

Confidence to Work

CVs and Cover Letters



CVs and Cover Letters



Section 1 - Creating your CV

Section 2 - Creating your Cover Letter

HELP!

If you feel you need any support whilst working through this booklet, please speak to

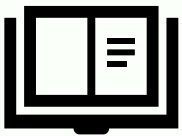
your employment adviser.

**Alternatively you can email
info.kirkleeses@richmondfellowship.org.uk or
call 01484 434866**

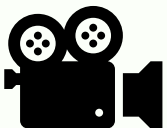
What is a CV?

A CV, which stands for curriculum vitae, is a document used when applying for jobs. It allows you to summarise your education, skills and experience enabling you to successfully sell your abilities to potential employers.

It is recommended that a CV should be no more than two sides of A4



Visit the Prospects page to read more information and advice about CV's: [CVs and cover letters | Prospects.ac.uk](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/cv-and-cover-letters)



Watch this video for an introduction to CVs: [How to Write a CV | Full Video | Monster - YouTube](https://www.monster.com/resources/how-to-write-a-cv)

CV Tips



Make it personal

Don't send out identical covering letters without any details about the employer.

Show the employer that you've done your research on the company and you know what they do. Make it clear you've thought about which skills they want and how you can provide them. The more specific you can be, the more attention your letter will attract. It's better to spend your time writing ten personalised covering letters than sending out 50 identical ones.

Consider explaining CV gaps

You can use a covering letter to explain gaps in your CV, such as unemployment, gap years or time spent travelling or in prison.

Don't be worried about mentioning difficult subjects like this. It's a good opportunity to introduce them and explain how you dealt with these periods and what you learnt from them.

If you take this opportunity to explain any gaps in a positive way, it will mean that an employer has a full picture of your history. There will be no unexplained gaps that could cause concern.

Whatever the reason for gaps in your CV, explain what you've learned. If you've been unemployed you could mention how organised you were in your approach to job hunting, training courses you've been on, or any volunteering you've done.

If you've been in prison you could describe any learning courses or other activities, you got involved in. If it's relevant, you could also describe the circumstances leading up to your offence but keep it brief. You could also

explain that you've learned from it, and how you have changed. Show that you now understand your responsibilities.



Provide information about your disability

You're not legally obliged to mention your disability and it's your choice on how open you decide to be in your covering letter about it.

Deciding to disclose your disability at the application stage can give you an opportunity to talk about the transferable skills you've developed as a result of dealing with your disability. You can use your covering letter to talk about how you will bring those skills to the workplace.

Use the right language and tone

When applying for most jobs, use clear, business-like language. If you're applying for a creative role, such as an advertising copywriter, you could show your originality and word skills in the language and tone you use. However, use your judgment carefully, based on what you can find out about the company and their approach to recruiting.



Check it and then check it again!

Always check your covering letter for spelling and grammatical errors.

Don't rely on word processing spell checkers, as they don't pick up everything. (If we had written 'pack', 'peck', 'pock' or 'puck', a spell checker would not have picked these up as these are valid words. It would not have known that the word we wanted to use was 'pick'!)

It helps if you leave some time after completing the letter before checking it. This way you'll look at it with fresh eyes. When you've been working on one piece of work for a while, it can be difficult to spot any mistakes or errors.

It's a good idea to ask someone else to check it over for you, to get a different perspective. Just like the employer, they will be reading it for the first time. They might also be able to make helpful suggestions and check that it flows well.


Keep it brief

Keep your covering letter short and to the point. A maximum of five short paragraphs on a single page should be enough to get your message across. It will also be short enough for employers to read quickly.

Keep the format consistent

If you use the same font and text size on your covering letter and CV it will look neat and professional

How to use your experience and skills



It is important to understand ourselves and be able to describe our personality traits

to others. It could be to promote ourselves to future employers or to describe our strengths and weaknesses at interviews.

Questions to help identify your strengths

- What skills, talents or personality strengths do you possess that will help you achieve your goal?
- Why are you passionate about achieving your goal?
- Who are people who have already achieved your goal?
- What qualifications have I got?

Questions to Help Identify Your Weaknesses

- What skills do you currently lack, but need to achieve your goal?
- Have I got any financial difficulties or pressures?
- What are the weak points of your personality that will get in the way?
- What worries you about pursuing your goals?
- Are you vulnerable in any way?

Use the job description and person specification as a checklist: tick off each one that you can mention in your CV and make sure you include it.

**Remember: if you don't write it the employer
doesn't know you can do it!**

Example CV -

10 S reet Avenue
Hopton
West Yorkshire
WF11 7ZQ
☎07444111345



Annie_example@hotmail.com

Personal Profile:

I am an honest, reliable and very hard-working individual who endeavours to complete tasks on time and when required. I have excellent organisational and communication skills. Not only am I able to work as part of a team but also under my own initiative to achieve personal and company objectives. I am friendly, enthusiastic, and approachable and have a genuine love of working with people, being calming, caring and generous of nature. I am self-motivated, pro-active and learn new skills quickly. A natural problem solver, with the ability to multitask. Possessing a desire to re-engage in the world of work. I take great pride in my appearance being an excellent representation for any employer. I also speak fluent Gujarati and some Urdu which has helped me translate for individuals I have worked with.

Skills:

- Good timekeeper
- Ability to work quickly and efficiently
- Honest and trustworthy
- Punctual
- Excellent hands on skills
- Excellent organisational skills

Employment History:

Home maker

- Planning meals / Buying food / Preparing and cooking food / Serving food
- Washing-up after meals / Cleaning the house
- Washing clothes / Ironing clothes
- Mending clothes

2007 – Present day

- Getting children ready for school
- First aider
- Giving good advice / Helping with homework / Reading storybooks
- Finding lost things / Fixing everything that goes wrong

Paradise Primary School (Dewsbury)

Sept 2003 – July 2007

Key worker/ Classroom Assistance

- Plan according to EYFS
- To plan IEP for children with special needs.
- To assist in planning of foundation stage
- Work with all children as directed by teaching staff
- Liaise with staff to do planning and plan classroom activities.
- Work with children with behavioural problems.
- Listen to children read and make appropriate recording of progress.

Manorfield Infant School (Batley)

April 2003 – July 2003

Classroom Assistant

- To provide one to one support for children in their activities, set up activities with appropriate equipment
- To translate to children who spoke English as their second language

Brownhil Infants School (Birstall)**Sept 2002 - April 2003****Classroom Assistant**

- To work with group of pupils and one to one in pre-planned activities
- To help set up activities
- To provide support to children working in different areas of play, i.e. role play, sand, water etc.

Play Scheme (Batley), Dewsbury Hospital Children's Ward, Chuckles Day Nursery (Batley)**Classroom Assistant/Play worker - Voluntary/ Work experience****2000 - 2002**

- Help with planning activities
- Set up activities
- Provide support to children in their activities
- Provide one to one support to children in activities
- Assist in mealtime supervision
- Read to children
- Provide comfort and care to children
- Encourage children to take part in pre-planned activities

Education:**Sure Start Centre**

- *The Incredible Years Parenting Programme- 2009*

Engage-Me/ Boothroyed J & I School

- *Personal Development - 2009*

Paradise Prep School

- *Observation, Assessment & Profiling - 2004*

Firm Foundation Course

- *Basic child Protection - 2004*

Rathbone training

- *Early Years Care & Education- L3 - 2004*
- *Early Years Care & Education- L2 - 2003*

EE! Howden Clough Girls' High School

- *Basic First Aid & Safety- Distinction*
- *Promoting Health & Well Being- Merit*
- *Health, Social Care & Early Years Provision- Pass*
- *Introduction to Human Body Systems- Pass*
- *Development & Care of Children- Pass*
- *Health & Social Care- Pass*
- *Understanding Personal Development- Pass*

GCSE:-

- *Maths-Pass*
- *English Lit- Pass*
- *English Lang - Pass*
- *Social Science - Pass*
- *Geography - Pass*
- *Science (double award)-Pass*
- *German - Pass*
- *D + T Textiles - Pass*

Interests:

- Socialising with family+ friends
- Reading
- Family orientated activities

References:

Are available on request

Example CV - Skills

Read

Lucy Marcus

Flat 3A, 18 Floral Place, Example Lane, Normanton NM8 6AY

Telephone: 01956 558123

Mobile: 07717 123456

Email: lucy.example@nomail.com

I have four years' practical experience of community arts development, strong interpersonal skills and can generate a love of learning.

Skills and achievements

Use specific examples of how you have developed your skills.

Communication:

- Able to communicate complex information to individuals and groups, make presentations and respond to questions in both educational and workplace settings. Skills developed in degree programme and during work experience as play leader at Top Tots.
- Able to give and take instructions and maintain active listening during times of pressure. For example, following minor accident in playground provided ambulance crew with important information and reassured other children.

Provide evidence of your achievements. Be precise and don't over-claim

Numeracy:

- Achieved grade A in GCSE Mathematics and grade C in AS level Statistics.
- Gained practical experience of handling money and observing company procedures for checking fraudulent bank notes while working at Drop Price supermarket.

Leadership:

Use words that exemplify the skill – e.g. direction and leadership.

- Responsible for the coordination of the work of four play leaders and direction and management of day-to-day recreational activities of 19 4-7-year olds at Top Tots in August 2012.
- Set up a parents' lobby group to urge the local authority to amend its school transport arrangements.

Teamwork:

- Successfully integrated into the art department at my former secondary school. Co-managed the year 11 parents' evening display of visual arts while on placement.
- Managed the induction and supervision of new members of administrative staff, joining the mixed age team.

Use of 'four' years implies extensive experience and stability.

Administration:

- Prior to starting full-time degree course, I worked for more than four years as an administrator for a small charity. Tasks included assisting in bidding for lottery funds, managing accounts and general administration.

Innovation :

- While volunteering at a local charity, I re-designed publicity materials following an audit of community development activities managed by the charity.

IT literacy:

- Proficient user of Excel and entry-level ability in SPSS; used both for collating and analysing data on pupil test scores while on teaching practice.
- Developed electronic database system so that the charity could maintain contact with its key stakeholders.
- Competent user of PowerPoint, Word, Outlook, and Dreamweaver applications.

Education and qualifications

2010-2013	University of Linchester 2:2 BA (Hons) Learning Studies
2000-2003	Border College of Technology, Foundation Design A levels: Art (A), English (A) and AS level Statistics (C)
1991-1996	Border City High School 8 GCSEs including 'A's in Maths and Science

Employment history

2010 - present	Top Tots - summer play-scheme leader.
2010-2012	Drop Price supermarket - part-time assistant responsible for stock control.
2006-2010	Arts dotcom - administrator and website manager.
2003-2006	Career break and full-time mum of two.
1996-2000	Rags and Riches - sales assistant for womenswear retailer.

Explain breaks in your employment history.

Voluntary experience

2012 (Jul-Aug)	Top Tots - volunteer assistant in summer play-scheme.
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References

Available upon request

Create your CV Template: Chronological

Use the examples above to
have a go at writing your
own CV



More examples and tips
to help can be found at:
[CVs and cover letters |
Prospects.ac.uk](https://prospects.ac.uk/cv-and-cover-letters)

Create your CV Template: Chronological



Create your CV Template: Skills Based

Use the examples above to
have a go at writing your
own CV



Create your CV Template: Skills Based



Word Bank

Accumulated	Aligned	Arranged	Analysed
Accomplished	Anticipated	Assumed	Adopted
Budgeted	Balanced	Brainstormed	Battled
Compiled	Championed	Calculated	Conceptualised
Changed	Captured	Commenced	Conducted
Delivered	Dispatched	Dedicated	Displayed
Explained	Explored	Envisioned	Evaluated
Formulated	Finalised	Fine-tuned	Fulfilled
Generated	Gained	Gathered	Gauged
Handled	Heightened	Hunted	Highlighted
Inspected	Influenced	Identified	Inspired
Launched	Listened	Lobbied	Listed
Managed	Mentored	Motivated	Monitored
Manufactured	Marketed	Minimised	Maximised
Negotiated	Notified	Neutralised	Nurtured
Optimised	Overhauled	Outsourced	Overcame
Promoted	Practised	Persevered	Produced
Polished	Probed	Protected	Performed
Released	Rectified	Repaired	Raised
Revitalised	Revealed	Reshaped	Reached
Spearheaded	Sold	Sharpened	Secured
Surpassed	Succeeded	Specialised	Stimulated
Translated	Targeted	Terminated	Theorised
Undertook	Uncovered	Unveiled	Utilised
Volunteered	Valued	Verified	Visualised
Won	Wrote	Withdrew	Widened

Tailoring your Document

Job descriptions give specific examples of the skills they are looking for in job descriptions. You can use this to 'tailor' your CV to each job you apply for.

The example below shows a job description with the skills highlighted. On the next page, the example shows how you might put this into your CV.

Example 1: Job advert from a cosmetics manufacturer



Beauty counter assistant

We're looking for a Beauty Counter Assistant who is passionate about beauty and skincare products and is looking for a customer-facing role. You will receive on-the-job training so while prior experience is welcome, it is not required.

Working on the shop floor you will:

- ✓ Guide current and potential customers through the product range, listening to their needs and inspiring them with your energy and enthusiasm
- ✓ Showcase your professional knowledge of makeup application and beauty therapy
- ✓ Maximise sales opportunities by making connections with customers and being determined to win repeat business through make-up lessons and appointments
- ✓ Work in a team to ensure all counter and business needs are met
- ✓ Support in store and at external events including new product releases and charity events
- ✓ Achieve individual sales goals agreed with the counter manager

Your name

Your Town | Your Mobile Number | Your Email Address | Your LinkedIn/Twitter/Instagram/Blog Link

Your desired job title

This is your opportunity to showcase who you are and what you can do in relation to the *job* advert

For example: An energetic and enthusiastic customer assistant with 3 years' experience in retail. Now seeking a new opportunity to work in the cosmetics industry.

- Add a short bullet point that showcases your key skills and brings value to your future employer. For example: Organised a yearly charity fashion show to showcase final projects for Art and Design at my old college, raising over £3,000 for a local cause from the ticket sales
- Add another bullet point here: Revisit your list of key achievements for inspiration and pull something out that relates to the job advert
- Add a third bullet point: Steer clear of mentioning any salary expectations or personal details in this section of your CV

Work experience

Company name | start date | end date

Job title

Write a line or two to introduce your job. This should include what you were hired to do, if you were promoted during your employment and some facts and figures about your job (if you were responsible for any team members or budgets etc.)

For example: Employed at a local retail store working in a team of five, keeping the store tidy and well-stocked, serving customers and dealing with queries on the shop floor.

- Add your key achievements in bullet point format here. Start with an action word to give them greater impact. Each role should have a minimum of three achievements, if possible. For example: Helped with the induction of new store staff and supported at other local branches during key sales periods such as Black Friday and January
- Add another achievement here: Helped with the co-ordination of a pop up advisory stall in the store to support the needs of customers
- Add a third here: Assisted with the creation of a loyalty card scheme to maximise sales opportunities

Add a second, third, and fourth job in the same format. Typically, you should add employment history for the last ten years.

Education and vocational qualifications


All of your education and vocational qualifications should be added here. You do not have to list your grades, unless you have recently completed your education. Don't forget to add them in chronological order. For example: Three A-levels: Art and Design, Drama, Photography; nine GCSE grades; piano grade 7.

Hobbies and interests

Do you do anything outside of work that will be of real value to your application, such as work-related interests, volunteering, or any impressive achievements?

If so, describe what you do here, in four to five lines. If you don't have anything that will make you stand out, or that you'll feel comfortable asked about at an interview, leave this section blank.

For example: Run my own vlog with 1,000 subscribers reviewing beauty products; Grade 7 piano, attend Stage School and have appeared in local musical theatre and plays. Volunteer at a residential home assisting the elderly with their personal care.



**Can you now have a go
at tailoring your CV to
a specific job
description?**

**Look back to the
templates you made
and see if you can
adapt them to a
specific job**

Cover Letters

A cover letter is a document sent alongside your CV when applying for jobs. It acts as a personal introduction and helps to sell your application. A cover letter is necessary as it gives you the chance to explain to an employer why you're the best candidate for the job. You do this by highlighting relevant skills and experience; therefore, you should always write your cover letter with the position you're applying for in mind.

A Cover Letter should be no more than a page of A4 - usually around 4 short paragraphs.

Cover Letters should not just repeat your CV but add information



Watch this handy video for a summary of Cover Letters:

[Cover letter tips: Write the perfect cover letter for your job application. - YouTube](#)

Example Cover Letter

August 20, 2019

Dear Hiring Manager,

I recently came across your job listing for the Retail Sales Associate position. I believe that I could prove to be an excellent fit for this job for many reasons. I'm familiar with what it takes to be successful as a sales associate due to the experience that I've gained while working at a similar store up until this point. I'm reliable and always willing to step up when shifts need to be covered. On my resume, you will find references that can attest to this.

In my four years of retail experience, I have gained valuable knowledge about working with a variety of Point of Sales systems. I am comfortable cashing people out and familiar with proper cash handling procedures. In the past, I've worked both the closing and opening shifts and was responsible for balancing the cash drawer and taking deposits to the bank each day. I have a 100% track record for accurate end-of-day balances. I've never been short a penny.

In addition to this, some of my other duties included creating displays, unpacking and stocking new merchandise, and assisting customers with any inquiries that they had about products. My past retail experience has taught me how good customer service can make or break the shopping experience, and I was able to gain valuable insight into how to keep interactions with customers positive. I was good at showing customers how to choose the item that fit both their needs and their budget, which earned me a 30% repeat customer base over two years, which was 5% above the average for sales associates at the store.

If, after taking a look at my resume, you agree that I could be a good fit for your store, I would love to hear about what the next steps are. I am available to talk at your convenience and can be reached by phone or email.

Sincerely,

Jensen Pope

Create your Cover Letter Template

Your Name

Address

Name of Company

Address

Date

Dear [name of manager/sir/madam],

Paragraph One:

- The opening statement should set out why you're writing the letter. Begin by stating the position you're applying for, where you saw it advertised and when you are available to start.

Paragraph Two:

- Highlight relevant experience and demonstrate how your skills match the specific requirements of the job description. Summarise any additional strengths and explain how these could benefit the company.



Paragraph Three:

- Cover why you're suitable for the job, what attracted you to this type of work, why you're interested in working for the company and what you can offer the organisation. This is a good opportunity to show off your knowledge of the company.


2

Paragraph Four:

- Use the closing paragraph to round up your letter. Reiterate your interest in the role and indicate your desire for a personal interview. Now is the time to mention any unavailable dates.

Yours Sincerely

[Name]



For more information about the topics covered in this area and employability you might find the following resources useful:

- **Barclays Life Skills:** An interactive website that allows you to explore lots of options around employability training, including creating a strengths wheel, CV, Cover Letters and much more (free to sign up!): [Employability Skills | Young People Job Skills| Life Skills \(barclayslifeskills.com\)](https://www.barclayslifeskills.com)
- **Prospects:** A useful website with careers advice, example cover letter and CVs and interview tips: [CVs and cover letters | Prospects.ac.uk](https://www.prospects.ac.uk)
- **National Careers Service:** Advice on writing CVs, Cover Letters, accessing the job market, applications and lots more: [Careers advice | National Careers Service](https://www.ncs.org.uk)