

Top 10 Tips to Writing an Outstanding CV

1. **Keep it short and snappy:** An employer only spends 10-20 seconds reading your CV, so keep it brief and relevant. It should be no more than **2 A4 pages**.
2. **Tailor your CV:** Where possible do not send the same CV to many different employers. Take the care and effort to read each job description and person specification, adapting your CV for each role. Research each company you apply to, and find out exactly what skills you need to put on your CV.
3. **Include a personal profile:** Include a statement explaining why you are the best person for the role, highlighting your knowledge, skills and key achievements.
4. **Do not leave gaps:** Employers are very suspicious of gaps in work history on a CV and will not give you the benefit of the doubt. If you have been out of work in the past, do not leave this out, put a positive spin on it. You may have raised your family, completed further study, or developed skills whilst volunteering.
5. **Keep your CV up to date:** Whether you are looking for a job or not, make sure you keep your CV current. Every time something significant occurs in your career, record it.
6. **Check, check and check again:** Employers do look for mistakes, so use a spell checker to double check your spelling, and get the help of a friend or colleague to proof read your CV.
7. **Be honest:** Do not lie on a CV; it can land you in a lot of trouble. Employers do use tools to verify your background and it will be very difficult at interview if you cannot answer their questions about your experiences.
8. **Back it up:** Although this may sound boring, backing up all of your achievements with statistics makes it easier to sell yourself. Do not just say you increased profit, tell them when, how and by how much.
9. **Make it look attractive:** Take some time to make your CV look nice, making use of a logical structure that is really easy to follow. Try and use a mixture of bullet points and short, concise sentences.
10. **Include your references:** It is a good idea to have your references on your CV, and whether an employer can contact them before interview or not. References are people who have employed you in the past, and can confirm your character, skills and experiences. Always ask someone first if they agree to be your referee.