

## Writing Your CV - Top 10 Recruiter Pet Hates

Recruiters spend less than 10 seconds reviewing a CV. What are the recruiter's likes and dislikes in a CV and what is going to get a CV read by them?

### 1. Pictures, Graphics or URL Links

Unless you are a super model or are applying to a position such as an actor or TV personality that might require a "headshot," there is absolutely no need to include your picture. A candidate should be judged based on their skills, education and work history, not race, sex, age, etc. This is why it is imperative that if a job seeker possesses the requirements of the position, that they GRAB the recruiter's attention IMMEDIATELY with these skills/experience. The best scenario is to customise each and every CV that is sent out and tailor it to the "hot buttons" that will catch the employer/recruiters attention within 5-10 seconds.

### 2. CVs not sent as a WORD Attachment

Unless specifically requested otherwise, your CV should be sent as a Word Attachment. Do not send your CV as a PDF, Mac file, etc. A recruiter simply does not have time to download and convert special files. In addition, do not send your CV in a ZIP file.

Recruiter TIP ... many recruiters shared with us that it is always a good idea to name your Word Attachment "Smith, John CV". Recruiters have no time to "guess" the author of the attachment.

### 3. Too Duty Oriented

A common complaint amongst recruiters was reading a CV that is "too duty oriented." CVs need to describe more than just job duties. A good CV must also detail your accomplishments. Mention the business benefits and results attributable to your direct effort, involvement or leadership

Recruiter Tip: "Do not separate your skills and accomplishments from each position. Someone should be able to look at it and know what you did at each job, and how long you were there. Make sure to provide specific examples of how the company benefited from your performance. Accomplishments should be quantified in pounds or percentages, for example, (Increased productivity of department). From what to what...1%, 10%, 90%?"

### 4. Objectives or Meaningless Introductions

Instead of an Objective that can pigeonhole your focus too narrowly or an introduction that adds nothing to your background; use this top piece of real estate to really SELL yourself, by creating a HEADLINE.



Tell them who you are and what you do immediately. Come up with one powerful sentence or phrase to "grab" your reader. Think of this like a headline to a major front-page news story. What is going to grab that reader to want to read further?

Eg: Senior-Level Health and Safety Manager with Extensive Experience Working with FDA Regulations in the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Arena.

Recruiter Tip: This headline can be customised to match the job description and "hot-buttons" of the employer or recruiter.

## **5. Lying or Misleading Information**

We all know the temptation is there to beef up your background by stretching the truth here and there to land that job. BEWARE! It is becoming more commonplace for companies to do extensive background and reference checks on a candidate's background prior to hiring. Also, companies are demanding that their vendor recruiters do more extensive background checks.

Recruiters stated the most common misleading information being put on CVs is:

- Inflated titles
- Inaccurate dates to cover up job hopping or gaps of employment
- 1/2 finished degrees, inflated education or "purchased" degrees that do not mean anything
- Inflated salaries
- Inflated accomplishments
- Out and out lies in regards to specific roles and duties

## **6. Candidates Who Apply to Positions They are Unqualified for.**

In order to gain experience in an area, you need to start out somewhere, and recruiters understand this. Recruiters do not have time to sort through hundreds of CVs that are in no way a match for the requirements they are trying to fill.

Recruiter Tip: The easiest remedy is to provide a simple introductory statement 'while my qualifications do not match your requirements, please accept the attached for your files in anticipation of future, suitable opportunities'

## **7. Long CVs**

Situations that usually contribute to long CVs are; too many jobs; a career that is not focused, an inability to be concise, written communication problems, or something similar. All of which make for an 'UNPLACEABLE' candidate.

If you are from academia, but are seeking a position in industry, do not include every publication or journal paper you have ever presented.



Recruiter Tip: For employment beyond 10 years ago, create a "Previous Employment" section. You can quickly list your older assignments by simply including title, company and dates.

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## **8. Poor Formatting**

It is paramount that your CV is clean, clear and not full of major formatting errors. Most candidates are unaware that many formatting features will not view well on a computer screen, and more importantly, will not download properly into many HRIS recruiting systems or job boards.

Recruiter Tip: To see what your WORD document CV will look like as a text file, take it and paste it into NOTEPAD. You can then make any minor formatting changes as necessary within NOTEPAD.

## **9. Spelling Errors, Typos, and Poor Grammar**

In the world of technology and 'Spell Check', you would be amazed at how many CVs come through with errors! Candidates need to remember their CV represents them. The general consensus among recruiters is that your CV will more often than not be your one opportunity to make a First impression.

## **10. Dates Not Included or Inaccurate Dates**

A CV that does not include dates sends up "red flags" about a candidate's background and is immediately tossed out. The obvious assumption is that the candidate is trying to hide something. Furthermore, be honest about your dates of employment.

Recruiter Tip: When providing dates, work history should be in reverse chronological order. The general consensus among recruiters is to place the employer info, title and location to the left hand side of the screen. Your employment dates should be aligned to the right so that your reader can easily "skim" down the page. And if you have a proven track record of staying with a job for a while, absolutely make sure that your employment dates JUMP out at your reader. This is a real selling point about you as a candidate

