1. CVs

Your Curriculum Vitae (CV) is an outline of your educational and professional history and it should give an employer enough interesting, relevant information to get you an interview.

Your CV may be used to shortlist you for interview and employers often refer to it during the interview and possibly again when making a final decision - so it's vitally important that you put the effort in to make it work for you.

A CV should be honest and factual. It's important that you don't volunteer negative information, but you also shouldn't leave gaps in your history because you will be asked about these at interview, if you get that far.

Collect all relevant information about yourself before you start. In fact, as your career progresses there will be more and more of this, so it's a good practice to keep a running record of things like qualifications, jobs, training courses, and achievements.

It is worth spending time on tailoring a CV to a specific job, especially if you're serious about getting it. Read the advertisement and person specification and make sure that you show how you meet the criteria. If they are specific in what they need (essential criteria) it is likely that they will shortlist the applications using these criteria. You need to be explicit that you have what they ask for or they may have to discard your application. Remember, an employer can't call you to interview if you don't give them the information they need.

A CV should not be more than two A4 pages. A longer CV may lose the employer's interest. Employers receive numerous applications for each job, they will not spend very much time on each CV. Clarity and organisation are very important in writing a CV.

Most people don't put much time and effort into their CV. So with some effort, you can easily make your CV stand out.

- use good quality A4 paper
- don't overdo the typefaces and design, less is definitely more
- judicious use of colour can help make your CV more attractive
- be meticulous about spelling, grammar and neatness
- leave plenty of white space
- use headings, bold and italic type to help the reader navigate
- make the font size 12 points so it's easy to read

Taken from: www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/11_16/gogetit/getthatjob/cvtips.shtml

2. CV Template

There's no right or wrong way to write a CV but you could use this as a template.

1. Personal Information

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone Number (Home and mobile)

2. Personal Profile

Use this section to describe yourself- what you want to do, what you can offer, what useful skills and experience you have. Keep this short- maybe a 3 sentence paragraph.

3. Objectives

Summarise what you are looking for in a job. If you know what industry and job you want, then include a statement of why and what makes you suitable for this type of work.

4. Education

Include information about your secondary education- dates, school, qualifications (show GCSE subjects with grades first, then AS subjects, then A2 subjects).

5. Work Experience
Details of part-time jobs/work experience (most recent first, name of organisation, address, duties/skills undertaken).

6. Additional Information

Include your interests, sports, team/club memberships, IT skills, voluntary work etc.

7. References

Include references from people who have taught or worked with you. It can be an adult who has known you for a long time, but not relatives. Make sure you ask permission before adding your referees to your CV.

8. Miscellaneous

Make sure you change your CV to suit the job you are applying for, i.e. focus on the skills and experience you think the employer might be interested in.

3. Covering letter/email for work experience/internship

Paragraph 1 Who you are and what you're asking for: e.g. a Year 11 student at SLBS looking to secure a one-week work experience placement/internship between …….

Paragraph 2 Why you want a work experience placement/internship with this particular company: it will strengthen your application if you show evidence that you have done some research, have looked at the company's website and know what services/products they offer. Explain what subjects you are planning to take at A Level and outline future career plans

Paragraph 3 Why you would be an excellent candidate for a placement: outline the particular skills and qualities you have that are appropriate to the workplace you're applying to. It will strengthen your application if you make it clear you have thought about/researched what the company would be looking for in potential employees).

Layout of covering letter

Your address

Employer's address

Date

Ref No:

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV for consideration for the JOB TITLE advertised in ……

I am interested in this vacancy because ….(include details of your skills, experience and qualifications that are relevant for the post).

Thank you for considering me for the position. I would welcome the opportunity of meeting you at interview and I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours faithfully

YOUR SIGNATURE

YOUR NAME

Enc

NB

Dear Sir/Madam ends Yours faithfully

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms (NAME) ends Yours sincerely

4. CV buzz words

Using active, positive words and verbs in a CV can give it additional impact and make a stronger impression on potential employers. These 'buzz words' (also called 'action words') will help you to effectively convey what you have achieved through tasks that you have completed by volunteering, completing work experience or by participating in extra-curricular activities.

It's important to include what you have *achieved* along with a record of what you *did.*For example, rather than writing:

"I had to carry out a survey of patients' attitudes to health care services for the elderly. This involved interviewing patients in hospital and in their homes. A database was used to keep track of data collected. This project was finished on time and was awarded an A grade."

You could instead write:

"Devised and prepared a survey of patients' attitudes to health care services for the elderly as part of my GCSE coursework. Interviewed 70 elderly patients and obtained a substantial amount of data. Created a database to analyse and interpret this material. Completed this project three weeks ahead of schedule and achieved an A grade."

The action words help to give an impression of a positive, motivated person who knows how to present themselves in a business-like way and will be likely to succeed in a variety of work areas.

Examples of buzz words

- Achieved

- Administered
- Analysed
- Built
- Controlled
- Coordinated
- Completed
- Created
- Designed
- Developed
- Devised
- Directed
- Discovered
- Engineered
- Established
- Expanded
- Experienced
- Evaluated
- Guided
- Implemented
- Improved
- Initiated
- Liaised
- Led
- Managed
- Monitored
- Organised
- Participated
- Persuaded
- Processed
- Productive
- Profitable
- Promoted
- Recommended
- Repaired
- Represented
- Researched
- Selected
- Specialised
- Supervised
- Tested
- Trained