

## Preparing a CV

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Your CV is often the first impression of you a prospective employer is going to get. Perhaps even more importantly, optical recognition technology will include or exclude you from a recruiter's or employer's search directly as a consequence of how you present and prepare the content of your CV. Structure your personal document with the following points in mind to ensure you get the most from your CV, every time you submit it for consideration.

## 1. Put information into reverse chronological order

Your most recent experience is in most cases the most relevant experience to the position for which you are now applying. For similar reasons your education should be placed in reverse order.

## 2. Write a leading paragraph at the beginning

A well-worded summary creates initial high impact. Avoid excessive use of flowery language, which will only serve to lessen the interest of the reader. Focus on your key skills and competencies only.

Use any of the following adjectives and variations of, albeit sparingly, where you genuinely feel they apply. But in each case, be prepared to back your choices up by giving personal examples of your behaviour in answers to interview questions.

ABILITY	ACCURATE	ACHIEVE	ADAPT	AMBITION
ASSERTIVE	APTITUDE	ATTITUDE	ACCOMPLISH	ATTRIBUTE
COMPETITIVE	CONFIDENT	CONTROL	CONSISTENT	CREATIVE
CREDIT	DECISIVE	DELIVER	DELEGATE	DIRECT
DIVERSIFY	DRIVING	EFFECTIVE	EXCEED	ESTABLISH
ENTHUSIASTIC	ELIMINATE	FLEXIBLE	INFLUENCE	IMPACT
IMPLEMENT	LOGICAL	MOTIVATE	MANAGE	NEGOTIATE
OPPORTUNITY	ORGANISE	OBJECTIVE	PERSISTANT	PERSUASIVE
QUALITY	RELIABLE	RESPONSIBLE	STRUCTURE	STRENGTH
SUPERVISE	SUCCEED	SYSTEMATIC	THOROUGH	

## 3. Keep it single-sided

No matter how much experience you may have, your CV should be no more than two to three pages long and should be single-sided.

## 4. Use bullet points wherever possible

Try not to have more than 3-4 lines of text at one time as this makes your CV harder to read. Use words that highlight your specific skills, responsibilities and experience. Key word searching using optical recognition is general practice for most large recruiters and organisations and often decides whether you are considered for suitable for a position.

## **5. Make sure there is enough white space**

Let your CV "breathe" visually. Don't try to squeeze everything onto one page.

## **6. Don't over format your CV**

Underlines, italics and bold-faced fonts are used to draw the eye to important information. But it will defeat the purpose if your entire CV is filled with these features. Use them sparingly.

## **7. Make your relevant strengths stand out**

Outline your skills, responsibilities and achievements, most relevant to the job for which you are applying. Keeping information concise and to the point.

## **8. Don't lie**

Fudging dates or hiding jobs and periods of unemployment are some of the biggest mistakes you can make. However innocent the omission is, when it comes to light - as it invariably does - your prospective employer can only assume that you have something to hide.

## **9. Talk "I", not "we"**

Give specific, quantifiable examples of your own experience wherever possible. Use "I" when focusing on specific areas of responsibility you hold. "I prepare quarterly management accounts", for example.

## **10. Make it your own**

There are countless examples of CV's available for reference. Nonetheless, yours should not be a mere replica of others you have seen. Instead, make your CV work hard for you by designing it to fit your personal circumstances.