**5 Tips for a successful CV**

A person wearing a white shirt

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With employers spending seconds reviewing each resume they receive, it’s essential you know how to make a successful resume which stands out from the crowd. Here are five ways to get your CV noticed.

**Showcase your relevant experience.**

A common mistake I see on CVs is when the most relevant experience for the role is on the second page, or sometimes even worse - right at the bottom of it! A recruiter wants to know you’ve got what they’re looking for, but they don’t want to spend too long trying to find it so make sure your relevant experience is on your CV’s first page.

If you have experience in the past which is relevant you can create a heading on your CV such as ‘Relevant Experience’ and underneath it include every role that is relevant. You can even tailor the heading more by stating the industry or type of role e.g. ‘Marketing Experience’ or ‘Administrative Experience’. Make sure all roles appear in reverse chronological order (starting with the most recent at the top). Any other positions can be listed under a ‘Further Experience’ section.

**Include active verbs and keywords**

You’ve probably heard you need to tailor your CV to every role you apply for. How do you do this? One way is through the language you use. Using keywords from the job specification/advert on your CV will mean the hiring manager can see you’ve tailored it to the role and you have what they are looking for. Use keywords from the role description to describe your past experiences is a good idea here, and if you’re applying for a large company, an applicant tracking system may be used - if this is the case, using keywords relevant to the role is essential to get through to the next round.

If you want to learn how to make a successful CV it’s also important to use active words and verbs. Use these to describe your duties, skills and achievements. These should relate to the competencies being sought by the employer. For example, if a company is looking for candidates with good teamwork skills, it would be a good idea to include words which indicate this is the case such as liaise, support, advise, assist.

**Use Bullet-points**

If you’re not already using bullet-points on your CV, make sure you do! Recruiters like to skim-read applications – it makes their lives easier and the shortlisting process less time consuming.

If you have paragraphs of text, they probably aren’t being read so use bullet points instead.

Pick out the most essential skills developed in the role and/or achievements.

A useful tip is to start each one with an active word/verb so it’s concise and focused. Here’s

an example:

* Supported a team of 12 lawyers...
* Implemented a customer awareness campaign using Twitter which generated a 25% increase in
* traffic to the website.

**Quantify you’re achievements and Impact**

When a recruiter looks at your CV, it will mostly consist of text, but if you can include numbers to quantify your impact, workload or achievements your CV will become instantly more engaging and credible. Most of us can’t quantify everything we’ve done and some industries are certainly easier to do this with (sales and marketing to name two) but try to add a few in if you can. Most people can show how many people they have worked with in a team, the number of people who attended an event they organised or the percentage increase in sales or social media followers their work resulted in. Remember to use digits i.e. ‘10’ not ‘ten’ to really grab the recruiter’s attention.

**Check your formatting**

Although content is the most important part of your CV, the way it’s presented can make or break an employer’s first impression of it. You only have a few seconds to impress so make sure your CV is easy to read – this means each section is marked clearly and displayed consistently too. You don’t need to use colours or fancy formatting styles to get the attention of your reader – less is often more.

If you want to draw attention to headings, use bold and/or underline the font. If you want to draw attention to role titles and/or organisations you’ve worked at consider using bold too. Don’t just cram everything in either – you need white space (blank space) to make what you have included on your CV stand out.