



**The People
Bureau**

Working in partnership

Preparing your CV

“FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE VITAL! ON AVERAGE, A CV GETS NO MORE THAN 30 SECONDS ATTENTION FROM THE READER”

Visual Impact:

- Use good quality A4 paper and consider colour, which can enhance impact and reinforce the view that yours is not a ‘run of the mill’ application. When using colour, it is generally considered that conservative shades create the best effect, e.g. blue, grey, parchment yellow, pastels
- Use an attractive type face
- Ensure that the print is well spaced out with wide margins and that key information is boldly highlighted or perhaps underlined
- Use as much paper as it takes to do yourself justice (without boring the reader!), however, if your final draft exceeds two sheets then you need to consider whether you have given too much detail
Maintain a consistent layout!

Content & Expression:

- Writing in prose or point format is a matter of personal style, although point format is generally considered easier for the reader. Whichever, it is important that you use words that suggest an active and successful career to date
- Avoid treating your CV as a rewrite of your job description with all the jargon and tedious detail that they normally contain. Ask yourself what the reader really needs to know
- Remain concise and positive throughout and avoid using qualifying statements such as ‘limited experience’ and ‘quite knowledgeable’
- Your career background must emphasise achievements, expertise and responsibilities
- Avoid ‘cluttering’ your CV with unnecessary facts, for example, National Insurance numbers and names of referees. Similarly, issues such as salary and reasons for leaving previous employers should not be disclosed until interview stage



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layout:

Your CV is an individual document, however, the following suggestions meet current conventions and enable the reader to identify core information quickly:

Personal Details - basic information including name, address, telephone numbers and age

Profile - an optional element (although highly recommended), which gives the reader a concise overview of your skills, experience and aptitudes. For those who have a limited career background, future aspirations may also be included

Career Background/Employment History - set out in reverse chronological order covering the last 15 to 20 years at most, with emphasis on your current or last position (unless you are considering a complete career change!). Avoid using terminology that is peculiar to your company or industry; use terms that are recognisable. If you have spent your entire career with one company or in like disciplines, thereby duplicating the content, you may consider encompassing them all into one separate section. If several appointments have been held at similar levels in a relatively short space of time, it is important not to be perceived as a 'job hopper'. This can be overcome by incorporating several positions into one paragraph

Education and Training Qualifications - avoid overloading this section with lists of dates, schools and colleges. State what is relevant to the status of the job you are seeking, for example, if you have been educated to 'A' level standard or beyond, the reader will not normally want to know your GCSE grades. Also, remember to include any specialist training undertaken which may be apt to your next appointment, together with membership of professional bodies

Interests - it is important to include only what is relevant or might serve as a comfortable topic of discussion at interview. If expressed properly, this area can be used to demonstrate qualities of leadership, fitness, intellectual capacity etc.

Additional Information - a final section can cover any further information which may be of use to the reader, for example, full clean driving licence or freedom to relocate

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