

idenk Limited



Top Tips for CVs

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- Write in the **first person** although there's no need to litter it with 'I'
- Making the logic **explicit** in the examples: you need x, I have demonstrated x, therefore I have what you need
- The person reading your CV may well spend only 30 seconds **skimming** through it. Give it to a colleague to read for 30 seconds. What do they spot and remember. Is that what you expected?
- People tend to look for **keywords** first rather than reading and understanding your prose. What five keywords will the person reading your CV look for. How can you make sure they appear prominently in your CV?
- Length - opinions vary but the first page should be **sufficient** to **convince** the reader to see you for an interview. Try and keep the overall look compact and neat, avoiding large expanses of white space.
- Consider using some **images** (high quality photos in action - eg speaking at conference, screengrabs of products/successes you have been involved with) to bring the CV alive
- Making a **difference**. The CV should emphasise the difference you have made to the organisation in your previous roles, not just what the role was or what you did or what experience you have. Think about how the CV reader can best distinguish you from someone else with identical experience and skills. It can also be useful to highlight the **outcome** of your work for the organisation.
- Good interviewers look for plenty of **evidence** to support what you're saying you've done. Offer some glimpses in the CV and then be prepared to go into more depth during interview.
- Personalise - prepare a number of **examples** which highlight **different aspects** of your achievements to date. Select as few as possible to illustrate your point.
- Try and put yourself in the interviewer's shoes. What **five things** are they looking for? How clearly have you addressed these?
- Chronology - a **brief** career history is useful (probably on the second page) but keep it brief. If the role needs a full description, consider using an annex to show that you can prioritise important information.
- Get a friend to review your CV and ask '**why** are you telling me this?' (or so what?) for every single part of the CV. **Cut** or **rewrite** anything for which you don't have a good answer. Think about how each piece of experience you've had could prepare you for the role - don't assume the interviewer can work it out for themselves.
- Remember the purpose of the CV is nearly always to get you an interview, not to win you the job so it needs to be **succinct** and very **focussed** on the

specific role you're applying for. It is worth preparing a separate version for each role you apply for (even reordering specific experience so examples most relevant to that job appear nearer the top).

- If you'd like to share your hobbies and interests, perhaps share a little more **detail** to make them come **alive** (Running vs Training for the London Marathon, Cooking vs Learning to cook Michelin standard food, Reading vs Reading and writing romantic novels).
- Cover letters are often required - keep it brief (its there to get the person to read you CV. Maybe explain why you're suited to and want the role and draw attention to two or three aspects of your experience which are most relevant.
- Some recruitment advisors are very concerned about any **gaps** in employment. If you're concerned turn them into a virtue 'I took a wrong turn but learnt alot'. Don't try to hide it!
- Above all:

Spell it out (don't make the reader work out why you're suited to the role)

Keep it focussed - what is the most important information I need to share that will really convince this person I should get an interview?

Say what difference you've made as well as what you've done

GOOD LUCK!