

Writing a Killer CV

Sue Young
Careers Coach, Writer
and Personal Branding Specialist

Writing a Killer CV



Writing a Killer CV

Learning outcomes

You will:

- Understand the principles of an effective (UK) CV
- Learn how to use language for optimum effect
- Know what to do – and what not to do
- Put yourself ‘in the shoes of’ the recruiter to appraise your CV
- Gain confidence
- Understand the principle that every new job application requires a new, targeted CV

Writing a Killer CV

What is it?

- Marketing document
- Objective
- Focused
- Designed to get you an interview

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What is it **not**?

- Your life story

[*Curriculum Vitae* – Latin for ‘course of one’s life’]

- Churned out for every job you apply for!

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DO

- Read the job description and person specification in detail
- Highlight the key words & phrases which detail the duties
- Ask yourself: ‘am I qualified for this role?’; do I *really* want this job?’; ‘have I got the basic requirements?’
- As far as you can, try to ‘match’ the JD and PS with your own experiences, skills and abilities
- Applicant Tracking Systems / key words
- Provide evidence to back up your assertions

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Sections

- Name / Contact Details
- Professional Summary / Profile
- Education
- Relevant Employment
- Other Employment
- Leisure Interests
- Referees / Recommendations

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Contact Details

Susan Young

[full address - optional] City + postcode 07123 12345 s.young@gmail.com

[landline – optional] LinkedIn url ... Online presence ...

DO NOT include photo, dob/age, gender, marital status

If international, will need to indicate visa status

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Professional Summary / Profile

- I am a motivated, enthusiastic individual with strong communication skills and the ability to work well in a team or on my own. I have proven problem-solving skills and am accomplished at managing my time effectively to meet deadlines. I enjoy a challenge and work very hard at everything I do.

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Professional Summary / Profile | Recent graduate

- Recent graduate from [Queen Mary, University of London], with a [BA (Hons) English (2:1)]. = where you are now
- Planning to develop a career [in publishing]. = where you're going
- During my undergraduate years I [wrote a weekly 'Student Life' column for *Queenie*, the student newspaper; I proof-read 8 issues of the quarterly magazine *Life at QM*; I led on a project to re-write a 12-page local community information leaflet; and was offered temporary work at Faber & Faber following my 4-week internship with them]. = Your USP relevant to the role

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Professional Summary / Profile | Career Changer

- A CIMA-qualified **Management Accountant**, experienced in financial management in the university sector **to** protect income, maximise profit and ensure accountability. Key strengths include: **analysing** departmental accounts **to** ensure targets achieved; **collaborating with** academic and administrative stakeholders **to** provide insights for HoDs; **producing** guidance reports where financial performance is weak or needs improvement; and **building** high-quality MIS capability which provides strong business information **to** underpin robust business decision-making.

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Education

- **2015-2018 Royal Holloway, University of London BA History (2:2)**
 - Final Year Dissertation/Project:
Title: [.....]. 2-3 line explanation of the subject; your idea or assigned to you? Reason for writing? Number of words.
 - List 2 or 3 courses for each year which are **interesting** and/or **relevant** to the role.
 - Integrate skills gained at university: e.g. writing; analysis; research; communication; teamwork.

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Education

- **2013-2015** St Martin's Sixth Form College, Egham
A-levels: History (B), English (B), Drama (C)
- **2008-2013** Hadleigh Comprehensive School, Middlesex
9 GCSEs (A-C) including English (A) and Maths(B)

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Relevant Employment

2017-2018 Community Centre, Egham Communications Assistant

- Part of a team of 4, reporting to Centre Manager
- Assisted in writing information leaflets about activities at the Centre
- Designed advertising posters for display in the local town
- Uploaded content to the CC website
- Proof-read 20% of outgoing literature
- Undertook InDesign training course

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Relevant Employment

2017-2018

RHUL

Library Assistant

- Checked new stock against sales orders
- Classified and shelved books and journals
- Monitored online lending; created report for Library Manager
- Managed the 'Returns' Desk one morning a week
- Took part in annual library audit

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Other Employment

2016-2017 The Conker and Crown, Windsor **Part-time bar work**

- Responsible for cashing up (over £12,000 per week)
- Serving behind the bar in busy environment
- Dealing with wide range of customers
- Worked within a team of 4, arranging cover where necessary

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“I haven’t really done anything...”

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Yes you have! Experiences, skills & achievements whilst at Uni:

- Sports
- Societies
- Volunteering (campus/community)
- Paid work (- ditto -)
- SU roles
- Work Placements
- Student newspaper, magazine, radio
- Mentor to younger students etc etc ...

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In the shoes of the recruiter. You're seeking someone good at teamwork.

- Candidate A: “Demonstrated strong teamworking skills during stock-taking at STL Retail.”
- Candidate B: “**Teamwork.** Led/Supported team of four to achieve full stock-take of STL Retail in 16 hours. Arrived early to receive briefing on behalf of team; allocated tasks on rota system; ensured team had rest breaks; checked all data captured correctly; congratulated by Manager on high level of accuracy and efficiency.”

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Dynamic verbs, e.g.

- Advised; Added
- Built; Balanced
- Created; Calculated
- Developed; Drove
- Explained; Edited
- Formulated; Facilitated
- Generated; Gained
- Handled; Held
- Initiated; Integrated
- Juggled; Judged
- Kept;
- Led; Launched
- Managed; Mapped
- Negotiated; Narrated
- Organised; Operated

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- Avoid 'so what' syndrome

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So what?

- Created a comprehensive skills programme for new staff.
- Created and implemented a bold marketing strategy using a variety of marketing collateral (physical and digital).
- Generated new strategic alliances with 3 local businesses.
- Provided course liaison support to teaching staff.
- Managed all aspects of copyright compliance.
- Created 6 departmental webpages using Java.

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- Action + Benefit

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- Created a comprehensive skills programme for new staff to increase workforce capability.
- Created and implemented a bold marketing strategy using a variety of marketing collateral (physical and digital) to promote 2 new products.
- Generated new strategic alliances with 3 local businesses to increase student opportunities.
- Provided course liaison support to teaching staff to ensure high quality teaching resources.
- Managed all aspects of copyright compliance in line with national regulations.
- Used Java to create 6 new departmental webpages for [xyz department] to improve user experience.

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Leisure Interests

Reading, Cycling, Judo

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Leisure Interests

- Reading, particularly the novels of Graham Greene ...
 - How many? When did you discover him? What is it you like about his novels?
- Cycling...
 - At any time of year? In the UK or elsewhere in the world? Do you belong to a club? Do you take part in team events? What is it you like about cycling?
- Judo...
 - How long? What drew you to it? What belt are you? What do you love about it?

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References

- Ask first!
- Name, job title, organisation, email, (optional: postal address)

'References available upon request'

NB: Reference is the *thing* given
Referee is the *one who* gives the reference

Recommendations

- A quote/comment from tutor, work colleague, Manager (take it from your LinkedIn profile)

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Checklist

- Proof-read! Proof-read. Proof-read...
- ‘Be the recruiter’ and ask if your CV demonstrates evidence that you are a good match for the job
- Have you **left out** something crucial? Have you **left in** something irrelevant?
- Check your dates
- Ensure formatting and layout are consistent
- Standard mode: black type on white paper
- Is your CV the correct length?
- The ‘R’ word ...

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Thank you and good luck!

* * * * *

CV Surgery (group discussion)
Conference Room 1
(next door)