



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

How to write a good CV

Tips on 'selling yourself' to potential employers

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Your CV is a marketing tool

Keep it simple and clear. If you are applying for an advertised position then read the job description or specification, as this will tell you about the kind of person they are looking for. Think about your current and previous roles, and match your skills and experience.

In addition to your professional knowledge and experience, have you overlooked any additional responsibilities, such as budgets, managing contractors, a customer/client focus, evidence of problem solving and improving performance?

How long should a CV be

There are no absolute rules but, in general, no more than two or three sides of A4 paper. Don't leave out important items, or crowd your text too closely together in order to make it fit. Always use a standard font e.g. Arial or Times Roman. Remember, an employer may only allocate 60 seconds to read your CV so make sure it is to the point.

What makes a good CV

- Target your CV to the job for which you are applying, bringing out relevant professional knowledge, skills and experience. What can you learn from the job description?
- Ensure the CV is logically ordered, headings in bold, evenly spaced, and not cramped
- Prospective employers don't just want to know what you did in a previous job, they also want to know what difference you made - how did you improve existing performance?
- Be concise - don't feel you have to list every responsibility in your job description, consider which are the most relevant to the job you are applying for
- Be honest - never give inaccurate or misleading information
- Be accurate in content, spelling and grammar
- If you are sending a CV to an organisation that has not advertised a position then remember to avoid jargon as the person reading or screening CVs may not be a planner.

For more advice
www.rtpi.org.uk/careers

Sample structure

Remember the CV is yours and can be structured as you wish, but by following the basic framework below should increase your chances of securing an interview.

Personal details. Start with your name, address, email and telephone contacts.

Profile. A brief paragraph (with bullet points if appropriate) to grab the reader's attention. Your profile should briefly summarise your skills and experience, your qualities as an employee, and your career aims.

Education and training. List your main qualifications and **make sure you highlight your professional status as a Chartered Town Planner MRTPI or as an Associate, as this is a key selling point.** Include membership of other appropriate associations.

Employment history. In this section start with your current or most recent position and work backwards.

- List your employer, period of employment, position and brief description of job
- Set out your key duties and achievements
- Include your level of responsibility (e.g. officer, team leader, section/department manager, associate or director etc).
- Relate your skills and experience to the job advertised. Also include any relevant temporary work and volunteering experience
- Avoid unexplained gaps in your employment history. If you had time out then explain why.

Interests. You do not have to include interests, hobbies and any sports you play - the views and opinions of experts differ in this area. What is agreed is that you should list any positions of responsibility you hold, or have held, in any club or organisation, and say what your duties and achievements were.

References. There are very few employers out there who do not take up references.

Some employers do not accept CVs however the above guidance may still be of use when completing job application forms.



Keep it honest,
accurate and concise
Remember to **match
your skills** and
experience to the job

For more advice
careers@rtpi.org.uk