

# FREE JLA 10 STEP CAREER PROGRAMME

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## Step 3: What is a CV for? What kind of CV?

A CV is a marketing tool - your personal advertisement. It contains your key messages – who you are and what you are looking for. It may be the only piece of information a prospective employer has available about you.

Too many people believe that the function of a CV is to get you the job. It isn't. A CV is there to get you an interview or a meeting.

Your CV should therefore give key information about your experience, skills and achievements - but not your life story.

Recruiters are known to filter CV's after scanning through them for perhaps only 15-20 seconds before sorting them into one of three piles: YES, NO, or MAYBE. In that short timeframe you have to make sure your CV is in the YES pile. Some kind of decision about you will be made almost immediately, which is why the key elements in your CV should be *in the first two-thirds of page 1*.

You therefore need to ensure that your CV only contains relevant & important information, to reflect your true worth and creates an excitement that you could be the right candidate for them - at least so that they will invite you to interview.

It should clearly demonstrate what you have done - not list the responsibilities of previous jobs like a job description. Everyone has responsibilities; it's what you do with them that counts. Focus on results - the benefits you have delivered before and can deliver again: employers buy experience.

If you want to move into a new field of work, remember that you need to translate skills for the reader – don't assume that the recruiter will see your transferable skills. Also remember to translate qualifications, courses, job duties and even what organisations do into terms which are readily accessible for the average reader.

Presentation should be business style - on good quality paper (100gsm), well prepared with no mistakes, kept to two pages (three at most) succinct and easy to scan/read, ensuring sufficient white space shows through. Avoid elaborate presentation styles - covers, binders, photographs etc.

Your CV will also be used by recruiters during the interview process, so it is important that you remember what you have included - and why! Keep copies of variations on your standard CV.

### What kind of CV?

The key question here is what result you want to achieve. If you want to change sector, you are probably going to need a **profile** to head up your CV, or you will keep getting offers of the kind of job you have just done. If you want to highlight certain skills or experience, you might want to write a skills or competence based CV. A good alternative is, after your profile, to list 8 or 9 bullet points summarising your **Key Skills & Achievements** which can be taken from any part of your career.

See *Why You? CV Messages To Win Jobs* for more tips.

### OTHER STEPS IN THE 10 STEP CAREER PROGRAMME

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