

CVs – When? How? Why?

Professionalism in the IT industry
(COMP1635)





Why do you need a CV?

- Designed to do one thing, and one thing alone:
 - *To get you an interview*
- The average recruiter will spend 20 seconds glancing at it!
 - *You need to make an impression quickly and sell yourself*



Targeting specific jobs...

- **Your CV is your personal marketing tool**
 - **How are you going to sell yourself?**
 - What makes you unique (USPs)
 - Why should they hire you (as opposed to someone else)
 - **How are you going to grab the attention of decision-makers?**
 - Impact on their firm
 - Your growth prospects
 - **How are you going to make it stand up to scrutiny?**
 - You need to be able to deliver what you promise in the CV
 - Be specific



What you should do...(the basics)

- Review your skills (key skills, employability skills, skills relevant to your degree prior to writing your CV)
- Think about your strengths and weaknesses and how you can sell yourself positively
- Adapt your CV to the particular job you are applying for
- Keep your CV under constant review
- Always send a covering letter with it
- *Other ideas??...*



What you shouldn't do...(the basics)

- Tell lies!
- “Creative” formatting e.g. including images and colour
- Send out your CV with spelling mistakes, typos or grammatical errors
- Use more than two A4 pages



Phrases to Avoid on your CV

- Watch the video from monster.co.uk:
 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeuQrK_DEXk



The art of CV building

- There are numerous books, websites etc that will give you information about building your CV. For instance:
- <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/getajob/cvs/Pages/default.aspx>
- <http://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/blog/2012/august/cv-templates-and-tips>
- ...many more...
- Remember:
 - **There is no definitive CV format**
 - You need to adapt your CV to different environments/ recruitment processes
 - Different countries/firms have different requirements for CVs – **observe these!**

Helpful Tools: *My Career Builder*



- University of Greenwich guide
<http://www2.gre.ac.uk/current-students/ecs>
- This won't build the CV for you
- ...but will help you a lot to structure it, keep it simple, choose formats, adapt it easily, keep track of different versions and more...
- ..provides numerous tools
- **Make sure you familiarise yourself with it!**
- It will come very handy for some of your Logbook exercises



Some tips on CV building

- Watch from 'The Employables':
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8S7z24mNfjQ>



Some good CV sites

- Reed.co.uk
- Doctorjob.com
 - Job hunting essentials – tips on graduate CVs etc
- [The Guardian careers website](http://TheGuardiancareerswebsite)
 - Practical advice on writing a CV

So, getting that interview – CVs again



- First, develop a **generic** CV
 - This will be used as the basis for all your CV applications
- Then, always adapt it for:
 - Every job you apply for
 - Every company you send it to
- Always send a covering letter with it



CV: Typical Content

- Personal Details
- Personal Statement
- Relevant work experience
- Skills/Career highlights
- Education
- Hobbies and Interests
- Job specific sections e.g. publications, references



Main CV sections (1)

- Remember there isn't a definitive list of headings that you should include...
- Personal details
 - Include name, address, phone numbers, email
 - Date of birth is not necessary (age discrimination act)
 - Also, think of privacy issues
 - Have a sensible email address



Main CV sections (2)

- Personal statement
 - One paragraph that immediately captures the attention of the reader and entices them to read more!
- Education
 - Always show this in reverse chronological order (most recent first!)
 - More detail for latest qualifications, less detail for less important qualifications
- Employment/Work experience starting with most recent employment
- Skills/Career highlights
- Hobbies and Interests



Main CV sections (3)

- Work experience
 - Again **reverse chronological order**
 - Name, location, job title, dates
 - Use bullet points to highlight responsibilities & achievements
 - Recruiter should be able to scan this section and assess what you have done quickly



Main CV sections (4)

- Skills
 - This is a difficult section to fill in
 - There are different ways of filling it in depending on the type of CV you are producing
 - Look at the placement CV later on
 - You must be able to justify the skills that you say you have
 - Otherwise it sounds false and pretentious!



Main CV sections (5)

- Hobbies and Interests
 - Point of this is to give the recruiter a more rounded picture of you
 - Also, would give them something personal to discuss with you at the interview.....
 - Be careful what you put here!
 - Socialising with my friends is not a good hobby or interest to put on a CV!



Main CV sections (6)

- References
 - It is best to provide specific referee names...
 - ...but if you don't have working experience you don't have to necessarily list them.
 - You can state 'Available on request'
 - **If you do have referees you can name** then:
 - Usually give the details of two
 - If recent graduate one should be your tutor/project supervisor
 - Give clear details about your referees
 - **Check with potential referees first**
 - They may not want their personal information on your CV
 - They may not want to act as your referees!



Some points on presentation

- Make it readable
 - Don't use a small font just to get all your details **on two sides** of A4.
- Make sure there are no spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, howlers of any kind!
- Make sure it all makes sense!
- Steer clear of long paragraphs
- Use sub headings and bullet points to make it readable
 - Don't over do the bullet points though!

Personal statements - overview



- This is a very important part of a CV
- If you are going to include it on a CV you must get it right otherwise it will put the recruiter off from the start
- *Your opportunity to convince the reader that you are interested in the position and that you have the necessary skills and aptitude to be successful in the role*

Writing a personal statement – some tips



- **3 Top Tips for writing an attention grabbing personal statement**
 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBfAOiQ_e0c

Two types of personal statement



- The one you put on an application form
 - Gives you the opportunity to say how your skills and experience match the job specification
- The one you include at the top of your CV
 - Gives you the opportunity to make your CV stand out

Personal statement – key points



- A short paragraph
 - About 50 words usually
- You'll need to revise it for each job you apply for
 - Tailor it to the particular job spec/organisation/environment
- Don't copy somebody else's or 'buy' one from the web
 - You'll get caught out!



Phrases to avoid...

- “Looking for a challenging opportunity...”
 - All about you – what can you give to the company?
- “team player” or “good communicator”
 - These phrases say nothing about you
 - “I can use my excellent communication skills to attract and retain high profile clients”.
 - Demonstrates how you use this skills
- “Highly motivated”
 - How? Just a cliché without any evidence

Any Questions?



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