

CV

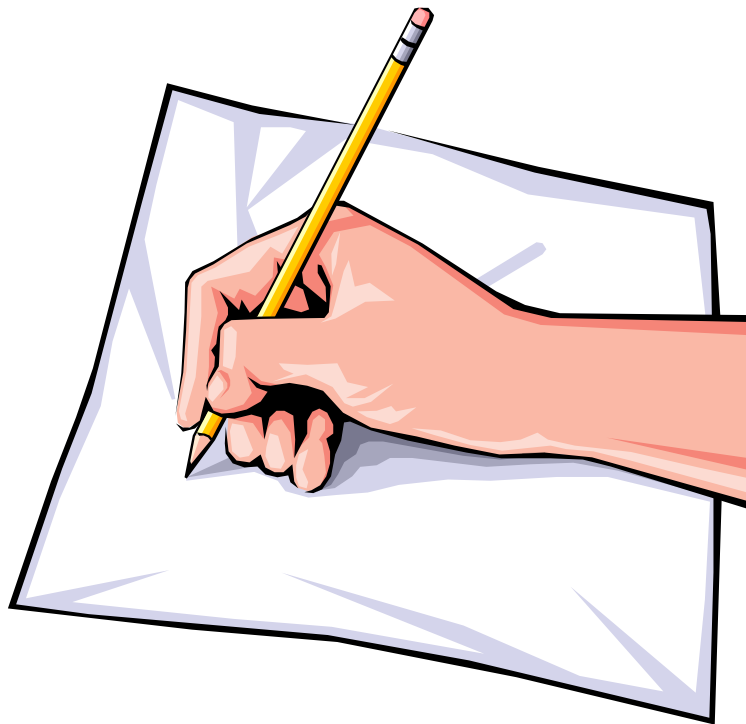
SELF HELP PACK

Includes writing covering letters

This is a self-help pack for adults who want to compile a CV

Produced by nextstep South West @ Connexions West of England

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CV Self Help Pack

The purpose of a CV is to get an interview by convincing an employer that you have the right skills and experience to do a particular job. This pack will help you put together a successful CV.

What's in this pack?

The pack takes you through the stages of writing your CV with the following step by step sections:

- Introduction - Top Tips for a Successful CV
- Information gathering for your CV
- Identifying and promoting your skills
- Writing an attention grabbing profile
- A note on references
- Different CV types
- Skills sets (for some popular occupational areas) to help you identify skills required for these types of work
- Covering letters

How to use the pack

- 1) Read through the pack before you start creating your successful CV.
- 2) Fill in the information gathering forms with your personal details, education and employment experiences.
- 3) Complete the skills activity which will highlight your 8 strongest skills. If you are planning to work in healthcare, admin, retail, construction or support work, you can use the skills sets provided to help you select the skills you have that will fit the job.
- 4) Complete the profile exercise so that you have a basic profile.
- 5) Look closely at the example CVs and decide which type of CV and layout will best suit your situation.
- 6) Have a go at producing a draft CV. Ask people you trust (or a careers advice professional) for constructive feedback.
- 7) Finalise your CV and print onto good quality paper to send off.
- 8) Use the nextstep self help pack on covering letters to produce a good covering letter that you can include with your finished CV.

INTRODUCTION - TOP TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CV

Here are some hints and tips to start you off.

- ✓ Produce a different version of your CV for every job you apply for, highlighting your key skills and experience most relevant to the job description and requirements.
- ✓ Remember that when a recruiter is sifting through a huge pile of CVs what they most want to see is how **you** will add value to their company. Make sure you give them plenty of reason to read beyond the first paragraph of your CV.
- ✓ Keep the layout simple and uncluttered with clear section headings and well organised information that is easy to follow.
- ✓ Always word process your CV and print it out on good quality A4 paper.
- ✓ As a general rule don't use more than 2 sides of A4 paper.
- ✓ Employers are most interested in your recent experience, particularly your current or last job, so include more information about your responsibilities and achievements for these jobs and less detail for earlier jobs.
- ✓ If you have had a lot of jobs you could group some together or summarise periods of time. There is nothing worse for a recruiter than reading every two week contract you've had in the last ten years.
- ✓ Only include information that is relevant to your application. You don't need to put your marital status, family details or date of birth, unless specifically asked for.
- ✓ Don't include a photo unless requested.
- ✓ Your CV should show a continuous history for you from the end of secondary school to date. You should therefore explain any gaps including time spent travelling, bringing up a family or not employed (see example CVs for techniques for this) – often this will be seen as a positive thing.
- ✓ For periods of time not in paid employment, highlight any voluntary work, training or activities that you did.
- ✓ Include achievements in and out of work and quantify them whenever possible.
- ✓ Be honest about any hobbies or interests you include – don't add things to impress as you many get caught out at interview. However, do try to include those hobbies and interests which will make a positive contribution to your employment, e.g. voluntary work, club membership or charity work.
- ✓ Never lie on a CV, it can only lead to trouble.

INFORMATION GATHERING FOR YOUR CV

Start by pulling together the main pieces of information that go into your CV.

Personal details:

Name	Address
Tel	
Mobile	Email address

Previous employment:

Consider all of your experience including paid and unpaid and voluntary work. Focus on your most recent experience first, giving details of your two most recent roles, then summarise or briefly list your remaining experience (unless there is something you really wish to highlight for the role). When you write down the key tasks and responsibilities for each job role, consider the type of work for which this CV will be targeted.

Job Title	Tasks/Responsibilities	Employer	Date from – to

Achievements - *think about any key achievements from your work to date and illustrate where possible with numbers / activities/ outcomes / successes:*

-
-
-

Education and training:

Institution	Qualification	Grades	Dates
Other on-job or non-accredited training			
Other interests and achievements outside of work			
Clean driving licence?			

IDENTIFYING & PROMOTING YOUR SKILLS

What are your skills?

Your skills are simply the things you do well. Many people feel that they have few skills but the reality is that we all use a wide variety of skills both in the workplace and at home. It is important to know your skills as the **skills** are a main feature of a good CV.

Skills can be transferred from one job to another. There are key skills that underpin many different types of work such as knowledge and application of information and communication technology, improving own learning and performance, teamwork, problem solving and application of numbers. These key skills are really valued by employers. Look at the lists below and tick those that you feel you are particularly good at. Don't forget to think about skills you use both in and out of work.

People based skills:

- Talking and listening to people
- Explaining things to people
- Dealing with complaints or enquiries
- Putting people at ease
- Organising people
- Selling, persuading, negotiating
- Motivating others
- Being supportive to people
- Training or tutoring
- Managing, supervising or leading
- Working effectively in a team

Thinking skills:

- Coming up with new ideas
- Evaluating different ideas
- Thinking of improvements or alternatives
- Planning ahead and setting goals
- Developing other people's ideas
- Sizing up a situation quickly
- Deciding between different courses of action
- Working out how to deal with things that have gone wrong
- Developing projects and ideas
- Being creative/artistic

Practical Skills:

- Using a keyboard
- Using hand tools
- Operating powered equipment
- Maintaining equipment or machinery
- Mending and repairing equipment
- Diagnosing faults and testing equipment
- Using physical strength
- Handling materials or equipment with precision and speed
- Using IT: word-processing, databases, spreadsheets and Internet

Skills using numbers, data & information:

- Keeping accurate records
- Making accurate measurements
- Using numbers accurately
- Following written instructions or diagrams
- Working out costs and budgeting
- Checking information for accuracy
- Writing letters, memos and reports
- Extracting information from reports, books or manuals
- Organising paperwork systems
- Organising or classifying information
- Providing information verbally or in writing
- Researching information
- Analysing numerical information
- Prioritising workloads
- Managing time effectively to meet deadlines

Add any others that you feel are missing from this list:

Putting your skills into your CV:

You will see from the CV examples later in this pack that your best skills are shown in a very prominent place. You should select your six strongest skills that are most relevant to the job or type of work you are applying for. They can be listed in bullet points at the start of your CV (after your profile) and show, at a glance, that you have what it takes to do the job you are applying for.

This is a selection of positive phrases that you could use to describe your skills:

Highly skilled at.....	With the ability to.....
Excellent.....skills	Highly developed.....skills
Very good at.....	Proven ability to.....
Extremely good at.....	Excelling at.....
Expertise in.....	Capable of.....
Experienced in.....	Successful at

Choose your 6 strongest skills and give an example for each of when you have used them. *To do this, consider the tasks and responsibilities from your previous roles (page 3) and identify the skills you developed to enable you to successfully carry out these tasks. Relate the skills you list to the type of work that you are looking for. The first line shows an example. You can then transfer the list to your CV.*

TASK – what work tasks did I have to do	SKILLS – indicate level of skill and if possible give an example to show your abilities
handling telephone enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> excellent communication and negotiation skills developed whilst working in a busy call handling centre

WRITING AN ATTENTION GRABBING PROFILE

Look at the example CVs and you will see that they all start with a short '**profile**' of around 2-3 lines. The profile is a summary of your main selling points and aims to grab the attention of the reader from the start and encourage them to read on. (Most recruiters spend only a few seconds reading a CV so make the first paragraph count!) As with everything on your CV it will be targeted towards the job or type of work you are applying for. Your profile will be supported by a list of your key skills – about 6 bullet pointed skills & achievements.

Your profile should contain the following:

- Your positive qualities (use two or three of the circled ones from the activity below)
- Your best skills (highlight a couple of your strongest and most relevant skills from pages 5 and 6)
- Your experience (highlighting what is relevant to the job you are applying for)
- Your career objective or aim (this could be a particular role or level of responsibility – or both)

Positive Qualities

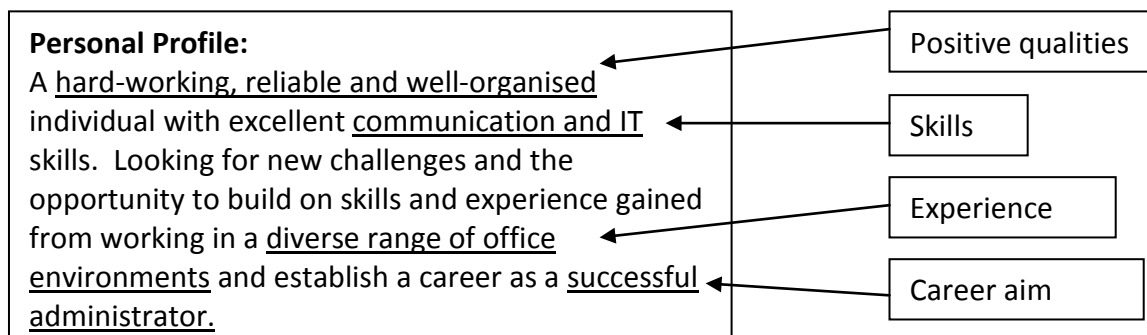
As well as our skills, employers look for other positive qualities. You will find lots of examples of these below. Begin by underlining your top 8 positive qualities. Then circle 3 from those 8 that you consider are your strongest ones.

Friendly	Kind	Dynamic	Enthusiastic
Flexible	Quick-thinking	Hard-working	Fit
Honest	Versatile	Creative	Adaptable
Willing to learn	Calm	Compassionate	Organised
Confident	Committed	Imaginative	Thorough
Articulate	Analytical	Innovative	Open-minded
Energetic	Mature	Diplomatic	Adventurous
Punctual	Reliable	Capable	Self-motivated
Caring	Decisive	Professional	Resourceful

This simple example could be adapted to suit your circumstances and of course you can add words that are better for you. The underlined words show positive qualities, and the previous sections in this pack will have helped you to identify your key skills and experience. The last thing to include is your career objective. Create your own profile, then adapt it each time you apply for a new role.

Your personal profile would normally go at the top of your CV, immediately under your name and contact details.

Now put together one or two sentences for your personal profile that summarise your positive qualities, your best skills, your relevant experience and your career objective or aim. For example:



Your personal profile:

A NOTE ON REFERENCES

An employer will want to know that they can ask for a reference so they have a way to check you will be a good employee.

'References available upon request' - as a general rule, it is best not to give the names and addresses of referees on your CV. You can provide them if they are requested, and you should then brief your referees carefully about who they may be talking to, and what the potential job is all about.

Ideally choose your most recent employer and a colleague or ex-colleague who knows you professionally. Alternatively, if you have been self employed or experienced a long period of unemployment - choose a referee who knows you through a club, society, charity or school that you support.

You should now have all the elements you need to put together a successful CV. The following pages give examples of different CV formats you could use to present the information you've gathered.

DIFFERENT CV TYPES

A: This type of CV is used to highlight the skills and experience learned in earlier jobs which may be relevant to the one you are applying for, even if the previous jobs were different.

Joe Bloggs
28 Station Road
Bristol, BS12 5XX
Tel: 0117 2917973
Joe.Bloggs@yahoo.co.uk

A hard-working, reliable and fully qualified Heavy Goods Vehicle driver with proven experience of organising transport movements across the UK and Europe, seeking work within the Bristol area.

Key Skills

- Excellent practical driving and vehicle maintenance skills
- Excellent organiser and time manager with the ability to plan routes and prioritise loads to meet schedules
- Experienced in completing accurate vehicle records and delivery paperwork
- Very good communication skills
- Capable of working independently and concentrating for long periods of time
- Physically fit and able to work with heavy loads

Employment

Drive UK, HGV Driver

2001 - Date

- Driving 7.5 tonne HGV and carrying out multi-drops across UK and Europe
- Planning routes to ensure delivery of loads in accordance with schedules and instructions
- Knowledge of UK and European road systems and traffic laws
- Ensuring safety of vehicles and loads at all times
- Carrying out routine servicing of lorry on day-to-day basis
- Accurately maintaining vehicle record books
- Maintaining a high level of physical fitness in order to load and move heavy equipment

Express Solutions, Driver (HGV and vans)

1996 - 2001

- Driving HGV vehicles and light vans
- Successfully completing HGV Class 1 and Hasmat training
- Communicating effectively with customers to confirm schedules, complete paperwork and help unload deliveries
- Carrying a variety of loads including hazardous chemicals and explosives
- Responsible for security of vehicle and loads, often of substantial value
- Basic vehicle maintenance and light repairs

Bristol Homes Ltd, Bricklayer

1995 - 1996

- Carrying out the foreman's instructions
- Prioritising tasks to meet deadlines
- Lifting and carrying heavy loads
- Communicating with colleagues in a small team

Professional Qualifications

- HGV Class 1 Licence (1999)
- Hasmat (2000)

Education

St Martins Comprehensive School, Bristol

1990 - 1995

GCSEs: English and Science

References available upon request

B: This 'Chronological' CV is useful to show progression from assistant to management level by quantifying achievements and grouping together junior jobs.

Paul Jones
12 Redhill Lane
Yate
BS12 5XX
Tel: 01454 258965
pauljones15@aol.com

A motivated, innovative and pro-active retail manager experienced in high-turnover retail environments with a proven track record in improving productivity and performance, keen to continue successful career progression into senior management level

Key Skills

- Able to communicate effectively at all levels
- Excellent motivator with proven record of developing and sustaining a positive and productive working environment
- Highly developed organisational skills
- Creative approach to problem-solving with the ability to devise and implement innovative solutions resulting in improved profitability
- Comprehensive understanding of the demands and workings of the retail sector
- Capable of working effectively in highly pressurised environments

Career History and Achievements

A1 Supermarkets, Gloucester

2001 - 2004

Departmental Manager (Grocery)

- Managed grocery department with turnover of 150,00k and staff of 15
- Increased annual departmental turnover by 5k through a range of sales initiatives including price targeting, display modifications and new product ranges
- Improved stock control systems and reduced shrinkage and waste
- Achieved highest profitability of all grocery departments in South West region for 4 successive months
- Maintained level of sales during period of extensive refurbishment
- Reduced staff turnover by 15% through implementing staff training at departmental level and introducing a staff appraisal scheme
- Worked closely with departmental supervisors - delegating tasks and responsibilities
- Compiled monthly report and sales figures for management meetings
- Promoted from Section Supervisor

Section Supervisor

1999 - 2001

- Organised staff rotas and cover to meet staffing targets
- Prioritised and delegated staff tasks and responsibilities
- Planned and managed daily stock rotation and scheduling
- Handled customer complaints and enquiries
- Contributed to weekly team meetings by reporting on section performance
- Managed stock deliveries and updated stock control data
- Suggested changes to section layout that were successfully implemented and resulted in higher sales

Woolmarts, Bristol City Centre

1998 - 1999

Team Leader

- Supervised small team of 4 staff in CD department including arranging staff rotas and allocating tasks
- Ordered and replenished stock
- Advised customers and dealt with enquiries and complaints
- Authorised to cash-up tills
- Key-holder
- Awarded best employee on three occasions

Previous relevant experience

1994 – 1998

Before joining Woolmarts, I gained experience in several retail and service environments including Sales Assistant with Budget Frozen Foods in Bristol, Customer Care Advisor at a call centre and as a Delivery Assistant with Sparks Electrical Goods. These jobs enabled me to develop a range of relevant skills such as customer care, teamwork and time-management as well as to gain an understanding of the demands of the retail sector.

Professional Training

During my career I have successfully completed the following training courses:

- IBM Budgeting for Managers
- Effective Selling in the 21st Century
- Staff Management in the Retail Sector
- Equal Opportunities
- A1 Stock Control Systems
- Keeping the Customer Happy
- Successful Complaint Handling

Education and Qualifications

NVQ Level 3 Sales and Retail	2000
Markham College, Bristol GNVQ Business Admin	1993 - 1995
Grange Park School, Bristol 6 GCSEs including Maths and English	1989 - 1993

Interests

- Restoring and renovating classic cars to show standard
- Treasurer of the North Bristol Car Club – involves recording all income and expenditure, producing annual financial report and chairing the AGM
- Keen football supporter and season ticket holder

References can be supplied on request

C: This 'functional' CV is useful to play down lots of short-term jobs or career breaks by emphasising key skills and experience rather than continuous employment.

Jane Smith
12 Cox Lane
Filton
Bristol BS7 9PJ
Tel: 0117 894657
Mobile: 0779 5689125

An efficient, adaptable and experienced administrator with excellent organisational and IT skills demonstrated in a range of office environments and roles looking for a permanent position in a progressive company to develop skills and meet new challenges

Key Skills

- Highly organised with the ability to prioritise and carry out a range of administrative tasks within deadlines
- Ability to contribute effectively to a team or to work independently
- Extensive knowledge and application of MS Office software
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Knowledge of good office practices and procedures gained through several years of relevant experience
- Accurate and methodical approach to all work responsibilities and tasks
- Very adaptable with experience of working in a wide variety of environments with the ability to quickly learn new skills and knowledge
- Received 'Temp of the Month' award on two occasions with Blue Bond agency reflecting reliability and performance

Key Experience

Receptionist

- First-line contact for clients and customers in several organisations including a large multi-national company, a medical centre and local council department
- Using several switchboard systems
- Dealing with telephone and face-to-face enquiries
- Booking meeting rooms and organising refreshments

Administrative Assistant

- Maintaining and updating client and staff records, and file systems
- Producing and circulating letters, minutes and memos using MS Word
- Liaising with a range of internal and external staff and organisations
- Organising meetings and taking minutes
- Dealing with incoming and outgoing post
- Maintaining diaries for key management personnel

Finance Assistant

- Documenting accounts, familiar with Sage software and MS Excel
- Preparing correspondence
- Processing invoices, cheques, credit and debit notes, payments and receipts

Career History

Blue Bond Recruitment Agency 2002 - Date
Variety of temporary administrative appointments including receptionist for AXA Life, administrative assistant for Heritage cars and personnel assistant at Bristol University

Kingswood Medical Centre 2001
Receptionist

Office Temps 1999 - 2000
Administrative temporary work including receptionist for Bristol City Council and claims administrator for Sun Insurance

McGovern & Sons 1998 - 1999
Finance Assistant

Education and Qualifications

South Bristol Learning Centre 2001 - 2002

- European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)
- CLAIT 1

Filton College
▪ GNVQ Business Admin 1996 - 1998

Marchford High School, Bristol 1992 - 1996

GCSEs: English Grade B
 Maths Grade C
 History Grade D
 Geography Grade D

Personal Details

Driving Licence: Full, clean driving licence and own car

Interests: Member of local amateur dramatic society – assisting backstage at a number of shows and performances
 Going to the theatre and cinema

References: Available upon request

If your CV is more than one side of paper, you may want to put a page number and your name at the bottom of each side so that if the recruiter separates or photocopies the pages they stay together.

D: This CV is useful following time away from paid employment through family responsibilities, travelling or unemployment. It focuses on skills, experience, interests and voluntary work that are relevant to the new career direction.

Jacqueline Moore
12 Ward Close
St Paul's
Bristol
BS3 4RF
Tel: 0117 347264

Personal Profile

A creative individual with an excellent eye-for-detail and the patience to see through detailed and complex work. An strong communicator who is hard-working and reliable and keen to build on skills and interests to develop a career within the area of personal care and beauty

Key Skills and Abilities

- Good eye for detail with a high level of manual dexterity
- Imaginative and creative approach with a strong interest in beauty and styling
- Very patient with excellent listening and communication skills
- Ability to work using own initiative or to contribute effectively to a team
- Highly organised
- Willing to learn new skills and knowledge

Career History

1994 to present

During this period I have been unavailable for paid employment due to bringing up and caring for my two young children who are now at school. I did however complete a CLAIT course and I have undertaken some voluntary work which is detailed below:

- Head and Hands Beauty Salon, Easton
- Advising clients when selecting designs for nails requiring excellent communication skills and knowledge of nail products and nail care
- Plaiting and braiding hair
- Using creativity to design styles for hair and nails
- Helping maintain high level of hygiene and cleanliness in the salon

Classroom Assistant and reader (voluntary) **Millbrook Primary School**

- Working with pupils in small groups or one-to-one to improve their reading requiring patience and understanding
- Creating games so that the children learnt through play
- Helping the class teacher prepare and set-up lessons
- Assisting on away days and during summer holiday activity sessions

Motif Designs Ltd**1991 - 1994****Machine Operator (Needlework)**

- Controlling 12 heads of cotton simultaneously on an embroidery machine to ensure continuous production of emblems for sports clothing
- Accurately following patterns
- Identifying and correcting problems with the operation of the machine, requiring a high level of manual dexterity
- Applying concentration, patience and an eye for detail to monitor and maintain machine operation
- Working without supervision using own initiative

Travel Inn Metro**1989 - 1991****Room Attendant**

- Responsible for cleaning and tidying guest rooms to meet company standards demonstrating a high level of reliability and trustworthiness
- Utilising customer care skills to assist customers when required
- Calculating required level of stocks and cleaning materials
- Organising own work routine
- Using cleaning chemicals in accordance with instructions and health and safety requirements

Education and Qualifications

St Paul's Community Centre (2001) CLAIT 1

1985 - 1989 Easton Comprehensive CSEs: English, needlework, art, and citizenship
Pitmans Typing Certificate**Personal Details**

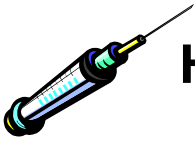
I take a keen interest in personal care and beauty as I decorate nails and plait hair for family and friends designing intricate and innovative styles that take many hours to create. I read several beauty magazines so that I can keep up-to-date with current styles, products and trends. I also design and make dolls clothes and alter clothing using my sewing skills.

Clean driving licence and own transport

References available upon request

SKILLS SETS - FOR A SELECTION OF POPULAR WORK AREAS

This final section of this pack details some of the skills and personal qualities that may be desirable for particular areas of work. If you are looking for work in these areas, you could use this for the exercise on pages 5 and 6 to help you identify personal skills and attributes that you want to include in your CV.



Healthcare

Here are some of the skills and personal qualities relevant to working in healthcare. However, there are many different jobs within this area from hospital porter to surgeon and each job will require particular skills in addition to the ones listed here. You should therefore use this list as a guideline when deciding which skills to highlight on your CV.

Skills:

- Interpersonal (relating to patients/relatives of all ages and backgrounds who are often in distress)
- Verbal communications (explaining, advising)
- Written communications (to read and produce records)
- Active listening skills
- Persuading and motivating
- Team worker
- Well-organised
- Able to prioritise workloads
- Observant
- Numerate (administering medicines)
- Remain calm in highly pressurised and crisis situations and to react effectively to rapidly changing circumstances
- Problem-solving
- Attention to detail and a methodical approach

Personal Qualities:

- Patient
- Tactful
- Sensitive to others needs and situations
- Sense of humour
- Caring
- Physically fit with good levels of stamina



Retail and Sales

Here are some of the skills and personal qualities relevant to working in retail and sales. However, there are many different jobs within this area from sales assistant to buyer and each job will require particular skills in addition to the ones listed here. You should therefore use this list as a guideline when deciding which skills to highlight on your CV.

Skills:

- Interpersonal (good manner with customers)
- Verbal communications (explaining and advising)
- Customer service (listening, helping, dealing with complaints and difficult customers)
- Numerate
- Selling (persuading, negotiating)
- Good eye for detail and accurate approach
- Able to work independently and follow instructions
- Remain calm and approachable in busy and pressurised environments
- Manual Dexterity (for some retail work)
- Creative approach (creating displays and merchandising)
- Product knowledge – good memory

Personal Qualities:

- Friendly, helpful and polite
- Tactful
- Outgoing
- Sense of humour
- Well-presented
- Physically fit with good levels of stamina



Building and Construction

Here are some of the skills and personal qualities relevant to working in the construction industry. However, there are many different jobs within this area from bricklayer to surveyor and each job will require particular skills in addition to the ones listed here. You should therefore use this list as a guideline when deciding which skills to highlight on your CV.

Skills:

- Practical skills (handling tools and machinery with speed and precision)
- Verbal communication (advising and explaining to colleagues and customers)
- Manual dexterity
- Planning
- Organising
- Prioritising tasks
- Aptitude for maths
- Team-worker
- Problem-solving
- Self-motivated
- Attention to detail
- Ability to read and follow plans and diagrams
- Safety awareness
- Follow instructions

Personal Qualities:

- Physically fit
- Enjoy working outdoors
- Head for heights



Administration

Here are some of the skills and personal qualities relevant to working in administration. However, there are many different jobs within this area from personal assistant to office manager and each job will require particular skills in addition to the ones listed here. You should therefore use this list as a guideline when deciding which skills to highlight on your CV.

Skills:

- Well-organised
- Plan and prioritise tasks to meet deadlines
- Spelling and grammar
- Accurate and methodical approach to work
- Written communication skills for producing documents
- Verbal communication skills especially in customer facing roles in order to give information and answer enquiries
- Telephone manner
- Follow procedures and systems
- IT skills particularly – knowledge of word processing and other MS Office software
- Process and analyse information and data
- Using a range of technical office equipment

Personal Qualities:

- Neat and tidy
- Smart in appearance
- Friendly and co-operative
- Polite and helpful



Social Work, Support Work & Counselling

Here are some of the skills and personal qualities relevant to doing support work. However, there are many different jobs within this area from social worker to careers adviser and each job will require particular skills in addition to the ones listed here. You should therefore use this list as a guideline when deciding which skills to highlight on your CV.

Skills:

- Interpersonal skills with the ability to establish relationships, develop rapport and sympathise and empathise with clients from different backgrounds and cultures
- Need to be persuasive and to negotiate/advocate on behalf of clients
- Verbal communication skills to advise and explain
- Written communication skills to produce records and reports
- Team-working with colleagues and other professionals
- Organise activities – often for groups
- Flexible and adaptable to move between different situations
- Able to work independently and to manage and prioritise caseloads
- Manage conflict and other stressful and demanding situations
- Admin skills including record keeping and IT
- Work within strict guidelines and regulations

Personal Qualities:

- Non-judgemental and tolerant
- Self-confident
- Discreet
- Common-sense and a mature and responsible outlook
- Patience
- Sensitivity
- Caring nature
- Outgoing

nextstep South West

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COVERING LETTERS

Why bother to write one at all?

Including a covering letter with a CV or application form adds a personal touch, shows professionalism and gives you yet another opportunity to remind the employer of your strong points. Producing a personalised letter shows the employer that you have a genuine interest in the job and in his/her organisation.

A covering letter assumes that you are applying for an advertised post so be sure to include details of the vacancy title and any reference numbers on the letter.

For a direct speculative approach, you should state why you are writing to them. Write a short summary of your skills and experience but do not repeat the whole content of your CV.

In your letter you should say:-

- Why this particular role interests you
- Why you want to work in this sector / career
- Why you have applied to this particular organisation

Top tips for covering letters

- Type in the same font and size as your CV
- Keep it short, use only one side of A4
- Where possible use the recruiter's title and name e.g. Mr Jones (remembering to sign off yours sincerely).
- In the case of speculative enquiries, it is best to try and elicit the named contact for an organisation in advance of your letter writing.
- Date the letter
- Include all your contact details
- Make sure the recruiter can read your signature
- Don't use abbreviations (I'm, can't) or acronyms
- Check it for spelling, grammar and presentation before sending

See Example attached.

SPECULATIVE LETTERS

When you are not applying for a job that has been advertised but would like to work for a particular company, you may decide to send a speculative letter.

See Example attached.

Structure of a good speculative letter

Include your full contact details

25 The Row
The Lane
Bristol
BS10 4BY
0115 3939793
Mob : 07070 12345
Email : jbloggs@hotmail.com

Letter goes to a named person in the company

Ms E McAuley
Comfy Fit Retailers
Old Town
BA1 11X

Date

Dear Ms McAuley,

Choose something that makes it clear that you know something about the company

Focus on needs of the employer & indicate the type of work you are seeking

I was pleased to see in the local paper that your company has opened premises in the new Cabot Circus Development in Bristol.

At times like these, recruiting experienced sales staff can make a huge difference. I am a retail assistant with significant experience in clothing and footwear.

I am pleased to attach a CV which outlines my experience and achievements in a number of areas including:

Highlight achievements in brief

- Developing a new stock control system
- Achieving "Sales assistant of the month" on 3 occasions
- Running my own business successfully for 5 years

I would welcome an opportunity of a meeting to discuss how I can contribute to your organisation.

Yours sincerely

End on a positive note and seek next action

Joanna Blogs

Enc

**EXAMPLE OF A COVERING LETTER TO USE WITH A CV OR APPLICATION
FORM**

24 The Street
Bristol
BS10 4XY
0113 3939793/
Mob : 07070 12345
Email : twhitely@hotmail.com

14th April 2007

Mrs Keenan
Hotel Manager
Comfy Hotels
Bristol Central
BS1 3XX

Dear Mrs Keenan

POST OF HEAD RECEPTIONIST REF 237/06

I am applying for the post of head receptionist as advertised in the Bristol Evening Post last Thursday 10th April.

I was pleased to see that Comfy Hotels has expanded its business to include the South West region. I am now seeking to further my career in the hospitality industry where my skills and knowledge can be utilised.

As you will see from my CV, I have a good deal of experience in providing frontline services to members of the public in a variety of settings, including hotels. I have excellent customer care skills. I enjoy meeting people and I have a confident and warm personality.

As someone who is committed to lifelong learning I am currently studying for my NVQ level 2 in Hospitality (Front Office).

I am available for interview at any time, and hope to hear from you in the near future. Thank you for considering my application.

Yours sincerely

Signature

TOM WHITELEY

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