

CVs and Covering Letters in Brief

THE CV

The reverse Chronological CV is suitable for most situations. It lists education and work experience in reverse date order (most recent first). Evidence of skills and achievements are built into the CV against the relevant experience.

Format and Structure

- Most UK CVs should be two A4 sized pages, unless otherwise stated by the employer.
- Your best selling points should always come first within a section.
- Allocate space according to importance to the job for which you are applying – expand on areas of relevance.
- You can draw the recruiter's attention to relevant experience by grouping it together under an appropriate sub-heading eg Legal Work Experience, Financial Work Experience, Scientific Work Experience, Technical Work Experience or Relevant Work Experience.
- Use headings which best describe the content of the section. Adapt the headings to fit your needs eg Awards and Achievements, Positions of Responsibility and Achievements.
- Putting lines between sections and the use of boxes or tables with lined borders can clutter up your CV making it difficult to read. Tables without borders can be useful for formatting neatly in columns.
- Use a standard font that is easy to read and looks professional. Use the same font style throughout.

Style

- Keep sentences short and precise.
- Bullet points can look effective and help you to write short, dynamic sentences. If you want to use paragraphs keep them short.

Content

- Must be tailored to the requirements of the reader. What skills and experience are they looking for?
- Spelling and grammar are very important; do not rely on spell checks.
- Personal profiles are optional; they are best suited to speculative applications or in circumstances where you are not using a cover letter.
- All skills claims must be backed up by evidence.

Structuring your examples - the CAR Model

Context – What was the situation – keep it brief, but specific.

Action – What did YOU do? What was your role? What actions did you take? Use action words.

Result – What was the outcome? What did you achieve? What was improved? Qualify and quantify.

References

Unless otherwise stated, provide names of two referees. These will depend on the role, your circumstances and what has been requested. More on references: www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/students/applicationsinterviews/af/references

THE COVERING LETTER

When sending a CV, you need to include a covering letter. The covering letter is your personal sales pitch, where you introduce yourself as a candidate and discuss why you want the job. It should be professional and business like in style and layout. In brief it should cover:

1. Why you are applying to this company? - What makes them stand out from other similar companies?
2. Why you are applying for this role? - Your motivation for applying, show your understanding of the role.
3. The skills and experience you have that match the job description.

Covering letters should be tailored for each job. If you cut and paste the company name and use the letter for any other employer, your letter will not convince the reader that you want to work for them. Even the least experienced recruiter can spot a 'mailshot' at a glance!

Marketing Executive

Skills:

- As you'd expect with a modern marketing role, the successful candidate will be digitally savvy, web competent and possess the more traditional capabilities of interpersonal and organisation skills.
- Attitude is as important as anything else. Must be well presented, bright, articulate and have the ability to communicate with actual human beings and not just via a laptop/iPhone/Xbox, etc.
- Some form of marketing understanding/background is welcomed yet not a necessity, but the desire (and ability) to learn is essential. I am looking for someone who has personality and is motivated by moulding this opportunity into something that I haven't even considered it could be.

Salary £20,000 + benefits

Vacancy Description:

As marketing executive, you will be right in at the start of the business journey. The role is a graduate role and one for an all-rounder, whereby the successful candidate will have the opportunity to work on a variety of marketing disciplines. This will probably be your first full-time marketing role, potential previous work placements to one side.

You will be involved in Consumer Marketing, Business Marketing, Corporate Marketing, Charities Marketing, Media Marketing and more. It really will be a steep learning curve, but one with such variety that there will never be a dull moment and will certainly stand the successful candidate in good stead for their future marketing career.

Your day could involve creating social media content, helping to organise launch events, writing email campaigns, coordinating production of sales support collateral, analysing consumer research, etc.

But the good news is that you won't be thrown in at the deep end – you will be working with, guided by and learning from an international, award-winning marketer who has, in what seems like a former lifetime, held senior international roles for global PLCs. Additionally you will be liaising with a team of expert online, PR & social media agencies who will be able to guide you through the learning experience.

This role has opportunity for progression, and not just in terms of a change in job title, but an opportunity to be looking after your own people in the fullness of time. Assuming the successful candidate displays the capability for progression and wants it, they will get it. The team starts with two people, but as we go in to Year 2 it will be five strong. And Year 3 will see the same level of marketing team expansion, etc.

Hannah Frances

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Education

2010-2013 The University of Manchester

BSc (Hons) Business Management. Expected result 2.1

Second year result: 65%

Modules include – strategic marketing management, e-business and e-marketing, market research, managing new product development, business modelling, entrepreneurship and management accounting.

- Frequently work in small groups to carry out projects; for example, presenting an innovative marketing strategy for a new local florist.
- Completed a number of individual market research assignments and received a first class mark for a project showing how computer simulation can improve queuing systems in a variety of retail outlets.
- Regularly give verbal presentations of assignments, either solely or in a group.

2008-2010 Longridge Sixth Form College, Sheffield

A Levels: English Language (A), Business Studies (A), Psychology (A)

2003-2008 John Roberts High School, Sheffield

GCSEs: 9 (5A, 3B, 1C) including Maths and English (both A)

Work Experience

2010 - Present

Part-Time Assistant, Denim International (online retailer of denim clothing)

- Collate online orders, prepare invoices and orders for shipping
- Complete financial records using Excel spreadsheets
- Write advertising copy for the company's website

2011 - 2012

Bar staff, The University of Manchester, Woolton Hall

- Organised bar game tournaments and film nights to promote the bar – bar sales increased 50% for these events
- Managed the bar's social media pages on Facebook and Twitter

2008 - 2010

Waitress, Links Hotel and Conference Centre, Sheffield

- Part-time work at weekends and formal dinners.
- Trained in silver service
- Assisted in organising wedding receptions – table layouts and PA introductions of wedding guests

Positions of Responsibility

2011 - Present

President of Manchester Hiking Club

- Responsible for large events
-50 students on hikes each Sunday
- Liaise with external companies to organise events and transport
- Target students through various platforms including print based media, blog entries, Facebook and Twitter
- Provide copy and design work for promotional material

2011-2012

Open Day Assistant, The University of Manchester

- Marketed the university through guided tours of the campus for up to 300 prospective students and parents
- Promoted to Group Leader, briefed new guides on routes and monitored tours to ensure they ran successfully

Summer 2009

Counsellor, Camp America – for underprivileged children

- Responsible for campers' general wellbeing and safety during activities
- Provided guidance and support to a set group of campers

Interests

Theatre

- In addition to attending live theatre performances I am a member of MUGSS (Manchester Universities Gilbert and Sullivan Society) and take part in productions both as an actor and stage-crew

Volunteering

- Completed 2012 Cancer Research 'Race For Life' raising £300 for the Charity
- Christmas volunteer – Wood Street Mission. The Mission is a children's charity based in the centre of Manchester. Assisted in delivering Christmas parcels to families in Manchester and Salford

Additional Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Word and Access, Adobe Photoshop and InDesign
- Full clean driving licence
- Basic conversational French

References available on request.