

CV's and Interviews

Year 11 – 2020-2021

What is a CV?

- A CV stands for 'Curriculum Vitae'. It is essentially a list of your skills and experience that you have to offer a company or job role.
- You will not have a huge amount to add currently due to your young age. But CV's should be added to each time you complete some training, qualification or job role.
- It should be no more than two sides of A4. Any more than this the person reading it will get bored and lose interest.
- It should contain your most up to date contact information – if they like you they will get in touch quite quickly.
- It should be concise and not contain waffle or too many 'buzz' words like 'Team Player'
- Bad grammar and spelling mistakes are a deal breaker – check it, check it and check it again!

Hints and tips for a great CV:

- When describing your accomplishments/responsibilities, Employers want to know what you've accomplished in your previous roles, and what you can bring to the table.
- Here are ten common words or phrases and some synonyms you can use as an alternative:
 - Lead (as in leading a project): execute, initiate, helm, orchestrate, oversee, spearhead
 - Manage (as in managing a team of people): coordinate, direct, guide, head, pilot, supervise
 - Create: design, devise, envision, establish, formulate, launch, pioneer
 - Improve: influence, optimize, overhaul, redesign, revitalize, transform
 - Increase (as in growing profits, production, etc.): advance, amplify, boost, expand, generate, maximize
 - Decrease (as in saving time and money or cutting down on losses): conserve, condense, ease, moderate, reduce
 - Research: analyse, examine, explore, inquire, investigate, study
 - Write: author, brief, compose, define, verbalize
 - Achieve (as in reaching a goal): attain, demonstrate, earn, reach, surpass, win
 - Communicate (with clients or colleagues): convey, correspond, interact, liaise, mediate, network

More hints and tips:

- When describing your personality/attributes are you a go-getter? A self-starter? A team player? That's great if you are, but there are far better ways to describe yourself. Try these instead:
- Self-starter: enthusiastic, inspired, motivated, zealous
- Go-getter: ambitious, aspiring, determined, industrious, passionate
- Detail-oriented: analytic, attentive, comprehensive, meticulous, precise, systematic
- Team player: collaborative, collegial, cooperative, helpful, supportive
- Proficient: accomplished, adept, apt, competent, effective, experienced
- Results-driven: committed, efficient, intent, purposeful
- Go-to person: enlisted, entrusted, expert, relied upon
- Dynamic: agile, diligent, energetic, engaging, lively, versatile
- Innovative: avant-garde, creative, groundbreaking, imaginative, inventive, pioneering, resourceful, shrewd
- Strategic thinker: critical, flexible, focused, logical, methodical, perceptive, studious

Your personal statement/profile, step by step:

- This is meant to be a short, punchy introduction that matches your skills and experiences to the job description. Sounds complicated huh! Here's an example:
- Part 1: Who you are
- Tip - Think about your current position of employment; what you like the most about your career, job or professional field; and your qualities that are valuable in relation to this vacancy.
- Your first sentence may read like so:
'As a successful digital marketing professional specialising in e-commerce, I have recently worked with several global brands in the sector to improve their marketing strategy and boost their reach.'

Your personal statement/profile:

- Part 2: Your suitability and value

- Tip - draw on your achievements that line up with the requirements in the job description, aiming to prove that what you can bring to the table is relevant and impressive.
- Your second point may look like this:

‘I have experience in optimising quality digital products via my most recent role and am therefore in tune with the latest developments across the online landscape. As a result, I have devised winning branding strategies for e-commerce businesses that are robust, customer-centric and set for aggressive growth.’

Your personal statement/profile:

- Part 3: Your career goals
- Tip - should be short and snappy as it's reaffirming why you are applying for this vacancy.
- It might read something like so:

'I am currently looking for a senior branding or marketing management role within the e-commerce sector where I can maintain my strong track record and deliver similar results.'

Other hints and tips:

- Education section – you do not need to list your nursery school and infant/junior school. Companies don't care where you attended when you were 5. They want to know your secondary education, college and University or Apprenticeship establishment.
- Work Experience – write a list of some of the duties you did – stacking shelves, serving customers, tidying the workplace, answering the phone etc. If you didn't do work experience, think of other responsibilities you've had – dog walking, babysitting, helping parents or relatives with their work – it all counts.
- Hobbies and interests – Employers are keen to know how you spend your spare time, it says a lot about you! Get yourself a life if you don't do anything – volunteer, help your neighbours, learn digital skills, create a portfolio of art/photography work, join a club etc.

Jobs for teens:

- Doing some research over lockdown I found a variety of things you can do, relatively cheap, to get you some experience in customer service, setting up a business, marketing and keeping busy. You could:
- Make greetings cards to sell to family and friends
- Babysitting
- Dog walking
- Grass and hedge cutting for neighbours
- Car washing
- Baking and selling cakes, cookies, bread (Gluten free food/allergies?)
- Local shopping and food deliveries for neighbours
- Making jewellery and art
- Printing your photos to sell as postcards
- Embellishments on shoes and clothing

Cover letters:

- When sending off your CV you need to add a cover letter.
- This introduces you to the Employer and gives you a chance to add a little more information about you from your CV.
- I have supported my 25 year old Daughter to do this recently.
- On the next slide is what she had written initially. Then on the following slide is what I wrote for her to add.
- Can you see the difference?

Draft cover letter:

- To have the opportunity to widen my skills alongside a brand I have worked with for over five years is extremely exciting. Diversity and inclusion is something I am strongly passionate about and I am highly driven to see Estee Lauder pushing this further in recent months. This proves the company continues to be innovative whilst also understanding their customer base.
- As a child I have always been surrounded by creativity - my mother is a photographer which led to my interest in photography and the creative world. Studying a photography A Level helped me to develop my creative skills and passion for creating content. Most recently I have thoroughly enjoyed working with friends on collaborative photoshoots and being in charge of Peter Jones' Clinique social media account. I have strong communication skills and have an understanding of Photoshop and iMovie. This opportunity really excites me as it will allow me to develop my skills and interests to a higher level. Furthermore, this will allow me to widen my expertise with a brand I have developed a fond relationship with and am truly passionate about. I have a very strong work ethic and I'm used to working as part of a team but also have the confidence to work on my own and take initiative.

Mrs Moore's cover letter:

- I have thoroughly enjoyed my role of Retail Business Manager at Peter Jones for Clinique. I am always keen to grow my professional and creative skills and feel that now this role has presented itself, I am excited to see if this will give me an even more diverse range of skills that I can use to promote and support the company that I am proud to work for.
- The customer base that I have come to know and understand over my five years working for Estee Lauder, has deepened my knowledge of not only what people are looking for from their products and services, but also how they like to be targeted and promoted to online. I often have conversations regarding a product that a customer has seen on their Instagram or Twitter feed. I would simply love to be a part of that journey. And knowing my customers in the way I do, I feel I can add so much value to what women (and indeed men!) with diverse skin colours, ages, issues and needs want to see online, and promote the Clinique brand, as well as others, in a way that speaks to so many, through a range of media.
- As an avid social media user myself I have been producing content for my counter formonths now. See this link for info..... I really enjoy doing this and would love to have more dedicated time to create such content, as I have so many ideas for campaigns and growing our diversity, as well as being passionate about skincare, make up and the beauty industry as a whole. As a digitally savvy millennial, I would be delighted to benefit from the mentoring programme alongside this apprenticeship. The sharing of ideas, collaborative working and growing a network of other like-minded young people with ambitions like me, sounds exactly what I want to be a part of.
- I do hope you will consider my application for the apprenticeship role. I very much look forward to hearing from you in due course.
- Best wishes,
- CBM.

Interview skills:

- An interview is where you are asked questions by one or more people to find out your suitability for a job role, in person.
- There will be a range of questions to answer. This could include your knowledge about the company to your experience in dealing with difficult situations.
- Some interviews are very formal and others are more informal.
- Depending on how well you perform, you may be offered the job, or invited back for a second round of interviews or an assessment day, where you are observed carrying out a range of tasks.
- You may have to take psychometric tests for certain companies too such as Ford Motors, HP, Deloitte and Procter and Gamble.

Don't panic!

- The interviewer knows you will be nervous. 'Fake it til you make it' – hold your head up, shoulders back and walk into the room confidently.
- They want you to shine and showcase your skills so they can see how you would fit into their company.
- Many interviewers are really encouraging and will also want you to go away with a good impression of their company.
- See it as a learning experience and something to get better at each time.
- Talk positively about yourself and your skills but don't waffle!
- Don't say negative comments about a current employer or yourself as this will not go down well.
- Be as professional as you can – watch your language and posture.