

## How to write a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a critical document in portraying an image that you wish to present to a potential employer, as this will be their first impression of you.

Your CV is a selling document; it sells your qualifications, skills and achievements to a potential 'employer', informs them of any extra-curricular activities, your employment history, and your hobbies/interests while also projecting your personality.

In order for your CV to achieve all of these things, you should ensure that you present your CV in a manner that is grammatically correct, clear, concise, and truthful i.e. your claims match your work and educational history etc. CVs are presented in a variety of different formats however the following basic information should be contained in a CV.

### Curriculum Vitae (CV) Headings

#### **Personal details**

Your name, address, contact telephone number (landline and/or mobile), email address and date of birth (optional).

#### **Career Objective or Opening statement (optional)**

You can state what you are aiming for at this stage and what skills you have to offer in relation to your objective. This is useful when confirming your interest in a particular job or employment sector.

#### **Education and qualifications**

- Recent qualifications appear first.
- Give the full title of your degree, diploma or certificates awards and their time frame of completion.
- If you studied outside of Ireland indicate qualification equivalence if possible.
- Junior Certificate results or Leaving Certificate results (whichever is most recent).

#### **Employment history**

- Start with your most recent job.
- Employers are interested in any work experience whether immediately relevant or not.
- Include any vacation/voluntary work experience that you have.

- Emphasise what you have learned and how you have made a difference to your employer.
- Emphasise the skills gained in each job.

### **Interests and activities**

Mention any positions of responsibility that you have held in societies/clubs in any outside organisations. Emphasise any skills that you have gained, e.g. teamwork, leadership, organisational etc.

### **Achievements**

An achievement is any activity you have completed successfully.

### **Referees**

Get permission before you use someone as a referee and include their name, job title, address, email and telephone number.

### **How long should a CV be?**

If possible, try to keep your CV short and concise. Include summaries of your employment and education, rather than lots of details. Use formal and well-written language, writing simply and clearly.

### **Proof Read Your CV**

Double-check your CV for typos and grammatical errors. Ask someone else to review it for you in case you have overlooked any errors (also use spell check). Look at the format of your CV ensure it easy on the eye to read. Use normal margins (1" on the top and bottom, 1.25" on the sides) and don't cram your information onto the page. Allow for some room between the different sections. Avoid unusual or exotic font styles; use simple fonts with a professional look.

### **Emailing CVs**

When sending an Employer an attachment resist the temptation to simply save your CV as 'CV.doc' - imagine being the person at the other end who has to rename CVs before saving them!

### **Other Resources**

There are numerous books and website that contain information on how to write curriculum vitae (CV). Here are just two examples.

- [Gradireland.com](http://Gradireland.com) - Ireland's graduate website has a detailed section on applications.
- [FÁS Jobs Ireland](http://FÁS Jobs Ireland)