

Your quick guide to:

CV tips for PAs and EAs

For PAs and EAs, writing an impressive CV requires many of the same techniques and conventions applied in other occupations. But there are also ways of boosting your CV that are unique to your profession. This guide provides handy tips for your next PA application.

Write a new CV for every job

A large proportion of CVs received for every job are generic – in other words, they've not been customised. By adapting your CV for every position you apply for, you'll immediately jump ahead of many other candidates.

It doesn't have to be overly time-consuming either. Get a clear understanding of the job specification, and simply place more emphasis on the relevant skills and experience you have.

Also, make sure that your employer can find whatever they'll be looking for quickly and easily.

Customising your CV is essential, and it's the first thing you should be thinking about.

Make it professional

Employers make decisions about CVs in a matter of seconds. If you want your CV to be looked at for longer, you'll need to:

- Use simple, professional formatting
- Use a simple, professional font (Arial or Times New Roman)
- Check your CV thoroughly for spelling and grammatical mistakes (get someone else to check too)

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Think about what makes you different

Recruiters and employers read a lot of CVs, and a lot of candidates describe themselves in very similar ways. You need to be professional and meet certain standards and expectations, but you also need to give them something different to spark their interest.

Consider the things people have said about you in previous jobs. Was there anything unique about the work you did? What did you do that no one else could? Find something special that grabs attention.

Make it easy to read

Using bullet points to illustrate the skills or experiences you've acquired in previous roles is essential. Bullets allow recruiters to scan through and pick out what they need to know quickly and easily – by helping them, you're helping your chances of landing the job.

Also, try to avoid long paragraphs. Break up blocks of text and be thoughtful about how your CV is spaced. Give your CV to friends and ask them to tell you how easy it is to pick out the key information.

Show your personality

In some professions, personality isn't a vital factor in securing a job – but for a PA, personality is everything.

Of course your CV needs to be professional, but you also need to find ways of letting your personality shine through. So, start your CV with a brief personal statement that outlines the skills and achievements you're most proud of.

Also, at the end of your CV, include some interests and activities outside of work that shows the person you are; it's a good chance to show that you're more than just a list of attributes, and may trigger some more casual conversation during interviews.

Use dynamic and positive language

By using language effectively you can turn an unremarkable point on your CV into something powerful and persuasive. Try to do the following:

- On bullets representing your experience, begin with 'created this' or 'accelerated that' rather than 'I did this' – it will give it a sense of urgency
- Avoid clichés
- Avoid jargon and ensure the terms you use are logical and relevant
- Avoid negative words and phrasing
- Be committed about your points – 'people have told me I have good people skills' sounds much better as 'I'm a proven communicator, as demonstrated by...'

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Above all, don't rush. Writing is all about editing, and good writing takes time.

We look at hundreds of CVs from PAs all over the UK every day. So, if you really want to perfect yours, get in touch – we know the difference between a good CV, and a great one.

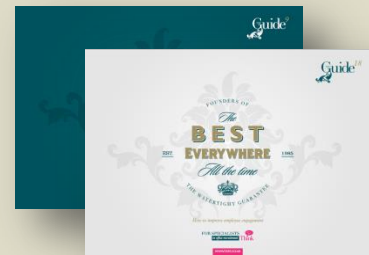
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