

# Writing Your CV

Your CV is often all a prospective employer has with which to consider you as a candidate, so it is vital to create the right first impression. It is one thing to find the job, but it is quite another to ensure that you are successful in being selected for interview and, subsequently, securing the job. A strong CV can help you get to the crucial interview stage and recruitment specialists [Charles Peters](#), together with [Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub](#), have put together a number of points to bear in mind when you are preparing your CV.

**Presentation** As a general rule a CV may only get 60 seconds of an employer's time so it is critical to create an impression. The content needs to be well organised in a confident and positive tone. Make your CV relevant to the job application and focus on your achievements. Make sure you proof-read it thoroughly and use good quality paper.

**Length** It is recommended that you keep your CV brief. Ideally two, but a maximum of three pages is sufficient.

**Detail** Look at the information held on your CV and ask yourself, 'Does this help my application and is it relevant to this job?' If the answers are 'no,' then you should simply leave it out.

**Style** Use a typeface that is easy on the eye, either Arial or Times New Roman. You should use upper and lower case appropriately, never create a CV in uppercase text. You should use anything from 10pt to 12pt text size and use bullet points to create definition and to make your CV easier to read.

## **Essential Information**

**Personal Details:** This should include your full name, address, phone numbers and email address. Keep your email address professional and, if necessary, register a new email address to use in your job search.

**Personal Profile:** This is optional and is, in essence, a miniature personal statement outlining, in brief, your characteristics and personality, expertise and skills. The personal profile should be no longer than a paragraph and should encourage the potential employer to continue reading.

**Key Achievements:** Include a list of the highlights in your career, including any awards or incentives you have won, (i.e. top performer for a specific year, targets exceeded, etc.), problems you have solved, new ideas that have brought about benefits to your employer, new procedures or systems you have developed, or special projects you have worked on.

**Employment:** List your most recent employment first and include a website address for each company. Detail what your role was/is within the company, your key areas of responsibility, the product/service you were selling, the target market (i.e. SMEs, Blue Chips, B2B, B2C), target sector (i.e. Oil and Gas, Manufacturing etc), average order value if relevant, any targets and how you performed in relation to targets. List the start and end dates for each period of employment, in reverse chronological order.

### Tip – How far back should your CV go?

Concentrate on your most recent history and only summarise older less relevant employment, as employers are most interested in your latest 2 or 3 positions and achievements. Jobs detailed on a CV should go back no more than 10 to 15 years, or a maximum of 6 positions, unless a previous role has relevance to the job for which you are applying.

**Education:** Briefly list your qualifications, education establishments attended and most significant academic achievements.

**Skills & Interests:** Add any specific skills you have, such as IT skills, typing speeds if relevant to the job being applied for, and languages in which you are proficient. It is optional to include your hobbies and interests, however this allows you to personalise your CV - but keep it brief and only list current or recent interests.

**References:** Either provide name and address or state 'references will be supplied on request'