

CV Guidelines

1.0 Your mission:

The point of your CV is to present your relevant achievements and skills to a recruiter in less than 30 seconds, so that you are selected for the next round of the recruitment process. And no Phil, how many bench presses you can do isn't relevant.

Your CV must be an honest representation of your skills, knowledge, professional experience and proven competencies (no fibbing like Phil), so as to indicate your potential for a job.

Potential employers will not waste their time with a CV that is difficult to read, however good a candidate you might be, so make sure that the document is easy to scan through. Don't write an autobiography like Phil has.

Everyone can 'tell their story' in two pages. Preparing a short CV will require more effort but shows respect for the reader's need for brevity.

Make a good first impression – everything you do and do not say in your CV, the language you use, the clarity, legibility and style of your document – will shape the reader's opinion of you, so attention to detail is vital.

2.0 What to include?

Contact details: It's a good idea to put this on both pages if your CV is longer than one page. Contact details should include your full name, address, phone number, email only – no need for your star sign.

Professional experience: See section 3.0

Education: Employers are mostly interested in what you have done subsequent to graduating from university or completing your most recent education. Include the name of your institution, degree/course and year of graduation/completion.

Additional information: List all your professional memberships. You should list awards won or detail anything that demonstrates that you have excelled within or beyond the workplace.

Keep lists of interests brief and beware of the impression that they might project about you. Include only those outside activities or memberships that will help you get shortlisted – there's no need to tell the world that you collect stuffed animals.

Information you don't need: your age, date of birth, salary data, geographic restrictions, references and indicators of religious or political preferences.



3.0 Your professional experience:

Recruiters and companies are constantly looking for candidates who can demonstrate evidence of increased responsibility and substantial achievements. Understanding where you've come from is part of this, so even if your previous company is well known, never assume they will know much about it.

It is a good idea to include a brief explanation of what the company does and indicate the scale of operations, e.g. turnover, number of staff, geographic reach and size.

Present your responsibilities for each role as achievements and qualify/quantify them. Make sure the significance of what you have done is clear. Recruiters want to know if you have saved costs, gained new business, increased efficiency, won awards, improved processes etc. Please note that speeding up your personal grooming routine doesn't count as improving processes, Phil.

Use results-oriented bullet points, action verbs and strong adjectives when describing your achievements. See some of our examples dotted around.

Ensure key skills relevant to your targeted role/industry come across clearly when reading through achievements, with the most significant achievement first.

If you used one skill in several roles, do not include repetitive bullet points – use that space to illustrate new information. Nobody wants to read about your original thinking more than once.

Example:

Introduced a user-friendly CRM system for the company, which was subsequently adopted by 20 other companies within the group and improved service levels by 18%.

Example:

Increased lead conversion rate of all PPC landing pages by 148% between Q1 2013 and Q1 2014 through testing and implementation of lead generation elements.

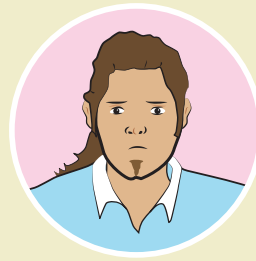
Use more space on recent roles. If you have a long work history, then it is acceptable to just list the company, title, dates and little else for your early roles.

Only include things you are able to talk about confidently about at interviews. This doesn't mean your pet rabbit Sanchez.

Example:

Developed an engaging sales training course for business developers, which was implemented nationwide for all new starters, resulting in sales increase of 20%.





4.0 Format & Style

- Keep your CV to two pages. If it's longer, question whether every piece of information is relevant.
- Use the language of the industry you are targeting.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short. Like this one.
- Use indentations and bullet point sentences where appropriate.
- Rephrase jargon and avoid the use of acronyms, which may not be known by your target audience.
- As a general rule, avoid abbreviations – they can imply slackness.
- Do not use the first person: 'I', 'me', 'my'. Try not to sound as self-obsessed as Phil.
- Keep the layout clean and uncluttered. Ensure there is plenty of white space and avoid excessive use of capitals, underlining and italics.
- Stay away from fancy fonts and avoid any text size smaller than 10pt as this can make reading difficult.

5.0 Key action words to include:

Planned
Devised
Achieved
Developed
Liaised (spell it right!)
Evaluated
Supervised
Co-ordinated
Managed
Administered
Controlled
Selected
Created

Instructed
Negotiated
Designed
Researched
Analysed
Discovered
Recommended
Tested
Diagnosed
Budgeted
Monitored
Evaluated
Examined
Assessed

Promoted
Sold
Advised
Selected
Trained
Taught
Explained
Presented
Conducted
Distributed
Organised
Solved
Represented
Persuaded

Calculated
Completed
Arranged
Responsible for

Good Luck!

#BeatPhil

