

SECTION 6
CV WRITING

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Your CV will describe your best assets, whilst minimising your weaknesses. It will be an accurate record of your employment history, and should also be applicable to the jobs you are applying for.

Care should be taken when compiling your CV as quite often this is the first piece of information a prospective employer has about you and your experiences.

TIPS

- Keep it short – 2 sides are normally acceptable, 3 if you are applying for a senior executive position
- Look at the job advert and pick out key words and competencies – use these in your Profile and throughout the CV
- Make it relevant to each job advert
- Use an attractive, readable font (e.g. Arial, Times New Roman, Helvetica)
- Make sure there is plenty of white space

DO NOT

- Lie
- Use jargon or pretentious language
- Exaggerate

You do not need to include personal details/hobbies but sometimes it can help a prospective employer build a better picture of you and provide an 'icebreaker' for discussion at interview.

The following page provides a Template CV for you to fill in with suggestions annotated in red. We have also included sample CVs so you can see how your CV will look when completed.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME (include any qualifications/titles here)

ADDRESS:

TEL NO:

E-MAIL:

Career Profile	Here you need to include a brief paragraph summarising your career to date and also highlighting your key competencies/ skills. Remember to use the sentences you constructed in the previous exercise. Remember to highlight key words from the job advert and use these in your profile.
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Educational Qualifications	List qualifications including dates – in chronological order with the most recent listed first	Dates
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Professional Qualifications	List qualifications including dates – in chronological order with the most recent listed first	Dates
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N.B Qualifications can be listed at the beginning or end of your CV depending on how relevant they are to the job

Career History			
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	Current Position	Company name and job title	Dates of employment**
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****N.B. Please note you should start with your most recent role and work backwards**

	Key responsibilities and achievements:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record bullet points of your key responsibilities • These will be outlined in the job specification for this role if available • List all your achievements during this time, including wherever possible a 'value' (example £X cost saving, X time saving £X worth of business, X% of target) • List any internal/external awards you have received
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	Previous Position	Company name and job title	Dates of employment
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	Key responsibilities and achievements:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
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	Previous Position	Company name and job title	Dates of employment
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	Key responsibilities and achievements:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
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N.B for roles you undertook more than 10 years ago, it is enough to simply list the Company, Job Title and dates

	Previous Position	Company name and job title	Dates of employment
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	Previous Position	Company name and job title	Dates of employment
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SAMPLE CURRICULUM VITAE

SAMPLE 1 (PA/Administrator)

Joanne Smith

45 Job Search Avenue
London
SE3 3TY

Tel.No: 0208 456897

E-mail: jsmith@ntlworld.co.uk

Career Profile

A highly experienced and well-organised person with extensive secretarial skills (including audio typing). Having worked in a number of different and challenging environments, she can communicate professionally and effectively at all levels. Able to work without supervision, but also an effective team member, she is very receptive to the needs of others. With the ability to work under pressure and a confident and cheerful personality.

Education

RSA I & II Typing	1966
RSA Shorthand	
Basic Book Keeping and General Office Procedures	
3 A' Levels	1965
6 O' Levels	1963

Career History

Current Position	ABC Ltd Secretarial Administrator	2000 - Present
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Key responsibilities and achievements:-

- Full administrative and secretarial support to General Manager and six Line Managers, including keeping the diary and the arrangement of and servicing of meetings
- Full corporate hospitality including arranging events at all levels
- Overall responsibility for four personnel on reception, including recruitment and selection
- Responsible for all HR administration at local level. Maintenance of personnel records, both manual and computerised
- Responsible for all customer complaints for every department as first point of contact
- Complete responsibility for the facilities management of the building
- Responsible for some petty cash
- Responding to requests from charities/schools etc with regard to any projects
- Maintaining good external public relations
- Manage and progress motor insurance claims
- Full responsibility for the day to day running of a busy car dealership

SAMPLE 2 (Customer Services)

John Smith

45 Job Search Avenue
London
SE3 3TY
Tel.No: 0208 456987
E-mail: jsmith@ntlworld.co.uk

Career Profile **A highly experienced individual with excellent interpersonal skills, whose career has spanned a number of different sectors where he has developed a variety of skills. Having run his own business for much of his career, he was involved with all aspects including sales, customer service, administration / book-keeping. Recently he has transferred his excellent interpersonal skills into a customer service telephone role Possesses the CLAIT qualification and is familiar with Microsoft Office packages.**

Education & Qualifications	Joseph Priestley College	1999
	CLAIT – Spreadsheets, Databases and Graphical Presentation	
	Royal Navy Training Apprenticeship as Radio Technician (Artificer)	1962 to 1970
	Castleford Grammar School 8 O-levels including Maths and English	1955 to 1962

Career History

Present Position	Leeds Bank Personal Loans/Sales Advisor	2000 to present
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Key responsibilities and achievements:-

- Responding to inbound customer service calls
- Dealing with customer enquiries and resolving complaints
- Cross-selling where appropriate
- Up-dating computer records on internal database
- Achieved 130% of annual sales target
- Won 'Customer Adviser of the Year Award in 2004'

Previous Position Smith's Sports & Leisure 1976 to 1999
Proprietor of Retail Sports Business

Key responsibilities and achievements:-

Responsible for all functions associated with the operation of an independent retail outlet, including-

- General management of the shop and business
- Ensuring high levels of customer service were maintained
- Planning and purchasing all stock for the shop
- Undertaking all sales activity. Annual turnover £500,000
- Undertaking all accounts work including sales and purchase ledger using SAGE Line 50
- Responsible for all marketing and advertising of business
- Built the business from scratch to annual profits of £150,000

Previous Position 3M (UK) Ltd 1970 to 1976
Senior Service Engineer
Course Instructor (North of England)

Previous role: H.M. Government, Wireless 1970
Establishment
Wireless Technician
(for Police and fire Service radio
equipment at base stations and
mobile)

Previous role: Royal Navy 1962 to 1970
Petty Officer – Radio Technician
(all aspects of radio, radar,
navigational aids and missile systems)

SECTION 7

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

SECTION 7 - COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

What is a Competency Based Interview?

The aim of a competency-based interview is generally the same as any interview; that is to give you the chance to tell the interviewer as much about your past work performance as possible. What will probably feel different about the competency based interview is that it has a very structured approach.

The interviewer will have a set of questions to ask you that have been prepared in advance. They will read these questions to you from their page, almost like a script – the reason for this is that they will be asking exactly the same questions of each candidate applying for the role.

The questions will be based on the competencies required in the role and you should ask a prospective employer what these are prior to the interview. Most job specifications will detail the competencies required and you should be provided with this when applying for any job.

How do I prepare for the questions?

Once you know the competencies that you will be questioned on, you can start to do some preparation for you interview.

At the interview, in response to the interviewer's questions you will need to recount examples of situations where you have displayed this competency.

A good way to structure your answer is using the 'STAR' method.

For example if an interviewer asks you:

"Tell me about a time when you had to answer the phone to an angry customer"

You could structure your response as follows:

SITUATION	<i>Describe the exact situation that occurred</i> e.g. "I once took a phone call from a customer who was really angry because they had not received an important document we had promised them would be received that day."
TASK	<i>Describe your responsibility in relation to this role</i> e.g. "As a customer service adviser, I was concerned that the customer was upset with our service and knew that I needed to resolve it as soon as possible."

ACTION	<p><i>Describe what action you took</i> e.g. "I therefore let the customer explain the problem and listened carefully to their explanation. I apologised for the delay and told them I would investigate the problem and gave them a timescale for when I would get back to them. I contacted the deliveries department and discovered that there had been a problem with some deliveries as a driver was off ill. I therefore arranged for a special courier to deliver the document and advised the customer."</p>
RESULT	<p><i>Describe the result of your actions</i> e.g. "I rang the customer to ensure he had received the document and he was absolutely delighted that I had worked so hard to get the document to him on time. In fact he was so impressed that he asked us to undertake some more work for his company."</p>

Interviewers will want to hear what **you** did. You should therefore ensure you use the word 'I' during your responses.

In preparation for your interview, think of some good examples for each competency. A good way to do this is to go through your experiences and think of some of your best achievements. Ideally your examples should be from the last two or three years experience. You can draw examples from education, work experience, voluntary work or personal/leisure activities.

Use the examples of situations, which you detailed in Section 2 of this toolkit, regarding your own competencies.

How do I prepare myself for the interview?

Rehearse your examples. Find a friend/colleague to rehearse with and ask for constructive feedback. Or record your answers and listen back to them objectively.

Remind yourself that the interviewers are there to help you give your best – they are not aiming to trip you up or trick you. They have been trained to help you through the process of describing your skills.

Try to relax and ensure you get a good night's sleep the day before the interview.

Hints and Tips for during the interview

- ✓ Ensure you know where the interview will take place and plan how long it will take you to get there
- ✓ Allow at least 15 minutes extra to ensure you arrive feeling relaxed
- ✓ Ensure your appearance is smart
- ✓ Answer questions in a clear and logical manner. Do not be afraid to pause for thought when you need to
- ✓ Keep your language specific and positive
- ✓ Bring notes with you if you feel it would help as a reference during your interview but do not read directly from them
- ✓ Research the company beforehand and prepare any questions you wish to ask.

SECTION 8

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Training/Learning Opportunities for Adults

Organisation/ Source	Contact Details	Website	Provision
Age Concern Training	Age Concern England Astral House 1268 London Road London SW16 4ER Tel: 0800 00 99 66	http://www.ageconcern.org.uk	A range of training opportunities for people aged 50+. Provides information on age, discrimination and pensions.
Learn direct	Tel: 0800 100 900	http://www.learndirect-advice.co.uk	Learn direct's remit to provide high quality post-16 learning which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reaches those with few or no skills and qualifications who are unlikely to participate in traditional forms of learning; • equips people with the skills they need for employability, thereby strengthening the skills of the workforce and increasing productivity; • is delivered innovatively through the use of new technologies.
BBC Learning	http://www.bbc.co.uk/feedback/	http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/adult_learning.shtml	Provides on-line learning support and guidance for adults. Has a course search facility
Jobcentre Plus	Correspondence Manager Jobcentre Plus Secretariat Ground Floor Steel City House West Street Sheffield S1 2GQ	http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Customers/HelpWithTraining	Training available for jobseekers. For training in your local area you will need to contact your local jobcentre.
Over50.gov.uk	http://www.direct.gov.uk/DI1/Directories/UsefulContactsByCategory/Over50sContacts/fs/en	http://www.over50.gov.uk/	Guide, covering England and Wales, or Scotland is designed for people aged 50+ to signpost to learning and other services.

Worktrain	Worktrain Division N10 Moorfoot Sheffield S1 4PQ Tel: 0800 100 900 worktrain-team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk	http://www.worktrain.gov.uk	Jobs and careers information from Jobcentre Plus
New Deal for people aged 50+	Tel: 08456 062 626	http://www.newdeal.gov.uk/newdeal.asp?DealID=50PLU&Show=SUMMARY	New Deal 50 plus programme assists people who have had difficulty in finding a job, or work that pays a decent wage. The programme includes training options and information and support.
TUC Learning Services	TUC Learning Services Suite 506-510 The Cotton Exchange Old Hall Street Liverpool L3 9UD Tel: 0151 236 7678	http://www.unionlearn.org.uk	Learning Services website merged with TUC Education to become unionlearn on 2 nd May 2006 (previously referred to as Union Academy). This new initiative has been developed by the TUC to help unions meet the education and skills needs of their members.
Age Positive	E: agepositive@dwp.gsi.gov.uk	www.agepositive.gov.uk	Promotes the benefits of employing a mixed-age workforce, including older people
Silver Surfers	richard@silversurfers.net		Provides website resources for the over 50's
UK Online	Tel: 0800 77 1234	www.ufi.com/ukol	Network of centres providing access to computers, internet and email locally

Further Education

Organisation/ Source	Contact Details	Website	Provision
Learning & Skills Council	Cheylesmore House Quinton Road Coventry CV1 2WT Tel: 0845 019 4170 Fax: 024 7682 3675 info@lsc.gov.uk	www.lsc.gov.uk	The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for funding and planning education and training for over 16-year-olds in England.
www.Direct.gov.uk	http://www.direct.gov.uk/DI1/Directories/UsefulContactsByCategory/fs/en	http://www.direct.gov.uk/Topics/Learning/AdultLearners/fs/en	Directgov contains information on a range of public service information from the UK government. Has a section on Adult learning with links to college and university prospectus information and guidance on available financial help
National Extension College	The Michael Young Centre, Purbeck Road, Cambridge CB2 2HN Tel: 01223 400 200 info@nec.ac.uk	http://www.nec.ac.uk/	The National Extension College (NEC) was set up over 40 years ago as a charity to help people of all ages fit learning into their lives.

Higher Education

Organisation/ Source	Contact Details	Website	Provision
Yorkshire Universities	Yorkshire Universities University House Cromer Terrace Leeds LS2 9JT Tel: 0113 343 1582 enquiries@yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk	http://www.yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk/	Yorkshire Universities is the regional higher education association for Yorkshire and the Humber. It provides a forum for the 10 Universities and 3 Higher Education Colleges in the Yorkshire and Humber region
Open University	The Open University Walton Hall Milton Keynes MK7 6AA Tel: 01908 274066 general-enquiries@open.ac.uk	http://www.open.ac.uk/	The Open University (OU) is the United Kingdom's only university dedicated to distance learning. For most courses there are no previous qualifications required to study, you have to be aged 18 when your course starts but there is no upper age limit.
Universities UK	Woburn House Tavistock Square London WC1H 9HQ Tel: 0207 388 8649 Info@universitiesuk.ac.uk	http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/	Mission is to be the essential voice of UK universities by promoting and supporting their work

Voluntary/Community Opportunities

Organisation/ Source	Contact Details	Website	Provision
Charities Information Bureau	The Charities Information Bureau 93 Lawefield Lane Wakefield West Yorkshire WF2 8SU Tel: 01924 239063	http://www.cibfunding.org.uk/	Training for voluntary and community organisations
Citizens Advice	Tel: 020 7833 2181	www.adviceguide.org.uk	Offers advice on a wide range of subjects from housing and health, to debt and consumer issues.
Community Legal Service Direct	Tel: 0845 345 4345	www.clsdirect.org.uk	An organisation which is the first port of call for legal help and information in England and Wales.
REACH	Tel: 020 7582 6543	www.reach-online.org.uk	An organisation which brings together voluntary organisations and volunteers with career skills
The Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP)	Tel: 0845 305 6979 E: rsvpinfo@csv.org.uk		Helps the over 50's to take part in their local area by volunteering

Career Development / Information Advice & Guidance (IAG)

Organisation/ Source	Contact Details	Website	Provision
Worktrain	Worktrain Division N10 Moorfoot Sheffield S1 4PQ Tel: 0800 100 900	http://www.worktrain.gov.uk	Jobs and careers information from Jobcentre Plus
New Deal for people aged 50+	Tel: 0845 606 2626	http://www.newdeal.gov.uk/newdeal.asp?DealID=50PLU&Show=SUMMARY	New Deal 50 plus programme assists people who have had difficulty in finding a job, or work that pays a decent wage. The programme includes training options and information and support.
Fiftyon.co.uk	Second Floor, Ryder Court, 14, Ryder Street, London, SW1Y 6QB Tel: 020 7451 0231 info@fiftyon.co.uk	http://www.fiftyon.co.uk/frameset.asp?frame=career	The Career Centre is designed to provide the FiftyOn job seeker with a range of tests and exercises to help decide what type of career change is sought, choose which skills and experience can be used to best advantage in the future, prepare for that important interview
Counsel and Care	Tel: 0845 300 7585	www.councelandcare.org.uk	Offers advice and help for older people
Pensioners' Guide	Tel: 0845 6065 065	www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/leaflets	A free guide for people aged 60 and over. It contains information on a wide range of topics

Other Useful Contacts

This page has been kept blank for you to record the details of other useful organisations or resources which you have come across: