



Creating a CV

A Guide

Overview

Curriculum Vitae's (CVs) are an essential part of any job search, as they are a great way to illustrate all of your skills, experience, and qualifications in one place. So why are CVs still as relevant as they ever have been, even in an ever-expanding world of technology?



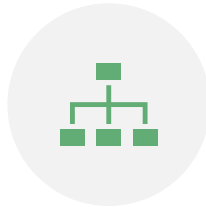
CVs are a quick and convenient 'first contact' for both the job seeker and employer to decide if it is worth progressing further into the hiring process.



Video CV services are now available, but if you are one of hundreds of applicants for a job then hiring managers will not watch that amount of content.



A CV delivers key messages concisely and can create a great first impression.



Tailoring a CV for a position or an organisation still shows that you go the extra mile over your competition that has used a generic CV.



Versatility – CVs cross the digital/analogue divide. You cannot print a video CV.

Purpose

Simply put, the purpose of your CV is to convince a prospective employer that you are a serious applicant for a position and invite you for a job interview. The CV is your sales document and, in effect, represents you in the form of a brand.

Creating your Brand & CV

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In order to begin to create your own brand, you need to ask yourself what your goal is, who you are, what you are about and what you have done.

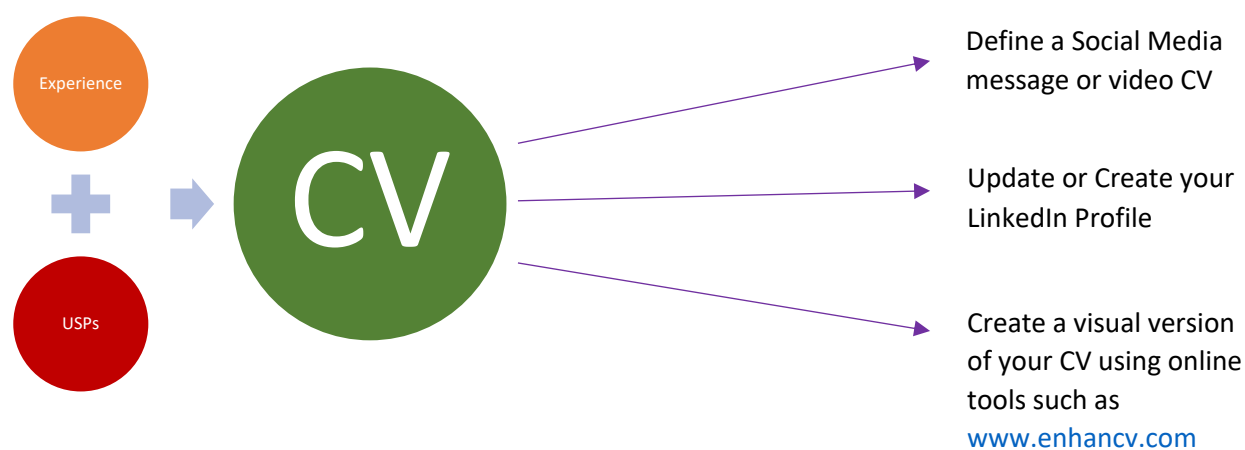
- What are you trying to achieve? – Employment? Contract? Executive post? Graduate post? Education?
- What are your characteristics and transferable skills? – Hard Working? Analytical? Personable? Resilient? Leadership? Motivation?
- What previous work experience do you have? What were your achievements? What would be marketable to a prospective employer?
- What education do you have? Masters? Undergraduate Degree? 'A' Levels? GCSE's? Learning?
- Do have specific qualifications or certifications? PRINCE2? Agile? MCSA? ISTQB?
- What are your Tech skills? Excel? Office365? MS Dynamics? Azure? Bespoke?
- What do you do with your free time? What are your extra-curricular activities? What are your hobbies? Do you help others?

What are your Unique Selling Points (USP's)? Armed with your knowledge of what you are trying to achieve and your personal experience, the next step is to work out your unique selling points. What reasons should you be hired by a company or selected by a University over the next person?

- Qualifications – Do you have exceptional grades?
- Industry Experience – Do you have more work experience than others? Have you achieved great things? Do you have specific characteristics that lend themselves to your chosen career?
- Transferable Skills – What skills do have that are transferable across organisations? Examples include Leadership, Communication, Resilience, Positivity, Motivation, Meeting Deadlines – Remember to give examples.
- Personality? What about your personality would be desirable to an organisation?
- Achievements? What have you achieved that others have not? These can be academic, professional or extra-curricular. Give examples and sell yourself

Experience + USP's = A CV, Brand & Online Presence

Armed with the information that you have put together about your experiences and your unique selling points; you now have everything that you need to create a CV and subsequent online presence. Creating your CV will mean that you have a template of information that you can then use to replicate on professional Social Media platforms such as LinkedIn; you will be able to apply for jobs, use it as supporting information for University, upload your CV on to internet job boards and you will know what messages that you want to convey or discuss on Social Media to build your messages and online presence.



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Your CV in Detail

If you have collected your experience, achievements and USPs, then you have done the hard part. The next stage is presenting this information in a CV. We are going to do this step by step. Don't worry about common misconceptions about the length of a CV or the order at this stage. Ultimately a CV will be as long as it needs to be in order to be informative but concise, and the order of your sections will be dictated by your goal and experience. Someone with twenty years industry experience will emphasise their employment history and achievements, those in education so will emphasise their academic achievements.

For candidates in industry, follow the following format guidelines to maximise the chance of a prospective hirer engaging with your CV and getting to most important information quickly – it will give them a reason to keep reading.

1. **Name & Contact Details** – For quick contact

Emphasise your brand by making your name stand out in bold and a bigger font as the starting point to your CV. Follow up with your address and contact details. You want to make it as easy as possible for somebody to get in contact with you, so put this information up front. Follow this information up with pertinent personal details – driving license, car, nationality/right to work/visa, type, expiry, etc.

2. **Profile / Personal Statement** – Sell yourself immediately

Tell prospective employers what you do, who you are and what your goals are concisely in a few sentences. Set the tone for the rest of your CV. Right this section in First Person prose to identify you as an individual and a person rather than just a CV, brand or product.

3. **Transferable/IT Skills Matrix & Achievements** – Examples

List your key transferable skills and/or Tech skills in a concise manner. Make it as easy on the eye as possible but make sure key information is included – key personal traits, achievements, professional certifications, technical skills. The idea is to give them a quick reference guide to why they are in the right place without making them pick through the bones on your career history to find key words. Make the experience as easy as possible on the prospective hirer.

4. **Career History**

This will most likely be the longest section of your CV and it is where you are going to put the meat on the bones of your experience. You should list your experience in reverse chronological order with your most recent, and therefore freshest experience, at the top of the section. Try to display the information for each role in a uniform manner and include all pertinent information that you would like an employer to see, along with any achievements and outcomes to any of the duties/tasks/projects for which you were responsible.

5. **Education**

Given an overview of your education and qualifications, again, in reverse chronological order. You may even want to go into more detail on your professional qualifications to include year of award and awarding body.

- › 2009 PRINCE2 Practitioner, APMG
- › 2001 - 2004 BSc (Hons) 2:1 in Software Engineering at Durham University
- › 1999 - 2001 A Level: Maths (A), Biology (B), Chemistry (C) at King Egberts School
- › 1994 - 1999 GCSE: 9 A-C grades, including Maths, English, Science and IT at St Marks.

6. **Interests / Personal / Additional**

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Use this section to personalise yourself further and literally flesh out the CV. What are your interests and what makes you... you? People always want to work closely with people with some shared interests, so get yours down. If there is anything additional that you want a prospective employer to know then let's include it too – languages, extra-curricular activities, charity work, experiences, travel or the like.

7. References

If you have permission and want to include any references that you have on file or details of your referees, then do so as your final act in completing your CV.

Do's & Don'ts

How would prospective employers interpret your brand if you did these things? Have a final review of your CV with these in mind.

Do	Don't
Sell yourself.	Lie.
Be professional.	Discriminate.
Tailor your CV to your goal.	Be unprofessional.
View your experiences positively.	Use an unprofessional email address.
Use positive language.	Use jargon, acronyms or slang.
Make the CV neat, tidy & easy to read.	Use wacky fonts
Give examples and achievements.	Hand type or typewrite your CV
Use the internet for ideas.	Include information that may be viewed negatively or be negative.
List your experiences newest to oldest.	
Use the spell checker, proof-read, ask a friend to review.	Include information that might allow discrimination – religion, politics, sports allegiance, disability, marital status.
Use good grammar and punctuation.	