

Candidate Advice Sheet : Preparing a CV

CURRICULUM VITAE "The course of one's life"



General

Be clear, concise, use space, and make it pleasing to the eye. Allow the reader to grasp quickly your message and to react positively – you have sold a meeting, a telephone conversation at worst.

Do not use the third person; "Michael does and Michael doesn't" is a party game. The CV is a personal selling document and is presented best with the (limited) use of 'I'. Otherwise the reader may think I wrote it for you. A strong drawback!

Two to three pages, but remember to use space. A powerful, multifaceted history directed towards a particular target may read well on four pages.

A CV is worth £(000) x n , your next package. Use it as such. Tailor it to the circumstance you are aiming for. Be positive, remember that you are selling, avoid negatives and do not raise unwanted questions in the reader's mind.

Be factual and truthful. Leaving things out is not dishonest, embroidery is.

Address any issues stemming from your CV in a covering letter, not in the CV itself.

Do not include salaries, publication lists or details of training courses attended. These may form addenda to the CV, if requested.

Generally, use a 'latest first' chronological CV rather than a skills based one – it is easier to read and makes relevant information more accessible.

Use your own words. CV consultants advise on structure, appropriateness and content but should not be asked to drip their wit onto your page.

Keep the CV up-to-date. An employer may call...

Contents

The contents of your CV, relevant to a chronological presentation...

Contact details Name, address, telephone, e-mail.

Report date of birth, driving licence, marital status (if you consider any of these to be appropriate, most of the time they are not) and other interesting titbits under '**Other Information**'.

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Career Summary Make this responsive to the situation. Use it to answer closely adverts or to qualify principal selling points when speculating. Keep it factual reflecting successes, achievements, experiences. Quantify if possible. Information found here should always report details contained in the body of the CV.

Write this section last

Work History Reverse chronology – your present (or last) post first.

Include dates (month and year, for most recent situation, year only for early ones), Company name (unless sensitive with regard to present employer), what they do, location, your title and to whom it reports. Express your experience in terms of success, accomplishments, targets met, innovations made. Quantify wherever possible. Avoid self-assessment of qualities.

Show promotions or other moves, as separate steps of your career, but under the main company heading:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| May 2002 – present | The Us Group, London Personnel assessment and career guidance |
| June '08 – present | Principal Consultant |
| Aug '05 – June '08 | Senior Consultant |
| May '02 – Aug '05 | Consultant |

Remember, the most relevant information concerns your most recent activities – last three to five years – this is what employers are usually buying. Therefore more space should be devoted to these years. The details should diminish the further back you go.

Education Reverse chronology, but most relevant qualification first. Detail post-degrees, degrees (a brief line focusing the subject is useful), 'A' levels by name, GCSEs by number. State your university, rarely your school.

Professional Qualifications Identification and when.

Other Information Include relevant details such as driving licence, a word about your home life, interests, do not belabour the reader. Unusual, positive information is effective.

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