

How to write the perfect CV

Wichtiger Bestandteil einer Bewerbung ist der Lebenslauf. Soll er auf Englisch verfasst werden, ist besondere Vorsicht geboten, denn mit einer direkten Übersetzung ist es nicht getan. Wo lauern die Fallstricke? Und was sollte beachtet werden, damit der Lebenslauf einen bleibenden Eindruck hinterlässt? **MIKE PILEWSKI** hat eine Fülle praktischer Tipps für Sie zusammengetragen.

medium



Create an impression: your CV should reflect your professionalism

You're looking for a job, but so is everyone else. You might be the best candidate, but will your next employer know that? Before you're invited to a job interview, your curriculum vitae (CV) will have to make a good first impression.

Many large companies in Europe now use English as a working language, so it's important to have your CV ready in English. This is also an opportunity to show that you have intercultural skills that may be critical to getting the job you want.

On page 55, Ken Taylor explains what belongs in a good covering letter. Here, we'll deal with your CV — which North Americans also call a résumé — helping you to mix style and substance and giving you the opportunity to practise the language you'll need to make the best impression.

covering letter ['kʌvərɪŋ ,letə]	Anschreiben, Bewerbungsschreiben
curriculum vitae [kə,rɪkjʊləm 'vɪtəɪ]	Lebenslauf
CV [ˌsiː 'viː]	
job interview ['dʒɒb ,ɪntəvjuː]	Vorstellungsgespräch
substance ['sʌbstəns]	hier: Inhalt, das Wesentliche

Alle Fotos: Thinkstock

Between the lines

As much as your CV says in black and white, it says just as much between the lines. It offers clues about the kind of person you are, what your priorities are and how conscientiously you work.

Probably the most important thing to bear in mind when writing your CV is that it will be read by another person. This could be someone with whom you'll be working closely — your boss at a small to medium-sized company — or it could be someone in a position of power, such as the head of the personnel department. Whoever that person is, he or she will decide whether or not you get invited to a job interview.

For that person, time is money: you may have only 15 seconds to make an impression. Here's how to do it.



Think about who'll be reading your CV

Over to you: your achievements

administered • attended • completed
coordinated • designed • developed • gained
organized • oversaw • passed • prepared
received • reported • specialized

I _____ secondary school from 1979 to 1983. I _____ my school-leaving examination (*Abitur*) with a grade of 1.8. At university, I _____ a course of study in sociology and _____ a bachelor's degree. I _____ the university's highest honours for my work, in which I _____ in consumer behaviour. At World Enterprises, I _____ monthly meetings, for which I _____ reports and presentations. Later, I _____ a project in which I _____ a team of four people and _____ a new marketing concept. I _____ a new logo for the company and _____ a budget of 80,000 euros. I _____ directly to the company president.

Answers on page 19

1. Do your homework. Find out about the company you're contacting and write your CV specifically for the job you want at that company. One tailored CV sent to five companies will get you further than a generic-sounding CV sent to a hundred.

2. Make your CV readable. Choose a font that is large enough, wide enough and not too decorative. Use generous margins. Put enough space between different elements. Fit everything on one or, at most, two pages.

3. Remember that less is more. The reader must be able to find key information immediately. Choose the three things that best qualify you for the job, and emphasize them in your personal profile.

4. Avoid clichés and vague language. Everyone claims to be highly motivated and hard-working. So don't just say you are; prove you are. Your achievements, as listed in your CV and supporting documents, should leave no doubt.

5. Write for your reader, not for yourself. John F. Kennedy (almost) said: "Ask not what your company can do for you; ask what you can do for your company." Employers don't care that you're seeking new challenges; they want to know whether you can communicate, are good with figures and have ideas.

6. Make the reader curious and eager to get to know you. What hidden skills do you have — whether relevant to the job or not — that will make you stand out from all the other candidates? Do you do charity or volunteer work? Have you travelled to countries where the culture is very different? When the 100 applicants are reduced to five, you'll be remembered as the man who cooks for homeless people or the woman who's lived in China. Such qualities show that you take the initiative, are a team player and finish what you start.

Are you a worker or an asset? That's the question that's answered between the lines.

applicant ['æplɪkənt]	Bewerber(in)
asset ['æset]	Bereicherung, Gewinn
bear in mind [ˌbeə ɪn 'maɪnd]	beachten
charity work ['tʃærəti ,wɜːk]	gemeinnützige Arbeit
cliché ['kliːʃeɪ]	Floskel
clue [kluː]	Hinweis
conscientiously [ˌkɒnʃi'entʃəsli]	gewissenhaft
eager: be ~ to ['iːgə]	unbedingt wollen
emphasize ['emfəsaɪz]	hervorheben
figure ['fɪgə]	Zahl
font [fɒnt]	Schriftart
generic [dʒə'nerɪk]	allgemein
head [hed]	Chef
margin ['mɑːdʒɪn]	(Seiten)Rand
stand out [ˌstænd 'aʊt]	sich abheben
tailored ['teɪləd]	maßgeschneidert
vague [veɪg]	schwammig formuliert
volunteer work [ˌvɒləntɪə ,wɜːk]	ehrenamtliche Tätigkeit