

CV Preparation for candidates

Your CV is the first contact that you have with a potential future employer and one of your main marketing tools so it is well worth spending time preparing a document that is clear and concise yet displays your skills and abilities in the best possible light.

Make your CV as easy to read as possible – you would be surprised how many CVs are unclear and muddled with a lack of concise information. If you write a good CV once then you should not need to update it for individual roles and applications.

- Use Arial or Verdana font size 9, 10 or 11 – use only one font throughout the CV
- Do not use capitals to emphasise particular words– use bold or underline to highlight information
- Never use italics or company logos or any type of colour font or highlight marker – all of your CV should be in black or auto colour
- Do not put any photos on your CV – they are unnecessary
- Do not have any gaps on your CV – mention any periods of travel and unemployment
- Do not use free flowing text when describing your responsibilities – use bullet points
- Always send your CV in word format never use PDF
- Always spell check your CV and then spell check it again – **CVs with spelling mistakes do not get interviews**
- Always use a UK spellchecker not a US one
- You must reread your CV after you have spell checked it – are there any misspelt words that a spell checker will not pick up on? For example: “Hear” instead of “here”, “there” instead of “their” – the possibilities are plentiful
- Then proof-read your CV – have you followed the same format throughout your CV?
- Are you using full stops at the end of your bullet points? All of them?
- What style are you using for your bullet points? There should be total consistency of style from start to finish
- Are you using abbreviations? Are they the same throughout? If you use Jan and Feb then use Sep and Nov – don’t suddenly change to Sept or November
- Be consistent in relation to your role descriptions – this will make your CV easier to read and relevant experience can be highlighted by the reader

Always state your

- Name
- **Relevant professional qualification** (often forgotten about and added at the end of the document!)
- Address
- Email
- Mobile number
- **Notice period** (hugely relevant – how quickly can you be available?)
- **Current Salary**
- List all Accounting systems and other specialised systems that you have used

At the top of your CV

Include a **short** (this is not a re write of your CV!) profile stating your experience and the type of position that you are seeking. Then start to detail your work experience with the most recent role first.

Left hand side of the page only:

Start date of employment – to date / finish date of employment
Employer name and parent company if relevant
Role title

If the role is a contract or temporary role then mention this in brackets.

You may want to give a brief explanation about the company – turnover, geography, business type – please remember to keep this brief as this is simply setting the scene for your responsibilities – your CV is about you not the company you worked for.

Responsibilities

- Use bullet points – this will highlight the range of your responsibilities and prevent you from going into too much detail
- Remember to include the full range – never assume that the reader knows your job better than you
- Responsibilities should include everything / everyone that you were in charge of delivering / managing, everything that you contributed to and other projects and pieces of work that you were involved in completing
- Uppermost in your mind should be: what are your key 4 / 5 skills that you have gained in this role? What new skills have you learned in this role?

Achievements - Important to mention as they are often forgotten!

- What have you done in your role that was above and beyond the day to day responsibilities?
- Where did you excel beyond others in your role?
- How did you expand your role?

Reason for leaving – always include this for your most recent role as the recruiter will want to know why you are looking to make a move. Honesty is the best policy however you should not attempt to discredit your current employer in any way as this is generally seen as bad form. Common reasons for leaving a position include:

- Reaching a ceiling in terms of learning and development
- Promotional opportunity i.e. increased responsibilities / remit
- Ambition – wanting to progress your career faster than your current company can accommodate
- Role change - Taking your career in a direction that is different to the path mapped out at your current company
- A desire for a different company culture
- Internal / operational changes at your current company

Continue to detail your work experience in reverse chronological order and include all relevant detail. Experience gained in your early career can be shortened as it becomes less relevant over time.

Deal with multiple roles within the same company by naming the company once and detailing roles and responsibilities separately. If you moved to different divisions within a parent company then name the parent company, then the division and then the role and responsibilities. Name the parent company only once to avoid repetition on your CV.

Interests and hobbies - Always include your interests and hobbies as they add colour and depth to your CV.

On your way to an interview

Read your CV – know every aspect of it and try to anticipate what the interviewer is likely to ask. If you have a job description for the role that you are being interviewed for then compare it to your CV. Draw out the similarities, understand why you are being considered for this role and get ready to highlight the skills that you are able to bring to the role. The interviewer may miss out on some of your skills – it is your job at interview to highlight every skill and piece of experience that you can bring to the role.

Example of a CV put together in the style above:

Name Surname ACA

Address: 167 Wardour Street, London W1f 8WP
Mobile: 07000 000 000

Email: namesurname@domain.com

Professional Qualification: Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales

Notice: 3 months

Current Salary: £64,000 plus £6,000 Car plus bonus of 20% (paid at 12% last year), 6% pension, family health cover and life assurance

Profile

Results oriented, fluent French speaking commercial Finance Controller with extensive International Operations experience within the EMEA /Far East regions. Proven management skills, with excellent Six Sigma, UK/US GAAP and IFRS knowledge. Seeking to broaden management skills in a commercial Finance Director role.

Work Experience

Jul 2005 – to date

Company Parent

Division name

Role title

Brief introduction to company

Responsibilities:

- Was the right hand person of the Managing Director and deputised for him
- Held responsibility for Finance, Human Resources and IT across the division

Achievements:

- Developed a new commission scheme that increased sales and motivated consultants
- Reduced head office costs through efficiency of new systems

Reason for leaving:

This role has been a fantastic learning curve for me however after 5 years in the role I have found that I have reached a ceiling in terms of learning and development and I would like to develop my career further.

Jan 2005 – Jul 2005

Career break for travel

Travelled throughout the USA

Sep 2000 – Dec 2004

Company name

Role Title

Brief introduction to company

Responsibilities

- Financial Control
- Management

Achievements

- Reduced Debtor days
- Implemented a new system