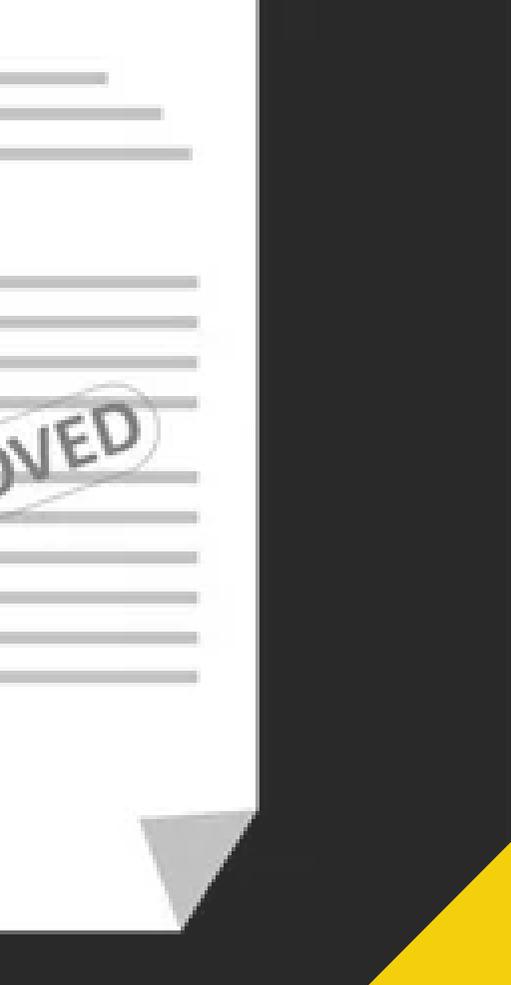XO RECRUITMENT

RESUME WRITING TIPS

How to make a great first impression!

Summary

Why having a resume is important
Key ingredients to include in your CV
How to stand out and catch the eye of the reader
Free CV template to use

WHY IS A RESUME IMPORTANT?

A resume is a personal marketing tool. It is a way to showcase your skills, talents, experience, education and qualifications in one place.
Think of your CV as your first professional introduction to your prospective employer. As it is the first thing an employer sees, it is crucial to use this tool properly to stand out from the crowd. It is a comprehensive record of your professional journey, and lends credibility to your professional persona.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression" - Will Rogers

Key ingredients for a great resume

- Keep your resume approximately two pages long. If you struggle to do this, you can erase information that is not relevant to the role or the industry you're applying for.

- Tailor your resume for each job application. We know it can be time consuming but it is totally worth it! Relate your professional summary to the description for the role.

- Include quantifiable results. Provide some evidence by adding in key achievements, your LinkedIn profile or a link to your online portfolio if you have one.

- Keep things clear, concise, and aerated. Remember nowadays, your CV might be read on a phone. So use bullet points and appropriate spacing, and simplify sentences to make it easy to read.
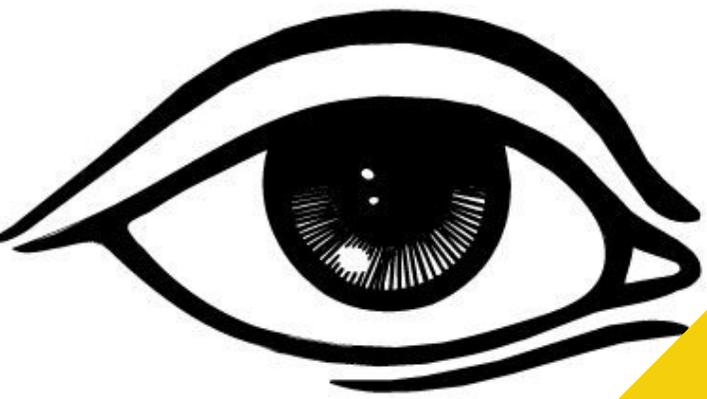
How to grab the attention of the reader

- Use key words smartly - incorporate relevant key words in headings throughout your CV that align with the job description.

- Use clear formatting. Stick to the standard resume format. This will make it easy for recruiters or hiring managers find essential information quickly. Don't get caught up with fancy looking resume formats and colourful fonts. It has to be easy to read for the receiver.

- Putting your accomplishments and impressive milestones towards the top of your CV is a good way to attract the attention of the reader.

It typically takes 6 to 7 seconds for a recruiter or hiring manager to make a decision when looking at a CV

THINGS TO NOTE!

Check for errors! Don't be a rookie and leave spelling mistakes in your resume. Grammar mistakes can leave a bad impression. Proofread your CV or have someone else review it to catch errors.

Using AI such as ChatGPT to help with writing your CV is a great way to get ahead! ChatGPT can help identify important keywords and incorporate them into your CV. However, do not use ChatGPT or AI to write your CV from scratch. Having your own tone of voice is important, and recruiters can spot an AI-written CV from a mile away!

Make sure that you have all your contact details and that they are correct! Phone number and email address are crucial, you don't want to miss out on a call because you mispelt something! Linkedin profile can be a +, but don't write your physical address or any other type of personal information.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CV

The Basics

Name | Email address | Phone Number

Summary - Keep it brief!

Who are you? Briefly introduce yourself, mention your current job title and years of experience relating to the job application. This will tell the reader your career identity and where you are currently in your professional journey.

Key areas of expertise; Highlight 2-3 of your core competencies or areas of expertise that align with the role you're targeting. These can be technical skills, soft skills or industry specific knowledge.

Your value proposition; articulate the value you will bring to this employer. Talk about your problem solving skills, how you drive results and how you will contribute to the company goals.

Your goals or objectives; include a brief statement on your career aspirations or what you're looking for in your next role - particulary if it aligns with the job you're applying for.

Example of a summary;

Results driven Marketing Manager with 5+ years of experience in developing and executing data-driven marketing strategies. Proven track record of increasing brand awareness, driving customer engagement, and delivering measurable business growth. Skilled in digital marketing, content creation, and campaign management across a number of platforms. I am adept at leading cross-functional team, optimizing marketing budgets and using analytics to inform decision-making. Passionate about leveraging innovative marketing techniques to elevate brand presence and looking to bring creative leadership to a dynamic organisation focused on growth and customer-centric marketing.
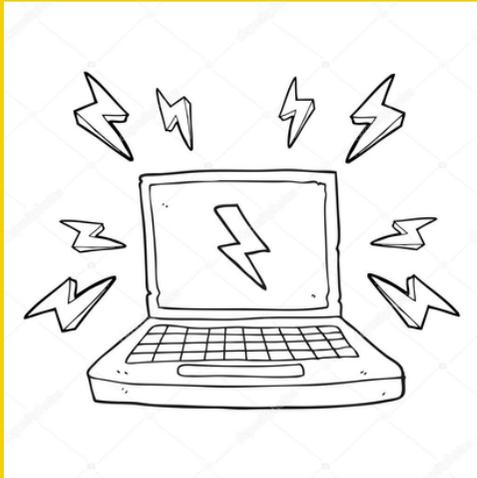
SKILLS

When talking about your skills, the key is to tailor and change according to the role you are applying for.

Include your "skills" section near the top of your resume, below your professional summary. Group your skills into categories such as; **soft skills** and **Technical skills. Make sure you have real-life examples to back it up!**

Example;

Programming Languages: Python, Java, Javascript, SQL
Frameworks: Django, React
Cloud Platforms: AWS, Azure
Soft Skills: Problem-solving, Teamwork, Communication, Time management

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CV

Career History

Writing your career history is super important and crucial in showcasing your experience. Here is how to structure it:

Job title - write your official title

Company Name - organization you worked for

Location - add the country if it was overseas

Dates of Employment - use the format MM/YY - MM/YY (e.g. Jan 2020 - June 2023), or MM/YY - Present if you are still in this role

Summary of your role - Write about your responsibilities and achievements for each role (use bullet points to highlight key accomplishments and responsibilities, and make it mobile-friendly). Use strong action verbs such as "managed", "coordinated", "developed" and "implemented". When highlighting specific achievements, quantify your results with numbers or metrics to show tangible impact. E.g "I mentored junior developers which lead to a 15% reduction in errors and improved team efficiency".

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATES

This section is straight-forward but should be done in a clear and structured way.

EDUCATION SECTION

Place this section below your Experience or Skills section. List your highest degree first and work backwards in chronological order.

Layout;
- Degree Name (e.g. Bachelor of Science in Computer Science)
- Institution Name (e.g. Cambridge University)
- Location (e.g. London)
- Dates attended or graduation date (Month/year)

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CV

CERTIFICATIONS

List your certifications separately, especially if they are technical certifications or relevant to the job. Structure this section similar to the education section, listing the most recent or most relevant certifications first.

Layout;
- Certification Name (e.g. AWS Certified Solutions Architect)
- Issuing Organization (e.g. Amazon Web Services)
- Date Obtained (Month/Year)
- Expiration Date (if applicable)

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CV

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Including hobbies on your CV can give employers a glimpse into your personality. However, they should be relevant and demonstrate skills or traits that can complement your professional capabilities, and your want to avoid to list anything that could lead to bias such as political activities, religious activities etc ....

Example of Strong Hobbies to Include:

- Team Sports (e.g., Football, Basketball): Demonstrates teamwork, collaboration, and discipline.
- Coding/Programming Personal Projects: Shows initiative, problem-solving, and passion for tech.
- Blogging or Writing: Highlights communication skills and creativity.
- Volunteering: Demonstrates empathy, leadership, and community involvement.
- Chess or Strategy Games: Shows analytical thinking and strategic planning.
- Photography or Design: Demonstrates creativity and attention to detail.

SIMPLE CV TEMPLATE

INSERT NAME HERE

Email address | Phone Number |

Summary

This is your elevator pitch where you have just a few lines of text to sell yourself to a potential employer. Try to keep it brief and to the point.

Key skills

Skill one, Skill two, Skill three, Skill four, Skill five, Skill six, Skill seven, Skill eight, Skill nine, Skill ten

Career history

Role Title
at Company Name

Month YYYY – Month YYYY

Overview of role in 1 to 2 lines

Key responsibilities   Insert 2 to 3 key responsibilities (use bullet points)

Achievements   Insert 2 to 3 key achievements

Role Title

at Company Name

Month YYYY – Month YYYY

Overview of role in 1 to 2 lines

Key responsibilities   Insert 2 to 3 key responsibilities (use bullet points)

Achievements   Insert 2 to 3 key achievements

Education

Course or qualification
Graduated YYYY   from Institution Name

Course or qualification
Graduated YYYY   from Institution Name

Hobbies

List your hobies here