

Searching for a job

Searching and applying for another job can be exciting. That is why Octagon gives you advice on how to prepare your CV, cover letter and professional networks.

CV Structure

Personal details

Start with your personal details at the top of your CV. You should at least state your full name, address, phone, e-mail, date of birth, nationality and optionally add your LinkedIn or Twitter account.

Professional/work experience

State your relevant work experience here. Start with the most recent job you have had and work your way back into history. Mention your job title, name of the company, start date and end date and add a description of your responsibilities and achievements.

Education

The same here: start with your most recent finished/doing education and work back in time. Mention your main subjects/specializations, thesis subject, any other information that you think would benefit your application.

Languages

Note your language proficiency here. Native/Fluent/Good/Fair.

Skills

Note your personal and IT (software skills, programming languages) skills here. It is also good to indicate your level of fluency in named personal or IT skill. For example, if you have advanced skills in Excel or mastery of Photoshop.

Profile

Writing a profile is optional. This is a good place to shortly express your strengths, ambitions and hobbies. Also, you can also mention your notice period and time/location preferences here instead of under personal information. It is also up to you to decide if to put this to the start of your CV or end. The generally accepted length of a CV is 2 A4 pages and the accepted style is Times New Roman 12 or Calibri 11. Justifying the edges gives your CV a more polished and professional look. If you'd like to add a picture, that is also okay and you can place it next to personal information.

Cover letter

A cover letter is your introduction to your CV and should complement it to capture the attention of the reader. Its purpose is to add a personal touch to your job application.

Cover letter writing guidelines

The items below should be included in every cover letter.

Header with contact information

Your Name
Your Address
Your Phone Number
Your Email

Date

Name
Organization
Address

Salutation

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. Last Name,

Introduction

Begin your introduction by stating what job you are applying for. Explain where you heard about the job (internet, contact). Mention how your skills and experience match the position and the company to give the employer an introduction of the rest of your letter. The aim is to get the reader's attention for the following part of the letter.

Body

In the body explain the following:

1. Why you are interested in the job.
2. Elaborate on how your qualifications meet the qualifications in the job description.
3. Use hard and measurable examples to convince you are suitable for the position.
4. Use paragraphs of five sentences to explain the above. Do not use bullets.

Closing

In the closing explain the following:

1. That you would appreciate to explain how your skills meet the qualifications in a job interview.
2. How and when you will follow up.
3. Show gratitude for the employer's consideration.

Signature

Sincerely,

Signature and or First Name Last Name

Social Media

Your presence on social media can make a major impact on your job search. Social media can be used to brand oneself online and give recruiters insight into your values, skills and previous work experience. Below we have summed up the most key factors to help you stand out on the job market (especially on LinkedIn).

Social profiles key factors

- Recruiters and potential employers look at your social media profiles to get a first impression of you. Therefore you should be aware that your activity on social media always presents your best side.
- All your social media profiles can help you brand yourself. Make sure your profiles are always up to date with your most recent contact details, skills, referrals and interests. Employers no longer use your CV and cover letter in their decision to hire a new employee.

LinkedIn profile

Profile title

- This is a very important tile of your LinkedIn page – it is the only thing seen via the Search function on LinkedIn and the first thing seen on your profile. It will show the quick summary of your current situation and while it is automatically created, it is customizable. For example, if you want to indicate that you are looking for a job currently, it is an idea to add “Available for Opportunities” instead of “Position Currently held at Company XX”.
- It is very important to use true information, if you are looking to be found, as it will not look attractive for a recruiter if you do not show full information.
- Adding a picture is definitely a bonus. If you have your profile built up nicely, a recruiter will not turn away if you do not have a picture, but it does definitely help with the overall impression and makes the profile look more complete.

Summary

You are quite free to write what you deem relevant in this section. It is common to add in a short overview of your past experience, your main qualifications and your career interests.

Experience & Education

These two usually follow summary, however you are free to choose the order of your entire profile. If you are a recent graduate with no or limited work experience, it is okay to put your education first, otherwise Professional Experience is good to continue with. As you are filling in the details for the job, the more detail you use the better:

- Make sure to add in the companies you worked for – if they have their own page in LinkedIn already – the better! It allows the recruiter to directly see what the company was involved in and if it is relevant.
- Keep your work-periods updated – if you finish at one job, make sure to update that on your LinkedIn profile as well, so people would have the most up to date info.
- Description: here you should write down your responsibilities (keep to the same rules as writing a general CV, unless you want to attract specific attention to specific skills) and achievements per job. It is also acceptable to add in a short description of the tasks of your company or department.

Skills & Endorsements

Here you should add your skills so your connections can endorse them.

Volunteering

This is a nice addition to your profile to show which volunteering activities you have been a part of and which causes you care about.

Additional info

Here you are free to add in your interests & hobbies and also advice for contacting you. You can add in your email address and/or phone here (but this can also be found under contact details, when you allow that under your privacy settings).

Groups & Following

You can follow groups/people/companies to get updates on their activities and posts. These will show on your profile and they show how active you are on LinkedIn and portray what you might be interested in.