



CVs and Interviews

By The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) Mercia Support for school's team

WHEN APPLYING FOR ANY JOB YOU MAY BE ASKED FOR A CV.

What is a CV?

It is a sales document that tells the employer all about your unique skills, achievements, experience and what you can offer. Showing the employer why you are the best person for the job!

The famous painter, Leonardo Da Vinci was the first person to send a CV in 1482. So they have been around for a while. Whilst we don't have to start our application with "Most Illustrious Lord", we do have to think about what we need to say and how to say it.

If you then get an invitation to an interview, you know that your CV has been successful (well done) and the employer is interested to know more about you. So let's talk hints and tips for CV's and also prepare for the interview (the next stage). You can never be too prepared!

CV HINTS AND TIPS

- 1 CV Layout** – Do a google search and this will show you many different layouts. Keep it simple with bullet points and the same size font.
- 2 Keep your CV to two pages' maximum** – On average an employer has only got six seconds to look at your CV. Even Usain Bolt cannot run the 100 metres that fast!
- 3 Have more than one CV** – Your CV will be much more effective if you tailor it for each position that you apply for - look for key words in the job advert and try to include them.
- 4 Keep your CV factual** – If you tell an employer that you skydive on a weekend, and you don't, this may look impressive but what if they ask more questions about this at an interview?
- 5 DON'Ts** - Don't include your photo, DOB, gender, nationality and any non-professional email addresses. Get someone else to check the CV over before sending it. Keep it professional!

A few other things to bear in mind:

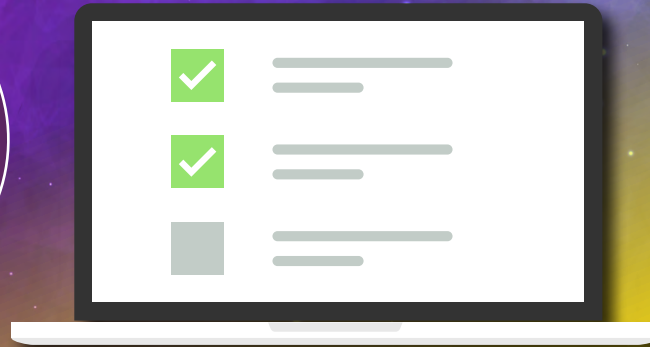
- Don't use colour on your CV as it doesn't always come out well when photocopied
- Consider using bullet points to make sure that all your important skills jump off the page and catch the recruiter's eye.
- Once you're happy with your CV print off a copy on A4 paper. Paper copies can look so different to a copy on your PC screen. If your CV goes on to a second page where is the page break? Try to avoid a page break in mid-sentence if at all possible.
- Avoid spelling mistakes as these will result in your CV heading straight to the "reject" pile. Ask someone to proofread it for you.





There are lots of websites offering tips and advice on how to create a fantastic CV, a good place to start might be the national careers service who offer free careers advice to anyone living in England www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

FREE
CAREERS
ADVICE



WOULD YOU LIKE SOME HELP WRITING YOUR CV AND COVERING LETTER? OR PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW?

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Mercia Support for school's team can help.

Just email mercia.supportforschools@dwp.gov.uk and in the subject heading please include your name and the school you attend. For safeguarding please copy in your school careers lead and note that our response will be sent to both yourself and the careers lead.

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEW TIPS

- 1 Research the company** – Look at the company website, or follow them on Instagram or twitter. Look at what they sell/make. Find out what is important to them.
- 2 Plan ahead of the interview** – What do you need to take? Passport/birth certificate, copy of qualifications etc. How will you get there? How long will the journey take?
- 3 Research top 10 interview questions** – You can find these on a google search and practise your responses with a family member or friend. REMEMBER doing this will help you feel more confident and comfortable at the interview.
- 4 Prepare what you are going to wear** – Aim for a more formal look. Just check a few days before that you have something clean and suitable.
- 5 At the interview** - Arrive 10 minutes early, smile, give good eye contact, give positive body language, look interested. Don't answer Yes or No to questions. Remember it is only a conversation and you have got this.

GOOD LUCK

An example CV Template:

Name

Address

Telephone Number

Mobile Telephone Number

Email Address

Tip: Research has shown that up to 76% of employers will reject a CV if the applicants email address is unprofessional so now might be a good time to make yourself a new email address to use when looking for work.

Personal statement

Your personal statement is a mini-advert for you and should summarise your skills and qualities with evidence to back this up.

If you're struggling with this section a quick internet search will come up with lots of resources offering hints and tips (reed.co.uk, top CV and CV library all offer advice on personal statements).

Education and training

Start with your most recent qualification and work backwards. Include your predicted grades if you know them.

Employment history

Include the employers name, the dates you worked and the main duties.

A prospective employer would like to know what tasks you did whilst at work not just your job title. For instance, you might have been responsible for handling cash, serving customers or keeping the work place clean and tidy.

If you haven't had any work experience yet don't worry, the Key Skills section will come to your rescue. Many employers say that soft skills are as important as qualifications so you could add all your amazing skills in this section to really impress an employer. For instance, can you speak another language? Do you have strong IT skills?

Key Skills and achievements

You can include any awards that you've received, any extra responsibilities you've been given or programmes that you've been involved with.

References

Many employers will ask for the names of one or two people who they could contact to find a little bit more about you. These are your references. You might like to ask a teacher to act as a reference for you or perhaps a leader in a youth or sports club. Whoever you ask to be your reference make sure that you get their permission first. You don't need to fill in their contact details on your CV simply add that they're available on request.