

A CV, curriculum vitae, or résumé can be tricky to write and a pain to keep updated. Here are some things you really need to know;

Number 1: There is no single, correct way to write a CV that will guarantee you an interview for every job you apply for. Every Job Centre adviser, employment agency, careers adviser and employability tutor will tell you something slightly different from the next person.

Number 2: Your CV is a tool to get you to an interview; *that is its primary function*. Therefore, the most important thing is to know the message you want to deliver, and make sure that everything on your CV supports that theme.

Number 3: Recruiters are pushed for time. They spend just a few seconds skimming over CVs, filtering them in the initial stages. So, you need to say the things that matter early on i.e. while you've got the reader's attention.

Number 4: Downloadable templates are a starting point only; the real challenge of CV writing is being able to personalise it and tailor it to a specific role or employer.

Number 5: The CV needs to play to your individual strengths and show how those strengths are relevant to the organisation. A lot of employers are drawn to "storytelling" – a profile that communicates passion and a clear direction of travel has real appeal.

Number 6: Accuracy and structure are essential. Words and phrases matter and should be chosen wisely. In an era of information overload, keep it relevant and authentic. This shows ability, dedication and, ultimately, respect for your audience.

