



THE IMPORTANCE OF A STELLAR CV

Fifteen seconds. That's the average time that a recruiter or prospective employer spends scanning your CV to make a very crucial decision: read on or move to the next candidate. It's not much time, is it? But for experienced recruiters and human resources employees, who spend hours each day reviewing CVs, it's plenty of time.

The downside? You don't have long to make a good impression.

During this fifteen-second scan, snap assessments are made. Are you located in the right country or city? Is your work experience relevant? Can you spell? A CV is your most important self-marketing tool and your key to securing an interview.

To put it simply – a top notch CV is mandatory in today's competitive job market.

Here are some do's and don'ts to ensure your CV has maximum impact.

Do:

- Use one of the many quality templates available on the Internet. Writing a CV is hard enough; you don't need to start with a blank page.
- Make sure it's succinct. This doesn't necessarily mean your CV should be a one-pager – you need to give people enough to assess your suitability for the role – but keep it to five pages or less. Your CV should be a summary, not a blow-by-blow account of your entire employment history.
- Use reverse chronological order. You'd be surprised how many CVs we see that don't. Your current or most recent position is usually the most important one – work backwards from there.
- Quantify your achievements; describe exactly what your contribution resulted in for your employer. Did you implement a new process that delivered financial savings? Did you strengthen stakeholder relationships which lead to business growth? Did you develop a new induction program that resulted in a smoother onboarding process? Write it down.
- Create a master copy of your CV. CVs are living documents and should be tailored to specific roles. By creating a master copy and fine-tuning it for each job application, you'll maximise your chances of being shortlisted.

Don't:

- It may sound like a no brainer, but don't lie. It's unethical and, in an increasingly networked employment landscape complete with social media, it's highly likely that you'll be caught out.

- Including your hobbies is an excellent way to personalise a CV or connect with your perspective employer, but don't overshare. I recently reviewed a CV where the candidate listed *hugging his wife* as his hobby. That's definitely a step into far-too-personal territory.
- Don't use a font that's difficult to read or considered unprofessional (I'm talking about you, Comic Sans. And yes, it really does happen). Keep it clean, modern and easy to read.
- Don't include an unprofessional email address. Unfortunately, there's every chance that the free account you set up in your teens is no longer appropriate. To be clear, SlickRick2000@gmail.com is not a professional email address.