

Work it girl!

From having a standout CV to charming your boss-to-be, make this the year you re-brand yourself and bag the corner office (yes, the one with the nice swingy chair...)

HERE'S ONE WE MADE EARLIER...

● If you want to avoid the common CV pitfalls, read on for careers expert Janet Davies' tips on how to give your résumé the glow-factor. Watch out boss! You're on your way up.

● The applicant hasn't listed an email address, so the only point of contact is a telephone number. Make yourself as contactable as possible.

● 'Position sought' - this should be on a covering letter because a résumé should only detail your relevant experience, qualifications and skills.

CV
 Kristen Elton
 Tel: UK +44 (01) 473 134 679
 NATIONALITY: British
 GENDER: Female
 DATE OF BIRTH: 24/04/81

SECONDARY EDUCATION:
 Northampton High School,
 Northampton Qualifications:
 GCSE: English Literature - B
 GCSE: English Language - B
 GCSE: Maths - C
 GCSE: French - B
 GCSE: Science (Biology, Physics
 and Chemistry combined) - A
 GCSE: CDT (Craft Design and
 Technology) - C
 GCSE: Music - C
 A-Level: English Lit - B
 A-Level: Psychology - C
 A-Level: Business Studies - C

THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION:
 Newcastle University, Newcastle,
 UK. Degree: Bachelor of Business,
 Economic and Social Studies
 2.1 (Honours)

Position sought
 I am looking for a new challenge
 within the field of office admin
 and would welcome a role with
 responsibility and development.

SKILLS
 Excellent communication skills
 Well-honed organisational and
 research skills
 Knowledge of MS Office
 Knowledge of MS Word
 Knowledge of MS PowerPoint
 and Excel

WORK EXPERIENCE
 March 2007 - present day
**Office receptionist - Martha
 Thompson Inc**
 Martha Thompson is a fast-paced
 and prestigious accountancy
 firm. Founded in London, it has
 established itself as one of the
 leading financial companies in
 the UK.
 Main duties: Representing the
 company and being the first port
 of call for new clients
 - Answering phone calls and
 organising the diaries of
 senior staff
 - Booking conference rooms and
 organising meetings
 - Writing memos and liaising with
 senior members of staff

HOBBIES
 Netball, cycling, creative writing
 and socialising with friends.
 References available on request

● The skills are lacking. What does 'excellent communication skills' mean? Provide examples.

● This CV is far too cluttered. You're put off reading it as soon as you look at it. Keep yours clean, simple and well spaced out.

● Hobbies are not necessary unless relevant. If you play team sports, this works because it shows you're a team player. However, keep it current - playing on a netball team 10 years ago isn't significant.

● References don't actually need to be included as it's a given that a job applicant will provide them come interview time. Stating it is superfluous, so leave it out.

● Spelling errors are big black marks - especially if you want to work in administration.

Spin doctor your CV

You're ready to apply for the job, but before you do, give your résumé one last read-through. From spelling mistakes to formatting errors, according to a recent survey by a UK-based career consultancy, 47 per cent of CVs are poorly presented, 81 per cent have spelling mistakes and a whopping 94 per cent find their way to the rubbish bin.

So how do you avoid the shredder? "Give your CV a re-vamp," says Janet Davies, editor of myexecutivecareer.com. Recent research by The Successful CV Company (thesuccessfulcv.com) shows that only nine per cent of people update their CVs on a regular basis, so by re-vamping often, you give yourself an added advantage over other applicants. Similarly, Davies says, "updating your CV every six months is important because it allows you to reflect on what you've achieved over that period, as well as seeing what skills you might be lacking."

Likewise, choosing the information you include is also key. "What a university-leaver puts on their CV is very different to what a 30-year-old should include," explains Davies. "Once you have a few years' professional experience under your belt, it's unnecessary to include details about old part-time jobs that you had as a teenager. They don't need to know that your favourite bit about working in New Look, was the staff discount. Also, if your highest qualification is a university degree or a Masters, don't detail your high school grades, unless they are absolutely relevant."

Steal the show

Heart pounding, throat thickening, body shaking like a leaf? No matter what experience you have, job interviews reduce the best of us into gibbering wrecks. Fortunately, we've rounded up the experts to give you the scoop on everything from handshakes to hairdos. You'll be running the show by Easter.

● Perfect your body language

According to research by CareerBuilder.com, failure to make eye contact with your employer and a weak handshake can severely affect your chances of being hired. "If you want to be in control, get your hand out first," says UK-based body language expert, Robert Phipps (robertphipps.com). "If you turn your palm