



## **Your CV – What or not to include**

**Your CV, Resume, Curriculum Vitae** – whatever you call it - it is the most important self marketing tool you possess.

This is your opportunity to sell, sell, sell yourself and progress your career to the highest echelons you can achieve. Why is, I wonder, that most candidates produce a woeful mass produced article that not so much sells them but hangs them out to dry?

Let's consider the reasons people read your CV – It's to find out about you, and specifically; whether you can do the job you are applying for better than any of the other applicants. So, in that case, your CV should be targeted at the vacancy you have in mind. There's no need to include your experience in babysitting if you are applying for a job as a florist. Nobody needs to know that you are a black belt in Karate or can speak fluent mandarin unless these are a requirement of the job. Make sure that every aspect of your CV relates to the job application.

What they do need to know is the experience you have gained in the industry, the qualifications you have achieved in the industry and the level of skill and knowledge you have acquired that is relevant to the vacancy. Use the skills keywords from the job advertisement as key points in your own description.

**Keep your CV brief** and concise and ensure that everything in your work history has clear relevance to the post you are applying for. The ideal length of a CV is 2 pages and this will have the information spaced and formatted for easy reading so that the attention is drawn to your skills and achievements.

A good CV is one that shows a good progression up the ladder and one that indicates a hard working and loyal employee. If you have had a number of jobs in quick succession then you need to explain this. The employer does not want someone who flits from job to job. Adding a reason for leaving gives you the opportunity to elaborate on why your stay was so short - although beware – never, ever, be rude, unkind or disparaging about a previous employer.

A good CV is also one that shows qualifications and experience in all the right areas. If you've got it flaunt it and tell the world just how good you are. This is no time to hide your light under a bushel. Many of the applicants may have similar backgrounds so elaborate in all the key areas. Explain just how well you have performed in your previous jobs and show your potential employer that your work has been productive and impressive. Show that you are responsible and quick thinking, a team worker or a team leader.

**This all might seem to good to be true** – but it better not be – The death knell for any job application is to be caught out with lies or exaggeration. Do not ever falsify or give any misleading information under any circumstances. Besides being illegal it's also plain stupid. If you are caught out with the merest untruth then the whole of the rest of your CV will be viewed with distrust – It's not worth it.

What should you keep in – your age? Well if you think the employer is looking for a certain age category then yes (ageism aside) – if you meet the criteria – if in doubt, leave it out they will probably be able to work it out anyway. Clean driving licence – yes - if it involves company car or driving. Married or single - who cares? Religion or Ethnic beliefs – only if it might interfere in doing your job.

Contact details – of course! Please make it easy for the employer to contact you at all times. Telephone, Mobile, Postal address and email – a word of caution here – if you usually answer your mobile with a cheery greeting or allo? Then don't whilst you are waiting for a possible employer to call answer politely with your name or the telephone number – likewise – got a comedy answerphone message – remove it and worst of all if your email address is something like: sexypants@... or upthemillwall@... Then get yourself a new one that shows a more mature rounded individual!

Put in your career history and make sure that any gaps are explained truthfully. Put in your relevant qualifications and any training courses. And finally include a short personal statement – this is the sell, sell, sell bit. If you have room and you think it's relevant then by all means include any hobbies or leisure activities – these may show that you have leadership qualities or organizational skills – if so; then don't forget to mention it!