

# **How to Write a Successful Curriculum Vitae**

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# How to Write a Successful Curriculum Vitae

## Why write a CV?

Nowadays, employers tend to receive thousands of applications for a job as soon as it is advertised on the job market. Therefore, it is vital that your letter should stand out from the thousands of CVs and letters that people are going to send.

The first impression is always the most important one, therefore, you need a good, well- structured CV in order to attract the employers' attention.

Your CV must sell you to a prospective employer and keep in mind that you are competing against other applicants who are also trying to sell themselves. So the challenge in CV writing is to be more appealing and attractive than the rest.

This means that your curriculum vitae must be presented professionally, clearly and in a way that indicates you are an ideal candidate for the job, i.e., you possess the right skills, experience, behaviour, attitude, morality that the employer is seeking. The way you present your CV effectively demonstrates your ability to communicate and particularly to explain a professional business proposition.

Different countries may have different requirements and styles for CV or resumes. So you must follow the correct practice for your culture and country. If you are applying for a job for an American or English company then use an English format. If you are applying for an Italian company use an Italian format.

## What is a CV?

**Curriculum Vitae:** an outline of a person's educational and professional history, usually prepared for job applications (*L. lit.: the course of one's life*). **Another name for a CV is a *résumé* (although this is somewhat different and will be discussed later on).**

**A CV is the most flexible and convenient way to make applications.** It conveys your personal details in the way that presents you in the best possible light. **A CV is a marketing document** in which you are marketing something: **yourself!** You need to "sell" your skills, abilities, qualifications and experience to employers. A CV should emphasis your **strong points**. It is important that your CV is **easy to read**. Remember CVs are the first impression that you will make on your potential employer and a well presented CV will help you make a good first impression. A CV can be used to make multiple applications to employers in a specific career area. For this reason, many large graduate recruiters will not accept CVs and instead use their own application form.

Often selectors read CVs outside working hours. They may have a pile of 50 CVs from which to select five interviewees. They could read it in the evening when they would rather be in the pub with friends. If your CV is hard work to read: unclear, badly laid out and containing irrelevant information, they will just move on to the next CV.

Treat the selector like a child eating a meal. **Chop your CV up into easily digestible morsels** (bullets, short paragraphs and note form) and give it a clear logical layout, with just the relevant

information to make it easy for the selector to read. If this is done well, it will give you a better chance of getting a interview.

An **application form** is designed to bring out the essential information and personal qualities that the employer requires and does not allow you to gloss over your weaker points as a CV does. In addition, the time needed to fill out these forms is seen as a reflection of your commitment to the career.

**There is no "one best way" to construct a CV**; it is your document and can be structured as you wish within the basic framework below. It can be on paper or on-line or even on a T-shirt (a gimmicky approach that might work for "creative" jobs, but this is not generally advised!).

## **Curriculum Vitae vs Resume - Not The Same Thing**

The terms 'Curriculum Vitae' and 'resume' are generally interchangeable. However, they do differ in many ways. Both are lists of the most relevant information of a person seeking a job. Both are used for the same purpose - i.e. seeking employment.

However, there are a few basic differences, i.e. while the Curriculum Vitae provides an in-depth and structured information about the professional experience and qualification of a person, the resume usually is the same thing in a very short form - hence, the name. The resume would usually provide a skeletal representation of what would otherwise be included in depth and detail in the Curriculum Vitae. This is why typically a CV would be two to three pages, while the resume would not normally exceed one page. Moreover, the CV is used for academic purposes, the resumé only for employment purposes.

### **When should a CV be used?**

- When an employer asks for applications to be received in this format.
- When an employer simply states "apply to ..." without specifying the format.
- When making **speculative applications** (when writing to an employer who has not advertised a vacancy, but who you hope may have one).

### **Before you start**

Sit down with a piece of paper. Look at the job(s) that you are applying for. Consider how your skills, education, and experience compare with the skills that the job requires. How much information do you have about the job description?

Sometimes employers do not give enough information. If necessary ask for more details if needed.

Spend time researching details about the job(s) that interest you and information about the employer - their structure, products, successes, and approach - from:

- Their own publicity, reports and publications
- A library (business reports, trade papers)
- College career office
- Newspaper reports
- The Internet

## What information should a CV include?

As mentioned above an employer has very little time to spend on your application. Therefore, remember that the most important thing is that your CV must be clear. Your CV has to be word processed. This will immediately show that you can work on word processors. The CV should be between one or two pages long. Don't be scared to space it out, never condense everything onto one page otherwise it will look messy. Since most employers have very little time to spend on each CV, they tend to skim read what you have written. **It is therefore better to start with what is most important and work your way downwards from what is important to what is not so vital.** A **personal profile** at the start of the CV can work for jobs in competitive industries such as the media or advertising, to help you to stand out from the crowd. If this style is used, it needs to be original and well written. Don't just use the usual expressions: *"I am an excellent communicator who works well in a team....."*

You will also need a **Cover Letter** to accompany your CV.

*Note : "Some employers may spend as little as 45 seconds skimming a CV before branding it "not of interest", "maybe" or "of interest". [BI Business School](#)*

### Begin with:

#### Personal details

Normally these would be your **name, address, date of birth** (in some countries there are age discrimination laws in force, therefore, the date of birth can be omitted as it is not essential), **telephone number and email.**

#### Education and qualifications

Your degree subject and university, Specialization, Masters, PhD. Mention grades only if you have high marks. Don't mention them if they are poor!

#### Work experience

- Use **action words** such as developed, planned and organised.
- Even **work in a shop, bar or restaurant** will involve working in a team, providing a quality service to customers, and dealing tactfully with complaints. **Don't mention the routine, non-people tasks** (cleaning the tables), unless you are applying for a casual summer job in a restaurant or similar.
- **Try to relate the skills to the job.** For example a finance job will involve numeracy, analytical and problem solving skills so focus on these, whereas for a marketing role you would place a bit more emphasis on persuading and negotiating skills.

#### Interests and achievements

Keep this section **short and to the point.** As you grow older, your employment record will take precedence and interests will typically diminish greatly in length and importance.

- **Bullets** can be used to separate interests into different types: sporting, creative etc.
- **Don't use the old boring cliches** here: "socialising with friends".
- **Don't put many passive, solitary hobbies** (reading, watching TV, stamp collecting) or you may be perceived as lacking people skills. If you do put these, then say what you read or watch: *"I particularly enjoy Dickens, for the vivid insights you get into life in Victorian times"*.
- Show a **range of interests** to avoid coming across as narrow: if everything centres around sport they may wonder if you could hold a conversation with a client who wasn't interested in sport.
- **Hobbies that are a little out of the ordinary** can help you to stand out from the crowd: skydiving or mountaineering can show a sense of wanting to stretch yourself and an ability to rely on yourself in demanding situations.
- Any **interests relevant to the job** are worth mentioning: current affairs if you wish to be a journalist; a fantasy share portfolio if you want to work in finance.
- Any **evidence of leadership** is important to mention: captain or coach of a sports team, course representative, chair of a student society, scout leader: *"As captain of the school cricket team, I had to set a positive example, motivate and coach players and think on my feet when making bowling and field position changes, often in tense situations"*.
- Anything showing evidence of **employability skills** such as teamworking, organising, planning, persuading, negotiating etc.

### Writing about your interests

Let's take a look at some interests and how they may show a person's personality and how they can be interpreted.

e.g.

*Reading, cinema, stamp-collecting, embroidery*

These interests suggests a solitary individual who doesn't get on with other people. This may not be true, but selectors will interpret the evidence they see before them.

*Reading, cinema, travel, socializing with friends*

This is a little bit better. There is a suggestion that you can get on with other people.

**Cinema:** *member of the University Film-Making Society*

**Travel:** *travelled through Europe by train this summer in a group of four people, visiting historic sites and practising my French and Italian*

**Reading:** *helped younger pupils with reading difficulties at school.*

This could be the same individual as in the first example, but the impression is completely the opposite: an outgoing pro-active individual who helps others.

### Skills

- The usual ones to mention are **languages** (good conversational French, basic Spanish), **computing** (e.g. "good working knowledge of MS Access and Excel, plus basic web page design skills" and **driving** ("full current clean driving license").

- If you are applying for more than one type of work, you should have a **different CV tailored to each career area**, highlighting different aspects of your skills and experience.

## References

- Normally two referees are sufficient: one academic (perhaps your tutor or a project supervisor) and one from an employer (perhaps your last part-time or summer job). If you have never worked, then include two academic references. If you have done volunteer work, then include a reference from the coordinator or your immediate supervisor. Remember to always ask permission before giving the referees' information and also ask them if they are willing to spend time in replying to a request from a possible employer.
- The **order** and the **emphasis** that you will give the reference will depend on what you are applying for and what you have to offer.

## What makes a good CV?

**There is no single "correct" way to write and present a CV but the following general rules apply:**

- Write an initial rough copy of your CV, get someone else to look at it and tell you how to improve it and make it better. Ask your family, friends, your tutors or teachers, your career office (if there is one in your university) to take a look at it. **What you have written may seem simple and obvious to you, but not to a possible employer!** Go through it again and again with a red pen, making it shorter, more readable, more understandable!
- It is **targeted on the specific job** or career area for which you are applying and brings out the relevant skills you have to offer.
- It is carefully and **clearly laid out**: logically ordered, easy to read and not cramped.
- It is **informative but concise**.
- It is **accurate in content, spelling and grammar**. If you mention attention to detail as a skill, make sure your spelling and grammar are perfect!
- Employers do not want to see CVs which are all written in exactly the same way. Therefore, do not just copy standard CV samples! Your CV should be your own, personal, and a little bit different.
- **If your CV is written backwards on pink polkadot paper** and it gets you regular interviews, it's a good CV! The bottom line is that if it's producing results don't change it too much but if it's not, keep changing it until it does.
- If it's not working, i.e. no one is calling you for an interview, ask people (friends, people you trust) to look at it and suggest changes.

## How long should a CV be?

There are no absolute rules but, in general, a new graduate's CV should cover **no more than two sides of A4 paper**.

If you can summarise your career history comfortably on a **single side**, this is fine and has advantages when you are making speculative applications and need to put yourself across concisely. However, you should not leave out important items, or crowd your text too closely together in order to fit it onto that single side. **Academic and technical CVs may be much longer**: up to 4 or 5 sides.

## Tips on presentation

- Your CV should be **carefully and clearly laid out** - not too cramped but not with large empty spaces either. Use bold and italic typefaces for headings and important information.
- Never back a CV - **each page should be on a separate sheet of paper**. It's a good idea to put your name in the footer area so that it appears on each sheet.
- **Be concise**: a CV is an appetiser and should not give the reader indigestion. Don't feel that you have to list every exam you have ever taken, or every activity you have ever been involved in - consider which are the most relevant and/or impressive. The best CVs tend to be fairly economical with words, selecting the most important information and leaving a little something for the interview: **they are an appetiser rather than the main course**. Good business communications tend to be short and to the point, focusing on key facts and your CV should to some extent emulate this.
- **Be positive** - put yourself over confidently and highlight your strong points. For example, when listing your A-levels, put your highest grade first. **Negative information of any sort should be avoided** in your cover letter as well as CV.
- 'Keep it simple'.
- 'If they didn't hear it, you didn't say it'.

## Important:

**Choose a sensible email address!**

**Not like the ones below:**

Here are some (slightly changed) graduate email addresses:

- [death\\_metal\\_kitty@hotmail.com](mailto:death_metal_kitty@hotmail.com)
- [demented\\_bovine@gnumail.com](mailto:demented_bovine@gnumail.com)
- [so\\_kiss\\_me@hotmail.com](mailto:so_kiss_me@hotmail.com)
- [platypus\\_mcdandruff@gnumail.com](mailto:platypus_mcdandruff@gnumail.com)
- [busty-beth@gnumail.com](mailto:busty-beth@gnumail.com)
- [flockynockyhillipilification@gnumail.com](mailto:flockynockyhillipilification@gnumail.com)
- [sexylikewoaaaah@hotmail.com](mailto:sexylikewoaaaah@hotmail.com)
- [virgin\\_on\\_the\\_ridiculous@hotmail.com](mailto:virgin_on_the_ridiculous@hotmail.com)
- [yourmywifenowgraham@gnumail.com](mailto:yourmywifenowgraham@gnumail.com)
- [original\\_madcow\\_jane@gnumail.com](mailto:original_madcow_jane@gnumail.com)
- [circle-of-despair@gnumail.com](mailto:circle-of-despair@gnumail.com)
- [rage\\_against\\_the\\_trolley\\_fish@mail.com](mailto:rage_against_the_trolley_fish@mail.com)



- **Be honest:** although a CV does allow you to omit details (such as exam resits, i.e. how many times you have repeated an exam) which you would prefer the employer not to know about, you should never give inaccurate or misleading information. **CVs are not legal documents** and you can't be held liable for anything within, but if a recruiter picks up a suggestion of falsehoods you will be rapidly rejected. An **application form** which you have signed to confirm that the contents are true is however a legal document and forms part of your contract of employment if you are recruited.
- The **sweet spot** of a CV is the area selectors tend to pay most attention to: this is typically around the **upper middle of the first page**, so make sure that this area contains essential information.
- If you are mailing your CV, **don't fold it** - put it in a full-size A4 envelope so that it doesn't arrive creased.

## Useful Information

### Researchers in recruitment and volunteering for a non-profit sector found that:

- **Graduates sent out 25 letters per one interview gained.**
- **The average graduate will send out about 70 CVs when looking for his/her first graduate job.** Of these, the average number of responses will be 7, including 3 to 4 polite rejections and the remainder inviting the graduate to interview or further contact.
- **There was a direct link between the number of CVs sent out and the number of interviews gained:** the more CVs you send out the more interviews you will get.
- **Applicants who included a cover letter with their CV were 10% more likely to get a reply.**
- **60% of CVs are mailed to the wrong person:** usually the managing director. Applicants who addressed their application to the correct named person were 15% more likely to get a letter of acknowledgement and 5% more likely to get an interview.

## Very Important

The Recruitment and Employment Commission says that about half of all CVs received by recruitment consultants contain spelling or grammatical errors.

Candidates aged between 21 and 25 are most likely to make these mistakes and **graduates in this age group are twice as likely to make mistakes as those who did not go on to university.** See <http://careers.guardian.co.uk/cv-mistakes>

- **Applicants sending CVs and letters without spelling mistakes are 61% more likely to get a reply and 26% more likely to get an interview.** "In the age of the spell checker, there is no excuse

for spelling mistakes". The most common mistakes which did not show up in a spell check were: "fro" instead of "for", "grate" instead of "great" and "stationary" instead of "stationery".

- **Set your spell checker to UK English** (assuming you are sending your CV to a British company) or you will get **center** instead of **centre**, and **color** instead of **colour**, (i.e. American spelling).
- **Other turn-offs include:**
  - misspelling the name of the company or the addressee,
  - not having a reply address on the CV
  - trying to be amusing.
  - Using the small letter "i" for the personal pronoun: "*i give great attention to detail*"

At this point special attention should be given to "Facebook", employers and recruitment consultants are now looking up profiles on facebook, thus it is a good idea to clean up your profile of immature behaviour, political ideas, silly photos or photos of a hangover etc. What they are looking for is a serious, reliable person.

**Unnecessary use of complex words or hard to read fonts gives a bad impression: people who use simple, clear language are rated as more intelligent.**

**Ex. 1. Why you need to use a spell checker.**

**Find the error and correct the spelling in the following sentences.**

1. I would like a job in the servillian police
2. i am a perfectionist and rarely if if ever forget details.
3. Proven ability to track down and correct errors.
4. I have good writen communication skills.
5. Lurnt Word Perfect computer and spreadsheet pogroms.
6. Develop an annual operating expense fudget.
7. Good custermer service skills.
8. In my 3rd year of BA houners English.

**Ex. 2. Why you must read it carefully.**

**Read the sentences carefully, find the error and provide the correct word.**

1. I was a prefect and pier mentor
2. I would like to do a law conversion cause
3. Extra Circular Activities
4. But I was not aloud to be captain
5. At secondary school I was a prefix
6. In my spare time I enjoy hiding my horse
7. I hope to hear from you shorty
8. I have a desire to work with commuters
9. Dear Madman
10. My hobbits include
11. I am sicking and entry-level position
12. I have a friendly manor
13. Oversight of an entire department
14. Restaurant skills: Severing customers
15. In charge of sock control
16. I'm an accurate and rabid typist

17. Over summer I worked for an examinations bored.
18. Ability to meet deadlines while maintaining my composer
19. Cleaning bathrooms and hovering hallways.
20. Have made speech's at Open Days
21. I can make models using a verity of different materials
22. Instrumental in ruining an entire operation for a chain operator
23. I was an administrator in a busty office.
24. Suspected to graduate early next year
25. For a PR job: I have a long term interest in pubic relations
26. Vox pox for BBC Radio, which enhanced my ability to analyse and synthethise information
27. I worked in a ' full shit system'
28. I own and maintain a volts wagon beetle.
29. As indicted, I have over 5 years of analysing investments.
30. On an application to work with teenagers – I am experienced in teaching marital arts
31. I am a genital person
32. I would be happy to work in any part of England or Whales

**Ex. 3. Thesaurusitis (using the wrong synonym!)  
Find the errors and make the necessary corrections.**

1. I demand a salary commiserate with my extensive experience.
2. I am a strenuous student.
3. I am a conscious individual with good attention to detail (Kent graduate).
4. Reason for leaving last job: maturity leave.
5. Received a plague for salesman of the year.
6. I was formally in a music group in which I performed in three conservative years.
7. I have a degree in orgasmic chemist.

## Fonts

- **TIMES NEW ROMAN** is the standard windows "serif" font. A safe bet - law firms seem to like it!  
A more interesting serif font might be **GEORGIA**.
- **ARIAL** is the standard windows "sans" font.  
Sans fonts don't have the curly bits on letters. As you can see they're cleaner and more modern than **Times** or **Georgia** and also look larger in the same "point" size (the point size is simply how big the letters are on the page.) However, **Arial** and **Times Roman** are so common that they are a little boring to the eye.
- A more classy choice might be **VERDANA** which has wider letters than most fonts.  
or **GENEVA** - these are both common sans fonts. Don't use Comic Sans!
- **FONT SIZE** is normally 12 points for the normal font with larger sizes for subheadings and headings.
- or 10 points. My favourite CV body text font is 10 point **Verdana** or **Lucida Sans** with 12 Or 14 points for sub headings.
- 14 points is too big for the normal body font - wastes space and looks crude.
- and 8 or 9 points are too small to be easily readable by everyone, especially in **Times New Roman** which **should not be used in sizes less than 11 points**
- Although many people use 12 points, some research on this suggested that **smaller point size CVs** (within reason) were perceived as **more intellectual!**
- **Most CVs are now read on screen** rather than on paper. It's no coincidence that **Serif fonts are rarely used on the web** - they are much less readable on screen (**Times Roman** was first used on Trajan's column, 2,000 years ago!), and some fonts, such as **Verdana**, were designed with screen readability in mind. Some of this paper is **set in Verdana** which, as you can see, is clear and easy to read.

## Different Types of CV

- **Chronological** - outlining your career history **in date order**, normally beginning with the most recent items (reverse chronological) . This is **the most "conventional" approach and the easiest to prepare**. It is detailed, comprehensive and biographical and usually works well for "traditional" students with a good all-round mixture of education and work experience. Mature students, however, may not benefit from this approach, which does emphasise your age, any career breaks and work experience which has little surface relevance to the posts you are applying for now.
- **Skills-based:** highly-focused CVs which relate your skills and abilities to a specific job or career area by **highlighting these skills and your major achievements**. The factual, chronological details of your education and work history are subordinate. These work well for **mature graduates** and for anybody whose degree subject and work experience is not directly relevant to their application. Skills-based CVs should be closely targeted to a specific job.

**If you are applying for posts outside the UK**, remember that employers in other countries are likely to have different expectations of what a CV should include and how it should be laid out. The "Global Resume and CV Handbook" and the [Prospects website](#) will help you prepare CVs for overseas employment.

## Targeting your CV

If your CV is to be sent to an **individual employer** who has requested applications in this format, you should research the organisation and the position carefully.

In the present competitive job market, untargeted CVs tend to lose out to those that have been written with a particular role in mind. For example, a marketing CV will be very different from a teaching CV. The marketing CV will focus on persuading, negotiating and similar skills, whereas the teaching CV will focus more on presenting and listening skills and evidence of these.

If your CV is to be used for **speculative applications**, it is still important to target it - at the very least, on the general career area in which you want to work. Check out on the web [I Want to Work in ....](#) pages and sites such as [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) to get an idea of what the work involves and what skills and personal qualities are needed to do it successfully. This will enable you to tailor the CV to the work and to bring out your own relevant experience.

Even if you are using the same CV for a number of employers, you should **personalise the cover letter** - e.g. by putting in a paragraph on why you want to work for that organisation. See section on Cover letter.

For **sample CVs, application forms and cover letters** see [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cv/cvexamples.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cv/cvexamples.htm) with notes highlighting points relating to the content and style.

## Emailed CVs and Web CVs

### How NOT to do it

### Story told by a Career Service Counselor:

**“One graduate had emailed over 80 CVs without getting a single reply and was puzzled as to why.**

**I asked him to show me what he had sent out. He had sent identical CVs and letters to all the companies in one mass email. Recruiters opening the email could see the names of the 80 companies he had applied to in the "To: " box of the email!"**

### How to do it

- **Put your cover letter as the body of your email.** It is wise to format it as plain text so then it can be read by any email reader.
- Emails are not as easy to read as letters. **Stick to simple text with short paragraphs and plenty of spacing.** Break messages into points and make each one a new paragraph with a full line gap between paragraphs. DON'T "SHOUT": BY WRITING IN CAPITAL LETTERS!
- **Your CV will then sent as an attachment.** Say you will send a printed CV if required.
- **PDF (portable document format)** is perhaps becoming the most widely used format now . There are PDF-readers for all platforms (Windows, MacOS, Linux). This also guarantees that the CV will look the same, no matter what reader is used to view the document. Modern versions of Microsoft Word contain a PDF export function or you can download a free pdf converter such as Cute pdf [www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp](http://www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp): you install it and then "print" the document to a folder on your PC.
- You can also use **MS Word (.doc) format**, however .doc format is not guaranteed to be compatible among different versions of Microsoft Word, so a CV might look garbled when opened with an outdated or newer version of Word. Also .doc files may not easily open on computers using Linux and Apple platforms. .doc-files may also contain sensitive information such as previous versions of a document perhaps leading to embarrassment. MS Word documents can contain macro viruses, so some employers may not open these. Send the CV in .doc (Word 2003) format, rather than .docx (Word 2007) format, as not everyone has upgraded to Word 2007, or downloaded the free file converter.
- **Rich Text Format (.rtf)**, or **html** (web page format) are other alternatives.
- **If in doubt send your CV in several formats. Email it back to yourself first** to check it, as line lengths may be changed by your email reader.

### Web CVs and Electronically Scanned CVs

**When emailing your CV to a potential employer** if you have any doubts about the validity of the organisation you are applying to, **it is probably wise to leave out your date of birth, place of birth and marital status.** In the UK, due to age discrimination legislation, you no longer have to disclose your age on a CV, but if you wish to, you could give this rather than your date of birth.

**N.B.** The credit company Iprofile recommended that **CVs posted on-line should not contain your date of birth, place of birth, marital status, address and phone number** as they can allow fraudsters to carry out identity theft and perhaps open bank accounts or apply for credit cards in your name.

**Web CVs use HTML format.** You can include the web address in an email or letter to an employer. They have the advantage that you can easily use graphics, colour, hyperlinks and even sound, animation and video. The basic rules still apply however - make it look professional. They

can be very effective if you are going for **multimedia**, **web design** or **computer games jobs**, where they can demonstrate your technical skills along with your **portfolio**.

**Electronically scanned CVs** have been used by Nortel, Ford and others. Resumix is one package used for this: it has artificial intelligence which reads the text and extracts important information such as work, education, skills. For more information on this, check the Internet for on-line applications.

## Summary

### Personal Information

- name
- address
- phone number
- email address (if you have one)
- career history

Put your most recent job first and include dates. Employers will be more interested in what you have done recently. Don't leave gaps between dates, because employers will want to know what you did during those periods.

If you don't have much work experience, you could include temporary, holiday, part-time or voluntary jobs. If you have had many different jobs, emphasise the skills and experience you have acquired from those jobs (for example, dealing with customers or communication skills).

### You don't need to include your date of birth

New laws on age discrimination mean that you do not need to put your date of birth, or your age, on your CV.

Here are some examples you may want to include:

### A personal profile

This is a short statement at the beginning of your CV to sell yourself, to show your skills, experience and personal qualities. You could include positive words such as 'competent', 'adaptable', and 'conscientious'.

Tailor the statement to the requirements of each job that you apply for. Make it clear to the employer that you're the right person for the job.

### Achievements

Mention things you did well in your past jobs which could be relevant to the job you're applying for.

### Qualifications and training

Include any qualifications and training from previous jobs (for example, training in health and safety or a certificate in food hygiene). Put the most recent first, and include qualifications you may have obtained from school or college.

## **Interests**

These can support your application if your hobbies and leisure activities highlight responsibilities and skills that are relevant to the job you're applying for. Perhaps you belong to a club or society which you organise activities for, or you use leadership skills or teamwork as part of the activity.

## **Other information**

It is up to you whether to include this, but it can be helpful if there are gaps in your CV. If you had a career break because you were caring for children or elderly relatives, make this a positive thing. Think about the skills you used doing this. If the job you're applying for is different from what you've done in the past, explain why you're interested in the new type of work.

## **References**

It's good to have two or more people who can provide a work or personal reference. Ideally, one should be your most recent employer. If you haven't worked for a while it could be someone who has known you for a long time. It should be someone who can comment on your qualities in relation to the job. You should ask for permission first and ask the person to agree to this beforehand. Ask a friend or relative to read through your CV to make sure it is accurate and shows your skills in a positive way.

## **Web sites you can consult for further help**

- **Sample CVs, application forms and cover letters** [www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cv/cvexamples.htm](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cv/cvexamples.htm)
- **Learning and Skills Council** [online CV Builder](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/online_cv_builder/) can help you build your own CV in just 12 steps. Very good!
- **bab.la phrase dictionary** <http://en.bab.la/phrases> provides useful phrases for CV writing, letters of application and business letters in 14 languages, including French, German, Spanish, Polish, Chinese and Japanese.

## **Sample. Curriculum Vitae – Academic**

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**John Smith**  
**Street, City, State, Zip**  
**Phone: 555-555-5555**  
**Cell: 555-666-6666**  
**email@email.com**

### **Objective:**

Assistant Professor, Psychology

### **Education:**

Ph.D., Psychology, University of Minnesota, 2006  
Concentrations: Psychology, Community Psychology  
Dissertation: A Study of Learning Among Disabled Children in a Low Income Community

M.A., Psychology, University at Albany, 2003  
Concentrations: Psychology, Special Education  
Thesis: Communication Skills of Learning Among Disabled Children

B.A., Psychology, California State University, Long Beach, CA, 2000

### **Experience:**

Instructor, 2004 - 2006  
University of Minnesota  
Course: Psychology in the Classroom

Teaching Assistant, 2002 - 2003  
University at Albany  
Courses: Special Education, Learning Disabilities

### **Research Skills:**

Extensive knowledge of SPSSX and SAS statistical programs.

### **Presentations:**

Smith John (2006). The learning behavior of disabled adolescents in the classrooms. Paper presented at the Psychology Conference at the University of Minnesota.



**Publications:**

Smith, John (2005). The learning behavior of disabled adolescents in the classroom. Journal of Educational Psychology, pg. 120 - 125.

**Grants and Fellowships:**

- RDB Grant (University of Minnesota Research Grant, 2005), \$2000
- Workshop Grant (for ASPA meeting in New York, 2004), \$1500

**Awards and Honors:**

- Trelidar Scholar, 2005
- Academic Excellent Award, 2003

**Skills and Qualifications:**

- Microsoft Office, Internet
- Programming ability in C++ and PHP
- Fluent in German, French and Spanish

**References:**

Excellent references available upon request.