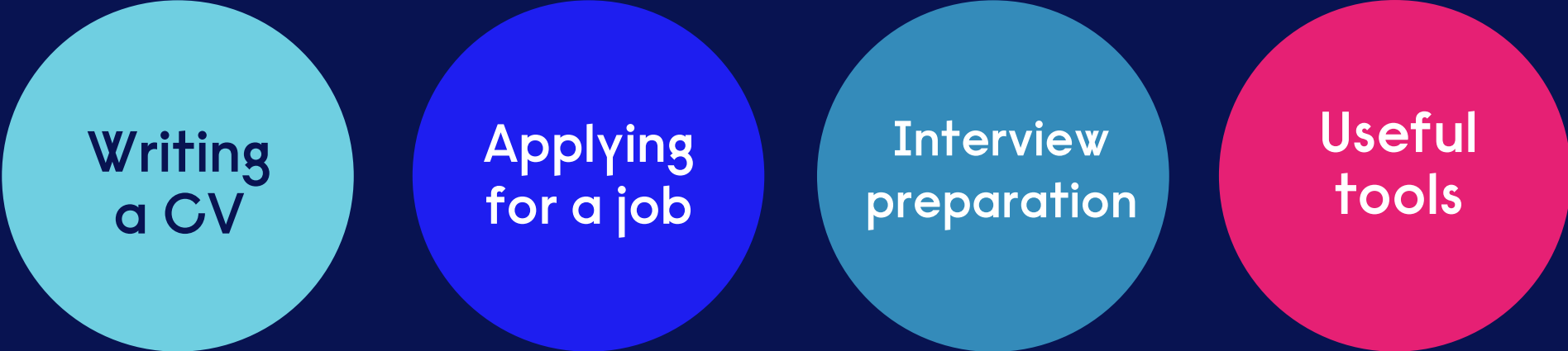


Riverside customers

Employability road map





Writing
a CV

Applying
for a job

Interview
preparation

Useful
tools

...→ Your journey starts now



Writing a CV

CV writing tips

- Keep your CV concise and try to keep it to two pages
- Outline your career history starting with the most recent position first
- Clarify any gaps within your career history
- Highlight key achievements and responsibilities, providing more content around your most recent job role
- Include your education and qualifications, again starting with the most recent first
- Include IT skills, additional training and spoken languages if relevant
- Steer clear of any irrelevant information i.e., age, gender
- Outline any hobbies and interests, but keep it brief
- State that references can be provided on request
- Check for errors and ask someone to read over it for you to make sure it is concise
- Make sure you have an appropriate email address to use to send your CV to potential new employers
- Tailor your CV to each job and include a covering letter when applying for your dream job

What to avoid on your CV



- Try not to make your CV too long. It needs to reflect all of your unique selling points, but keep it concise and relevant
- Don't include a photo of yourself, your experience is what sells you
- Try not to use clichés. We are all team players and have great communication skills - instead demonstrate how you are a team player and how you have good communication skills
- Don't lie or embellish the truth on your CV, this could jeopardise your chances in getting your dream job
- Don't use tables and graphs in your CV as this can look untidy
- Don't include irrelevant information i.e., obscure testimonials, references
- Don't be tempted to reduce the font or margin sizes to fit more in
- Don't use inappropriate email addresses that could make you look unprofessional

CV writing guide

How to write a CV

Interests/hobbies

General information

Skills/competencies

Work experience

Education

- **Keep it short and sweet** - the most effective CVs are informative and concise, try to get to the point and keep it to two pages
- **A professional font** ensures your CV is easily read and looks professional
- **Play to your strengths** - format your CV to maximize the impact of your application, as long as you can relate it back to the job you are applying for
- **Bullet points** are a great way to draw attention to key achievements easily without having to read through a wordy document
- **Cover letter** - writing an effective cover letter is just as important as writing your CV. The cover letter is a great opportunity to sell yourself even more

CV template

- Find the perfect opening statement using positive words that describe your strengths
- Starting with the most recent first, list your employment history, including any achievements
- List key skills that would make your CV stand out and that are relevant to the role your are applying for
- Starting with the most recent first, list your qualifications including the grades
- Keep these brief and to the point
- Make prospective employers aware that references are available on request



CV template

Name

21 Example Street, Example. EX21 2EX
0113 000 0000 • name@mail.com

Personal statement

A conscientious and professional personal assistant with extensive experience in administration, PA and secretarial roles, seeking a new position as an Executive PA. A highly organised and efficient individual, whose thorough and precise approach has yielded excellent results. Achievements with my current employer include implementing an innovative filing and indexing system.

Key Skills

- 80 words per minute typing
- Proficiency in all areas of Microsoft Office, including Access, Excel, Word and PowerPoint
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Accredited member of APA (Association of Personal Assistants)
- Fully qualified first aider

Employment History

PA to Personnel Manager, Company Name, Location

(April 2011 – Present)

Achievements and responsibilities:

- Implemented a change of stationery supplier, reducing costs by 20%
- Implemented a new, online meeting booking process, leading to reduced diary conflicts within the team
- Devised and implemented a new filing and indexing system, resulting in greater ease of access
- Provided a safer workplace by cataloguing and dispatching health and safety information for the whole company
- Diary management, typing correspondence and documents, creating presentations and meeting minutes

Front of House Receptionist, Company Name, Location

(June 2010 – April 2011)

Achievements and responsibilities:

- Presenting a professional and friendly first impression of the firm to all visitors and clients
- Managing incoming phone calls and mail
- Organising stationery orders and liaising with suppliers to meet business requests
- Replenishing and restocking the bar, always ensuring high level of stock management efficiency
- Also assumed the role of fire/health and safety officer for the entire office staff

Education

College/School Name

(September 2004 – June 2006)

A-levels: General Studies – B, English – C, Mathematics – C

School Name

(September 1998 – June 2004)

10 GCSEs, grade A-C, including Maths and English

Hobbies & Interests

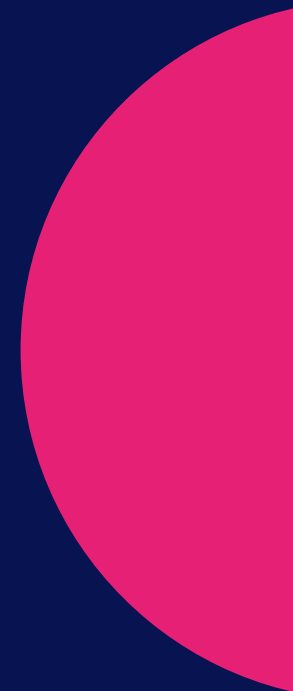
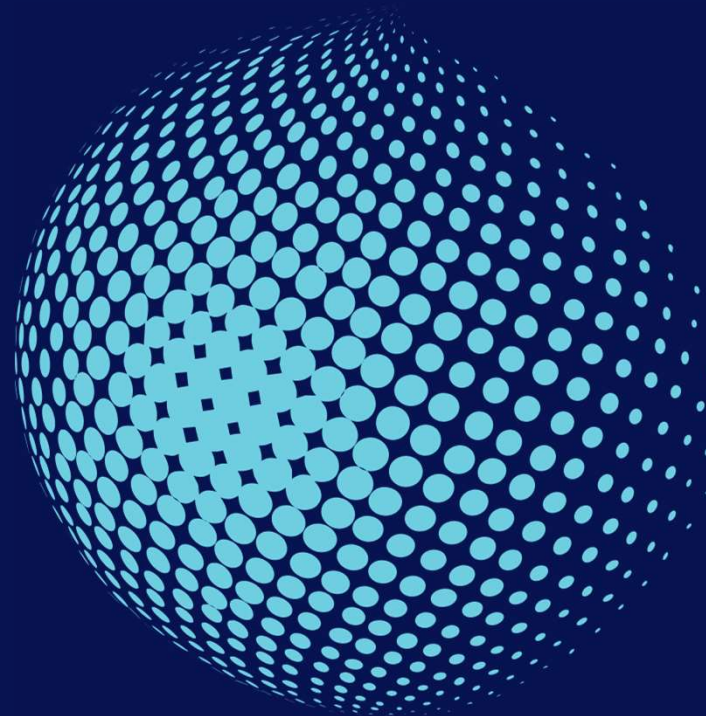
I am involved in a local amateur dramatics' society, where I volunteer as a lighting and sound technician. I have been involved with this society for three years and enjoy being part of the team. More recently, I assumed the role of Stage Manager for a two-week production and relished the chance to take control of performances in a pressured environment.

References

References are available upon request.

Free CV templates for sale on reed

Applying for jobs



How to find a job

- ✓ Create your online brand using platforms like LinkedIn
- ✓ Register for email alerts on Reed.co.uk
- ✓ Be clear on the job you're looking for
- ✓ Upload your CV to Reed.co.uk
- ✓ Research your target companies
- ✓ Follow up on your applications with a phone call
- ✓ Talk to friends and family and ask for referrals
- ✓ Tailor your CV and covering letter to the job you're applying for



Interview preparation



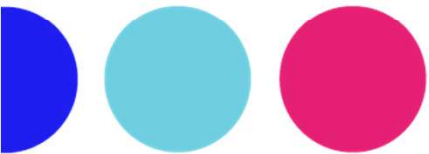
Interview preparation

- Read the job description so you understand the duties and required skills for the vacancy, enabling you to tailor your responses accordingly using relevant examples.
- Write notes to bring to the interview, listing your relevant skills and experience so you can use these as a reference point when providing your response.
- Do a trial run to check the journey time, ensuring you will arrive 10 minutes early.
- Research the company. Do you understand the size, different departments, and who the customers and competitors are? You can then refer to this in your interview.



Types of interview

- **Phone interview** - Often a first stage interview to discuss your CV and review your telephone manner and communication skill. Ensure you have no distractions for the duration
- **Video interview** - Increasingly more common, this will be held between the candidate and the interviewer. Format will be similar to a face-to-face interview
- **Face-to-face interview** - A one-to-one meeting between a candidate and a hiring manager. Will include open-ended questions relating to the role and possibly tests
- **Assessment day** - Most assessment days will last the whole day and include tasks to assess a variety of skills. These could include case studies, group work, problem-solving and presentations
- **Group interview** - Often for roles where you will work as part of a team. They may include group interview questions, activities, and assessments, and sometimes a short one-to-one interview



Interview tips

- Research the company and industry
- Arrive 10 minutes early
- Use eye contact and sit up straight
- Dress appropriately
- Practice answering common interview questions
- Ask questions throughout the interview
- Listen and respond accordingly
- Share your strengths and experience
- Smile and relax
- Ensure the interviewer takes the lead
- Highlight what makes you a good fit for the role
- Prepare open-ended questions to ask the interviewer



What to avoid in interviews

- Arriving late
- Speaking over the interviewer
- Rushing when answering questions
- Speaking negatively about your current workplace
- Booking interviews back-to-back
- Lying about past experience/qualifications
- Allowing previous setbacks to affect your confidence
- Fidgeting, slouching or crossing your arms
- Treating it like an exam, waiting for questions to be asked
- Inappropriate or offensive language
- Waiting until the end of the interview to ask questions
- Answering the question with a question



Useful tools



Common questions



Practice makes perfect, so try using these interview questions to help prepare your answers

- ...→ Tell me about yourself?
- ...→ What do you know about the organisation?
- ...→ Why do you want to work here?
- ...→ What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- ...→ Tell me an achievement you're proud of?
- ...→ Why are you the right candidate for this role?
- ...→ Where do you see yourself in five years time?

Competency based questions

These are a very popular choice for employers and are likely to form part of a face-to-face interview.

Example question: 'Tell me about a time when your communication skills improved a situation?'

How to answer:

Situation – Describe the situation you were in

Task – Explain the task you were asked to complete

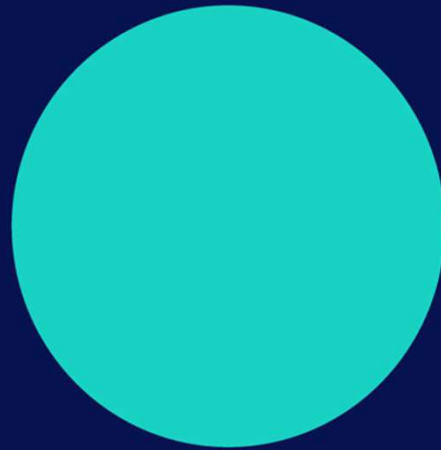
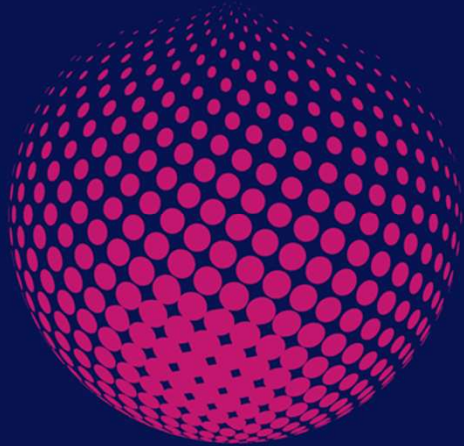
Action – Describe the action you took to ensure the task was completed

Result – Finish with the results of your efforts

Useful links

- CV writing tips: <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cvs/cv-templates/>
- Personal Statements: <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cvs/personal-statements/>
- Where to find a job: <https://www.reed.co.uk/>
- Interview tips: <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/interview-techniques/>
- Career Guides: <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/career-guides/>
- Reedglobal.com = <https://www.reedglobal.com/>





We hope you've found this information helpful.
Good luck!

If you need any further help please visit our website at:

www.riverside.org.uk/employment

Or email us on:

employmentandtraining@riverside.org.uk