



The

Interview

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CV DOS AND DON'TS

- ✓ Try to keep your CV straightforward and easy to read with well demarcated sections.
- ✓ Thoroughly check spelling and grammar. This goes beyond a spell check using word processing software (many words are not picked up by these such as the common misspelling of *coordinate* as “co-ordinate”). Wherever possible ask friends or colleagues to read through your CV so obvious errors are not missed. Spelling or grammatical mistakes might suggest poor attention to detail which can be an issue for employers.
- ✓ Balance content against length. Whilst a two page CV is the textbook ideal, this is not always possible. Using ridiculously small text to accommodate two pages can be more detrimental than having an extra page. It is rarely advisable to have a large volume of pages however if you feel that the experience you have is relevant and you need more pages to explain this, balance this against the impact of a shorter CV. Would leaving a key detail out potentially cost you the job? If you believe this might be the case then it is better to leave the detail in. What you should cut is *unnecessary* information
- ✗ Put your photograph on your CV. You want the employer to consider you on the basis of your skill set not what you look like.
- ✗ Have overly elaborate or stylistic CV formatting such as a multitude of colour or a huge range of fonts. Too many job applicants spend too much time on CV design and not enough on CV content. Except in professions reliant on design (such as graphic design) a highly stylistic CV will have little or no impact. If a CV is hard to follow because of its design it can be detrimental to ones chances. Experience and achievements speak volumes; the ability to use CV templates does not.
- ✗ Be afraid to omit sections recommended by CV templates. Don't spend hours agonising over what you should put in the Hobbies/Interests section of a CV particularly when you are suffering from a lack of space. The reality is that this section is rarely read by interviewers. The exception to this is of course graduate positions (where extra-curricular activity at University can be important) or companies that put high value on staff having outside interests (such as management consulting).



such as descriptions of jobs that were 10 years ago in unrelated fields.

- ✓ Adjust the CV to suit the role. If you have a job description it can be advisable to adjust your CV so that it more readily highlights the aspects of your experience relevant to the role to which you are applying. CVs with a specific role in mind are almost always more successful than those written for any generic position. This is particularly true of graduate applications.
- ✓ Remember that a CV is primarily a selling tool. It is not an autobiography but a way of persuading a consumer to buy a product; namely a company to decide that your skills are worth paying for. You should think about the skills and experience that would appeal to an employer, not include everything you have done. The “kitchen sink” approach can mean that your relevant skills are lost in your CV or not sold enough.
- ✗ Stick rigidly to traditional CV ordering. It is a good idea to put your personal/contact details first but beyond that remember that you need to catch an employer’s eye (without gimmicks) so that they make a buying decision. For example, if you have weaker academics but convincing work history, put your education on the second page.
- ✗ Use unnecessary space with details of references. You should simply state that: “References are available on request”.
- ✗ Have long wordy paragraphs. In general, bullet points are a much more effective way of summing up experience in an easy to read format.
- ✗ Undersell yourself. Ensure that particularly your most recent role is described in an amount of detail; include relevant key achievements or recent successes.

About The Author:

The Interview Company.com is an interview and job application advice resource. We provide training on writing CVs and cover letters, interview technique and the whole caveat of ways you can ensure that your CV is seen by a potential employer.

We can also conduct mock interviews; much tougher than a standard HR interview, ensuring that you are well prepared for any situation you might face when applying for a job. For more information please consult our website: www.theinterviewcompany.com or call 0113 2777 583 to speak to an Advice Consultant. We offer competitive and affordable prices from £20.

