

# Building Your CV

Although your GetMyFirstJob profile is what will get you spotted and seen by employers, your CV is what will get you your interview. It's crucial to get your CV right first time, so you stand out from hundreds of other applicants. Here are our top tips of things to bear in mind when developing your CV:



**1. First Impressions.** An employer or recruiter will have an impression of you from the moment they see your application. Your profile, CV and phone manner all play a role and that's before they've even met you!

- > Ensure that your CV is easily accessible, saved in a typical, universal format such as Word or PDF.
- > Ensure that the eyes are drawn to the top of the page, where the viewer knows instantly who you are, how to get hold of you and what makes you tick.



**2. Clear Structure.** You want a recruiter or employer to pick up your CV and find what they need, rather than having to search for information, they don't have the time!

- > There is varied guidance on offer about the exact structure to follow. However, you want your CV to be relevant and gain traction from the reader, maintaining their interest so that they read it end to end.
- > Ideally, you want your CV to be 2 pages long (at the most).



**3. Formatting.** The formatting of your CV often reflects on you. If the content is all out of line, with inconsistent headings and fonts, you could come across as disorganised.

- > The presentation of your CV must be clear, professional and easy to follow.
- > Ensure the format throughout is consistent, including spacing, alignment and style. Only use one font throughout and be consistent with font size.
- > Be careful of your colour choice. Rainbow CVs aren't viewed as fun and quirky as you may think.



**4. Spelling and Grammar.** We're always told to watch our spelling and grammar, but when it comes to building your CV it is essential. An almost instantaneous judgement is made.

- > Use tools such as spellcheck! There really is no excuse for spelling or grammar mistakes. It just looks sloppy!
- > Make sure you use the tools available and if in any doubt, ask a friend or family member to double and triple check for you before sending.



# Building Your CV Cont.



**Contact Details.** You want a prospective employer to contact you, so don't make it difficult for them to find out how.

- > Ensure that your full contact details are clearly visible at the top of your CV.
- > Don't assume that if applying through a job board or portal, where you may have been asked to separately provide your contact details, that they will automatically be sent.
- > Be sure to include phone number(s), email and address including postcode. Make sure you monitor your voicemails and emails.



**Personal Summary or Introduction.** This is crucial – it is telling the reader who you are and what you can offer them.

- > For many recruiters and employers, it is this element that decides whether they read on or call you to discuss the opportunity.
- > It is vital to capture their attention by presenting a short and compelling summary of you & your personal brand.



**Employment History.** Providing an outline of your previous roles, responsibilities and notable achievements will give an employer an idea of what you can do.

- > Start with your most recent position first, and chronologically track back from there
- > Provide the name of the employer, the title of your position and the start and finish dates.
- > Ensure that any dates are correct, wrong dates create confusion and extra work for a recruiter or employer.
- > If you are a candidate with no paid employment history, don't be afraid to include any voluntary or work experience.



**Irrelevant Content.** Your CV should be an accurate reflection of your skills, experience and personal brand.

- > Tell the truth at all times.
- > Avoid irrelevant content. Don't add things for the sake of it, or to make your CV look longer. It only waters down what matters.
- > Don't include photos or images – they do not serve a purpose.



**Tailor-made.** Don't overlook the importance of tailoring every CV to the job you're applying to.

- > A CV often replaces an application form and/or a cover letter in explaining why you feel you are the perfect candidate for a job.
- > Read the details of the job you are applying for and adjust your CV accordingly.
- > The one-size-fits-all, spray and pray approach will never secure you the top jobs.



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