

Information to consider when creating a CV

1. Contact/personal information

At the top of your CV put your name, email address and mobile phone number.

Employers don't need your date of birth, marital status, nationality or even your address at this stage. Make sure your email address sounds professional and any LinkedIn profile, blog site or social media activity reflects you in a professional light and helps to create the right impression.

2. Personal profile

This only needs to be a few lines long, but must be enthusiastic, punchy and immediately grab the attention of the reader. Think of it as a mini advert and make sure it highlights your skills, qualities and achievements. If it's done well, the personal profile will encourage the employer to read on.

3. Employment history/ work experience

This section starts with your most recent employer and works backwards. For each one, show the employer's name, your job title and employment dates.

Under these headings, you need to show what results you achieved and the skills needed to do so.

It's important not just to focus on activities, but what the outcomes were. This should ideally include achievements that are measurable i.e. they saved money or time, or you hit a specific target. Don't be afraid to use financial values (like sales targets) or numbers (units sold, or number of people signed up) to demonstrate your achievements. This is the section where you can really emphasise your successes – don't be modest!

By using bullet points, positive language and examples of your achievements, you can make clear connections between the qualities the employers are looking for in the job description and what you can do. You could also include any relevant temporary work or volunteering experience here.

4. Qualifications and training

This might be academic qualifications or training that was completed during a period of employment. Depending on when you gained the educational qualifications, they may not be relevant now, especially if you have gone on to gain professional qualifications. Relevant training and development that didn't lead to a specific qualification should also be shown, so the employer can build a full picture of your skills and knowledge.

5. Hobbies and interests

Only focus here on hobbies and activities that demonstrate skills relevant to the job. Make this an insight into what you do away from work but highlight what it enables you to bring to the workplace.

6. References

Ideally, you should have one work- related and one personal referee. It may be enough to simply state 'References available on request' at this stage.

Covering letter

The covering letter/email is another opportunity to sell yourself and ensure you make an immediate impact. This may be read before your CV, so make sure it supports what you have said and doesn't have any spelling or grammatical errors. The covering letter can also be where you explain any gaps in your CV. It's important to focus on how you dealt with these periods and what you've learned. By explaining any gaps in a positive way, you enable a prospective employer to understand more about you and your suitability for the role.

Declaring a disability

The covering letter may be where you decide to declare your disability, but there is no legal obligation to do so when

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