choose strong action verbs
- Generally, avoid abbreviations
- Print in black ink on one side only of A4 white paper, using standard typeface e.g. Times New Roman, Arial or Helvetica (avoid coloured paper or strange fonts)
- Font sizes of 10-12 for text and sizes 11-14 for headings. Use capital letters/bold for emphasis
- Don't use italics, underlining, shading, graphics, vertical/horizontal lines or boxes

Types of CV

CV format is not 'one size fits all'...you can adapt the way you lay out your CV to fit the type of role you're looking for and where you want the emphasis to lie.

1. The Chronological CV

This is the traditional CV format that focuses on your career history. Use it when you are looking for a job in a similar career area.

2. The Functional or Skills-based CV

Useful when you are making a career change to a different job type or industry. This type of CV emphasises your skills and abilities rather than your recent employment history. You might consider using a functional CV if:

- you want to change to a new area of work and show your relevant transferable skills and experience
- you've got gaps in your employment history
- you've had a lot of jobs and you want to describe the experience you've got as a whole

- you want to highlight skills you've gained in previous jobs but that you don't use in your current or most recent job

CV Content and Order

- Name and Contact Details
- Summary/Profile
- Achievements / Key Skills
- Career History
- Qualifications & Professional Development
- Your hobbies

Name and contact details

Keep it brief with name, email and phone number.

You don't need to include other personal details like:

- nationality, unless you will need a UK work permit
- marital status
- age
- details of children
- your health status

Summary/ profile

Your opening paragraph should aim to summarise your key selling points. Think, 'if I were a brand, how would I sell myself?' This needs to be hard hitting and rather than being a personal objective, should aim to give the reader an overview of your key strengths.

- It should be written with your goal/next job in mind
- It should state who and what you are i.e. how do I describe myself
- It should indicate your breadth/length of experience
- It can include 2/3 key skills/strengths
- It should state your USP
- It may state your next move/objective

Achievements and Key Skills

Whether you're using a chronological or function/skills based CV format, you should detail your achievements under each heading.

Think back through your work history and identify work that produced especially good results.

You can use the following STARS guidelines to write up these achievements

- S** First describe the **Situation** you were in
- T** Describe the **Task** that was involved
- A** Next describe the **Action** you took (say 'I' not 'we' – interviewers want to know what YOU did, not the wider team)
- R** Then explain what the **Result** was

Examples of work achievements

- Money : Think of a time when you saved or made money for your company or client
- Time : Did you save time or increase efficiency?
- Organisation : Have you organised, planned, co-ordinated or implemented a system, event or project?
- Making Improvement : Have you made improvements to a system, process or project? Are you creative, innovative and good at coming up with new ideas? Are you organised with strong administrative skills?
- Teamwork : Do you work well with others? Where have you exhibited this?
- Client Management : Are you good at winning, retaining and managing clients? How have you managed tricky situations or difficult clients?
- People Management: Are you good at managing people? Are you able to co-ordinate and administer relationships
- Presentation / Public Speaking : How good are your communication skills? Have you presented in public?
- Writing Skills : Do you write reports? Where do you use your writing skills?
- Flexibility : Think of a time when you were called on to be adaptable in handling new or different situations
- Training / Coaching : Have you mentored team members or others in or outside the organisation?

Check:

- Does each achievement begin with an action word or phrase? (See examples of action words in the table below)
- Is the language you have used concise, specific and professional?
- Have you highlighted the results of your actions clearly?
- Is each of your skills illustrated with at least one solid achievement or result?
- Have you chosen skills that relate to your job objective?

Action words to describe your achievements and pep up your CV

Achieved	Designed	Initiated	Predicted	Simplified
Accomplished	Detailed	Innovated	Prepared	Solved
Accelerated	Developed	Inspected	Presented	Standardised
Acquired	Devised	Installed	Prevented	Streamlined
Acted	Directed	Instructed	Procured	Strengthened
Activated	Displayed	Integrated	Produced	Stretched
Adapted	Distributed	Interpreted	Programmed	Structured
Addressed	Documented	Introduced	Projected	Studied
Administered	Drafted	Invented	Promoted	Succeeded
Adopted	Dramatised	Investigated	Proposed	Summarised
Advised	Earned	Judged	Proved	Supervised
Analysed	Edited	Launched	Provided	Supplemented
Appointed	Educated	Led	Publicised	Supplied
Appraised	Eliminated	Logged	Published	Surveyed
Arranged	Employed	Made	Purchased	Tailored
Ascertained	Enforced	Maintained	Qualified	Taught
Assessed	Engineered	Managed	Quantified	Tested
Assisted	Enlisted	Manipulated	Questioned	Tracked
Attained	Ensured	Mapped	Raised	Trained

Awarded	Established	Marketed	Realised	Transferred
Balanced	Estimated	Matched	Reasoned	Transformed
Budgeted	Evaluated	Met	Recommended	Tripled
Built	Examined	Modelled	Reconciled	Uncovered

Calculated	Expanded	Modernised	Reconstructed	Undertook
Checked	Facilitated	Modified	Recorded	Unified
Coached	Finalised	Monitored	Redesigned	United
Collaborated	Formed	Motivated	Reduced	Updated
Communicated	Formulated	Navigated	Referred	Upgraded
Completed	Fostered	Negotiated	Refined	Used
Conceived	Founded	Nominated	Reinforced	Utilised
Conceptualised	Generated	Observed	Reorganised	Vacated
Conducted	Guided	Obtained	Reported	Verbalised
Constructed	Handled	Opened	Represented	Verified
Consulted	Headed	Organised	Researched	Weighed
Controlled	Helped	Originated	Restructured	Widened
Converted	Identified	Oversaw	Reviewed	Withdrew
Co-ordinated	Illustrated	Participated	Revised	Withstood
Created	Implemented	Perceived	Revitalised	Won
Decided	Improved	Persuaded	Scheduled	Worked
Decreased	Improvised	Piloted	Secured	Wrote
Defined	Increased	Pinpointed	Selected	
Delivered	Influenced	Pioneered	Shaped	
Demonstrated	Informed	Planned	Showed	

Qualifications and Professional Development

Detailing your GCSEs, A-levels or University modules isn't really necessary unless this is first or second role and you have limited work experience (a quick summary of number and grades will suffice).

Don't forget to include any industry specific qualifications such as the ISP, IDM, CIM, AAT, CIMA etc and any other courses you may have attended such as Presentation or Negotiation skills, and IT knowledge.

Hobbies

This is usually used as an ice-breaker in an interview so do put something you are passionate about here, which brings your personality to life.

A word about creativity

Although you may have a creative background, your CV needs to look and sound professional otherwise it may not be taken seriously. Keep it clean and with a simple, usable format as many recruitment agencies use automatic CV scanning technology, for which simplicity is key.

There are loads more helpful guides, hints and tips for your job search in the Job Seekers area of our website, just visit www.famerecruitment.com

Looking for a new opportunity? Review our latest jobs or register your CV at www.famerecruitment.com
You can also contact one of our consultants on 020 8209 1858 or at info@famerecruitment.com

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