



Live. Love. Thrive. Belong.

Preparing a CV

Our CV is where we write out our whole employment, education and skills history, so employers can decide whether we have the skills required to do a particular job.

It might seem old-fashioned but, along with a cover letter, a CV is often the only thing between you and a face-to-face interview, so it's important you get it right.

If you have a learning disability or autism, our supported employment coaches can work with you to create a perfect CV. In the meantime, have a look at the tips below on what a perfect CV will do.

The layout

Your personal details

The best thing about you is **you**, so make sure the first thing people see is your name and your contact details – your phone number and email address will do. These are usually written at the top of the page. You shouldn't put your photo on it - save your award-winning smile for the interview.

A personal statement

You can't speak to the employer during the application stage, although we'd love to change that. The best place to shout about why you should get the job is in the personal statement. This is a paragraph of text that should come after your name and before your experience. It allows you to tell an employer what type of person you are. You may choose to disclose your disability here. It's important to talk about your positive personal qualities. For example, you might be 'confident', 'flexible' or 'hard working'. Be honest and try to tell them what makes you special as a person.

Your experience

This is the part where you write your experience in date order, with the most recent experience first in your list. Include the name of the role, the dates you were employed and the company name. Underneath or beside that, use a list with bullet points to explain what you did and what skills you used doing it. We think it's a good idea to add a summary box of the skills you used below too, just to make it crystal clear.

Don't worry if you don't have an employment history. Think instead of life experience. Have you volunteered somewhere? Played a role in your

community or school? Has there been a big life event where you've shown your skills and ability? Remember, we all start somewhere.

Your education

What you did at school is important. It shows your skillset and what interests you. Maybe you were keen on maths or were a gymnast or perhaps you just liked art. Write down the school you went to, when you were there and what subjects you got awards in. Unless the employer specifically asks for it, you don't need to tell them what grade you got. For example, you can just say: "Achieved an A-level in German".

Awards

This section is optional and allows you to show what a great and determined person you are. If you don't have any awards, don't worry. Employers won't overlook you for not showing any.

Hobbies and interests

You're a human being with an active life outside of work and your employer wants to know this. Write down some of your hobbies or interests, as these can also show why you're interested in a job.

Other tips

Check it twice (and then get someone else to as well)

We all make mistakes. Spelling and grammar are easy to get wrong, so it's important that you get someone to read over your finished CV. They should notice any mistakes you might have missed, even after you checked it yourself. Spelling mistakes can put employers off, so don't forget this stage. If spelling isn't a strength of yours, ask a family member or friend to help you.

It doesn't need to be written

A written CV may not be right for you, depending on your skills or disability. Instead, you could consider a video CV. Just follow the format we've shared with you but instead of writing, speak it instead.

Use your support networks like your friends and family - or your supported employment coach - to help you with the technology.

Taking the next step

Creating a CV is an important moment in your journey to employment. It allows you to proudly show everything you've achieved and what you want to achieve in the future. It's the closest thing to you that many

employers will see, so make sure it's as good as possible. Remember – don't be afraid to be yourself.