



# CV Tips & Examples

Ideas and advice to help you write a great CV

# CURRICULUM VITAE

Writing your CV can seem like a sizable task, but it is a great opportunity to show the reader that you have the skills and experiences to meet their requirements. We have collated a range of ideas and examples to help you write a great CV and sell your capability and experience.

## WHAT DOES AN EMPLOYER LOOK FOR?

- Relevance to the role you are applying for
- To know where you have worked, for how long and in what roles or, what you will bring to the role
- To easily understand your skills, competence, and experience and why you have applied

## WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE CV?

### VISUAL IMPACT

- Create a layout that is designed to be read - strike a balance between space and text
- Use clear and legible font – we recommend Calibri font size 11 or Arial font size 10
- Clearly separate out the different elements of your CV with subtitles
- Bullet points are useful to highlight relevant skills and experience and help break up continuous text
- Limit the use of bold, shading, underlining and multiple font sizes
- No photographs

### WORDS, PERSONALITY & TONE

- Simple, short sentences
- Do not omit anything, such as unexplained periods of time that will give you a reason to be excluded
- Facts – be honest and stick to them
- Do not talk about yourself in third person. Use “I”
- Review your CV for any grammatical and spelling errors and ask a friend or family member to read it

### LENGTH

- Keep it short and simple. Ideally not too long – 2 pages is a good length for most CV's
- Think of someone speed reading for 15 – 20 seconds:
  - Keep it relevant to the job you are applying for to get their attention!
  - What parts will their eyes be drawn to?
  - What will they remember ten minutes after putting your CV down?

# 12 IDEAS TO HELP YOU WRITE ABOUT YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

We have collated a range of themes that can help you get started writing your CV. Think about what you enjoy, when you feel most confident, and when you perform at your best. The idea here is to choose four of five areas to help showcase your capability and experience.

## 1. ACCOUNTABILITY & DEPENDABILITY

- Shows up to work on time, and follows instructions, policies, and procedures. Meets productivity standards, deadlines, and work schedules
- Stays focused on tasks despite distractions and interruptions
- Makes the best use of available time and resources
- Balancing quality of work with meeting deadlines
- Does not make excuses for errors or problems; acknowledges, takes ownership, and corrects mistakes
- Does not diffuse blame for not meeting expectations; faces up to problems with people quickly and directly

## 2. ADAPTABILITY & FLEXIBILITY

- Responds positively to change, embracing and using new practices or values to accomplish goals and solve problems
- Adapts approach, goals, and methods to achieve solutions and results in dynamic situations
- Copes well and helps others deal with the ongoing demands of change; sees and shows others the benefits of change
- Recovers quickly from setbacks and finds alternative ways to reach goals or targets
- Manages change in a way that reduces the concern experienced by others. Clarifies priorities when leading change

## 3. ATTENTION TO DETAIL

- Performs tasks with care; is thorough. Makes few if any errors
- Checks work to ensure accuracy and completeness
- Compares observations or finished work to what is expected to find inconsistencies
- Remains aware and takes care of details that are easy to overlook or dismiss as insignificant

## 4. RESILIENCE

- Handles high workloads, competing demands, vague assignments, interruptions, and distractions with poise and ease
- Remains steady or thrives under pressure, using it to fuel productivity and efficiency
- Stays calm and maintains focus in turbulent, threatening, or emergency situations. Makes rational decisions and continues to perform effectively

## **5. COACHING & MENTORING**

- Coaches' others regardless of performance level. Shares specialised approaches and skills that will increase capabilities
- Helps others identify key goals and use their talents to achieve those goals. Sees others' potential and strengths and works to build on them
- Takes time to observe behaviours that contribute to or detract from others' success. Highlight's performance strengths and weaknesses by giving factual, specific, non-judgmental feedback
- Builds relationships with teammates so that coaching efforts are received in a positive, developmental manner. Takes steps to learn the work interests and career goals of teammates
- Actively supports others stretching beyond their comfort levels and trying new techniques that may enhance success. Coaches for incremental, one-step-at-a-time improvements, offering praise and recognition as each step forward is made
- Encourages repeating and building upon areas of strength and dissects areas that may be improved.
- Suggests methods and gives examples that provide a roadmap to improved performance
- Models' success behaviours, a high-performance work ethic, and constant self-improvement

## **6. CREATIVE & INNOVATIVE THINKING**

- Sees old problems in new ways and has novel approaches to solving those problems
- Contributes original and resourceful ideas in brainstorming sessions
- Connects seemingly unrelated ideas, events, and circumstances to find global solutions to individual problems
- Sees opportunities for creative problem solving while staying within the parameters of good practice.
- Generates unique but workable and useful solutions to difficult problems
- Thinks in terms of desired outcomes, not just reactive, quick solutions. Finds ways to turn the ideal into reality. Experiments with new ideas, methodologies, and procedures
- Visualises potential problems and solutions without needing tangible, "real-life" examples. Can discuss and project the aspects and impacts of issues and decisions

## **7. CUSTOMER FOCUS**

- Can describe customers' business and expectations. Shows interest in, anticipates, and responds timely to customer needs
- Focuses on the customer's business results, rather than own. Goes beyond basic service expectations to help customers implement complete solutions
- Delivers products and services when and where the customer needs them. Explores options when unable to deliver a requested product or service and pursues solutions until the customer is satisfied
- Provides to customers status reports and progress updates. Seeks customer feedback and ensures needs have been fully met
- Seeks ways to improve service delivery. Assesses the organisation and its services from the customer's point of view. Emphasises a team approach to providing great customer service
- Recognises adverse customer reactions and develops better alternatives

## **8. DECISION MAKING & JUDGMENT**

- Gathers data and others' input when making decisions. Considers lessons learned from experience, differing needs, and the impact of the decision on others
- Balance's analysis, wisdom, experience, and perspective when making decisions
- Finds solutions that are acceptable to diverse groups with conflicting interests and needs
- Weighs the pros and cons of each option before deciding and moving forward
- Can explain the rationale for a decision and learns from the consequences of decisions

## **9. MANAGING PROJECTS**

- Ensures the project's goals, purpose, and criteria for success are clearly defined. Clarifies the related roles and responsibilities, deliverables, milestones, limits for independent decision-making, and needs and desires of the primary customers
- Ensures required resources and skill sets among staff are available. Identifies and averts scope creep
- Develops reasonable performance standards and ways of evaluating outcome quality
- Integrates the ideas and needs of others in developing feasible strategies to achieve goals. Obtains stakeholder acceptance of and support for those strategies
- Evaluates progress and success against performance standards. Appraises and resolves deficiencies and challenges. Ensures deadlines are met and keeps stakeholders informed of project/program status

## **10. PLANNING & ORGANISING**

- Identifies the sequence of tasks and the resources needed to achieve a goal and prioritises key action steps. Anticipates the impacts and risks of decisions and actions
- Seeks and uses others' input about critical actions, timelines, sequencing, scope, methodology, expected outcomes, and priorities. Sees potential challenges and opportunities, and adjusts plans based on input
- Creates realistic schedules for projects and follows them. Evaluates progress against schedules and goals
- Monitors and evaluates social, fiscal, and political trends that affect the plan. Prepares strategies to deal with problems or drastic changes
- Evaluates proposed actions and timelines against organisational mission and values. Integrates the current plan with other plans as needed to achieve the overall mission

## **11. PROBLEM SOLVING**

- Frames problems before trying to solve them. Breaks down problems and identifies all their facets, including hidden or tricky aspects
- Shows insight into the root-causes of problems. Generates a range of solutions and courses of action with benefits, costs, and risks associated with each
- Probes all fruitful sources for answers and thinks 'outside the box' to find options. Uses the good ideas of others to help develop solutions. Seeks advice from those who have solved similar problems
- Tests proposed solutions against the reality of likely effects before going forward; looks beyond the obvious and does not stop at the first answers
- Evaluates the chosen course of action after it has been implemented to determine its worth and impacts

## **12. VALUING DIVERSITY**

- Sees the value of cultural, ethnic, gender, and other individual differences in people. Creates an environment of learning about, valuing, encouraging, and supporting differences
- Seeks different points of view and leverages diverse perspectives in group processes and decision making.
- Checks own views against the views of others
- Supports fair treatment and equal opportunity for all. Listens to and objectively considers them ideas/input of others. Respects the talents and contributions of all individuals
- Strives to eliminate barriers to diversity; ensures that new barriers to diversity are not built

# ACTION WORDS

Using action words is a great way to bring your skills and experience to life. We have compiled a list of action words that you can consider using in your CV. We have grouped them into six key categories – leadership, communication, research, technical, coaching and financial.

## LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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administered  
analysed  
appointed  
approved  
assigned  
attained  
authorised  
chaired  
considered  
consolidated  
contracted  
controlled  
converted  
coordinated  
decided  
delegated  
developed  
directed  
eliminated  
emphasised  
enforced  
enhanced  
established  
executed  
generated  
handled  
headed  
hired

hosted  
improved  
incorporated  
increased  
initiated  
inspected  
instituted  
led  
managed  
merged  
motivated  
organised  
originated  
overhauled  
oversaw  
planned  
presided  
prioritised  
produced  
recommended  
reorganised  
replaced  
restored  
reviewed  
scheduled  
strengthened  
supervised

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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addressed  
advertised  
arbitrated  
arranged  
articulated  
authored  
clarified  
collaborated  
communicated  
composed  
condensed  
conferred  
consulted  
contacted  
conveyed  
convinced  
corresponded  
debated  
defined  
described  
developed  
directed  
discussed

drafted  
edited  
elicited  
enlisted  
explained  
expressed  
formulated  
furnished  
incorporated  
influenced  
interacted  
interpreted  
interviewed  
involved  
joined  
judged  
lectured  
listened  
marketed  
mediated  
moderated  
negotiated  
observed

outlined  
participated  
persuaded  
presented  
promoted  
proposed  
publicised  
reconciled  
recruited  
referred  
reinforced  
reported  
resolved  
responded  
solicited  
specified  
spoke  
suggested  
summarised  
synthesised  
translated  
wrote

## **RESEARCH SKILLS**

analysed  
clarified  
collected  
conducted  
critiqued  
detected  
determined  
diagnosed  
evaluated  
examined  
experimented  
explored  
extracted  
formulated  
gathered  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
invented  
investigated  
located  
measured  
organised  
researched  
searched  
solved  
summarised  
surveyed  
systematised  
tested

## **TECHNICAL SKILLS**

assembled  
built  
calculated  
computed  
conserved  
constructed  
converted  
debugged  
designed  
determined  
developed  
engineered  
fabricated  
fortified  
installed  
maintained  
operated  
overhauled  
printed  
programmed  
rectified  
regulated  
remodelled  
repaired  
replaced  
restored  
solved  
specialised  
standardised  
studied  
upgraded

## **COACHING SKILLS**

advised  
clarified  
coached  
communicated  
conducted  
coordinated  
critiqued  
developed  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
focused  
guided  
indivisualised  
informed  
instilled  
instructed  
motivated  
persuaded  
set goals  
simulated  
stimulated  
taught  
tested  
trained  
transmitted  
tutored

## **FINANCIAL SKILLS**

administered  
adjusted  
allocated  
analysed  
appraised  
assessed  
audited  
balanced  
calculated  
computed  
conserved  
corrected  
determined  
developed  
estimated  
forecasted  
managed  
marketed  
measured  
planned  
programmed  
projected  
reconciled  
reduced  
researched  
retrieved

# YOUR CV CHECKLIST

You are almost done, and your CV is ready to send off to a prospective employer. Before you press SEND, you should run through this checklist to make sure you have covered off everything you need to.

Once that is done, you will feel confident that you have included the most relevant information about your capability and experience.

- ✓ Is your CV clearly relevant to the role and/or organisation you are applying to?
- ✓ Does it highlight your work history and experience, with your positions, organisations and dates clearly listed in reverse chronological order (with your most recent role at the top)?
- ✓ Does it highlight your relevant education, training, and other qualifications?
- ✓ Does it feature a strong personal profile and/or summary of transferable skills?
- ✓ Have you overviewed your key achievements in a clear and concise way?
- ✓ Is the layout and format professional and consistent throughout the document?
- ✓ Does it have your first name, surname and relevant contact details on the front page?
- ✓ Have you checked for spelling or grammatical errors?

**We wish you all the very best with your application!**