



Stafforce

YOUR GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CV Writing | Interview Preparation | Dress code | Managing Nerves



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CV WRITING TIPS

A well-structured CV is your first step to securing an interview. It should be professional, concise, and tailored to the role.



Structure

Personal Information:

At the top, include your name, contact details (phone number, email), and location (town or city). No need for a full postal address or irrelevant personal details.

Professional Summary:

Write a brief (3-4 sentences) summary that highlights your key skills, experience, and career goals, relevant to the role.

Skills:

List technical and transferable skills relevant to the job. Be specific (e.g., “financial analysis” or “customer service management”) and avoid clichés.

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Work Experience:

Present your work experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first). Include:

- Job title
- Company name
- Dates of employment
- Key achievements and responsibilities (using bullet points)
- Where possible, quantify your accomplishments (e.g., “Reduced costs by 15%,” “Led a team of 12”).

Education:

Include your academic qualifications and professional training relevant to the job.

Formatting Tips

- Aim for a professional layout: use a clean, readable font (e.g., Arial, Calibri) and clear headings.
- Keep your CV to 1-2 pages.
- Use bullet points and keep formatting consistent throughout.
- Save your CV as a PDF to maintain formatting when submitting online.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Proper preparation is essential for performing well in an interview. Here's how you can prepare effectively:

Research

1. Understand the Company:

- Learn about the company's mission, products or services, and values. Use their website and recent news to stay updated.

2. Understand the Role:

- Review the job description carefully and be prepared to discuss how your skills and experience align with the key responsibilities and requirements.

Common Interview Questions & How to Answer

1. Tell me about yourself.

- Focus on your professional background and relevant experience rather than personal details.

2. Why do you want this job?

- Show how your goals align with the company's vision and explain why you're a good fit for the role.

3. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

- Strengths: Highlight qualities that are relevant to the job.
- Weaknesses: Be honest but frame them in a way that shows you are working to improve.

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- **Use the STAR Technique (Situation, Task, Action, Result):**
 - This method helps structure your answers to behavioural questions by describing a situation where you demonstrated a key skill.
- **Questions to Ask:**
 - Prepare thoughtful questions about the company or role, such as:
 - What does success look like in this role?
 - Can you tell me more about the team culture?

Body Language and Communication

- **Maintain Eye Contact:**
 - Engage with your interviewers by making appropriate eye contact, but avoid staring.
- **Clear Communication:**
 - Speak clearly and at a moderate pace. Show enthusiasm and interest in the role through your tone.
- **Active Listening:**
 - Pay close attention and respond appropriately. Demonstrating good listening skills shows your engagement.
- **Positive Body Language:**
 - Sit up straight, avoid fidgeting, and smile when appropriate. This conveys confidence and professionalism.



CONTROLLING NERVES

It's natural to feel nervous before an interview, but these techniques will help you manage your nerves and stay calm.

Preparation

1. Practice:

- Rehearse answering common interview questions with a friend or in front of a mirror. The more you practise, the more confident you'll feel.

Visualisation

- Imagine yourself succeeding in the interview. This mental preparation can help boost your confidence.

On the Day

1. Arrive Early:

- Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early to give yourself time to settle. Rushing will increase your anxiety.

2. Breathing Exercises:

- Use simple breathing techniques to calm yourself before the interview. A good method is the 4-7-8 technique: inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7, and exhale for 8.

3. Positive Self-Talk:

- Replace any negative thoughts with positive affirmations. Remind yourself of your strengths and how much you've prepared.

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Confident Body Language

Even if you're feeling nervous, maintain an upright posture and smile. This can help you project confidence, even if you're feeling tense inside.

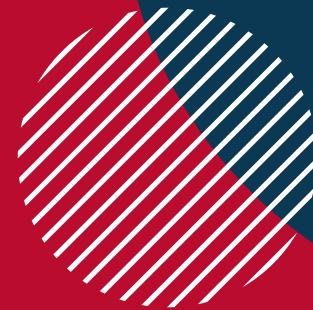
During the Interview

1. Pause Before You Answer:

- If you're unsure how to answer a question, take a moment to think before responding. A short pause shows that you're considering your answer carefully.

2. Focus on the Conversation:

- Engage in the conversation and actively listen. This will help keep your mind off your nerves and on the interview.





Staffforce

Your Local Recruiter of Choice

We hope this guide will help you prepare for job applications and interviews, whether you're writing your CV, preparing for an interview, deciding what to wear, or managing pre-interview nerves.

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