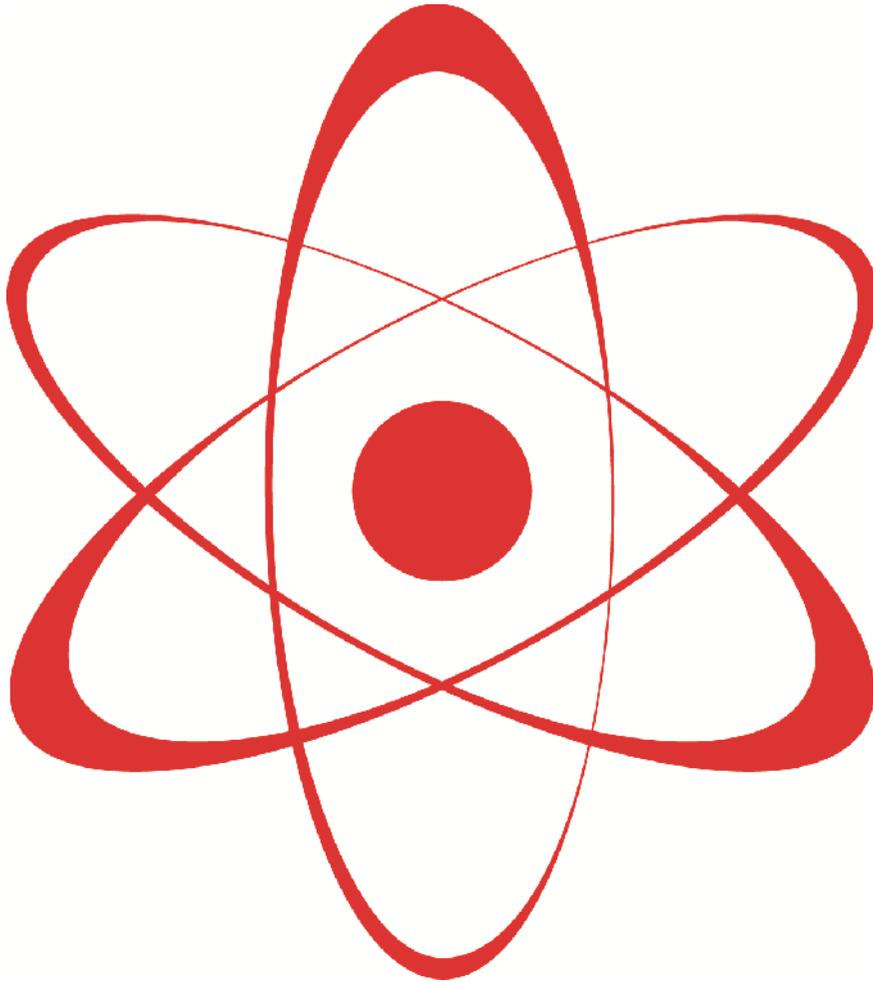


Vizioncore
Consulting



CV Preparation



A CV is quite simply an 'advert' to sell yourself to an employer. The purpose of your CV is to make you as attractive, interesting and worth considering to ensure that the company invites you for a job interview.

An employer may have several hundred enquiries about a single job, he or she will only choose a few people who appear suitable for interview so follow these tips to make your CV as presentable as possible..

Tip 1 - Do not list all your achievements and experiences on your CV. Only include the most current and those that are the most relevant to the role for which you are applying. It should be a methodical presentation of how your profile matches the employer's needs, without being too wordy or detailed.

Unlike an application form, a CV allows the applicant to decide which information is most relevant to the role or company. It is an opportunity to sell your skills, and highlight your strengths and achievements and should aim to grab the interest of the recruiter.

Tip 2 - Every time you complete a training course, volunteer or gain new responsibilities in your current role you should update your CV. It is a living document. You may feel old items have become outdated or even irrelevant, and decide to remove them. This keeps your CV fresh. The style of your CV will also reflect on you. There is no perfect format, as you cannot please every taste. You need to consider that an employer is likely to receive a lot of CVs and will not have much time. A clear, brief CV, with details laid out so they are easily scanned, will be appreciated.

Tip 3 – Personal details. Keep this section clear and brief - no more than a quarter of a page, ideally positioned at the top of the main page. Follow these tips:

- Use your name as the title of the document - it will help recruiters refer back to your CV more easily.
- Never use 'CV' or 'Curriculum Vitae' as a heading - recruiters know it is a CV and cluttering the title makes it harder to remember your name. It is not necessary to include your middle names.
- Ensure you are easily contactable at the address you provide



- Your telephone numbers should be current, and if you have a personalised reply message for your voicemail, ensure that it is professional.
- You may wish to create a specific 'work' email address if your usual address is informal or comical - iamamuppet@hotmail.com will not do! Try to include your name in your email address for clarity.
- It is not usually necessary to include information relating to your age, sex, nationality, marital status or health. Applications for some roles may still legitimately require this information, but it is common practice for HR departments to remove candidates' personal information from CVs before presenting them for the consideration of departmental managers.
- It is the employer's responsibility to ensure recruits are legally permitted to work in the UK when hiring them, and so you do not need to state this on your CV. However, international students may still feel it is an advantage to declare their work permit status on their CV.

Tip 4 - It is not necessary to include a personal profile in your CV. If space is an issue, you could drop it altogether and include the information in your covering letter. A well-written profile is great but, in fact, most candidates write the same clichéd profile and bore the recruiter with their lack of imagination.

A profile should be brief (three or four lines maximum). Use it to state your career focus and/or aims and perhaps evidence of two or three main strengths.

Target your profile to the specific role or company - this means it will have to be changed continuously.

Tip 5 - Avoid generic skills statements such as 'hard worker', 'good communicator', 'motivated', 'team player', 'people person', 'ability to meet deadlines', and 'strong analytical skills'. People tend to use these descriptions as standard. Keep in mind that no candidate will say they are lazy, unmotivated and hate working with others. You need to qualify your statements to give them more gravity.

An alternative to a profile is a bulleted list of achievements in which you give examples of three to six accomplishments relevant to the role you are applying for.



Tip 6 - Details about your education are usually stated in reverse chronological order, with your most recent experiences first, going back to your secondary level education.

Include dates, the name of the institution, and town. Full addresses are not required.

Summarise GCSEs, but market your later education and professional training more fully. Mark the equivalent of non-UK qualifications in parenthesis. It is not worth highlighting low grades but you must be specific about exactly what you have achieved.

Use language that will be familiar to the employer. They may not have kept up with recent changes or variations in qualifications.

You might include a list of relevant modules, information about projects and dissertations, received grades or predicted results, and/or skills developed.

Tip 7 - All work experience counts, whether paid, voluntary or shadowing.

International students are often reluctant to list experience gained outside the UK, but this is just as relevant to an employer as experience in Britain.

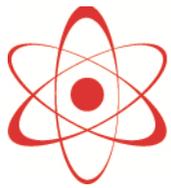
Focus on your responsibilities and achievements in the role, and how skills were used or developed.

Try to use job titles and terminology relevant to the post you are applying for.

Tip 8 - Positions of responsibility, achievement, interests allow you to demonstrate that you are motivated to pursue other activities, and take the initiative to develop your skills. Mentioning interests and hobbies serves two purposes:

- to show you are a well-rounded person;
- as potential subject matter at interview. Hopefully, the interviewer will relate to your interest, or engage you in discussion on the topic.

Beyond this, listing outside interests has little use. There is even a risk that recruiters may make judgments based on their own stereotypes of those hobbies.



If you decide to list your interests avoid generalisations such as 'reading', 'socialising', 'going to the cinema', and 'listening to music'. These are not unique to

you and do not reveal much about your character, but actually highlight a lack of specific outside interests. The risk with terms such as 'socialising' or 'clubbing' is the image they conjure of late nights and hangovers - not an ideal image for a potential employee.

Tip 9 - Most companies will not hire you without checking your references first, but they will usually contact you before they do this. It is therefore not necessary to include your references on your CV unless this has been requested.

Bear the following in mind:

- Always ask your referees for permission before you provide their names and check that you have accurate contact details.
- You will need their full name and title, full postal address, email address and telephone number.
- Referees often prefer not to be named in your CV as this may result in their details being sent to several employers or agencies, or even posted on jobsites.
- After you send in an application, it is a matter of courtesy to contact your referees to let them know they may soon be contacted by a potential employer.
- It is useful to keep your referees informed of your career aspirations and achievements to date.
- You should keep several potential referees in mind in case some are unavailable at the crucial time, or slow to respond.

You will usually be asked to supply the names of two referees. A good mix would be to have one academic and one work-related, or a character referee if this is allowed. If you are already in employment and a reference from your current manager is not possible, consider using someone else in the company. If using an overseas referee, it is a good idea to confirm with them that they can send a fax or email in English.