

Part 2 - Before we get excited about the Interview Stage - let's look at Writing the CV

The internet has changed the focus of a job search and just because your CV is nice on paper, it doesn't mean it's nice on a computer. With stacks of CVs arriving in hiring managers' inboxes every day, they quickly grow to loath some of the things they see. If you don't want your CV to be discarded, take heed of these things to avoid.

Spelling errors and poor grammar

You don't gain anything by getting it right, but you lose a lot when you get it wrong. Check every word, then double check it and before you send it off, check it again. Read your CV out loud to uncover any grammatical discrepancies and even consider getting a friend to look it over.

Too duty-oriented

If you're copying your job description into your CV, you're missing the point. Recruiters already know what the job is; your CV should highlight what you've achieved whilst you've been there.

Inaccurate dates

Recruiters need to know when you worked where to get a better understanding of your working history and to use the dates for background checks. Missing dates, especially for long periods of time, could send up a red flag. Include specific ranges in months and years for every position. If you have gaps, explain them in your cover letter.

Inaccurate contact information

You create a CV for one reason: to get a response. How can someone contact you if the phone number is missing a digit or your email address is incorrect? Recruiters will not look you up; they'll move on to the next candidate.

Poor formatting

Different typefaces and boxes may look nice on paper, but as your CV goes through various email formats and IT packages, it can get distorted. If you want everyone to see your CV in the same format, keep it in plain text.

Long paragraphs

Employers generally don't have the time to read them. Focus on the skills and accomplishments that directly apply to the job you're trying to get and put them into snappy bullet points. Every word counts, so don't dwell on the specifics of each job, but the highlights specific to getting the reader's attention.

Unqualified candidates

You may want a job, but if you don't have the skills and experience needed, recruiters will feel you're wasting their time. If you think you have what it takes, look at the job description

and highlight the skills they are looking for with a bullet list of your related qualifications at the top of the document.

Information unrelated to the job

With the limited time recruiters spend on your CV, you don't want to distract them with your age, height, weight and interests unless they're directly related to the work you want to do. You need to make the link between what a recruiter needs and what you bring to the table. The hobbies and interests section is valid, but don't let it dominate.