

CV Overview & Essential Information

Overview

A CV is meant to be a summary of your abilities, education, experience, and skills. Its main task is to convince prospective employers to contact you. A CV has one purpose: to get your foot in the door so you can wow potential employers at the job interview.

Employers or HR officers may look through a mountain of applications and usually spend only a few minutes reviewing your resume so your CV must create a good first impression. In order to grab the interest of a potential employer and stand out from the rest of the applications, your CV must quickly convey that you are capable and competent enough to be worth interviewing.

When preparing your CV, it is important to ask yourself: for a certain position, what aspects of your education, experience, or skills will be most attractive to that employer? Your CV should highlight immediately relevant skills, or knowledge and specific coursework, or areas of specialty that you think would interest the employer. A summary of your areas of experience and background is usually helpful to do this.

Tailor as much as possible to the role you are applying for. Do not write a long essay. On the other hand, US-style CVs stick to only one page. That is too short for most Commonwealth countries that we deal with but it shouldn't be too long either! Ideally your CV should not be more than 3 to 4 pages long. Use of bullet points are best.

Check that all events are properly dated, especially the dates on which you obtained your qualifications and those of your current and previous employment. Do not forget to state your place and date of admission. Any gaps (when you took that sabbatical to try your hand at something else perhaps?) in the dates should be adequately explained.

Essential Information

At the very least, your CV should contain the following information:

- **Professional Qualifications:** dates and jurisdictions of admission to relevant bars/courts and professional bodies (eg Institute of Chartered Accountants; Corporate Secretarial Association etc).
- **Education:** all degrees and diplomas obtained, where and when. High school information should also be included.
- **Work History:** all jobs should have the start and end dates clearly listed by month and year. Any gaps/time off between jobs should be explained.

- Work Experience: listed under each job should be the main experience gained, together with a transaction/deal list in bullet points. If the deals are too long, try using an annex to the CV.
- Language Capability: the level of fluency you have in a language/languages (fluent, working, basic) and whether it is written and oral, or oral ability only.