

How to write a CV that will bag you that interview!

1. Layout & Presentation

- Recruiters spend 6-8 seconds on average looking at a CV, so your layout and presentation are KEY to selection for interview!
- Think punchy, professional and evenly spaced.
- Many HR and Recruitment professionals use software systems to upload CVs where tables and text boxes don't sync well, so stick to a simple document without unnecessary formatting or you may find that your CV is overlooked!
- Unless you're a creative looking to showcase those Adobe skills, then stick to a modern, simple style, clearly laid out.
- Best suggested fonts: Calibri; Cambria; Gill Sans
- Font size: between 10 and 12...and stick to **black** for all text colour!
- Use **bold** instead of underlining headings for a more professional finish.

2. Content

- Templates can be great... but they can also be over formatted with unnecessary sections.
- See below for the ideal template in our opinion based on many years' experience in presenting CVs to our clients!

NAME

ADDRESS OR GENERAL LOCATION

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL ADDRESS

✓ Profile

- Write in an impersonal, professional way – this isn't the place for personal interests!
- Write a brief paragraph which offers a clear and concise overview of your skills/background first
- Finish with a 'statement of intent' (what you are looking for in your next role. Include any specific industry you might be keen to work in!)
- Gear this towards each role you go for, do not use the same profile for every application!

✗ Profile

- Avoid writing in First or Third person
- Do not write too much!
- Avoid cliched or generic phrases e.g. able to work well in a team and independently
- Be honest but do not over sell yourself e.g. world class leader

✓ Key Skills

- Keep this specific – anything that is a genuine skill in terms of the role you are going for, like experience using a particular system or doing a particular task
- This is the place to show off any language or IT skills (are you an advanced user of Excel/PowerPoint/SharePoint/Salesforce?!
- Be honest! You'll soon be found out if you can't speak Dutch but have claimed you can!

✗ Key Skills

- Avoid any 'softer' skills – it comes across far too generic on a CV, and you can give examples of softer skills far better in an interview
- Do not list too many – this section should be used only for specific and measurable skills

✓ Employment History

Dates (Month / Year – Month/Year)

Company name

Job title

- Always record in reverse chronological order
- Put anything that is most relevant to the role you are going for at the top of the list
- Be honest
- Use facts/figures/stats if you are able to e.g. targets achieved against targets set/notable achievements

✗ Employment History

- Avoid writing in the first-person tense as it sounds less professional
- Avoid being too specific or using terminology that might only be understood within your company/industry if you're looking to move into a new sector
- Do not feel the need to include minutia – only the key and relevant information is needed
- Do not use opinion-based language
- Be honest – you'll soon be found out if you claim to have done something you haven't

✓ Education

Dates

Organisation name

Level of Education

- Summary/list of grades
- If your academics are glowing, then ensure you keep that detail in your CV to draw attention to them
- If you are a graduate, include your degree classification

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✓ Professional Training

- Always in reverse chronological order
- List in the same format as Education

✗ Professional Training

- This section isn't relevant for all candidates – if you haven't undertaken professional training then do not include this

✓ Interests

- Keep it brief and do not overshare but do give employers a taste of your personality!
- If you have a range of hobbies, list using semi colons (;) between each one for clarity and to keep it concise

✗ Interests

- Do not oversell yourself! If you aren't really a reader, don't say you are! If you get the job people will find out pretty quick that all you're reading is Sports Illustrated or Cosmo! Employers want to know and will appreciate the REAL you!

Final Tips!

- Remember to use language that MEANS something – don't just use the generic words you think sound good!
- Don't waste words with waffle!
- Offer references on request at the end.
- Don't listen to people who tell you it has to be 2 pages only! If your experience is over the course of many years, squeezing it onto 2 pages may be challenging! Include all of your roles, but perhaps stop listing the duties for any other than the most recent or relevant positions to keep it concise.
- Clearly explain any gaps in employment!
- Finally, PROOF READ AND SPELL CHECK – get a friend or family member to double check as well as running the spell check function – there is nothing that will lose you an opportunity more quickly than errors on a CV... ensure all alignment is even and the document looks the same all the way through.
- If in doubt ask your consultant to help you! A decent consultant will take the time to advise and guide you at all stages of your job search!