



CV Writing Advice

Your CV is a vital marketing tool and its sole purpose is to secure interviews for you. When considering how to construct it you should consider the following points:

- Your CV will help the client to form a first impression about you, it's vital that this is positive.
- It's likely that your CV will be one of many that are being reviewed, so it must have an immediate impact.
- A client or consultant will only spend a short time reviewing your CV.

General Points

When constructing your CV there are some general points that you should consider:

- Your CV should ideally be no more than 3 pages long and should be laid out logically and simply.
- Use headings so that the information required can be found immediately.
- Ensure that it is written in a consistent tense, - third person (e.g. A number of tasks were completed, such as) or first person (I completed a number of tasks, such as).
- Consider tailoring your CV for each application so that you include the experience that is relevant for the job you are applying for. One way of doing this is to prepare a master copy that includes every responsibility that you have held, every project that you have been involved with or every major sale that you have made, and delete the ones that aren't relevant for the application in hand.

Constructing your CV

An example of a good CV structure is as follows:

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telephone 0208 988 9110
facsimile 0208 988 9118
freephone 0800 458 5247
fc@egoli-uk.com
www.egoli-uk.com

Kirkdale House (2nd floor)
7 Kirkdale Road
London
E11 1HP



PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name

Address

Telephone

Mobile (if appropriate)

Email

Date of Birth

Driving Licence?

Foreign Languages (if applicable)

PROFILE

Briefly state in no more than two paragraphs the type of work that you are looking for and/or major achievements. This could be tailored for each application.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This section may only be relevant for candidates applying for jobs that require technical skills.

Include a summary of all of the technologies, operating systems, computer languages, applications, etc that you have used, ideally with an estimation of your competency (e.g. expert, average, basic knowledge). Remember that most agencies search for skills on keywords so include everything that is

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relevant to the type of role that you are interested in.

WORK HISTORY

This should be in reverse chronological order (i.e., the most recent job at the top).

Assume that the reader does not know your employer's business and briefly state this for each one.

Include the year and month that you started and ended each job (August 1999 - September 2001), not just the year (1999 – 2001). Where and when you've worked is important and both employers and consultants will ask for this information and will discuss the reasons for any gaps in employment.

For each job in your employment history include your main tasks and responsibilities (e.g. "responsible for selling high value bespoke general insurance solutions" or "responsible for developing web based billing applications using Java"), the scope of your role (e.g. responsible for a budget of £x, managed three people, etc) and your main achievements (awards or accolades, major projects completed, or sales made, etc).

EDUCATION/PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Include education history, professional qualifications, certifications and training courses attended, including dates and grades.

INTERESTS/HOBBIES

Briefly state some personal information such as your interests, hobbies, charity work that you are involved with, personal achievements, etc. This helps to give employers an insight into you as a person.

Before you send your CV

Always ask someone to proof read your CV. They will probably spot errors that you may have missed yourself and give a valuable opinion regarding the layout and appearance.

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Use different fonts, heading sizes and underlining to make your CV easier to read and more attractive.

An interview is an opportunity for an employer and yourself to assess your suitability for each other. Although it's possible that you may not be interested in an opportunity once you have met the interviewer it's important that you perform at your best, to give you the best possible chance of receiving a job offer, in case it's the job of your dreams! Everyone conducts interviews differently; however there is general advice and some tips that can be applied to any situation.

Find out about:

- The organisation by looking at their website and reading news and investment information if available. Consider calling them to ask for a brochure or annual report.
- The interviewer if information is available. Ask the consultant who has arranged the interview.
- The structure of the interview, whether there will be any technical, aptitude or psychometric testing, whether you will be shown around their offices, how long will the interview take. Again, ask your consultant for this information.
- Make sure you know exactly where the interview is being conducted and plan your route in advance.
- Take an extra copy of your CV - if the client has forgotten it and you have an extra copy you will look efficient.
- Practice talking through your work history in a logical chronological order, including your reasons for accepting different jobs, your reasons for leaving and career gaps.
- Make a list of the questions that you need to ask and consider taking the list into the interview with you as a prompt.
- Prepare for standard interview questions such as:
 - Why do you want to come to work for us?
 - What do you know about this company?
 - Why did you choose this career?
 - What are your major strengths/weaknesses? (have at least three of each prepared with supporting evidence)
 - How was your last review?

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- Why do you want to leave your current employer?
- What has been the biggest challenge in your career to date?
- How would your friends/colleagues describe you?
- Where do you see yourself in 2/5/10 years time?
- Always dress formally wearing appropriate business dress.
- Leave extra time for delays before travelling - there is nothing worse than arriving late and being flustered.
- Ask your consultant for advice - we are here to help and will be happy to meet you before an interview to help you prepare

At the interview

- Turn your mobile phone off
- When you meet the interviewer stand up, smile, say hello and introduce yourself with a firm handshake.
- Body language is important. Smile where appropriate and make eye contact. Consider practicing an interview with a friend, relative or your consultant beforehand to see how you come across.
- Avoid negative references to previous employers if possible
- Tailor your approach to the person interviewing you. For example, if the person is friendly or makes a joke, laugh and be friendly back. If they are being very formal, be friendly but professional. Never swear, even if the interviewer does.
- Don't take anything that you have been told by your consultant for granted, always ask the interviewer to fully explain everything about the company, the role and attributes/competencies of the person that they are looking for. This will make the interviewer feel that your questioning skills are strong and that you fully understand what they want.
- It's important that you explain about yourself but listening skills are also very important, don't talk too much.
- Try to relate your experience to the attributes that the interviewer is looking for (e.g., if they are looking for team leading experience make sure that you cover all of the instances when you have been responsible for people).

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- Towards the end of the interview always try to get feedback to see how closely you match the interviewers' ideal candidate (e.g., "How closely do you feel my experience matches what you are looking for?" Or more directly "Do you have any doubts about my background or ability to do the job?"). This is really important because it will tell you whether the interviewer has any reservations about you and will give you an opportunity to overcome their reservation(s). Remember, they may have a reservation because you have not explained something fully or because it has not been fully discussed. It would be a shame for you to miss out because of a misunderstanding about your experience.
- Finally, at the end of the meeting if you want the job, end the interview positively by telling the interviewer what you like about it and why you feel you are right for them. Remember that they want to recruit someone that wants to work for them.
- If you are being interviewed for a sales role you **MUST** demonstrate your sales ability by structuring the interview like a sales meeting: fact find, presentation, identify reservations, overcome reservations, **CLOSE!!!** Ask for the job!

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