

Crafting your CV to stand out for all the right reasons

We all know first impressions count, and that's key when you're applying for your dream job. You might be the perfect candidate, but if your CV isn't up to scratch then you might not make it to the interview stage. There's no need to panic though, it's not rocket science. Here are a few simple rules you should follow.

Keep it concise

Two sides of A4 is the absolute maximum for a CV. Keep details concise, make use of headings to create a clear layout, and use bullet points where possible. Your CV should be easy to read, and the important details should jump out rather than being buried in dense paragraphs.

What to include?

We don't want your life history, but we do want to get an impression of who you are, and the skills you have to offer.

- **Personal details:** Simply your name, address, phone number and e-mail address.
- **Profile:** A short paragraph that briefly describes why you want this job in particular, highlights your relevant skills and knowledge, and demonstrates your motivation and passion for the role. This is perhaps the most important part of your CV, and should be customised for each role you apply for. A good profile can make or break your CV.
- **Education/Qualifications:** List schools/colleges attended (including dates), and the qualifications you achieved. Include dates and grades (or predicted grades if you are still studying).
- **Work experience:** List Saturday jobs and/or work placements. Include the name of the employer, and the dates worked, plus the title of your role. You could also bullet point any key transferable skills gained, such as written or verbal communication, working in a team, time management or organisation.
- **Interests and hobbies:** If you tried skateboarding once, we don't need to read about it. Make sure you highlight your key personal interests, hobbies and passions, this will help to paint a picture of the type of person you are, and can help demonstrate valuable transferable skills such as teamwork, personal motivation, creativity and tenacity.
- **References:** Suggest two contacts who have known you for at least three years in a professional capacity. These could include a manager from a Saturday job or work experience, and a form or careers tutor from school. Give their name, title, e-mail address and phone number so we can contact them. Don't forget to check with them first that they are happy to be a reference contact for you.

Design matters

There are numerous free CV templates available online so choose one that appeals to you, but remember that simple designs work best. Avoid flowery fonts and clashing colours; your CV should be quick and easy to read. If you're printing your CV out rather than sending it electronically then choose a decent quality paper.

Keep it real!

Don't be tempted to lie or embellish the truth. Our pre-employment checks are very thorough, and we will confirm all the details you give, and follow up on references.

Check for errors

Nothing will land you in the 'No' pile faster than a badly written CV with spelling or grammatical errors. We want to know that you care about the quality of your work, so make sure you do a spell check and ask a parent or friend to proof read it for you.

Take a look at our exciting trainee opportunities and apply today at aztecgroupp.co.uk/careers