How to Write a CV

- The Importance of a Good CV ● CV Writing Checklist
- CV Preparation Sheet – Get Started on Your Own CV
- CV Layout ● Sample CVs

● The Importance of a Good CV

The importance of a good CV cannot be emphasised enough. In many cases this will be the first contact you will have with your prospective employer and so it is very important to create a positive and lasting first impression. **You don't get a second chance to make a good first impression.**

You will greatly improve your chances of success when applying for a job by creating the right **CV layout**. Imagine the prospective employer sifting through a large stack of applications and trying to decide who to invite for an interview. After reading the first several applications, they may all begin to look the same.

Writing a CV might be time consuming, but having to read them all is an arduous task. The key to a good CV is not only to list your correct background information, but to present that information in an appropriate and interesting way - and that's where the right CV layout will make all the difference. Did you know that 82% of CV's end up in the bin and just 18% of CVs have a layout and content that are good enough to get candidates to the job interview?

▪ CV Layout is a Combination of Four Elements:

1. The appropriate pieces of information about you
2. The information grouped into logical sections for easier reading/understanding
3. The information is conveyed in a professional manner or tone
4. The visual presentation of the document is appealing to the eye

Your CV layout makes its vital first impression mostly from the last of these elements – an appealing visual presentation. Yet often times it's the element that most people completely overlook. But it is possible to go to the opposite extreme, creating a CV layout which looks too busy and takes away from the word content.

▪ Sections of the CV Layout:
The CV is normally laid out in sections to clearly identify relevant information.
The CV layout normally consists of these sections:

- Personal Information
- Career History
- Skills and Qualifications
- Other Skills & Achievements
- Referees

▪ An Effective CV Should Be:
- No more than 2 pages of A4 good quality paper
- Normal type size (i.e. Times New Roman 12, Arial 11), with clear headings
- Checked for correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Positive - use it to sell yourself throughout
- Targeted to the employer's requirements
- Make specific reference to skills, experience and knowledge giving concrete examples/evidence
- Avoid repetition of information and any time gaps

● CV Writing Checklist

1. **Conduct a Self-Inventory**
   - **Review Your Personal Experience**
     - Contact information
     - Education
     - Work experience
     - Community/civic involvement/voluntary work experience
     - Professional organisations/clubs
     - Interests and Activities
     - Anything else you think may be important to a potential employer
   - **Identify Your Skills**
     - Languages
     - Computer skills
     - Other special skills (communication, organisation, problem-solving, etc.)

2. **Select the Format**
   - **Chronological vs Functional**

3. **Write a First Draft**
   - **Use ACTION VERBS**
   - **Make it Clear and Concise**
     - Do not use "I"
     - Do not use full sentences
     - Use bullet points
     - List results and accomplishments, rather than just your duties
     - Do not use words such as "Major" or "GPA" if applying for jobs **outside** the US.

4. **Critique and Revise First Draft** (as many times as needed)
   - **Ask Others to Review Draft** (friends, teachers, family, Career Services staff)
   - **Check and double-check grammar, punctuation and spelling**
     - Have you used British or American spellings (honour/honor, programme/program, etc)?
   - **Organisation**
     - Is the layout consistent?
   - **Content**
     - Did you use action verbs?
     - Did you use short, action-oriented phrases instead of full sentences?
     - Did you stress your accomplishments?

5. **Final Draft – Make It Look Professional**
   - **Use an attractive layout**
   - **Use good quality paper**
   - **Font: Arial (10) or Times New Roman (12)**

● CV Preparation Sheet - **Get Started on Your Own CV**

(Use this sheet to get yourself organised. Make sure you tailor your CV to every job you are applying for in order to highlight your relevant skills and experiences.)

I. Personal Information
Local Address, Telephone, Email:

Permanent Address, Telephone, Email:

II. Education
Most Recent Institution:

Location:

Degree and Major:

GPA:

Honors:

Date of Completion:

Other Institution:

Location:

Degree and Major:

GPA:

Honors:

Date of Completion:

Secondary School:

Location:

Exams Taken:

Extra-Curricular Activities:
Activity:
Position (if any):
Years of Participation:

Activity:
Position (if any):
Years Participation:

III. Work Experience

Most Recent Employer:

Location:

Job Title:

Dates of Employment:

Duties and Achievements:

Next Employer:

Location:

Job Title:

Dates of Employment:

Duties and Achievements:

Next Employer:

Location:

Job Title:

Dates of Employment:

Duties and Achievements:

IV. Skills:
Computer – Languages, Software etc:

Languages and Levels of Proficiency:

Others:

V. Interests/Activities:

● CV Layout

YOUR NAME

(You could even put this in the header - use a font that's easy to read and make it nice and bold. Don't put "Curriculum Vitae" unless you want to state the obvious! Use a bigger font than the rest)

PERSONAL DETAILS *(you don't even need to give this a heading)*

Contact addresses and telephone numbers, both home and term-time (with dates if applicable)

Email address(es) if applicable

If there is a lot of information here, save room by having 2 adjacent columns of text or by using a smaller font

EDUCATION *(in reverse chronological order; a margin down the side looks good and makes it easier to read*

Date in Years (Ex- 2000- 2004	**Name of Course Studied (Example- Bachelor of Arts in International Relations)** Name of University Address Degree Classification Achieved or GPA
Date in Years	**Name of School** Address A-levels (or equivalent) - itemised with grades achieved GCSEs - total number achieved (e.g. 9 at grades A-C including English and Maths)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Month(s), Year - Job Title
> **Name of Business**
> **Address**

- Bullet points work well here. If you prefer to use prose, try not to ramble - keep it concise, sharp and relevant!

- Look to highlight skills used and/or developed (e.g. team work), emphasise any insights or learning points

- Use action verbs such as created, managed, developed etc. (see attached list)

- Emphasise responsibilities and personal/team achievements

- It is not necessary to list every job but don't leave big gaps.

RELATED EXPERIENCE/ACHIEVEMENTS

It is always useful to highlight these to employers by giving them a separate section. It can look good if you structure substantial positions as you did for work experience or give them a subheading. Focus on what you did/changed/achieved and remember to quantify!

1998 - 1999 Treasurer, Student Industrial Society

RELEVANT SKILLS …another place where subheadings work well

IT Skills	List specific packages you have used and indicate your level of competency. If your IT skills are extensive, consider giving this a main section of its own.
Languages	Give details of language skills, indicating the level proficiency, written and spoken (be honest - if you did French at GCSE but have not used it since, it is probably not worth mentioning!).
Other	Driving licence, other "general" stuff.

INTERESTS

Travel	Simply saying "I love travelling" is insufficient - say where you have travelled, how (e.g. independently, in a group) and if the latter, what you were responsible for (e.g. looking after the money!)
Other	Give details of society memberships, outside interests, sports (if very sporty, again give it a separate subtitle). if team captain or hold a specific post, consider a "Positions of Responsibility" section. Focus on what you've done, not just what you've belonged to. Show a balance between active and passive, group and individual pursuits.

REFERENCES
If you run out of space, it is acceptable to put "Available on Request". In many cases, references are taken up at a later stage in the recruitment process.
If you have space give name, title and address for each person (usually one academic, one employer). Make sure you check with your referees FIRST - few people appreciate a telephone call out of the blue requesting a reference - you need to ensure they are suitably prepared and primed! Give them a copy of your CV and tell them about the position for which you have applied.

JOHN SMITH

London Address
1 St. Albans Grove
London W8 5PN
Telephone: 0171 368 8448

Permanent Address
111 Main Street, Apt. 2
New York, New York USA

Nationality: American

Date of Birth: 1 January, 1975

EDUCATION

Fall, 1998   **RICHMOND, THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN LONDON**
Candidate for Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications, May 1999
Cumulative Grade Average A-
Relevant Courses: Marketing Theory, Cross-Cultural Communications, Introduction
to Mass Communication

1991-1994   **CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**, New York, New York
Diploma awarded. Graduated in top 10% of class

WORK EXPERIENCE

June 1995-Aug 1998   **LIVE 105,** CBS-W Broadcasting Group, New York, New York
Student Assistant
- Planned and wrote scripts for radio interviews of local celebrities
- Managed 6 major promotions held at music venues in New York City
- Assisted disc jockeys with music, contests, request hotline
- Utilised Internet and library resources to compile detailed report on radio stations in the state of New York

1994-1995   **THE OBSERVER**, American University, New York, New York
Section Editor, Humor Columnist, Reporter
- Received first place for humor column in statewide contest
- Awarded Most Valuable Staff Member of 1994
- Wrote a weekly humor column focusing on university life and edited the entertainment section

Summer, 1993   **ABC DAY CARE,** New York, New York
Teacher's Assistant
- Assisted in developing play routines for 10 toddlers
- Administered the ordering of all teaching supplies
- Developed detailed weekly teaching plans

SKILLS

Computer: Proficient in Quark, Microsoft Word and Excel. Knowledge of Access.

Research: For Cross-Cultural Communication course, worked as part of a team which researched, analysed and presented on communication styles between men and women in the Japanese workplace.

Language: Intermediate knowledge of French.

INTERESTS   Skiing, travel (spent Summer, 1997 travelling through Southeast Asia), soccer (coached local youth team for five years), theatre

<u>Adam Wright</u>

Campus Address   **Permanent Address**
425 Grant St.   411 Banks Ave.
Bowling Green, OH 43403   Elyria, OH 44035
419-555-1040   440-555-9999

wright15@bgsu.edu   adamwright@fastmail.com

Education

B.S. in Accounting, Bowling Green State University   Expected May 2001
3.4 cumulative GPA, 3.6 major GPA

A.A.S. in Accounting, Lorain County Community College   May 1996
3.7 cumulative GPA, 3.9 major GPA, Dean's List all semesters

Relevant Course Work

Financial Accounting   Federal Taxation   Speech Communications
Managerial Accounting   Corporate Finance Effective   Information Systems
Cost Accounting Auditing   Business Writing

Work Experience

Junior Accountant, Homanick Inc., Akron, Ohio   September 2000-present
Handle monthly journal entries; analyze sales/marketing monthly expenses and sales
representatives' gross receipts; create spreadsheets; handle special projects.

Accounting Intern, Burry and Associates, Akron, Ohio   May-August 2000
Reviewed and corrected accounting entries, assisted with financial planning input and analysis, and
generated reports. Accounting corrections revealed nearly $50,000 in unpaid bills and mislaid
funds.

Billing Coordinator, Corpora Corp., Elyria, Ohio   June 1996-August 1999
Handled collections on more than 500 past due accounts; reconciled payment discrepancies;
resolved client billing and eligibility issues.

Crew Leader, Michael's Muffins, Elyria, Ohio   June 1994-May 1996
Supervised crew of seven workers and managed bakery's daily operations.

Computer Skills

Proficient in Quark, Microsoft Word and Excel. Knowledge of Access

DANIEL MILES
15 Melrose Road
Massachusetts, Massachusetts 523521
(545) 432 9501
daniel.miles@oursolutions.com

JOB OBJECTIVE

Position in a rapidly growing software development company, which would best utilize my experience as a software developer and project manager.

PROGRAMMING SKILLS

Computers: IBM PC-compatible, UNIX Servers and Workstations
Operating Systems: UNIX, Linux, Solaris, Nowell NetWare, MacOS, MS Windows, MS-DOS
Programming Languages: Assembler, Fortran, Smalltalk-80, Smalltalk/V, Objective C, C++, C, Java, Perl, Python, Lisp, Scheme, Forth, Prolog, SAS, PL/1, Cobol
Database Systems: SQL, ODBC, perlDBI, JDBC, DB/2, MySQL, PostgreSQL, DbVista
Document Processing: TeX/LaTex, HTML, SGML, DSSSL, DocBook DTD, Jade DSSSL engine
Version Control: RCS, CVS
Web-Management: Apache, Apache-SSL, Perl, PHP/FI, PHP3, JSDK scripting
Cryptography and Security: IPSEC, SSH, SSLeay, PGP2, TCP/IP firewalling
GUI Programming: Win16/Win32 API, Borland OWL 2.0, ParcPlace VisualWorks 2.0
General UNIX administration

EXPERIENCE

OUR SOLUTIONS, Massachusetts, Massachusetts 1997-to date
Project manager
- Inventory and Materials Management and Cost Optimization
- Sales Order Processing System
- Material Handling and Transportation Cost Optimization
- Warehousing System Layout

DATAHOUSE, Massachusetts, Massachusetts 1993-1997
Programmer
- Production System Investigation
- Job Shop Scheduling
- Activities Based Time Planning System
- Web Page Design
- Online Internet Software Store

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

B.Sc. in Information Systems Technology
University of Massachusetts, Massachusetts

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Sean M. Rosen
1001 Fillmore Street • San Francisco, CA 12345 • (123) 555-2345

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Objective**: Graphic Designer**

Summary

- Experienced with design concepts for packaging and advertising.
- Photographer with skills in evaluating prints for reproduction.
- Familiar with print preparation and production.
- Understanding of video shooting and editing for television.
- Experience in Photoshop, QuarkXpress, Persuasion, FreeHandFile, PageMaker, Illustrator, Maker Pro, and MS Word.

Experience

GRAPHIC DESIGN
- Created consumer packaging using PMS and four-color processing; prepared designs for photo shoots
- Produced ad campaign strategies for a variety of products and services
- Designed thumbnails, roughs, and final comps for print advertising
- Wrote copy for television and print media
- Communicated corporate identity through design of logo and collateral
- Created mechanicals; proofed blue lines and color keys
- Used a wide range of typography to appeal to specific audiences

PHOTOGRAPHY
- Photographed fashion and food compositions in studio settings.
- Developed portfolio of color landscape prints from across the U.S.
- Exhibited photos in two Bay Area locations.
- Won award in black and white community photo contest.
- Black and white darkroom and other technical experience.

Relevant Work History

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(Concurrent with Education)

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2000-pres. Freelance Computer Graphic Designer, San Francisco
1998-00 Marketing & Graphics Assistant, Smith & Co., San Francisco

Education

B.F.A., Graphic Design & Marketing, anticipated Spring 2002
San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA

Marketing Program, summer 2000
Emory University, Atlanta, GA