

TOP CV MISTAKES

Your CV is the first thing a potential employer will see when you apply for a new job so it is important to get it right. A well thought out CV could be the difference between getting an interview or not.

We asked our team of Recruitment Consultants to highlight the key mistakes they commonly see on CVs, here is what they came up with:

John Smith

Address line 1
Address line 2
City
Postcode

Curriculum Vitae

Telephone: 00000000000
Mobile: 00000000000
Email: sexyboi99@webmail.com
Heath: Good health
Martial status: Single

Including an awkward photo. Nobody ever discards a CV because there isn't a photo on there, they most certainly have because of it.

Writing CV at the top of the document as the title. It should be obvious that this is your CV.

Using an unprofessional sounding email address

Including strange and irrelevant personal information about your health, marital status, number of children, etc.

Personal profile

John has over 3 year's experience within IT support roles. He is a highly motivated, dynamic and committed individual with excellent communication skills.

Grammatical errors

Writing in the third person

Employment history

2011 – 2012 **IT Support Assistant, Company X**

- Test programs
- Maintain records
- Transfer computer files between platforms
- Administer user accounts

Only including the year. You should include both the month and year.

Your most recent job should be at the top

Not explaining gaps in your CV. 2012-2013?

2013 – 2014 **Service Desk Support, Company Y**

- System building and testing
- Working in a flexible small team environment
- Hardware and software fault diagnosis
- Account creation, deletion and administration

Not including enough detail about specific projects. Writing only about duties, not achievements.

2014 – 2015 **IT Technician, Company Z**

- Taking a high volume of calls to provide IT support to internet users
- Calls varied from connection problems, reporting broadband faults, updating customers on existing faults and problems receiving email.
- Logging and taking ownership of faults
- Offering technical advice via email and live online chat

Using a range of fonts and formatting styles

Typing errors. Always double check your CV before sending.

Education

2005 – 2010 Cardiff Secondary School

GSCes

English literature	C	Science	C	Religion	D
English language	C	ICT	C	History	E
Maths	C	Welsh	D	Geography	E

Using too much colour

You don't need to list all your grades, you can just summarise your school qualifications. E.g. Achieved 9 GSCes including Maths and English.

1999 – 2005 Cardiff Primary School

Including your primary school

INTERESTS

I enjoy watching football on TV at the weekends. In my spare time I like to collect stamps and have a collection of over 1,000 varieties.

Don't include passive, solitary hobbies (reading, watching TV, stamp collecting) or you may be perceived as lacking people skills.

Section 1 – Contact details and personal profile

1. Putting CV at the top of the document as the title is unnecessary and just wastes valuable space on the page. It should be obvious from the content that the document is your CV.
2. It is difficult for employers to take you seriously if you use an unprofessional email address
e.g. sexyboi99@webmail.com
3. In some countries it is custom to include a photograph of yourself but in the UK incorporating an awkward photo isn't necessary. Nobody ever discards a CV because there isn't a photo on there, they most certainly have because of it.
4. Strange and irrelevant personal information about your health, marital status or number of children should not be included on your CV.
5. Your contact details should appear at the top of the front page so they are easy to find.
6. Our consultants fed back that a lot of people write their personal profile in the 3rd person which makes the content harder to read, instead use the first person to talk about you personality traits and skills.

Section 2 – Employment history

7. If you apply for a job that is completely irrelevant to your skills and experience you are unlikely to be invited for an interview. If you are looking for a career change then you need to explain this and why you would be suitable for the job in your covering letter.
 8. One major complaint from our consultants was that many people don't include enough detail when describing their employment history. You need to include detail about specific projects and your achievements within those roles.
 9. We have found many people update their CV with their current role without reviewing the rest of their CV at the same time. As a result we often see people using present tense for past roles.
 10. When listing your employment history your most recent or present role should be first and the oldest role last. Putting your employment history in reverse order means that an employer has to search to find your latest position.
 11. It is helpful to explain gaps in your work history. You don't need to include too much detail but potential employers may wonder why you were out of work for a significant period of time. This information could be included within your covering letter instead but it shouldn't be forgotten.
 12. For each role you need to include the month and year for all the start and end dates. Including just the year doesn't give employers an accurate idea of how long you worked in each position.
- Section 3 - Education

13. You don't need to include any information about your primary school.
 14. It is possible to summarise your GCSEs rather than listing all the individual grades e.g. achieved 9 GCSEs including Maths and English.
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Section 4 – Hobbies and interests

15. Unfortunately some pastimes are more interesting than others. Our consultants advise that you don't include passive, solitary hobbies (reading, watching TV, stamp collecting) or you may be perceived as lacking people skills.

Section 5 – Formatting and presentation

16. Spelling and grammar mistakes will immediately put employers off, especially if they are looking through a number of similar CVs.

17. Use an appropriate file name when saving your CV if you plan to email it to potential employers. This will enable employers to easily find your document from other saved files. E.g. John Smith CV 2015

18. Your presentation should be clean with consistent formatting. Having multiple font styles and sizes throughout your CV can make it harder to read.

19. Don't include a background or colourful headings unless you are applying for a particularly creative role as it can be really distracting for the reader.

20. There is a lot of discussion about CV length; some people think two pages is more than enough but others feel that 2 pages can be too restrictive. When it comes to your CV you need to think about covering all your latest roles and projects in enough detail to sell yourself without waffling. If you have a technical CV it is quite normal for CVs to be slightly longer than the 2 page norm but employers and recruiters don't want to have to read 10 pages either!

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