

Graduate Nurse Program

Tips for writing your CV

WHAT IS A CV?

A CV is a document which informs prospective employers about you, enabling them to consider you for a position with their organisation. A CV is usually between 2 and 4 pages long, depending on your experience, and contains a summary of your personal information, education and qualifications, work experience, achievements and interests. A well designed CV will enable you to promote yourself to an organisation you are interested in working with.

WHY IS A CV SO IMPORTANT?

Your CV is the first contact you will normally have with a prospective employer. Employers often receive a large number of applications for positions, so it is important that you stand out against the other candidates. Your CV is an opportunity to sell yourself, your skills, qualifications, experience and career objectives. Don't be afraid to alter your CV so the relevant skills and experience for the position you are applying for stand out on your CV.

A poorly executed CV which doesn't provide a prospective employer an insight into what you can bring to a position and organisation, may be the difference between gaining an interview and being unsuccessful at the initial stage of the recruitment process.

WHAT SHOULD I INCLUDE IN MY CV?

Personal Information:

- Name
- Address
- Home number
- Mobile number
- Email Address

Skills Summary

This section is optional and can contain a keyword list detailing your key competencies or skills. This does not need to be lengthy and can contain dot points to provide your prospective employer an insight of additional skills you may bring to the position. For example:

- IT Skills (competency with specific software programs e.g. Microsoft Office, role related software)
- Leadership skills
- Project Management skills
- Languages other than English

Clinical Placements

List your clinical placements and which facilities you completed them at.



Career Objective

This section is optional and provides the prospective employer with an idea of what you see as the next step in your career. It should be a short and concise statement informing the reader of what kind of position you desire, what skills, experience and background you have and what your career aspirations are. For new graduates you may wish to include why you are interested in the organisation and position. For example:

- As a recent graduate I am now looking for a position which will enable me to consolidate my educational experience into a position which will enable me to continue to develop and build on the skills I have obtained through my tertiary education.

Education & Qualifications:

List your qualifications including your year of graduation, institution you studied at, certifications, courses, especially those related to the position you are applying for. You may also like to highlight specific subjects or studies within your course which have been related to the position you are applying for. If specific qualifications are required for the position, e.g. Bachelor of Nursing, then you should highlight these important criteria.

Work History

List your work experience, including paid, unpaid or voluntary work experience. If you are only just starting your career and had no relevant work experience in the position you are applying for, be sure to include all your work experience to date, including casual or part-time positions, and highlight any gained skills or experience which may be relevant to the position you are applying for, e.g. Customer Service.

Each position held should include, as a minimum, the following information:

- Title of position
- Dates in which you held the position, e.g. August 2011 to March 2013

- Name of organisation
- Achievements
- Brief explanation of position responsibilities

Professional Memberships or Associations

Include any relevant industry or professional memberships relevant to the role you are applying for, e.g. AHPRA.

Referees

Generally school leavers or early career candidates are able to rely on written references which are obtained from managers or supervisors who have known you and can provide comment on your work performance and character in an existing or previous position. Personal references from educational leaders or community figures may also be provided.

If the application process does not ask for referees it is generally accepted to include "Referees available upon request" in your CV.

GETTING STARTED ON YOUR CV?

Before starting your CV in response to an advertised position you must ask yourself a few questions to help you shape and tailor your CV.

TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR CV – GRADUATE PROGRAM

- What do I think the organisation and selection panel are looking for?
- What abilities are required to develop in and/or carry out the position?
- What skills and achievements have I gained in previous positions and my education, which can help me in this position?
- Do I have the correct qualifications and experience?
- Do I have other experiences that have helped me develop skills and capacities to solve problems (e.g. travelling abroad, volunteering, taking on responsibilities at university, clubs or associations)?



- What type of position is right for me? Do I like to work alone or in a team? Am I creative or do I prefer to be directed?
- What did I like about my previous position? What aspects or functions would I rather not have this time?.
- Are there periods of inactivity in my professional history? How I can explain them positively? What have I learned and what abilities have I used, for example travelling, taking care of and raising my children, looking for work for a long time?

MORE TIPS FOR YOUR CV?

- Tailor your CV to the position you are applying for. If you are applying for a Graduate position then highlight your educational experience and achievements, e.g. received a Dean's recommendation for academic achievement. Your CV should be tailored to suit the position, not a summary or history of your life.
- Ensure absolute honesty in the content of your CV, this is critical. Be positive and sell your best points rather than highlighting your negative points.
- Do not include hobbies or activities you do in your free time if you are applying for a more senior role.
- Never include your activities or interests if they relate to politics, religion or more controversial topics. These items could alienate a biased reviewer.
- No more than 2 pages for school-leavers or junior job role seekers; no more than 4 pages for more senior or experienced job seekers.
- Never hand-write a CV unless specifically requested in hand-writing. Use a clear font without decorative or fancy fonts and excessive colour.
- Your CV should transmit clarity and professionalism visually (short phrases, visually appealing, emphasis on key skills and experience which are relevant to the position sought).
- Strong use of action verbs to commence each sentence (e.g. commissioned the; managed the; coordinated the)

- Do not include supporting documentation unless specifically requested.
- Do not include a CV cover sheet, it does not need an introduction or heading.
- Ensure correct use of punctuation, use clear and concise wording, try to display a high standard of written expression, and be sure there are no spelling errors.
- Write your CV so that the most recent education/ qualification and work experience is contained at the beginning of each section.
- Do not refer to salary or your salary expectations in your CV.
- Do not include your reasons for seeking new or alternative employment in your CV; this can be discussed at interview.
- Do not include a photograph.
- Only attach written references if specifically requested.
- Consider all aspects of the job before finalising your CV.



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