



FULL GUIDE TO:

CVs

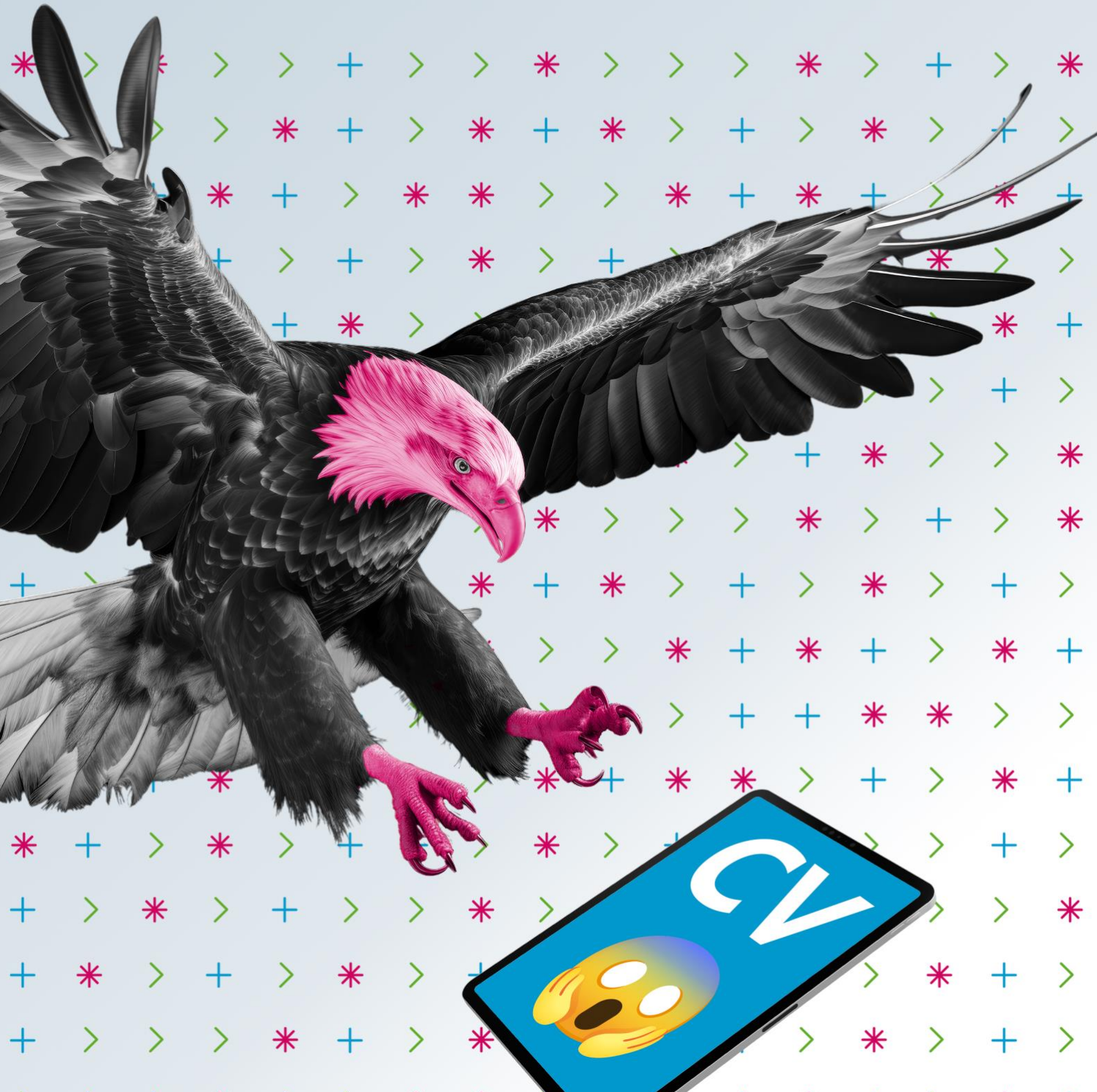


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Introduction

Your CV is a marketing tool that promotes your skills, attributes, achievements, knowledge and experience. Put simply, it is often the key to unlocking opportunities and experiences, and requires your time and energy to make it as strong as it can be. If you aren't going to sell yourself – then who is?

For that reason, some people say it's THE most important document that you'll leave university with...however, this is not strictly true as you are actually likely to end up with multiple versions of your CV - because one size does not fit all, and you will need to present yourself differently according to the different roles you may be applying to. If you are applying for a very creative role, please also refer to our **'Guide to Creative CVs'**.

There is no universal blueprint for how to set up your CV. This gives you a degree of freedom and creativity in writing the content and creating the layout. Plus, every employer will have different tastes and there may be industry specific traditions. When writing your CV it should really be a question of "How can I ensure that I present myself most effectively for the role I am applying to?"

It's a good idea to start developing your master CV document early on at university, so that you can add to it as you develop, rather than having to recall everything at the end of your degree experience - especially when you're under pressure to meet an application deadline!

A CV might be used for the following reasons:

- To apply for an advertised vacancy.
- To write to an organisation to find out if they have vacancies which have not been advertised, usually referred to as a 'speculative approach' (you may also wish to refer to our **'Guide to Speculative Applications'**).
- To enhance your online presence, such as using it as the basis for your LinkedIn profile.
- To upload to vacancy listing websites – although you might only be limited to one version, so this will not necessarily always allow you to tailor your CV accordingly.
- To hand to employers you meet at networking events or careers fairs, or other contacts in your network.

Your CV will be effective if:

- It has visual impact to capture the employer's attention.
- It reflects your personality and strengths.
- It fits the industry and organisation you're aiming for.
- It shows that you have the specific skills to do the job.

- It meets the criteria they are assessing your application against.
- It is no more or less than 2 pages long for a graduate CV (although 1 page CVs can be common for some creative roles, please see our *'Guide to Creative CVs'*)
- It is well written, clearly structured and consistently formatted (incl. appropriate font and font size).

Ask yourself the following to help you target your CV:

- What do you know about the organisation / industry you're writing this for?
- What are the requirements of the opportunity you're applying for?
- How do your skills and experience match the recipient's needs?
- Can you make relevant 'links' to the organisation and role throughout all areas of your CV?

Before You Begin Your CV

Start making notes: write down every job you've had (paid or unpaid), any organisations to which you've belonged, any leadership positions you've held, any special projects you've initiated or worked on, any awards or qualifications you've received, any languages you speak, any specialist IT skills / other skills, any interests you have, travelling you've done, or anything else significant to you. Consider all areas of your life – education, hobbies, interests, work, volunteering etc.

Remember that not all of these are likely to be included in your final CV, but it will help to get it all down where you can see it.

1. Next, try to clarify in your own mind why it is you are constructing this CV – what is your objective? Are you looking for a part-time job in retail? A full-time graduate job in marketing? Or a placement related to your degree? It helps to write down in one sentence exactly what it is you're looking for, i.e. 'I want to work in digital publishing as a graphic designer' or 'I want to be a TEFL teacher in China.'
2. Return to the items you wrote down in your skills and experience list. Circle those which **most closely relate to your CV objective**, and those which will be valued by the employers for whom you want to work.
3. Following on from this, find a job description of the job / type of placement you'd like to do. This will give you valuable information about the employer's selection criteria, such as which skills are essential and desirable. Again, circle which parts of your list seem to be the **most relevant for the role / industry you are applying to** - you now have the basic items for your CV.

4. You will need to organise them into categories that make it easy for the employer to read and decide on the **type of CV** that will work best for you. Before that, we'll take a look at the different headings you might use.

The Content of Your CV

By following the steps above you should now have some idea of what you might include in your CV. There are no set rules about how you need to organise the information or the headings that you use, although the structure that follows beneath is a typical layout - some sections are **required**, some are optional:

The following two sections are required for all CV types:

1. Heading (required)

Your first name and your last name should be clearly displayed in large letters across the top of the page. Make it bold to stand out and use a bigger font size than the rest of your CV. It's not necessary that you write 'CV' or 'Curriculum Vitae' at the top of the page.

2. Contact Details (required)

Include your address, email, contact numbers and website / blog address (if appropriate). You should also include your LinkedIn address if you have an account with a complete profile. Ensure your email address is professional in nature.

This section is optional for all CV types:

3. Personal Profile (optional)

Think of this as a 2-3 sentence summary of the most important things you want the employer to know about you: a selection of your most relevant skills, attributes, achievements, knowledge and experiences, perhaps ending with your 'career objective'. This is your first chance to make a good impression - see additional guidance on the following page.

This section is required by all CV types:

4. Education and Qualifications (required)

Put your most recent first and work backwards stating the date, name of institution, location and qualifications gained. Include details of your degree, such as specific skills learnt, projects undertaken, achievements etc. If your modules are particularly relevant then include brief descriptors rather than just listing them. Don't list all your GCSEs – just a

sentence highlighting the total number gained and grade bracket, plus any individual subjects that may be relevant i.e. *8 GCSEs grade A-C including: Maths (B)*.

The following two sections will depend on the type of CV you have chosen (see examples):

5. Relevant Work Experience / Other Work Experience / Work History / Volunteering

You will need to include either one or multiple sections that explain your experiences so far. The headings you choose will be dependent on the type of CV structure you have chosen and the types of experience you have so far, paid and unpaid (see above for some suggested headings). For every experience you do include make sure you write the from / to dates (month and year is typically sufficient), name of organisation / company, and your role in the sub-heading. Underneath explain about your duties, tasks and achievements, but avoid simply listing these. Emphasise what impact you had and the results of your actions - make links to particular skills that you developed. Try to use power words such as 'initiated', 'responsible for' (see power word list later in this guide).

6. Skills

If you have enough relevant / other work experience to fill both pages this section may not be necessary, as instead you will have talked about your skills in the context of these experiences. You can use this part to highlight any relevant skills that you have. Look closely at the job description as this is your guide for what skills employers are looking for. Always try to put your skills into context of how you have used them.

This section is optional for all CV types:

7. Interests (optional)

There are a number of ways to use your interests section to attract the employer's attention: show your personality; describe activities and interests that relate to the employers industry; convey your motivations; or any personal facts that you feel make you memorable and fascinating. If you do not feel confident in writing this section, then it's fine to leave it out.

This section is required by all CV types:

8. References (required)

It's fine to write 'references available on request', alternatively include the full contact details for two people who know you in either a professional or academic capacity (and ask them if this is OK!).

Writing a Personal Profile or ‘Career Objective’

If you do decide to include a profile (remember they are optional) it should be a short, positive statement at the beginning of your CV, summarising your key qualities of most interest to the employer so they are enticed to read on. However, you may decide that your covering letter is the best place to convey this information in more detail, rather than trying to cram everything onto two pages.

Who am I?

When writing your profile you will want to consider what makes you special, and frame it as a combination of your most relevant:

- Skills
- Experiences
- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Motivations
- Personal attributes
- Influences
- Ideas / creativity
- Aspirations
- Goals – future plans
- Unique selling points (USPs)
- Suitability for the position

To get started, try to focus on three key areas:

- **Past** – What experience do you have? What skills and knowledge will you bring to the role?
- **Present** – What best describes your current situation? What interests you?
- **Future** – Where would you like to be? What role / industry are you seeking?

Then try to bring it all together into a powerfully worded statement (aim for 2-3 lines) that is backed up by your CV. Put yourself in the shoes of the employer - What would you like to see? What grabs your attention? Don't fall into the trap of sounding like everybody else e.g.

- *"Design graduate with good communication and organisation skills. Also very much a team player who is self-motivated, and ambitious with excellent time management".*

This does not grab an employer's attention – it could describe almost all graduates!

A couple of better examples would be:

- *"Fashion designer accomplished at pattern cutting and sewing with a specific interest in knitwear and tailored clothing. My work reflects an appreciation of intricate*

patterns, attention to surface embellishment, colour and texture, inspired by an enthusiasm for vintage clothing."

- *"Flexible Business Undergraduate with excellent analytical, project management, team working and customer delivery skills gained through university studies, one year industrial placement in the logistics industry and a variety of part time work in retail and hospitality."*
- *"English Literature undergraduate with substantial events management experience and administrative skills, seeking events management position within the cultural and creative sector."*

Alternatively you could try using this template:

"I am <qualification>, having achieving a <grades>. I have a successful experience in <background>, including a 6-month internship with <employer A>, where I was responsible for / achieved <examples A and B>. I am also <key selling point>. I am now keen to bring these qualities to a career in <career aspiration>"

Breaking Down A Task Into Skills

When it comes to writing CVs it can be hard to work out exactly how much detail you need to provide for each of the roles / experiences you are describing. It can be useful to break things down into the tasks / responsibilities / duties and the skills used, before refining this for your CV.

Here's an example using associated tasks / responsibilities / duties for a hospitality role:

1. Setting and clearing tables
2. Seating people
3. Making menu / wine suggestions to customers
4. Taking orders
5. Delivering orders to kitchen
6. Serving food
7. Giving bill, taking money and providing change
8. Thanking customers and asking for feedback

Here are the skills being used for one of the tasks identified above – "Delivering orders to kitchen":

- Maintaining good working relationships
- Communicating information
- Organised approach to managing workload
- Developed system for monitoring orders
- Work under pressure
- Work as part of a team

Now try to combine the parts together into punchy sentences for your CV describing what you did, how you did it, what skills you used / developed and the positive results.

Types of CV

The **chronological CV** (sometimes referred to as 'traditional') is the most commonly used type of CV. The focus here is on experience. Information is presented in reverse chronological order, within each section i.e. your most recent studies and jobs are shown first working backwards. This format is particularly effective if you have relevant experience, as you can highlight this quickly to employers.

The **skills-based** approach emphasises capabilities and skills rather than leading with your experience, which may not be as relevant. The format is effective if you have limited work experience and want to highlight transferable skills. It can be particularly effective if you have experience that appears diverse or unrelated, but nonetheless supports your suitability or potential for a position. It can also be useful if you want to change your career direction.

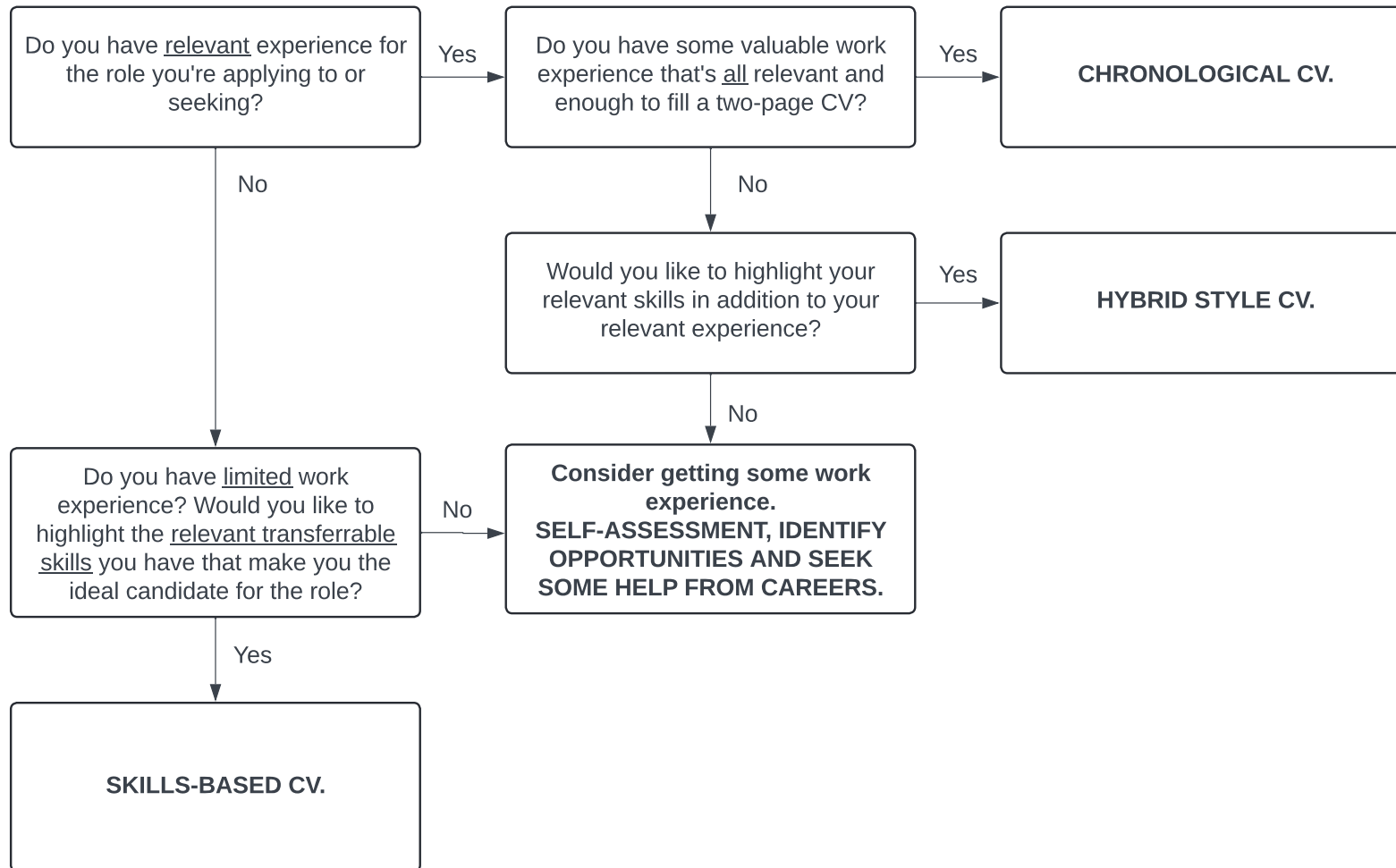
A **hybrid style** CV combines these two approaches and includes both a chronological work history section and a skills section – usually in this order. You might prefer to take this approach if you do not have sufficient work experience to fill the two pages, and / or you would like to highlight your skills separately from your experience.

Which CV Type Are You?

If you are not immediately sure what style / type of CV is most suitable for you, use the diagram on the next page to help get some clarity.

Additionally, on the following pages you will find an example of each type of CV, which might also help you to decide what would be most appropriate for you at this time.

Remember: it might be that you choose a different style CV for different roles (depending on your level of relevant skills and experience for the post).



Jane Smith

1 Address Road, Town, City, AB1 2CD

Tel No: 01234 1231546

Mobile: 01234 123456

Email: email@bathspa.ac.uk

Conscientious and hardworking Psychology and Business Graduate with experience in Human Resources. Looking for HR Assistant role that utilises strong interpersonal skills and opportunity to take on high levels of responsibility.

EDUCATION and QUALIFICATIONS

Sept 2014 - June 2017, Bath Spa University

BA (Hons) Psychology with Business and Management (*Achieved 2:1*)

Key Modules

Industrial Relations: Gained a broad understanding of concepts of employee relations and the effective management of these in small to medium enterprises (SMEs).

Personal and Social Development: Explored the needs of people in order to be fulfilled in the context of our daily and working lives.

Dissertation: Analysed trends in staff retention over a 10 year period for a large manufacturing organisation.

Key Skills

Organisation: Required to meet assignment deadlines, whilst balancing study/work commitments.

Presentation Skills: Individually researched, planned and presented detailed and complex theoretical concepts to an audience of peers, achieving a 68% mark.

Sept 2006 - June 2013, St. George Secondary School and Sixth Form, Bristol

- 3 A Levels: Business Studies(B), Sociology(C), History(C)
 - 8 GCSEs (grades A-C) including: Maths(B), English Language(A)
-

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

June 2016–Sept 2016, Cadburys Ltd (Bristol), HR Assistant – Work Placement

- Co-ordinated an employee satisfaction survey aimed at identifying areas of staff discontent.
- Supported various team members to carry out research, analyse data and make recommendations to senior personnel.
- Self-confidence increased as a result of gaining own areas of responsibility and by giving presentations to senior staff members at meetings.
- Assisted with general administrative duties and dealt with HR related queries, including payroll and staff contracts.
- Developed basic understanding of the essentials of employment law and HR practice.

Summer 2015, Remploy (Bristol), Volunteer Coordinator Assistant

- Britain's largest employer of people with disabilities, and supporting sustainable employment.
- Managing the paperwork for new Volunteers, including screening of applications for shortlisting and recording personal contact details on Microsoft Access database.
- Learnt how to communicate in a professional manner via email, telephone and letter.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Sept 2015 – May 2016, Bath Spa University Students Union, Events Officer

- Biggest achievement was taking overall responsibility for organising a successful Halloween charity event held in a local nightclub.
- Contacted a range of venues to establish best price and negotiated additional discount based on number of expected guests.
- In order to share workload, I allocated specific roles to the other three members of the events team, and set individual responsibilities and deadlines.
- Held regular meetings to monitor team progress, and raised £650 - exceeding the target by £150.

July 2013 – Aug 2014, Bath Area Play Project, Play Assistant – Gap Year

- Organised and supervised play activities, such as creative painting and cookery, for children aged 8-11yrs.
- Planned ahead to ensure all the relevant materials were available, resulting a smooth running timetable of activities throughout day.
- Accompanied children on away days and trips to local museums and attractions, required a high level of attention to detail to ensure health and safety guidelines were followed and children were kept safe.

Saturdays Dec 2011 - April 2013, Jolly's Department Store, Sales Adviser, Bath

- Providing customer assistance and advice on range of ladies clothing and accessories to ensure weekly sales targets were met.
- Arranging stock and visual signage, till operating (handling cash and till floats, answering telephone enquiries.
- Responsible for my own particular sections of the department and had to ensure they met with the approval of my managers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- I take an active interest in news and current affairs, including UK and international business matters, and subscribe to Online Recruitment Magazine and Human Capital Magazine.
- I have been awarded Duke of Edinburgh Gold award whilst at school which has developed my drive to succeed in challenges, even when they may seem difficult to complete.
- Active member of University Business Club – Winner of the 'Bucks Best Business Pitch' award in 2017 Enterprise week, developing confidence in public speaking and presentation skills.

REFEREES

Mr Martin Samuel

Human Resources Director

Cadburys Ltd

Bay Road, BRISTOL

Email: m.samuel@cadburys.co.uk

Tel: 0117 989554

Ms Susan Taylor

Senior Lecturer

Bath Spa University

Newton Park, BATH

Email: s.taylor@bathspa.ac.uk

Tel: 01225 875875

Clare Tasker

1 Address Road, Town, City, AB1 2CD

Mobile: 01234 123456

Email: email@email.com

Highly motivated English undergraduate with commercial experience and excellent writing skills. Proven ability to design and deliver events on time and budget. A team player keen to meet new challenges and take on a varied role in Marketing.

EDUCATION

Sept 2016 – Present, Bath Spa University, BA (Hons) English Literature (Predicted 2:1)

- Essay based assignments have improved my research and editing skills, covering topics such as transnational literature and digital humanities.
- Active engagement with seminars has built confidence in public speaking and presentation of ideas.
- Developing my ability to think more critically, applicable to situations beyond academia.

Sept 2014 – July 2016, Abbeyfield Sixth Form, Southampton

A-levels: English (A), Philosophy (A), French (B)

Sept 2009 – July 2014, Greenoakes School, Bath

GCSEs: 10 (grades A-B) including Maths (B) & English (A)

RELEVANT SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Interpersonal and Teamwork:

- Elected captain of University Netball team. Worked effectively with team members to raise the team's profile and to recruit more members.
- Sourced contacts and built relationships with companies targeted to sponsor the university netball team. Negotiated sponsorship of £3000 to purchase team kit.
- Engaged with customers in retail roles, listening carefully to their needs and adapting sales information appropriately.
- Completed group work assignments successfully at university by listening to others and ensuring equal division of labour; this included producing a digital publication.

Commercial Experience and Brand Awareness:

- Exceeded sales targets at Topshop by using detailed knowledge of the product to meet customers' expectations of the brand and persuasion skills.
- Proposed new marketing ideas to manager for underselling brands at One Stop newsagents. Sales of products increased by 20% in six months.
- Devised a social media marketing campaign to engage and recruit new students for the University Netball Team at the Fresher's Fair, resulting in over 50 new sign-ups.

Writing and Editing:

- Consistently wrote and edited to a high standard of academic work during 1st year of degree, averaging at least a 2:1 for most assignments.
- Solely responsible for editing the University Sports Societies Guide, a print and digital publication circulated to all 1st year students. Worked to strict deadlines and quality standards to ensure consistency in tone, and high levels of correct spelling and grammar.
- Produced professional correspondence via email in order to negotiate sponsorship with local companies.

Organisation of Events:

- Designed and organised regular themed events for netball team fundraising, including 'Dress as your idol' themed fancy dress party, raising over £200.
- Efficiently undertook arrangements for the annual netball tour, travelling to 12 match fixtures across the UK in a 3 month period.
- Managing a budget, taking responsibility for and receiving and processing payments from 256 players, sourcing travel and accommodation, liaising with host teams.

Admin & IT:

- Experience updating and maintaining confidential client database including detailed record of work done and accurate data entry.
- Proficient user of Microsoft Office and Apple computers, plus using social networking sites for both professional and personal audiences.
- As part of a team produced a digital publication for the web during degree, using Adobe InDesign and basic HTML.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Nov 2015 – Present, Top Shop (Bristol), Sales Assistant

- Maintaining the shop floor, checking and accepting deliveries, handling money, and helping to ensure maximum sales impact through visual merchandise.

Summer 2015, Ridgeway Office Solutions (Southampton), Office Assistant

- Variety of administrative tasks, including: updating customer database, filing, word processing, answering phone, and talking to suppliers.

Aug 2014 - April 2015, One Stop Newsagents (Southampton), Sales Assistant

- Served customers, ensured the shop was stocked and tidy. Demonstrated reliability and enthusiasm during early morning shifts.

VOLUNTEERING

Sept 2016 – Present, Bath Spa University Netball Team, Vice-Captain

- Coordinating team members, responsible for internal and external communications and wide range of administrative tasks. Exhibited high levels of responsibility.

June 2015 - Present, Field Community Hub (Bristol), Volunteer Support Worker

- Engaging visitors in conversation to explain the purpose of the Hub and the support services available, working one-to-one to help cater and care for service users.

INTERESTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Conversational French and Spanish language skills, written and spoken.
- Enthusiastic runner at beginner level, aiming to complete the Bristol half marathon to raise a target of £250 for Cancer Research UK.
- Have developed an interest in using social media for professional purposes and take every opportunity to research into new platforms and techniques.

References available on request

Noah Wybrook

1 Address Road, Town, City, AB1 2CD

Mobile: 01234 123456 **Email:** email@email.com

Education and Qualifications

Sept 2017 – Present, Bath Spa University

BSc (Hons) Global Development and Sustainability (Currently averaging 2:1)

Key modules:

- **Global Development** – Introduction to current issues affecting the world, such as poverty, technology, population growth and health.
- **Climate Change and Sustainability** – Detailed project work looking at the ways in which we can achieve a more sustainable life.
- **Economics and Globalisation** – Researched environmental impacts on wildlife populations due to locally produced food sources, produced a report and presentation of my findings.

Sept 2015 – June 2017, Freebridge Sixth Form, Weymouth

A-Levels: Business Studies (B), French (C)

Sept 2010 – June 2015, Grey Friars School, Weymouth

8 GCSEs (grades A-D): Including Maths (C), English (B) and ICT (A)

Volunteering

June 2017, The Prince's Trust, Volunteer Youth Worker - Bristol

- Participating in sustainability awareness events for young people across the local area and invited into local schools.
- Giving talks and presentations, explaining how small changes in everyday life can make a big difference to the future of the planet.
- Required a high level of enthusiasm and subject knowledge in order to communicate effectively and to encourage others to become involved.

Work History

Sept 2017 – Present, Bath Spa University SU, Bar Staff - Bath

- Assisting in the smooth running of bar area to deliver a high standard of service and customer satisfaction.
- Operating the till and taking cash, keeping bar clean and tidy, collecting empty plates & glasses, taking food orders, dealing with complaints in a friendly and efficient manner.
- Ensuring that policy guidelines for recycling are adhered to, and encouraging all staff to be aware of the environmental impact of waste.

Summer 2016, Next Retail, Sales Assistant/Supervisor - Weymouth

- Working on the busy sales floor, taking deliveries, stock control and dealing with customers with high quality customer care.
- Planning staff rota to ensure fittings rooms, till and replenishment were covered at all times and allowing for breaks, required methodical thinking and a degree of problem solving due to staff shortages.
- Given higher level of responsibility after promotion to supervisor at weekends.

Relevant Skills and Achievements

Environmental awareness

- I keep up to date with environmental and sustainability news and policy developments through a number of channels (such as Environmental News Network) to improve my knowledge and understanding of the sector.
- My university experience and work with voluntary organisations has given me a firm grounding in the field of sustainability.

Research and Report Writing

- My degree has included individual and team projects, field reports, commentaries, management plans and statistical analyses.
- I have learned data collection methods including focal and scan sampling methods, transects and behavioural observations.

Effective communication

- Strong presentation skills and confidence demonstrated by experience of delivering presentations to groups of people from a wide range of ages and backgrounds.
- Used a variety of approaches to engage young people with the idea of 'Thinking Sustainably' through interactive tasks and activities.

Teamwork

- During my role at the Student's Union I have demonstrated excellent teamwork skills in a busy hospitality environment by helping others to complete their duties, alongside my own tasks.
- Ability to quickly build rapport with colleagues and calmly deal with any problems during my retail experience, where I took on a supervisory role and dealt with customer complaints on behalf of the team.

Time Management

- As a member of bar staff I am required to demonstrate an excellent ability to plan ahead and manage my time effectively. I started each shift with a to-do list and regularly checked my progress against this to ensure that all tasks are completed.
- Gathered data from a wide range of sources during university project work whilst balancing my other studies and work, resulting in a 73% grade.

Interests and Achievements

- Active member of Bath Spa University Environmental Society - promoting the sustainability agenda to students and staff through social media channels, running stands at events (such as Fresher's Fair) and took the lead in designing leaflets and posters, as part of a targeted marketing campaign.
- Nominated to speak at a university 'Environmental Awareness Week' event, to a crowd of over 100 students, gaining confidence in public speaking abilities.

References

Ms Samantha Marshall

Supervisor
Bath Spa Students Union
Newton Park, BATH
Email: m.samuel@bathspasu.ac.uk
Tel: 01225 989554

Dr Alison Smith

Senior Lecturer
Bath Spa University
Newton Park, BATH
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CV Language and Tone

Employers have to trawl through many applications, including some that seem indistinguishable and unremarkable. Help them to find what they want by using direct, positive and appropriate language. Make the first word in a bullet point an active verb such as 'organised', or 'delivered' and find the right balance between too much detail and not enough!

For example: I have excellent written skills...

Or

Consistently produce clear, well-structured and accurate reports, even when under pressure to meet strict deadlines...

Or

Consistently produce high-quality written work across range of formats: reports, essays, action plans, and social media blog.

When writing in the first person, be positive and affirmative. Avoid starting your sentence with: 'I feel that I am a good communicator', or: 'I believe in diversity and equal opportunities.' Say rather: 'I am a good communicator', and: 'I am committed to diversity and equal opportunities' and then go on to give the evidence. Do not invite the employer to question the strength of your skills.

Start your sentences with these sorts of power words and phrases:

- Demonstrated skills in...
- Extensive academic...
- Practical background in...
- Experience in all aspects of...
- Knowledge of / experienced as...
- Established / created / designed...
- Provided technical assistance...
- Proficient in / competent at...
- Analysed / evaluated...
- Formulated...
- Initiated...
- Orchestrated...
- Presented...
- Assigned to...
- Project managed...
- Trained in...
- Initially employed to...
- Expert at...
- Working knowledge of...
- Coordinated...
- Organised...
- Promoted to...
- Succeeded in...
- Experience involved / included...
- Instrumental in...
- Delivered...

- Familiar with...
- Evaluated...
- Achieved...
- Contributed...
- Implemented...
- In charge of...
- Actively sought...
- Supervised / delegated...
- Devised...
- Planned...
- Investigated...

Word Bank

There are particular skills that you are likely to discuss on most applications, to avoid repetition you may find this useful:

Words that imply communication:

Advertised, Called, Circulated, Coached, Communicated, Conferred, Corresponded, Discussed, Displayed, Distributed, Edited, Emphasised, Familiarised, Informed, Instructed, Interested, Lectured, Oriented, Presented, Promoted, Publicised, Recommended, Redirected, Represented, Referred, Related, Showed, Translated, Transmitted, Tutored, Wrote.

Words that imply leadership:

Administered, Allocated, Appointed, Approved, Assigned, Authorised, Awarded, Conducted, Controlled, Delegated, Designated, Directed, Disapproved, Discharged, Encouraged, Enforced, Evaluated, Executed, Led, Managed, Oversaw, Presided, Recommended, Regulated, Required, Selected, Settled, Specified, Sponsored, Stipulated, Supervised.

Words that imply initiative:

Attended, Automated, Collected, Compiled, Considered, Contemplated, Contracted, Delivered, Discharged, Engaged, Engineered, Established, Examined, Founded, Handled, Implemented, Increased, Insured, Interviewed, Inventoried, Maintained, Monitored, Operated, Packaged, Participated, Performed, Processed, Provided, Received, Recruited, Reviewed, Shipped, Solicited, Sorted, Staffed, Submitted, Systematised, Trained, Utilised, Verified.

Words that imply organisation:

Arranged, Analysed, Assembled, Budgeted, Calculated, Coordinated, Organised, Planned, Prepared, Purchased, Recorded, Reorganised, Reported, Scheduled.

Words that imply interpersonal skills:

Accommodated, Adjusted, Advised, Agreed, Arrange, Assisted, Consulted, Contributed, Co-operated, Counselling, Facilitated, Guided, Harmonised, Influenced, Mediated, Moderated, Modified, Motivated, Negotiated, Personalised, Persuaded, Provided, Reconciled, Related,

Requested, Respected, Served, Sold, Taught.

Words that imply creativity:

Adapted, Authored, Composed, Conceived, Created, Designed, Developed, Established, Estimated, Forecasted, Formulated, Initiated, Invented, Investigated, Originated, Proposed, Researched, Revised, Studied, Set up.

Other Useful Buzzwords That Will Make Your CV Come Alive

Accepted, accomplished, achieved, acted, adapted, addressed, administered, advanced, advised, allocated, analysed, appraised, approved, assembled, assigned, assisted, attained, audited, authored automated

Balanced, budgeted, built, calculated, catalogued, chaired, clarified, classified, coached, collected, completed, composed, conceptualized, conducted, consolidated, contained, contracted, contributed, controlled, coordinated, corresponded, counselled, created, cut, critiqued

Decreased, delegated, demonstrated, defined, designed, developed, devised, diagnosed, directed, distinguished, drafted

Edited, educated, eliminated, emended, enabled, encouraged, engineered, enlisted, established, evaluated, examined, executed, expanded, expected, explained, extracted, facilitated, familiarised, focused, founded, formulated, forecasted

Generated, guided, headed up, increased, identified, illustrated, implemented, improved, indoctrinated, influenced, informed, initiated, innovated, installed, inspected, instigated, instituted, instructed, interpreted, interviewed, integrated, invented

Launched, lectured, led, maintained, managed, marketed, mediated, moderated, monitored, motivated, negotiated, operated, organised, originated, overhauled

Performed, persuaded, prepared, presented, prioritized, processed, produced, published, purchased, programmed, projected, promoted, proposed, provided, publicise

Recommended, reconciled, recorded, recruited, reduced, referred, regulated, rehabilitated, remodelled, represented, researched, repaired, restored, restructured, retrieved, revamped, revitalised

Saved, scheduled, schooled, screened, set, shaped, solidified, solved, specified, stimulated, strengthened, summarised, supervised, systemised, tabulated, taught, trained, translated, travelled, trimmed, upgraded, validated, worked, wrote

Personal Qualities and Attributes:

Personal qualities and attributes may be included in your CV, cover letter and application form, as long as they are relevant to the post. If the role requires an 'enthusiastic self-starter' then describing yourself as 'calm and follows instructions well' would not be appropriate in this case (but could be spot on for other roles). It can be useful to ask someone who knows you well to help you identify words which they think describe you best.

Here are some strong adjectives you might use to describe yourself:

- Accomplished
- Active
- Accurate
- Adaptable
- Adventurous
- Analytical
- Approachable
- Artistic
- Astute
- Attentive
- Broadminded
- Business-like
- Calm
- Careful
- Cheerful
- Committed
- Competent
- Confident
- Conscientious
- Consistent
- Co-operative
- Creative
- Credible
- Curious
- Demonstrative
- Determined
- Decisive
- Diplomatic
- Discreet
- Easy-going
- Efficient
- Empathetic
- Energetic
- Enthusiastic
- Even-tempered
- Friendly
- Generous
- Happy
- Hardworking
- Helpful
- Honest
- Humorous
- Imaginative
- Impartial
- Industrious
- Innovative
- Intelligent
- Intellectual
- Judicious
- Knowledgeable
- Level-headed
- Lively
- Logical
- Loyal
- Mature
- Methodical
- Motivated
- Non-judgemental
- Objective
- Open
- Optimistic
- Outgoing
- Passionate
- Patient
- Perceptive
- Persistent
- Persuasive
- Positive
- Practical

- Proactive
- Productive
- Prudent
- Questioning
- Quick-witted
- Rational
- Resourceful
- Resilient
- Reasonable
- Relaxed
- Reliable
- Responsive
- Responsible
- Sensitive
- Serious
- Sincere
- Spontaneous
- Stable
- Sympathetic
- Talented
- Thorough
- Trustworthy
- Visionary

The CV Checklist

The checklist has been designed to help you to reflect on your draft CV, and to give you ideas for how to develop it further, using criteria that most employers would expect you to meet (this is not a definitive list!).

Firstly, you might also like to assess whether or not you can confidently answer ‘yes’ to the following questions:

1. Have you identified the skills and qualities needed for the role, and provided evidence of these?
2. Are the various sections of the CV arranged in a way that draws attention to the most important information early on? Does the length of each section reflect the importance you feel it deserves?
3. Have you used a clear and simple font type and size (e.g. Arial 11)?
4. Have you experimented with capitals, bold, italics, or colour for headings and sub-headings to achieve a consistent and clear layout? Is your alignment consistent throughout and have you made good use of ‘white space’?
5. Have you used reverse chronological order for each section?
6. Is it concise - ideally, no more than two pages long? Have you have avoided long paragraphs of text, and used short, dynamic phrases, with no jargon or abbreviations that may confuse the reader?
7. Have you researched what type of CV is most typical for the industry? Is the style and language used appropriate for the role, employer and sector?
8. Have you asked someone to proof-read your CV for spelling and grammatical errors? Don’t only rely on your computer's spellchecker!
9. Are you able to demonstrate the wider set of most commonly sought graduate skills / attributes? E.g. commercial awareness, communication, teamwork, negotiation and persuasion, leadership, organisation, perseverance and motivation, problem solving, ability to work under pressure and confidence.

10. Is your CV attention grabbing without being distracting? Would it stand out from a pile of applications for the right reasons?

Secondly, do you feel that the content of your CV meets these minimum requirements?

Contact Details

Phone numbers and e-mail up-to-date. Not taking up too much room. Should not use a third of your first page. Include appropriate weblinks, e.g. LinkedIn profile.

Personal Profile

Remember this is optional. Two-to-three lines showcasing your most relevant skills, qualities and experience for the role. Tailored specifically to what you're looking for / applying to.

Education

Full title of your degree. Highlight modules, projects, achievements, and skills learnt (most relevant to the application). Pre-university qualifications taking up minimal space.

Skills

Those identified reflect those required by the employer. If using a separate skills section, the headings are relevant. Language is positive and achievements-orientated.

Work Experience

A clear description of the tasks / duties / responsibilities and the skills used or developed. Highlight any specific knowledge gained and reflect on any other positive outcomes.

Interests

Demonstrates your other interests, skills and abilities that may also be relevant to the employer and role.

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