



JAMES GRAY  
RECRUITMENT

# How to Write the Perfect CV





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When you are looking for a job, it is very important to understand how to present yourself in the best way to an employer. This is done by writing a 'CV' or 'Curriculum Vitae' (Latin for 'life story'). In some countries this is called a 'Resume'.

## **What is a CV for?**

A CV is quite simply an 'advert' to sell yourself to an employer. The purpose of your CV is to show you as an attractive, interesting, and worthwhile candidate to the company. Your aim is to be asked to attend a job interview. An employer may have several hundred enquiries about a job, and he or she will only choose a handful of people who appear suitable for interview.

## **Before you start**

- Sit down with a piece of paper. Look at the job you are applying for. Consider how your skills, education and experience compare with what the specific job requires.
- Do you have enough information about the job? Do not be afraid to ask for more detail if needed, this shows the employer you are serious about the role.
- Spend time researching the job role, and the employer's company - their structure, products, successes, and approach. You can get information from:
  - o Company website
  - o Company social media pages
  - o Google search on company name
  - o Company's own publicity, reports and publications
  - o Newspaper reports Employees currently working at the company
  - o Employees who previously worked at the company



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## Basics

This might sound obvious, but you would be surprised how many people leave out the basic information on their CV. Always include:

- Full Name
- Address & Email address
- Contact Number
- Career Objective
- Relevant Education
- References

## Projects

We are in a project led industry, so why write a CV without listing your projects worked on? Make sure you include:

- Project Headline
- Value of Project
- Technical specifications
- Contract Type
- Project Summary

## CPD

Including your continuing professional development is **CRUCIAL**. It shows that you are working to improve and progress in your career. You can do this in a variety of ways:

- Skills
- Awards
- Publications
- Licences & Certificates



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## **Achievements**

Listing a number of achievements for each position that draws attention to your skills will help you stand out - especially when they are desired by the company you are applying for.

## **Length**

Perhaps all you need to say will fit onto one sheet of A4, but do not crowd it; you will probably need two sheets. Three sides of A4 is the maximum a CV should ever be, but be aware that this can be off putting to the reader so try and avoid it.

## **Style**

There are two main styles of CV, with variations within them.

1. Chronological - Information is listed under general headings (education, work experience, etc.), with the most recent events placed first.
2. Skills-based - You think through the necessary skills needed for the job you are applying for. Then you list all your information under these skill headings. This is called 'targeting your CV', and is becoming more common, at least in the UK. However, it can be harder to do. So, take advice on whether it is suitable for the job in hand, and how to do it best.

## **Optional Extra**

It can be good to start with a 'Personal profile' / 'Personal statement'. This is a two or three sentence overview of your skills, qualities, hopes and plans. It should be very precise and to the point; and encourage the employer to read on.

## Presentation

### Do:

- Use bold and/or underline print for headings
- Use plenty of white space, and leave a good border round the page
- Check that all spelling is correct
- Consider using bullet points to start sub-sections and lists
- Insert page numbers at the bottom of the pages; this is a little detail that may impress
- Consider using a two-column table to list your educational qualifications and courses

### Do not:

- Use lots of different font types and sizes. You are not designing a magazine cover.
- Clutter the page with too much text. Employers want a simple snapshot of your skills and achievements

## References

Ideally provide two references from your most recent jobs. A perspective employer will want to see the name of your referee, his/her job title, the name of the company and contact details (email address & telephone number). There is a good chance an employer will contact your references to find out more about you, so make sure they know to expect a call, are that they are willing to give you a reference. If possible, give both their day and evening phone numbers.

Alternatively, you can simply write "References available on request". In this case you should take your reference details to the interview.

## Finally

Although it may be tempting to go into depth about every detail of your career history remember that nearly 50% of CVs are discarded because they are more than 2 pages long. Make sure that everything you include is relevant, keep it concise and focus on the experience and achievements that your potential employer is looking for.



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## How can we help?

Are you searching for a new opportunity in the construction industry or a hiring manager in need of construction talent? Get in touch today.

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