

## The curriculum vitae

A CV has only one goal and that is to excite future employers: 'We want to talk to this person!'. If you ask recruiters how they read CVs, they will say in most cases: 'I read so many CVs, 9 seconds at the most!'

There are many tips for CVs. This checklist is also a practical guide. Bear in mind that you are unique in the solution\* you offer to the labour market. Your best CV is the CV that gets you a job interview!

### General

- 2 pages A4 at the most. Attention please! The first page is decisive. And of this page, one sees often only the first half on a tablet, laptop or smart phone. Go straight to the point with your skills.
- Use 'scannable' rows and use bullets in your enumeration (no extensive paragraphs).
- Use 'search terms' from vacancies in your profession. This is crucial for ATS (robots) and CV selection (and LinkedIn).
- Emphasize your last 10 years of work experience; this describes best who you are right NOW. Mention previous work experience brief and to the point.
- **Below (and behind)** the bullet lists and pages is what catches one's eye. **Use this in a smart way.**

### Personal details

- Photo: same professional, business portrait picture as you use on LinkedIn, wearing cloths you would wear during a job interview, with a smile 😊.
- First and last name and titles (if any). Mentioning all your official Christian names is outmoded.
- Street, number, postal code and city on one line.
- Date of birth, with month written in full. For example: 28 November 1963.
- Mobile number, email address and your *public* LinkedIn address (mentioning a landline telephone number is outmoded).

### Profile

- Give a visual description of the solution you are for the labour market. Mention your strong points. Only a few lines.

### Work experience

- Describe your work experience, with your most recent work experience on top.
- Mention employer's names in full, use current company names, avoid using abbreviations.
- Context: describe in a few words who your employer is/was, size of the company, number of employees, etcetera.
- Job title: use the *most common* job title in your profession (that is not always the job title in your contract).
- Describe a gap in your CV in a few positive words. For example: 'Orientation on labour market' or 'Time out...'.  
• Work experience: your most important experience in bullet points, specific, with results, figures and percentages. Figures are magic!

### Education

- Describe your training courses with year and the *current* name of the training institute.
- Did you follow an important course part-time? Then mention this *twice*. You mention it under the employer where you followed this course part-time and you mention it under education as well.

For example your knowledge of languages:

English: fluent business English since 2008, spoke English for twelve years on a daily basis

Sidelines/interests/sports: judge the relevancy; does it empower your 9 seconds CV? Adding sports is tempting!

**\* Don't draft it alone**

My experience teaches us that if you draft your CV on your own, or if you ask someone to check your CV, you don't live up to your promise for not even 30 percent. That's because of your idea of what you do: you consider it's 'normal'. You are 'unconscious competent' in your profession. If you draft your CV together with a job-find-buddy or coach, you'll become 'conscious competent', also on your cv. And that might just effect that you excite in 9 seconds: 'We want to talk to this person!'

Good luck!

Aaltje Vincent, April 2018