



# APEX RECRUITMENT SERVICES

## Top CV Writing Tips

Hiring managers will often have to sift through stacks of CV's so it is worth spending the time to make your CV the one they stop to look at. This article includes our top 10 tips to keep in mind when writing your CV and applying for jobs.

- **Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar**

This may seem obvious and fairly simple, but so often we see people with an excellent educational background and 10 year's experience with spelling mistakes on their CV. Proof reading your CV is an absolute must, and running spell check is not always effective (we all know the dangers of using auto-correct) so check your CV thoroughly, get someone else to read through it or even read it aloud to yourself to make sure it makes sense. Even if you are perfect for the role, if you haven't taken time over your CV then a Hiring Manager certainly won't.

- **Presentation**

Many people think in order to make their CV stand out they need to include tables, graphs, pictures, templates and colourful writing. This is NOT the case, and can often work against you by making your CV look complicated and it can distract from the content. The most important thing is that the information is presented clearly and is to the point. Make sure you put your strongest point first. If you lack experience but have an excellent educational background, put this at the top of the page and vice versa. Also, try to stick to 2 pages. A hiring manager will rarely read a CV from cover to cover, so make sure you only include the relevant information for the job you are applying for.

- **Use buzz words**

Use buzz words! In other words, when you are looking through a job specification, highlight the phrases and key words that are clearly important and insert these in to your CV. You can even make them bold to catch the eye of the reader. However, be subtle about this. If you simply re-write the job spec they will notice! If

you are uploading your CV to a job board, this will also help to get your CV noticed as it will appear in the relevant searches.

- **Quality, not quantity**

When you're applying for multiple jobs, it is tempting to send the same CV to as many companies as possible but this is not advisable. If you are too general the hiring manager will assume you are not passionate enough about working for them and that you are just looking for any job. Tailor your CV to the job spec, addressing each point.

- **Hobbies and interests**

It is always worth writing a brief overview of your interests as it brings some personality to your CV. If you're lucky, you may even have a similar interest to a hiring manager and this will help you in an interview situation. However, while it may be helpful to know that the hiring manager is a black belt in karate, DO NOT LIE to get yourself an interview; you could put yourself in an embarrassing situation. This is where you need to ask yourself – what do your hobbies say about you? If possible, include hobbies or interests that highlight your skills and compliment the company and their ethos.

- **Career gaps and reasons for leaving**

If you have been out of work for a while, it is worth putting the reason down on your CV. This is always one of the first questions that a client will undoubtedly ask and want to know why. There is usually a perfectly good explanation but if you do not put this down, the client will assume the worst! If you were at a company for a very short time, the client may see you as a 'job hopper', so a good way to avoid this is to provide the reason for leaving if this applies to you.

- **References**

Many candidates like to include references on their CV, but if you are struggling for space this should be the first thing to go. Employers will very rarely ask for references before inviting you to an interview and by simply saying "references available upon request", you cover this issue without taking up valuable space.

- **Don't be modest! (... but be careful not to be arrogant)**

This is your chance to show the employer what YOU have achieved. Therefore be careful of the word 'we'. Whilst it is good to show you can work in a team, you also need to ensure that you highlight your personal strengths and skills. At the same time, you want to sound confident, not arrogant. Passion is good but it can sometimes force us to get carried away. Remember the employer is looking for

someone who will fit in to their environment and if they feel you would be difficult to manage then they will avoid you. Assess the tone of the company you wish to join and enforce this in your CV.

- **Don't write an essay**

Large chunks of text can be off-putting, so break it down with bullet points and again, be concise and to the point!

- **Use LinkedIn!**

Back up what you're saying by including a link to your LinkedIn page. But of course, make sure your LinkedIn profile is tailored for potential employers. Make sure your picture is professional, the information is relevant and you have good recommendations and endorsements. Don't provide a link for an empty page!