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Title:

How To Write A Graduate CV

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Summary:

The old saying "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" is absolutely true when it comes to applying for a job and your CV is the first opportunity you will get to impress a potential employer. If your CV is not carefully written you may never get a second chance.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

The old saying "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" is absolutely true when it comes to applying for a job and your CV is the first opportunity you will get to impress a potential employer. If your CV is not carefully written you may never get a second chance.

What Format Do You Use?

The difference between a Graduate CV and the CV of a person established in the workplace (sometimes called a Performance CV) is predominately one of emphasis.

A Performance CV is written in reverse chronological order, beginning with Profile, then a list of Achievements, Career History, Skills, Education, Personal Information and Interests. It is designed to highlight achievements and responsibilities in a person�s career. The main emphasis is on job titles and the companies they have worked for.

As a graduate this can seem intimidating as you suddenly realise that three years hard academic study doesn�t seem to provide enough experience to complete a CV.

Your emphasis, therefore, should be on the �Profile� and �Achievements� sections of your CV, which are in the focal point, i.e. one third down from the top of the page, where it is thought that the human eye is naturally drawn.

The format can be the same as the Performance CV because:

1. It is the most popular and therefore makes it easy for the reader to scan your CV quickly and find the information they need.

2. The �Education� section provides a concise list of qualifications that, although valuable, may not distinguish you enough from other applicants for you to be invited for interview. Therefore this section can remain further down the CV just as it is on the Performance CV whilst a summary is written in the �Profile� and �Achievements� sections.

Profile

This is a statement in the focal point of your CV that summarises what you have to offer. The key is to emphasise the transferable skills gained while at Uni that will be of benefit to a potential employer. Examples could be drawn from your educational achievements, foreign travel, work experience, and involvement in clubs and voluntary work. You must be specific and concise and a full description of your skills with evidence should be written elsewhere in the CV. The reader should be able to see that the skills described in the �Profile� are relevant to the vacancy they are trying to fill otherwise they may not bother reading any further.

Achievements

This section should be used only to highlight specific achievements that are relevant to the job for which you are applying. It is a good idea to complete it after you have written the rest of your CV. Pick out a maximum of six, preferably write them in bullet points and if you cannot think of any then leave this section out altogether.

Work Experience

Both employers and students know that the University environment is unique and very different to the full-time workplace. Employers need to have re-assurance that you have had experience in the �real world�. Your work experience therefore is very important on your CV, whether it was a summer job, part-time work, voluntary, or an industrial placement.

Any job will have provided you with valuable skills and experience that should be highlighted to an employer and linked to the requirements of the job.

For example: A part-time job in the local petrol station provides cash-handling skills, customer service experience, diplomacy, stock control, ability to accept responsibility, able to work in a team and/or work on your own initiative, willing to learn new skills, trustworthiness, hardworking, able to cope with routine tasks.

Skills

This section gives you an opportunity to list your computer skills, languages, and any extra-curricular courses you have taken outside your degree. Make sure you include the level you have achieved, for example: fluent German, conversational Italian, regular use of all Microsoft Office Applications.

Education

Start with your most recent qualification, which may be your degree or a post-graduate course. Do not list every course or module that you have studied but include any that are relevant to the job you are applying for including presentations, projects and travel as part of your course. Only include grades if they are impressive.

A levels, or other qualifications achieved before university, should only be included if relevant.

Interests

Many professional CV writing companies advise not to include any interests, as they are rarely relevant to the job for which you are applying. However, it is a good idea to add some information about how you spend your free time for two reasons: firstly, it gives the reader a rounded picture of you as an individual secondly, if invited for interview your interests are often discussed as a soft introduction to the interview before the more searching questions are asked. If you include interests in your CV try not to just write a list but include a fuller description of your involvement.

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