

Writing your CV

When it comes to writing your CV, bear in mind that this is your personal sales document; a document that can open and close all sorts of doors, so take the time to get it right.

A relevant, clear CV will stand out from the pile, and as well as improving your chances of securing an initial interview, it will work in your favour throughout the recruitment process. It helps focus interviewers' minds on your strong points, and will often be referred to by decision makers in your absence.

- First impressions are vital. Clients can receive hundreds of CVs per opening, and so your CV needs to catch the reader's eye in the first 20 seconds.
- With this in mind, put your work experience at the start of your CV. Leave personal or educational details until later in the CV, unless you have only just left School or University.
- Your CV should jump out at the reader, telling them why they should invite you for an interview.
- So highlight your main achievements and skills.
- Candidates often use a skills matrix to highlight technical abilities, noting how long they have used each technology.
- Personal Statements are also helpful. You can outline your objectives, and summarise your technical and soft skills.
- Be careful not to oversell yourself – be prepared to defend anything you write down on your CV in an interview.
- Candidates often ask us how long their CVs should be. We would recommend 2-3 pages (do not exceed 4 pages). Whilst you do not want your CV to appear cramped, employers generally only want to know enough about you to decide whether or not to invite you to interview.
- Presentation is paramount. Keep the format simple, the text style consistent, and use the spell check function on your PC.
- Organisation and adequate spacing are also vital. Readers often skim-read, so you want your CV to be easy to follow.
- Avoid very long sentences. Keep your sentences punchy. Bullet points are a good way to break up long text.
- Ensure that all your contact details appear on your CV.