

Hire STEM Women - CV Guide



Hire STEM Women
Bridging the gender & diversity gap

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What is the purpose of your CV?

Your CV is an opportunity for you to showcase your skills to a potential employer. Employers will normally look at your CV and make a decision on whether you are right fit for their organisation, therefore it is important you make a positive impression. You will be competing with many high potential candidates for roles that have limited spaces, you should aim to make sure your CV shows that you are an all rounded seeker with strong skills.

How can I write a good CV?

Your CV should demonstrate the following:

- **Honesty:** make sure you are honest when writing your academic results as many firms will verify these much later and you do not want to risk tarnishing your reputation
- **Education:** talk about your educational achievements. This section should highlight your GCSE's, AS or A-Levels, predicated grades if required.
- **Awards:** If you have won awards via academic achievements do talk about this for example, achieved the highest score in your first year at university
- **Start date & end dates:** it's helpful to talk about your years at university or school/college. It is always good to start with your most recent and work your way backwards
- **Projects or Work experience:** employers like to look at what you have done outside your academic achievements; this is where you highlight your skills. This is a good way to demonstrate your work experience or project achievements that will make you stand out as a seeker. If you have got yourself involved in charity endeavours such as fundraising, or set up a society at university this is especially useful as these elements will make your CV stand out.

What do employers look for in a CV?

- Problem solving skills
- Customer or client facing skills
- How you made a difference to a project
- Team work skills
- Communication skills

You should highlight achievements you have received during your project work or work experience, for example exceeding sales targets or winning best customer service awards

- **Hobbies, interests & charitable achievements:** This section is an opportunity to tell employers that you are human! Good examples to include are as follows:
 - Travelling
 - Sports
 - Charitable achievements
 - Volunteering
 - Leadership roles
 - Drama or dance
 - Music
 - Languages

Note that the list above isn't an exhaustive list, you may have other interests and awards which you can include. But remember, you always have to ask what the value in including any information is. Your aim is to include information that adds to your credibility as a strong candidate.

Errors to avoid making on your CV

- Spelling & poor grammar

- It is pretty easy to make a spelling mistake, but the recruiter can view this as negative. They will think if you are not bothered to make sure your CV is error free, why should they bother to process your application and give you a chance? Make sure you are using spell check & avoid using slang terms. You are using the CV to communicate with a professional not your best friend.
- It is important to read your CV several times to make sure you are not missing any key words for example; "I am good writing" as opposed to "I **am a** good writer".
- Make sure your language is set to English (UK)
- Grammar: Make sure you use the right tense when writing your CV. Examples: <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/bad-grammar-examples.html> , you can also download Grammarly, a free grammar checker to help you.
- **Proof reading:** Make sure you read your CV, this is a common mistake. Print your CV check it, print it again and check it, and get your friends or family to check it. This is important as you need to make sure your CV makes sense, and check for any errors.

- Poor formatting: You need to make sure your CV format is consistent. For example if you are writing in word and you have text boxes, you then download your CV to PDF and the text boxes cover your text, the employer will not be able to read your CV properly resulting in a poor impression.

- **Fonts:** make sure your fonts are consistent, if you are using ARIAL font, do not switch to another font later. Best fonts to use are Arial or Times New Roman, but use ONE.
- **Text size:** same as above, if you are using a size 10 font, no need to change your font sizes to 16
- **Headings:** If you choose to make headings bold, do this consistently throughout your CV
- If you choose to put full stops at the end of every sentence do this throughout, consistency is key!
- **Emails:** Make sure your email address is professional. The best email addresses are in the following format:
Firstname.lastname@gmail.com , joe.bloggs@gmail.com or surname.firstname@gmail.com DO NOT use an email address like the following: groovy.chick@gmail.com, yomamma@gmail.com this is NOT professional and will be frowned upon significantly.

Example CV

The format and structure of your CV is important. Make sure it is simple and easy on the eye. Below is a sample CV to give you an idea of what a good CV looks like.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/CareersAndVacancies/careersService/CVCoverApps/CVs/CVExamplesPDF/1%20page%20UG.pdf>