

# A CV MASTERCLASS

TERESA ROBERTSON shares hints and tips to help you create a stand-out CV.

**Y**our CV is an essential document in the world of recruitment, both internally and externally. When carefully created, this 'selling' document offers a chance to showcase your career to a prospective employer or talent recruiter – and hopefully secure you an interview. But capturing the skills, experience and achievements from throughout your career can be a challenge, particularly in just one or two pages.

### CURATING YOUR CAREER BIOGRAPHY

There are different types of CVs and ways to present your skills and experience, but the three most common ones are:

1. Chronological – focusing on experience gained with each employer, starting with the most recent. This style can be helpful if you wish to stay in the same career or industry.
2. Functional/skills-based – organised around your skills and expertise rather than employers. Helpful if you wish to change career or industry.
3. Hybrid – combining both the chronological and functional CV together.

Whichever CV you wish to use, the key content should always be the same:

- **Personal details**
- **Profile**
- **Skills and expertise**
- **Qualifications and education**
- **Professional memberships**
- **Experience (career history)**
- **Achievements**
- **Training**
- **Additional information (interests outside of work, hobbies, voluntary work, committees).**



### HINTS AND TIPS

#### THE 'DOS'

- Truthful
- Free from spelling or grammatical errors
- Positive, using appropriate wording/language
- Well presented; two pages preferable
- Has headings and bullet points for easier reading
- Tailored to the role in question

- Clear and concise
- Use one font only throughout – not a combination of various fonts as it can look cluttered
- Consists of achievements for which you can expand on when required
- Add your LinkedIn URL (preferably personalised)
- Written in third person – no 'I' or 'my'.

#### THE 'DON'TS'

- Include reasons why you left each job
- Attach / insert photographs, unless requested
- Add nationality, date of birth, marital status, family information or age (unless requested or adds value)
- Height, weight or state of health
- Referees' names and

- addresses (unless requested as part of the application). It is sufficient to say 'references available upon request'
- Abbreviations or jargon, unless industry-specific or recognised
- Leave gaps in employment history
- Salary details
- Fancy borders
- Fabricate or over-embellish.

**PERSONAL DETAILS:** include your name, address or location, contact telephone number(s), email address – preferably a professional one consisting of your name – and LinkedIn URL.

**PROFILE:** this is an introductory statement about you – your personal branding. It offers a brief overview (no more than 100 words) of your experience and, in some cases, what you are hoping to achieve in your career. For example:

*A Chartered Banker and senior banking manager with seven years' UK and International experience operating across the financial services industry. Has developed extensive change management knowledge and skills including project management, organisation design and process design.*

OR

*An Administrator who has an impressive career spanning 15 years in a customer-facing role within the banking industry. Has a proactive attitude and delivers a high standard in all work undertaken. Excellent communicator with a natural ability to engage with customers, members of the public or external businesses. Possesses a positive outlook, is driven to succeed and is seeking a new challenge.*

**SKILLS AND EXPERTISE:** this is a key section in showcasing what you are good at, and, if you are pursuing a career change, what is transferrable to another role or industry. Skills example:

**IT:** Proficient user of MS Office, in particular Excel and Access. Working knowledge of SAP and Oracle and various databases/CRMs. Strong knowledge of social media.

**Planning and organisational:** Successful in planning tasks, projects, day to day operational activities in line with business and client needs.

**Communication:** excellent communication with a natural affinity to build effective relationships with a variety of stakeholders, both internal and external.

**“WHEN CAREFULLY CREATED, A CV OFFERS A CHANCE TO SHOWCASE YOUR CAREER TO A PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER OR TALENT RECRUITER – AND HOPEFULLY SECURE YOU AN INTERVIEW.”**

Expertise example:

**Financial:** Strong working ability in hedge fund management, risk assurance, investment banking, financial reporting and process reviews (Six Sigma).

**Leadership and people management:** Professional, supportive, effective leader, skilled in situational leadership. Open and honest communication style. Champion for staff talent development, training and succession planning providing guidance and coaching for managers and direct reports.

**Change management:** Member of several organisational change projects, one of which resulted in the successful implementation of a new electronic CRM management system which saved the business over £1m.

**CAREER HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Introduce the company, what your role was and how long you performed it for. Rather than copy and paste your job description, show your audience evidence of your successes and what you have achieved, as this will add greater value for anyone reading your CV. For example:

**ABC Ltd, Germany**  
**BUSINESS ANALYST**  
**Mar 2012 – present**  
 ABC Ltd is a niche market consultancy firm providing consultancy solutions to the investment banking sector across Europe.

Worked within the change management team, analysing and proposing implementation solutions across processes, people and governance. Reported to Business Manager of EMEA.

**Achievements:**

- Integrated delivery components into the business in a controlled, efficient and sustainable manner.
- Co-ordinated implementation activity with regard for business as usual operations and other change programmes.
- Led and developed Programme Office processes and supported project management of change portfolio.
- Co-ordinated impact assessments of change Programmes, site closures and work movement across portfolio of sites (17 sites).
- Frequently recognised for high performance by management and colleagues (four times in 18 months).

**Note:** starting each achievement with an action word underlines your input in the achievement.

**QUALIFICATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS:**

Example:

**Sept 2014**  
 Fellow of Chartered Banker


**2011 – 2014**  
 MBA (part time) Bangor University

**June 2000 – Sept 2004**  
 BSc (Hons) in Finance The University of Strathclyde

**TRAINING:** list the training courses or accreditation that you have undertaken which support the role and your continual development. For example:

Emotional Intelligence  
 Six Sigma (Yellow Belt)  
 Having difficult conversations

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** use this section to note anything else that is not work-related. Outside interests can provide a good ice-breaker at an interview. Example:

- Languages: Fluent in English and German, conversational Spanish
- Willing to relocate
- Was Chairperson of the Social Committee for one year at ABC Ltd
- Avid golfer and likes to fundraise for local charities. Raised £5,000 in one event and had a mention in the local newspaper.
- Interests: Playing the piano and keeping fit. I once ran 10 marathons in a year, in cities including Avignon (France) and Jelgava (Latvia). 

Teresa Robertson, Chartered MCIPD, is Business Partner – People, Planning & Communication at the Chartered Banker Institute.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Start by creating a 'Master CV' document that captures everything from your career
- Keep it relevant
- Select and tailor the content from this document for each role
- Make a plan

Teresa Robertson discusses career development, the key steps to take to support your career planning and how to create a Career Development Plan:

**www.charteredbanker.com/knowledgehub/webcasts**

