

CV Writing Tips

Keep it simple and easy to read

Your CV should:

- Show the reader what you can do. Keep it simple and easy to read.
- Clearly identify your functional expertise, sector experience and qualifications.
- Demonstrate an excellent track record of achievement.

The objective is to meet the client. So the **CV needs to capture** the client's or agency's **interest** and sell you.

1. **Presentation.**

Presentation will get them to look at the CV.

- a. What does it look like when viewed in word, most CV's are only printed after short listing? Spelling or grammatical errors look terrible and are usually highlighted.
- b. Is the eye immediately drawn to your profile and key achievement?
- c. Is it cluttered, can it be easily read and is it structured? Don't cram; use a minimum font setting of 12.
- d. Avoid using tables and use bold type sparingly, reserve for titles and your name.
- e. Place the CV on a desk and look at it from some distance (5 ft). Would you pick it up and read it?

2. **Attention.**

People's attention span is remarkable small and they tend to scan documents. So the CV needs to be concise, structured and ordered. Ideally two pages and at a maximum three. Interested people will ask for more information, if it really is needed. Keep a longer more detailed CV for people who ask (also useful as memory jogger when you meet the client or agent).

3. **Key words.**

Key words or phrases trigger people's minds and can say a lot more than two or three sentences. They can make you react positively or negatively.

Also the agency will search their database looking for specific skills or experience.

Take your existing CV and using a highlight pen mark all the key words. Have you missed any?

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4. **Irrelevant Information.**
Omit any irrelevant information or information that may give a negative signal if you can, without misleading. There is no need to include personal details such as marital status, age, gender and nationality unless specifically asked.

5. **Make it easy for the agent and the client.**
In your profile, clearly identify what you can do, your functional expertise and sector experience. Ensure your CV is easy to read. Do not use the middle letter of your name i.e. Philip H Smith as it would be unusual for people to refer to me as Philip H Smith.

6. **Achievements and Core Skills**
Order achievements and core skills with the greatest first. Think how the client would rank these, place them in that order.

7. **Structure the CV**
Structure the CV avoiding using tables, some search software cannot read the information contained. They also distract you when viewing the document in Word.

8. **Spell Check**
Ensure the spell check is set on United Kingdom and check the spelling.

9. **Document Properties.**
Ensure the properties of the document are what you want. To check and or change these, in Word, click file, select properties and they will be displayed. Save the document so that the agent can record and find it easily i.e. Philip H Smith CV.doc

10. **Judgment You Value**
You need to own your CV and feel comfortable with it. Show several versions to someone whose judgment you value. Which captures their interest and sends a positive message? Does anything jar with them? **Also ask agents for feedback on your CV.**

The style of good CVs will be very varied and unfortunately agencies and client's views on the perfect CV are just as varied. Remember a **successful CV** is the one that **captures** the client's or agency's **interest** and enables you to meet them.

CV Writing Tips

The structure of your CV could be:

1. Name and contact details.
2. Qualifications. You only really need the top level qualifications MBA and any which is specific i.e. BSc Production Engineering.
3. Profile. Clearly identify what you can do, your functional expertise and sector experience
4. Achievements, Experience and Core Skills. Use bullet points and rank in the order the client would value them.
5. Employment summary. Dates, Company, job title, responsible to, responsible for and company sector.

CV Writing - Simply

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