

English for Business

Chapter 5

Writing an Impressive CV (Part 2)

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Writing an Impressive CV (Part 2)

1. Identifying Key Skills
2. Highlighting Your Work Experience
3. Detailing Your Education and Qualifications

Identifying Key Skills

1. Communication skills (written and oral)
2. Foreign language skills
3. Intellectual skills (e.g. critical, analytical and problem-solving skills)
4. Interpersonal skills (e.g. working with or motivating others, flexibility)
5. IT skills
6. Numeracy skills (e.g. statistical skills, data handling)
7. Organizational skills (e.g. working independently, meeting deadlines)
8. Research skills

Personal Statement (1)

“my role was to assist the project team in devising and implementing strategies to communicate this message to local residents in different regions in Kenya.”

(communication/teamwork/creativity/organization)

“In Sept 2007 I successfully completed an eight-person expedition to Austral Andes in Argentina.”

(motivation/teamwork/achievement/creativity)

“As the sole Spanish speaker I acted as spokesperson for our group, organizing bookings and negotiating the expedition itinerary.”

(interpersonal skills/communication/analysis/negotiation)

Personal Statement (1)

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(motivation/teamwork/achievement/creativity)

“As the sole Spanish speaker I acted as spokesperson for our group, organizing bookings and negotiating the expedition itinerary.”

(interpersonal skills/communication/analysis/negotiation)

Personal Statement (2)

“I organized and led sports and drama activities for 200 international students at a summer school in Shrewsbury.”

organization/leadership/motivation/writing

“the nature of the project meant that I had to travel regularly throughout the country at short notice, and share basic living conditions.”

flexibility/teamwork/research/interpersonal skills

“I am currently completing in-dept research on reforestation techniques for the African subcontinent for my Master’s degree dissertation.”

Independence/analysis/research/teamwork

Personal Statement (2)

“I organized and led sports and drama activities for 200 international students at a summer school in Shrewsbury.”

organization/leadership/motivation/writing

“the nature of the project meant that I had to travel regularly throughout the country at short notice, and share basic living conditions.”

flexibility/teamwork/research/interpersonal skills

“I am currently completing in-dept research on reforestation techniques for the African subcontinent for my Master’s degree dissertation.

Independence/analysis/research/teamwork

Self evaluation:

1. My role was to ...
2. As the ... I acted as ...
3. The nature of ... meant that I had to ...
4. Within this role I was responsible for ...
5. To do this effectively, I had to ...

Review: Silvia's skill-based CV

1. I assisted in organizing and managing 12 ... events.
2. In Sept 2007 I ... completed an eight-person expedition to Austral Andes in Argentina.
3. Three months of training and fundraising preparation resulted in the ... crossing of the remote central part of the Southern Patagonian ice cap
4. I devised a number of sporting tournaments for the summer school students and motivated the children and staff to get ... involved, culminating in an ... volleyball competition.

Review: Silvia's skill-based CV

1. I assisted in organizing and managing 12 **successful** events.
2. In Sept 2007 I **successfully** completed an eight-person expedition to Austral Andes in Argentina.
3. Three months of training and fundraising preparation resulted in the **successful** crossing of the remote central part of the Southern Patagonian ice cap
4. I devised a number of sporting tournaments for the summer school students and motivated the children and staff to get **fully** involved, culminating in an **international** volleyball competition.

Review: Silvia's skill-based CV

5. I handled a ... variety of tasks and projects throughout the six-month project.
6. The ... approach was adopted by the ... team across the country.
7. I research ... international universities for my degree courses.
8. I am currently completing ... research on reforestation techniques.
9. Research for my dissertation includes ... use of the Internet.
10. I have an ... command of Microsoft Office Suite.

Review: Silvia's skill-based CV

5. I handled a **wide** variety of tasks and projects throughout the six-month project.
6. The **successful** approach was adopted by the **entire** team across the country.
7. I research **top** international universities for my degree courses.
8. I am currently completing **in depth** research on reforestation techniques.
9. Research for my dissertation includes **substantial** use of the Internet.
10. I have an **excellent** command of Microsoft Office Suite.

Highlighting your work experience

Think about a job or position of responsibility you have held.

1. What were your duties?
2. What did you do?
3. How did you do it?
4. What were the positive results of the action you took?

Layout of work experience section of a CV

Chronological CV

With this approach, your work experience is listed in chronological order, starting with your most recent job. Your main achievements and skills are tied to a specified job, at a specified time, in a specified place.

Functional/ skill-based CV

With this approach, your relevant achievements are listed separately under skills headings at the top of your CV. The names, dates, and locations of your work experience are listed towards the bottom of your CV.

Using past simple without personal pronoun

Example:

True : Chaired weekly meetings.

False : ~~I chaired weekly team meetings.~~

Examples of action verbs in CV

Achieved	Compiled	Edited	Improved	Operated	Researched
Anticipated	Consulted	Established	Increased	Organized	Resolved
Approved	Convinced	Evaluated	Interpreted	Persuaded	Scheduled
Arranged	Coordinated	Examined	Investigated	Planned	Supervised
Budgeted	Created	Facilitated	Led	Presented	Taught
Calculated	Delegated	Formulated	Listened	Recommended	Trained
Chaired	Demonstrated	Identified	Motivated	Repaired	Translated
Clarified	Designed	Implemented	Negotiated	Represented	Wrote
Collaborated	Developed				

Work experience: practice

1. There were five employees in my team. I was their boss and it was my job to keep an eye on them and help them when they needed my support. (**managed**)
2. I enrolled on successfully finished a financial management course in order to improve my knowledge in this area. (**completed**)
3. When I arrived, the company website was only in Polish. As well as Polish, my mother tongue, I also speak English, German and French, and so I decided to write the website information in English, German, and French. (**translated**)
4. The company's database system had a problem, which I found. Afterwards I talked to my boss about a different way of doing things, which would solve the problem. (**identified/recommended**)

Work experience: practice

1. There were five employees in my team. I was their boss and it was my job to keep an eye on them and help them when they needed my support. *(managed)*

Managed a team of five employees.

2. I enrolled on successfully finished a financial management course in order to improve my knowledge in this area. *(completed)*

Successfully completed a financial management course.

Work experience: practice

3. When I arrived, the company website was only in Polish. As well as Polish, my mother tongue, I also speak English, German and French, and so I decided to write the website information in English, German, and French. *(translated)*

Translated the company website into three different languages.

4. The company's database system had a problem, which I found. Afterwards I talked to my boss about a different way of doing things, which would solve the problem. *(identified/recommended)*

Identified a problem with the company's database system and recommended an alternative solution.

Work experience: practice

1. I made recommendations regarding the most effective allocation of resources.
2. I was the front-office staff representative on the implementation team for our new ICT strategy.
3. I was responsible for coming up with the training plan.
4. I looked after the budget for running the office.
5. I was in charged of the design team.

Work experience: practice

1. I made recommendations regarding the most effective allocation of resources.
I identified most effective allocation of resources.
2. I was the front-office staff representative on the implementation team for our new ICT strategy.
Represented front-office staff on ICT Strategy Implementation Team.
3. I was responsible for coming up with the training plan.
Formulated training plan.
4. I looked after the budget for running the office.
Supervised office budget.
5. I was in charged of the design team.
Led design team.

Detailing Your Education and Qualifications

Think about the following questions:

1. Where should you put the education section of your CV?
2. What qualifications should you include?

Education Education Education

■ Should your education be proudly at the top of the CV or among the optional sections at the end? It all depends on who you are and what job you are trying to get. If you have just left school, college or university, your education experience is going to be more immediately relevant and should therefore be prominently displayed early on. Your potential employer may be keen to hire recent graduates and will wish to see exactly what your educational attainments are. This means you can give plenty of detail of curricula, theses and grades. However, if you have been in the world of work for 20 years, your education is of little interest to an employer and should go in skeletal form near the bottom of the CV. What you have achieved since leaving full-time education is

obviously more indicative of your value.

Another thing to bear in mind is that higher qualifications imply lower ones. If you have only got GCSEs, fine. If, however, you have a bachelor's degree, it is unnecessary to mention your GCSEs, or even your A-levels, unless they are spectacularly good. A recruiter will simply assume they were taken at the usual time and is unlikely to be interested in how many there were and what grades they were. The same applies to a Master's degree or PhD. The higher qualification makes the mention of any lower ones redundant.

If you feel you need to mention more in the way of academic attainment, for example as a recent graduate or as someone with professional

qualifications or other postgraduate training, the section should be organised in reverse chronological order, like your work experience section.

Finally, the education section can be the place to mention the all-important computer skills that continue to dominate working life. Different jobs and professions will require you to have an understanding of different computer packages, and if you have good working knowledge of these it is worth mentioning that you know they exist, or have been trained to use them. If you are applying for a job more closely related to IT, your technical proficiencies should have a relevant section of their own (entitled 'computer efficiency' or 'computer skills' or 'technical expertise') much higher up the priority list.

Thank you and see you in the 6th session.

Yours sincerely,

Lerissa Daniela, S.S., M.Pd.

Original Source:

The original source of this chapter is taken from the book entitled
“ Cambridge English for Job-hunting”
written by **Colm Downes** and the series editor is **Jeremy Day**.
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