

Tips for that Tip Top CV: Get the dream job you want.

Your CV is a sales tool:

Create a winning headline in your CV to attract attention.

"Marketing professional with 15 years brand management experience in FMCG".

Recruiters of all types scan Cvs rather than reading them thoroughly to determine a candidate's fit for a role. So help them out- Make sure your headline reflects a description of what they are looking for! - headlines grab attention so make yours attention grabbing!

Make sure of your star billing:

Create a section in a box that describes your career highlights in terms of experience in a nutshell. This needs to be 4-8 lines long. Keep it brief. Recruiters have a tendency to concentrate their attention on the top third of the page. It's possible that they only read on if your profile grabs their attention quickly.

"Excellent background in product brand management ranging from retail foodstuffs to designer luxury travel goods. A team focused professional with experience of managing large projects (£2million plus). Significant experience of managing suppliers and contracts both in country and internationally against clear deliverables and KPIs."

Show me and prove it:

Communicate your experience clearly by giving evidence-based examples of what you have done during your career to date. These need to be results based wherever possible. Examples of what you have added to the organisations you have worked in.

"Reviewed all marketing agency contracts and within one year achieved a 30 % increase in brand exposure for xxxxx product whilst reducing the budgeted costs by 25 %"

Set your core skills out clearly. One of the first things recruiters look for is indications and evidence that you have the skill set necessary to do the job. Your areas of expertise should be prominent in the resume. Try and match these to a specific role you are applying for if you can, using the same language.

Mind your language:

Generally throughout your CV and any covering letter, use the keywords, or phrases that are used within the recruiter's job application pack or advertisement if there is one. Use language and abbreviations that are appropriate to your profession and the industry you are applying to.

Align and give them what they want:

Make sure you align your educational background and qualifications with the job description/ specification. Make these relevant rather than listing everything you have ever done. Frankly, they're not interested in your cycling proficiency test gained age 9 when you are 45 applying for a Deputy Director post.

Where have you been fishing previously?

Include brief descriptions of the organisations you have worked for and the role you had. Include information on the company/organisation size, and revenues. Indicate the size of your budget under management and number of staff if the role includes resource management. This gives the recruiter a sense of scale of operation you have worked within. If you have been a big fish in a small pond and are going to a bigger organisation-play it down .If you have been a little fish in a lake and are going to a small but impressive puddle, play it down.

Did you achieve and deliver or just turn up for work?

It is important to convey a brief overview of the job you have held but remember that descriptive information is less useful than evidential examples that illustrate what you have achieved/delivered. Description does not really help your CV to stand out. Remember that a number of candidates will have experience of doing similar roles and a similar professional background. What makes you memorable is what you have achieved. Employers are interested in reading about your achievements because past performance is the best predictor of your future performance. These need to include evidence of how you have helped the organisations you have worked in make money, save money, save time and grow/develop.

Consider what the role you are applying for requires you to deliver, and then look at your achievements and decide whether to group your achievements into sections. For example, it might be a good idea to put the examples of cost saving together, examples of team and contractor management together and so on depending on the job requirements.

Are your interests really that interesting?

Note down your interests and hobbies. This is particularly important where your interests outside of work relate to/reflect the work interests in that industry. So, if you are applying for a job in an Art Gallery they will be more interested in the fact that you run a local art group and annual exhibition rather than your addiction to Sudoku. Include any recent volunteer experience particularly if you are looking to transition into another field of work or a new industry and have undertaken voluntary work in that new area. A day of helping out at the local school fete doesn't count. It needs to be volunteering over a period of time to be meaningful to a recruiter.

Do you affiliate and participate?

List any professional memberships, affiliations and networks . If you hold any kind of office in a professional network or public office make this clear. If the role requires a particular professional membership remember to include it and your level of membership where necessary.

I'm not interested in the Saturday job you had 20 years ago:

Recruiters generally expect to see the years you were employed by an organisation, not the months. Exceptions to this include candidates who have less than one year of tenure in a post or students/interns. Focus on past 10-15 years of employment. List the rest but make those previous roles less prominent in the content of your CV.

You gotta edicashiun?

In your education section make sure you include dates. Don't be tempted to include studies that you have started but not completed. Recruiters can see this as a sign of non-completion in life generally.

Show them you have cheerleaders:

When you list references make it clear whether they can be approached or not prior to interview. Rather than saying "references available upon request," It is obvious and expected that if you are applying for a role you will provide references so indicate this in more positive language such as " References will be supplied with pleasure at or after interview stage".

Most Important final touch:

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Good luck happy hunters!

Marie Taylor

Marie coaches professional men & women who already have successful busy lives. She works with clients to enable them to achieve success in all areas, be it business, confidence, managing people, relationships with others, or relationship with the self.

In addition to her individual coaching practice, Marie works with organisations to create effective leaders and effective teams. Through her company Living Right Now, she works with a business partner providing retreats and self-care inspiration for professional women.

If you want to find out more about Marie and the way she works contact her through her blog at www.marietayloronline.com

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