Top Tips for writing a CV

Unscripted Freelancer Pack

bectu.org.uk

A good CV is an essential tool for any freelancer, your CV is your shop window, and is what will lead you to get a job interview.

1. **Essential Information**

   The following should be clearly included at the top of your CV:
   - Name
   - Mobile Number / Email
   - Role/Job Title - this should be roles you currently work in or are experienced enough to step up into, not roles you are wishing to progress onto eventually.
   - Base - this should not be your postal address but City/Region - eg, London/South East.
   - DO NOT INCLUDE the following which can be used to steal your identity
     - your date of birth - it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of age so this information isn't necessary.
     - your National Insurance number
     - your home address

2. **Credits/Jobs**

   List all your credits / roles in reverse chronological order - most recent first. Include both the channel / platform and production company the production was made for, an example of how to lay this out is below:

   PRODUCTION EXECUTIVE

   INTERIOR DESIGN MASTERS, SERIES 3, 8x60, Darlow Smithson Productions for BBC1

   You may want to summarise your experience from the job here too.

3. **Be clear & concise**

   Employers will receive large numbers of CVs with limited time to read them, because recruitment is only a small part of their job, so ensure yours is clear and easy to read.

   Don't be tempted to get 'creative' with your CV - i.e making an origami surprise of your CV or using wacky fonts. Use a clear font; bullet points rather than long wordy paragraphs and don't 'over-design' your CV with different shaded text boxes etc. Employers will have seen it all before and won't be impressed as they take up far too much precious time to read and looks sloppy. If you imagine the response to an average job advert can run into the hundreds, it's easy to see why this approach can be counterproductive. Employers want to find the relevant information they are looking for at a glance, therefore the first thing they need is a quick easy read, this means the order of information is essential.

4. **Personal statement/profile**

    You can choose to include a personal statement at the top of your CV which should act as a teaser for the CV. It is a summing up of who and what you are. Avoid generalised phrases such as 'good communication skills and works well in a team', employers may think 'so what? Doesn't everybody in this industry'? Give them something to get excited about, tell them what you've done, what you've achieved, make them want to read the rest of the document. Personal profiles should be about what you have done, not what you are like. Make it punchy, concise and relevant to the job you are applying for.

    Alternatively you can leave your personal profile off your CV and include this information in your cover email ensuring you specify the experience that is most relevant to the job you're applying for.

5. **Length**

    Ideally your CV should be no more than 2 pages regardless of the length of your career - if its longer you may need to only include selected credits/roles from earlier in your career, eg, an experienced PM may not necessarily include any Production Coordinator credits.

6. **Training**

    Include any relevant industry training you have undertaken recently (in the last 5 years or so - anything before that may well be out of date). Include the name of the course, qualification, dates undertaken and valid until (some training expires) and training provider.

7. **Technical skills/experience**

    If your job (or the job you are aspiring to) involves using equipment/certain software include this information, eg, if you are a researcher who wants to shoot and has experience using certain cameras or if you are a Development Producer with experience of Photoshop or PremierPro it's worth listing these skills.

    DO NOT use skills bar graphics. There is no universal scale and has no meaning to anyone except you - do you know ALL the creativity?

    Example
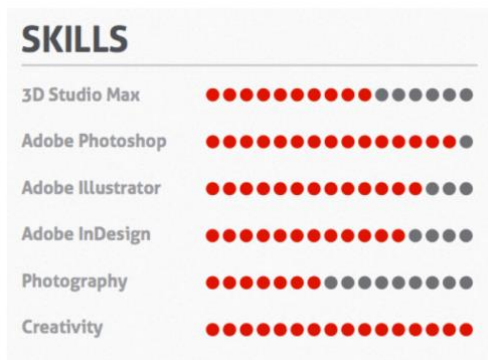
If you don't yet have any screen industry experience, do some research into the dept and job you are aiming to be hired in, then evaluate where your previous experience and skills in other industries is transferable.

8. Spelling & Grammar

Each time you edit your CV check the spelling and grammar carefully. If this isn't your strong point, ask a friend or colleague to help you. A CV with spelling / grammar mistakes suggests a lack of attention to detail and may well put an employer off progressing your application. You can also use the [Grammerly](#) tool.

9. References

You should include 2 relevant references on your CV who you know are happy to be contacted and will give you a good recommendation. You should speak to anyone you wish to use as a reference before adding their details to your CV.

10. Lying

It should be obvious but never lie on a CV no matter how much you want the job! The screen industries are smaller than you may realise and it's very easy for recruiters to check out your work history.

11. GDPR Statement

It is recommended to include a GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) statement on your CV to give the recipient your permission to hold your personal data for future opportunities or to share with others for the purposes of offering you employment.

Example:

"GDPR STATEMENT- this document may be processed or kept on file or distributed for employment purposes"

12. Format

Use tables and bullet points to make the best use of the space.

Keep the formatting consistent - this indicates your ability for attention to detail.

Save the document as a .pdf so that the recipient opens it in the manner you intended.

Save an editable version in the cloud so that you can access, tweak and send while on the move.

13. Photo

No. For the purpose of being inclusive, recruiters do not want to see your photo on your CV for behind-the camera jobs.