

Writing a successful CV

Your CV is your “Sales Brochure” and make no mistake, that is what this all about - selling yourself.

A Curriculum Vitae (CV or Resume) forms an important part of the recruitment process and you should not underestimate the value of this document. Take the time and effort to prepare a CV that you can present with confidence. A CV is the first impression that an employer gets and it must create the desire for them to move to the next stage and interview you.

Your CV should be neatly laid out and correctly typed, remember to spell-check. If you decide to use the word “curriculum” spell it correctly!

The document should contain an honest and factual account of your history, embellishments can only do you harm.

There is no set format for preparing a CV, but its layout should be easy to read and easy to follow. Up to five pages is considered acceptable; one page is not really sufficient to present you effectively.

Modern CVs are always in reverse order with most recent experience/ qualifications first.

In the age of technology it is recommended to email CV's. Copies of qualifications and referee's should be brought with you in person to interviews.

When preparing your CV remember that the readers will be busy senior management personnel who want to take in maximum information at a glance and that on a computer screen the first page (often 1/2 to 3/4) is the first thing employers see. Make that right impression from page one.

If you require assistance creating a CV, please contact us.

Content of the CV

This format is a guideline only and can be followed in conjunction with the CV template on our website. The following is recommended:

Personal Details

Name
Address
Phone numbers – work, home, mobile
Email address

Career Objectives

Don't be afraid to tell people what you really want to do and where you would like your career to develop.

Date and place of birth *

Citizenship *

Marital Status and dependents *

Health *

* These are optional and a personal choice.

Qualifications

Clearly indicate your qualifications and where they were completed, including dates. eg. Bachelor of Engineering (Honours), Mechanical option, University of Canterbury 1976.

Memberships

Give the names of any professional bodies or organisations you belong to. eg. MIPENZ (Member of the Institute of Professional Engineers of New Zealand)

Career Summary

List a summary of the positions you have held in reverse order with most recent position first. Include:

- Company names
- Dates of employment
- Your job titles/positions held

There is no need to go into detail, this is covered under *Employment History*.

Technical/Professional Strengths

List the technical/professional strengths you believe you possess (in bullet style). As an example:

- Project/contract management
- Commercial/financial capability
- Broad exposure to an industry

Employment History

Employment positions should be listed in reverse order with most recent experience first, give details of:

- Company names
- Dates of employment
- Description of companies
- Your job titles/positions held
- Duties and responsibilities
- Achievements
- Reasons for leaving (optional)

Where a CV doesn't “read right” (eg perhaps two short jobs in succession), give an explanation, if there is one (optional). The jobs could have been temporary, or you might have been made redundant from the first and filled in time with the second. Do not leave gaps in your CV. If you were travelling or “in-between jobs” state so. Allowing the reader to draw their own conclusions will not help your cause.

Interests

List some of your favourite leisure activities, don't go overboard! This helps a prospective employer to formulate an overall picture of your general personality.

Training/Courses (summary)

List all relevant training and courses.

Referees

Ideally you should identify at least three people who you know will give a verbal assessment of your character and capabilities, but make sure they have agreed to do this for you. You may wish to simply state that referees can be provided on request.

In Conclusion

It does take time and thought to put together a good CV, but the rewards are worth the effort. Your CV is ‘selling’ you and you must be happy with the ‘feel’ of what you write. You will be asked about it, so be able to justify what you have written.

There is no right or wrong way to present a CV, there is your way.

“An effective CV is the key to success”