

# Essential Guide for Jobseekers

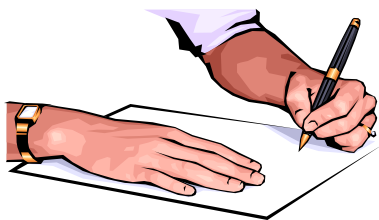


**Job Hunting  
Techniques**



**Making  
applications  
for jobs**

**Writing a CV  
and Covering  
Letter**



**Interviews**

**Useful  
contacts and  
resources**



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# Job Hunting Techniques

## ▶ Advertised Vacancies



## ▶ Unadvertised Vacancies

# Job Hunting Techniques

## Advertised Vacancies

### **Connexions**

- Check out Connexions offices for jobs aimed at young people.
- Many of these jobs offer training as well.
- Personal Advisers may ring up on your behalf to arrange interviews.

### **Local Newspapers**

- Check out the Shropshire Star on Thursdays for jobs from all over Shropshire.
- You could try placing your own ad in the Appointments Wanted section of a local newspaper. Local employers are more likely to see these adverts.

### **National Newspapers**

- Remember that these vacancies are often for professional or technical jobs.
- They may well also be in other parts of the country.

### **The Internet**

- Look for recruitment websites that have a regional search facility such as: [www.fish4jobs.co.uk](http://www.fish4jobs.co.uk) or the Job Centre Plus site: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk).

### **The Job Centre**

- There are lots of jobs advertised in Job Centres.
- Most jobs are local but you can use Job Centre Plus or Worktrain to search for jobs out of the area:
  - Job Centre Plus: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)
  - Worktrain: [www.worktrain.gov.uk](http://www.worktrain.gov.uk)
- Jobseeker Direct is a telephone service run by Jobcentre Plus. Ring 0845 6060 234 to find out what vacancies are available.

## **Recruitment Agencies**

- You have to give your details to an agency and they will try to match you up with available jobs.
- The Yellow Pages (or Yell.com) or Thomson Directory will list local recruitment agencies.
- Connexions offices will have lists of local employment agencies.

## **Outside an employer's premises**

- Some employers put their vacancies up outside their premises on notice boards or signs.

## **On notice boards in the community**

- Check out post office and newsagent notice boards.
- Jobs advertised here are often cleaning, childminding, gardening or shop work.

## **Unadvertised Vacancies**

- Many job vacancies are never advertised. You will have to contact the employer just in case they have a suitable vacancy. This is known as a speculative enquiry.
- Remember that you may have a lot of setbacks with this method, as many employers will reject you.
- You could try going to the employer's premises in person to ask if there are any vacancies. Take a copy of your CV with you to leave if there are no current vacancies.
- You could try making speculative phone calls to employers. This may suit you if you feel confident talking on the phone.
- You could send your CV and a covering letter introducing yourself and what you have to offer.

## **To decide who to approach you could try:**

- Asking friends or family already in work if they know of any vacancies in the company they are working for.
- Going to the library to look in the Yellow Pages or Thomson Directory.
- Looking at the local press for stories about companies winning new contracts, building new premises or anything that might mean they are expanding and are likely to be recruiting new staff.

# Writing a CV and Covering Letter



- ▶ What is a CV?
- ▶ The truth about CV's
- ▶ What makes a good CV?
- ▶ What should I include in my CV?
- ▶ Different types of CV
- ▶ Writing a covering letter

# Writing a CV and Covering Letter

## What is a CV?

- A CV (Curriculum Vitae) is a summary of your personal history and achievements to date.
- It is the first chance an employer will have to find out about you, and decide whether you may be suitable to work for them.
- The main purpose of a CV is to persuade an employer to offer you an interview.
- A good CV is very important, as it is your first chance to emphasise all of the good points about you.

## The truth about CV's

- You don't need to make things up! - Make the most of all of your achievements and skills and present them in a positive way.
- Don't worry if your qualifications and work experience are limited - focus on skills gained in other areas, such as volunteer work or helping family or friends.
- Who is a suitable reference? - Think about asking someone who knows you well, such as an employer, teacher, or family friend.

## What makes a good CV?

- Make sure it's word-processed. If you don't have a PC, your local Connexions branch will have a PC that you can use for free.
- Keep it brief! - It should be no longer than 2 sides of A4. Remember that the employer will have a lot of CV's to look at.
- Always include a covering letter. This will encourage the employer to read your CV (see "writing a covering letter").
- Keep the layout simple and clear. Leave spaces between each section so that it's easy to read. Stick to white or cream paper.
- Check your CV - Spelling mistakes or out of date information in your CV creates the impression that you are sloppy or can't be bothered.
- Keep it positive! - A CV is your first chance to sell yourself. This is your chance to tell people about your strong points.
- Make sure it's relevant. Look at the information in your CV and ask yourself if it is relevant to the job you are applying for.

## What should I include in my CV?

The information that you will need to include will depend on the type of job that you are applying for. However there are certain sections that should appear on any CV.

- **Personal Details** - Your name, address, telephone number, e-mail, date of birth, marital status (optional), driving licence, etc.
- **Personal Profile** - A summary of your skills, experience and personal attributes
- **Key Skills & Achievements** - List any other skills or certificates that you may have.
- **Education, Training & Qualifications** - List your education from age 11 onwards. Include the names of the schools and colleges you went to, with dates. List any exams you have taken, along with the results.
- **Employment History** - List any jobs you have done. Include the name of the company, and the dates you worked there
- **Work Experience** - List any work experience you have done in the past or are doing now alongside your paid work
- **Hobbies and Interests** - This is important as it gives the employer an idea of what you are really like. Again, be honest and be specific.
- **References** - Give the names and addresses of 2 people who will provide a reference for you. Always ask their permission before including their details.

## Different types of CV

Everyone is different, and so are CV's. Your CV should be suited to the type of job that you are applying for. Here are some different types.

- **School leaver CV** - List what schools you have attended and what exams you have taken. Also include work experience or jobs. List any other achievements, and include your hobbies and interests. Also include references.
- **College student CV** - Include the same information as above. Now you can match your CV to what you are applying for. For instance, you might want to give more detail to your work or personal skills.
- **Part-time job CV** - You may want to put your "Work Experience and Skills" section at the beginning of the CV. This is useful for the employer. Try to include all of your skills - why not ask someone who knows you to list the skills they think you have.

- **First job CV** - This will need to include all of the information above. Try to complete your CV before you start looking for a job. This will give you a good idea of what you can offer to an employer.
- **E-mail CV's** - Keep it clear and neat. Include all relevant sections as normal.

## Example of a CV

### **Sarah Parish**

5 Mount Drive  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire  
SY1 2DT  
(01743) 592618  
[s.parish@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:s.parish@hotmail.co.uk)

Date of Birth: 12<sup>th</sup> September 1979  
Full clean driving licence  
Status: Single

#### **Personal Profile**

A well organised and experienced professional who takes great pride in her work. Communicates well, both written and orally and works well with people at all levels. Works well under pressure and can work to tight deadlines.

#### **Key Skills and Achievements**

- CLAIT Level II Course
- RSA Level II Word Processing
- RSA Level II Text Processing
- Qualified lifeguard

#### **Education and Qualifications**

##### **Belvidere School (1991 – 1996)**

1996	GCSE English Literature	B	1996	GCSE Mathematics	C
1996	GCSE English Language	B	1996	GCSE Science	CC
1996	GCSE Media Studies	A	1996	GCSE Art	C
1996	GCSE French	D	1996	GCSE Technology	C

##### **Shrewsbury Sixth Form College (1996 – 1998)**

1998	A Level English	D
1998	A Level Media Studies	C

#### **Employment History**

1995 – 1998          Charlie's Bar and Restaurant (part-time)

- Taking food orders
- Serving drinks
- Maintaining a clean work environment
- Customer service

## **Employment History**

1998 – 2000

Clark's Solicitors

- Completed an NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration
- Typing letters and filing documents
- Maintaining a client database
- Answering telephones

2000 – 2004

Weston's Veterinary Surgery

- Answering telephone enquiries
- Dealing with invoices
- Maintaining a database of clients
- Filing
- Typing letters

## **Work Experience**

- I work on a voluntary basis for the Cats Protection League helping to publicise the work they do

## **Hobbies and Interests**

Reading, travel, cinema, swimming and tennis

## **References**

Mrs Marie Weston  
Weston's Veterinary Surgery  
13 Whitchurch Road  
Drewsbury  
Dropsire  
SY1 4DE

Mr Tony Clark  
Clark's Solicitors  
Harlescott Lane  
Drewsbury  
Dropsire  
DY1 3AD

## Writing a covering letter

- The purpose of a covering letter is to tell an employer about your CV. It will also give them some information about you. Employers **do not** like CV's sent without a covering letter.
- The letter should be short and clear. Say what you are applying for, and include any job title or reference number.
- You may also want to include a short summary of your personal skills, which make you suitable for the job.
- See the example on the next page for an idea of how it should look.

## Example of a covering letter

Mr J Smith  
Shrewsbury Office Supplies  
Monkmoor Road  
Drewsbury  
Dropshire  
DY2 3HL

Sarah Parish  
5 Mount Drive  
Drewsbury  
Dropshire  
DY1 2DT

18<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Dear Mr Smith,

### **Senior Administration Assistant**

Please find enclosed my CV in connection with the above position, as advertised in the Shropshire Star on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

As you will see from my CV, I am an experienced administrator, with several years of experience in two different organisations. I would like to add that I am proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel and Access. I am used to working unsupervised and am capable of working on my own initiative. I am reliable, responsible, highly organised and keen to learn new skills.

I believe that I have a great deal to offer this position and I think I possess the necessary qualities, attributes and experience that this post demands.

I look forward to having the opportunity to discussing the position in more detail.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parish

# Making applications for jobs



- ▶ Applying for a job by phone
- ▶ Applying for a job in writing
- ▶ Completing job application forms

# Making applications for jobs

## Applying for a job by phone

Plan before you phone:

- Have a notepad and pen with you
- Plan what you want to say
- Be prepared to answer questions.
- Note down any questions that you would like to ask.
- Have the job advertisement in front of you
- Have your C.V. handy so you can answer any questions.
- Have your diary with you in case you are asked to attend an interview.
- Choose a quiet area to make the call from
- If you are planning to use a payphone, make sure that you have plenty of change
- Stay calm, relax and think positive.

Making the telephone call:

- Speak clearly and confidently
- Be enthusiastic
- Ask politely for the person you wish to speak to
- Give your name and explain why you are calling
- Offer to send them your C.V.
- Note down all the details if an interview has been arranged
- Thank the employer for their time

## Applying for a job in writing

### Setting out your letter and what to include:

- Your address should go in the right hand corner of the page. The date should also go underneath your address.
- The company's name and address should go directly opposite your address, on the left hand side of the page.
- If you know the name of the person you need to apply to for the job use this or you can start your letter by writing - Dear Sir or Madam.
- Your opening paragraph should be short and straight to the point. Start by explaining why you are writing. State what job you are applying for and give the reference number if there is one. It should also state where you saw the advert.
- Your second paragraph should briefly describe your education and qualifications.
- Your third paragraph should describe any experience you may have and what your interests are.
- Your fourth paragraph should include details of why you want to work for the company and what you can offer the employer
- You should mention that you have enclosed a copy of your CV with the letter
- End with a short sentence indicating that you look forward to hearing from them soon.
- Sign off with either: Yours sincerely (if you have used the person's name at the start of the letter) or Yours faithfully (if you are not writing to a specific person).
- Sign your name and print it clearly underneath

### Creating a good impression:

- You can write your letter by hand or on the computer
- If you are planning on writing your letter by hand ensure that your writing is readable and neat.
- Use black ink to write your letter, as this is easier to photocopy.
- If you are planning on typing your letter, remember to set out the letter so it looks clearly set out on the page. Also, justify the text so the paragraphs line up.
- Use good quality, plain paper
- For maximum impact keep your letter to one page only.
- Do a draft copy first
- Check spelling, grammar and punctuation

- *Get someone else to check your letter.*
- *Use a good size white or brown envelope.*
- *Address the envelope clearly and neatly*
- *Post your letter first class*

## Example of a letter of application for a job

Mr John Smith  
Drewsbury Office Supplies  
Monkmoor Road  
Drewsbury  
Dropshire  
SY2 3HL

Sarah Parish  
5 Mount Drive  
Drewsbury  
Dropshire  
SY1 2DT

18<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Dear Mr Smith,

I am writing in reply to your advertisement in this week's Dropshire Star for the position of Senior Administration Assistant.

I have 9 GCSE's, including English, Mathematics and Science. I also have 2 A Levels in English and Media Studies. I have recently completed a CLAIT Level II course and I already hold RSA Level II qualifications in Word and Text Processing.

For the past four years I have worked as a Receptionist with Westons Veterinary Surgery. My present job involves general reception duties in person and by the phone. I also operate the switchboard, deal with telephone enquiries, deal with the post and I type and word process documents. Before this job I was a Modern Apprentice with Clark's Solicitors where I completed an NVQ Level 3 Qualification in Business Administration.

I have always enjoyed working with people and my previous experience will enable me to work as part of a team. I am highly organised, methodical and reliable person.

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV for your further information. References are available from present and previous employers.

I look forward to hearing from you soon

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parish

## Completing job application forms - Some valuable tips

- Fill in all of the application form.
- If the company/organisation requests that a CV should not be sent, then don't send one.
- Read through the form thoroughly before starting. Think about what information is required. Also, read the job description and person specification which is sent out with the application form so you are clear about what they want.
- Read all instructions before completing the application form.
- It is worthwhile photocopying the original form so you can complete the application form in rough first.
- Ask someone to check your rough copy before filling out the original form.
- Avoid drinking and eating while filling out the application form.
- Try to keep the application form neat and tidy
- Handwriting should be clear and legible
- Don't leave blank spaces.

### Sending off your application form:

- Before sending your application form off make some last minute checks.
- Check that you have signed and dated it
- Check for mistakes
- Ensure that all sections of the form have been properly completed.
- Photocopy the completed application form and keep it safe
- Use the correct size envelope
- Neatly and correctly address the envelope
- Ensure the application form is sent first class.
- Send the application form off in plenty of time

Remember, if you need help filling out application forms or writing letters of application, your Personal Adviser in your local Connexions Office, School or College will be happy to help.

# Interviews



- ▶ Last minute checks
- ▶ At the interview
- ▶ Questions you might get asked
- ▶ Questions you could ask
- ▶ What to do and what not to do

# Interviews

Preparation is the key. You only have one chance to make a good impression!

- Do your research - find out everything you can about the company or organisation.
- Re-read your application form or CV. It might also be useful to read the job description again. Prepare some questions to ask the interviewer/s
- Try to think what questions you might get asked and how you will answer them
- If the format of the interview has been arranged in your invitation letter give some thought about each aspect of the interview process.

## Last minute checks

- Check the time and date of the interview
- Work out the route you will take to get there and how long it will take.
- Arrange what you are going to take with you
- Decide what you will wear. Dress smartly, ensuring that your shoes and clothes are neat and clean.

## At the Interview

- Be punctual.
- When you arrive at the company be courteous to all employees
- When you greet the person who will interview you, smile confidently and firmly shake their hand.
- Look attentive
- Be positive, confident and enthusiastic
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer
- Relax - sit up straight
- Be yourself
- Don't talk too quickly and avoid waffling.
- Avoid yes and no answers
- If you are not sure about a question ask for clarification
- After the interview is completed, thank the interviewer for his/her time

## **Questions you might get asked**

- Why do you want this job?
- What qualities do you think will be required for this job?
- What can you offer?
- What is your knowledge of the company?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- Why should we employ you?
- What would you like to be doing five years from now?
- Describe a difficult problem you have had to deal with?
- Tell me about yourself?

## **Questions you could ask**

- What training do you provide?
- What are the chances of advancement/promotion in this position?
- What will my responsibilities be?
- When will you be making a decision?

## **What to do and what not to do!**

Do:

- Prepare thoroughly
- Dress smartly
- Turn off your mobile before you go in to the interview
- Arrive on time
- Be polite and courteous to all staff you meet
- Relax
- Stay calm and take deep breaths
- Be honest
- Be yourself
- Be confident
- Look enthusiastic
- Ask questions
- Thank the interviewer when you leave

## Don't:

- Smoke
- Chew gum
- Wear jeans or trainers
- Ask about salary and holidays
- Use the interviewer's first name unless requested to
- Show boredom
- Make offensive comments about your previous employer
- Don't answer questions with just a "yes" or "no" answer

# Useful contacts and resources



- ▶ **Books**
- ▶ **Leaflets**
- ▶ **Telephone numbers**
- ▶ **Websites**

# Useful contacts and resources

## Books

- Great Answers to Tough Interview Questions by Martin John Yate  
(Available in your Connexions Resource Centre)
- Excel at Interviews

## Telephone Numbers

- Jobseeker Direct - 0845 60 60 234
- Connexions Direct - 0808 00 13 2 19
  - Connexions Offices -
  - Shrewsbury (01743) 284400
  - Bridgnorth (01746) 765001
  - Oswestry (01691) 659111
  - Ludlow (01584) 873725
  - Market Drayton (01630) 654138

## Websites

- Connexions Direct - [www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com)
- Jobs4U - [www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u](http://www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u)
- Work Train - [www.worktrain.gov.uk](http://www.worktrain.gov.uk)
- Job Centre Plus - [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)