



CV tips

Apply for any job and you will most likely be asked to send a copy of your CV. It is your first chance to prove that you are the right person for the job. If you haven't got one, don't panic. Here is the essential Zenith guide to putting one together.

It's a Personnel thing

Likelihood is that your CV will end up on the desk of a very busy HR or Personnel Officer and if it doesn't hit the right note I'm afraid it will probably end up at the bottom of a very big pile.

I'm also afraid that we can't give you all the answers or a 'right or wrong' way to do it.

It should be a personal thing and that means that your CV will be as different as the next persons.

What we can offer is a few pointers as to what we like to see on a CV.

Think about it

Don't just rush in and print off loads of the same CV and fire at random. If you are applying for a specific job that has been advertised then have a think about what they are asking for. You can usually tweak elements of your CV to emphasise the skills that an employer is asking for.

Printer syndrome

We have identified a new disease. Its symptoms are coloured paper, unnecessary borders and clip art. Its effects are that your CV will, yes stand out, but is likely be taken much less seriously. It's content we want, so please stick to white, good quality paper with an easy to read font. Most employers want to find the information presented under clear headings, so think about how you will set it out before you start.



Be content with your contents

All we are looking for are all the details that we need to know so we can establish whether you meet the basic criteria for the job. When you get your face to face interview this is your opportunity to elaborate about your 30 metre swimming badge and other achievements.

All we need is:

Personal Details

How do we contact you? Name, address, phone number, mobile, email, work number - all are really useful to contact you quickly to organise that first interview. Save the space for the relevant info! Most employers aren't really concerned (and certainly shouldn't discriminate) if you have family or how old you are. And unless you are applying for a job working abroad, we aren't really bothered if you have a current passport or not!

Work Experience

Unless you are a school leaver with no experience, this section of your CV will be the most important to most employers. It should list the most recent experience first as this will probably be the most relevant or responsible. List your Employer and Job Title and when describing the role keep it straightforward using positive language. We recommend short sentences, which are clearly laid out (and we LOVE bullet points!) Listing achievements are fine if they are to the point and highlight relevant skills required for the role you are applying for.

Education

School leavers this will be your main part but it's important for other applicants too. List brief details of Qualifications and/or memberships to professional bodies.

Skills and Training

If they are relevant to the role and are specific skills such as languages or IT skills they should be listed again in a simple style.

References

If you get the job it is likely that your new employer will issue your contract subject to satisfactory references. It is usual for you to provide names of two people (one of whom should be a recent former employer) who they can contact for a reference. Academic and character references are usually acceptable but in all cases make sure check with your named referees that they are happy to be contacted!

Hobbies

This is probably the most personal and probably the least relevant thing on your CV. It is optional and we advise you to be careful with what you put if you decide to include this section - think about what kind of image you want to portray to your potential employer.