



**Bradon Forest School**

# **CV TIPS & INTERVIEW ADVICE**

**INFORMATION FOR Y11 STUDENTS**

**Name:**

**Tutor Group:**



# CONTENTS

3	About this booklet
4	CV Writing
5-6	What words should I use?
7	Things to Avoid
8	CV Template
9	I am amazing because...
10	Preparing for interview
11	Links and further help
12-13	How to decide what to do after leaving school
14	Notes

# ABOUT THIS BOOKLET



The aim of this booklet is to give you information and support with attending interviews and for writing up the best CV you can. Life beyond secondary school is full of opportunities and first impressions can make all the difference in gaining the future you have always dreamed of!

In this booklet you will find useful information on how to write a winning CV and be able to stand out from the crowd in a competitive market. Whilst we cannot currently offer face to face interviewing, we can provide the attached and give guidance on helpful and informative websites.

Some of these websites offer fun interactive games and skill tests to try out which can help you understand what is expected at an interview, how individuals are chosen from a CV and the importance of using positive language among other hints and tips.

Don't forget to also check out the CareerPilot website where you can find all sorts of useful information including:

- ★ Choices at 16+ (inc. A-Levels, apprenticeships etc.)
- ★ Explore pathways
- ★ Recognise your strengths and skills
- ★ Explore jobs and careers
- ★ CV Builder and more...



# CV WRITING

Whilst there is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution to the perfect CV, there are some basic rules on what should be included. They are:

## ★ **Personal Details**

This should include your name and a secure email address for contact.

## ★ **Personal Statement**

This is what will make you stand out from the crowd. You should include who you are, what you are able to offer and what you are looking for. You should tailor this statement to the role you are applying for and make sure it is only one short and punchy paragraph.

## ★ **Work Experience**

Include all relevant work experience and start with the most recent first. State your job title, name of the organisation, time in post and any key responsibilities or skills gained. Think about any part time or weekend work (whether it was voluntary or paid) you have carried out, such as babysitting or having a paper round.

## ★ **Education**

List your qualifications along with grades achieved (or expected grades if unknown yet). Also include any achievements from your school years (such as certificates, further learning, awards etc.)

## ★ **Hobbies and Interests**

Include any out of school activities you enjoy, think about the role you are applying for and what skills you have learned through hobbies or interests elsewhere. These may help in showing you have the attributes for the role you are applying for.

# WHAT WORDS SHOULD I USE IN MY CV?

It is important to use positive language in your CV. You are hoping to gain an interview from this and perhaps even a placement (FE), job or apprenticeship, so keep to facts and give examples to prove your abilities. This is your chance to blow your own trumpet and really sell yourself.

If you are including sentences such as 'I am very hard-working', give an example of a time you have shown this strength but keep it short. At this stage, they do not need too much information.

## Appropriate keywords could include:

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| *Accurate   | *Adaptable    |
| *Pro-active | *Hard-working |
| *Innovative | *Confident    |
| *Reliable   | *Responsible  |



Try to stand out and take the time to present a well written CV. They say it takes an employer around 10 seconds to review and decide which CV's will make the cut.

## To ensure you are providing the best CV you can, you should:

- ❖ Keep it short and concise (2 A4 pages are enough)
- ❖ Choose a clear and professional font such as Calibri/Arial (avoid Comic Sans)
- ❖ Lay it out in a logical order, highlighting your most recent experience first
- ❖ Check your grammar and spelling thoroughly (or ask someone else to)

Have a look at the below CV buzzwords, key adjectives and examples, which will boost your chances of getting your dream job.

**These are great adjectives to describe yourself:**



1. *Able* - I am **able** to handle multiple tasks on a daily basis.
2. *Creative* - I use a **creative** approach to problem solve.
3. *Dependable* - I am a **dependable** person who is great at time management.
4. *Energetic* - I am always **energetic** and eager to learn new skills.
5. *Experience* - I have **experience** working as part of a team and individually.
6. *Flexible* - I am **flexible** in my working hours, being able to work evenings and weekends.
7. *Hardworking* - I am **hardworking** and always the last to leave the office in the evening.
8. *Honest* - I am **honest** and trustworthy when I am counting money after our bake-sales.
9. *Imaginative* - I work with the team to provide **imaginative** solutions for our customers.
10. *Innovative* - I am always coming up with **innovative** ideas.
11. *Motivated* - I am **motivated** to go to the gym before work to get fit and healthy.
12. *Organised* - I have **organised** school functions for the last four years with great success.
13. *Reliable* - Friends **rely** on me to be on time.
14. *Sense of humour* - Even though I take my work seriously, I do have a good **sense of humour**.



Whilst the list above can be great additions to a CV, experts also have their bugbears about certain other words that candidates use.

Here is a list of words to avoid using on your resumé.

**1. Seasoned** - *Using this will make you sound like you are a steak! Also, it is so dated. There are much better words to use!*

**2. Authoritative** - *Recruiters want a collaborator not a dictator, especially in the customer service field. So, replace a phrase such as: “I was in an authoritative position...” with: “I was in a position of leadership...”.*

**3. Think outside the box** - *Give examples of how you were made to think creatively and the benefits that such innovation brought to the company. To do this, it is important to avoid vague phrases such as: “I think outside the box.”*

**4. Detail-orientated** - *There is a chance, no matter how excellent you believe your grammar to be, that you will make a mistake on your CV. Whilst many recruiters may overlook one minor error, pairing the mistake with the phrase “detail-orientated” could create problems.*

**5. Track record** - *If your CV is written correctly the recruiter will be able to see your track record, so don't waste your limited space with needless phrases like this.*

**6. Hard worker** - *It is much more convincing to show the recruiter that you are a hard-worker than to tell them. Recruiters will draw their own conclusions from the evidence that you present, so don't try to confuse them by using vague phrases... it won't work.*

**7. Results-driven** - *Are results your only driver? Don't limit yourself by using such language. Demonstrate how you are driven by purpose, personal development and colleagues/teammates, as well as by achievement.*

**8. Go-to man** - *Not only is this too informal for a CV, it takes focus away from how your skills align with those in the job description. Don't distract yourself by trying to do everyone else's jobs – they they will be more experienced in these than you.*

**9. Passionate** - *This is so over-used. If you were not passionate about an aspect of the role, it is assumed that you would not be applying for the position. So, set yourself apart from the average candidate by trying something different, like noting how fulfilling the passion makes you feel.*

**10. Team-player** - *It is important to note that you enjoy a collaborative atmosphere, but the phrase “team-player” is contrived. Alternatively, refer to a success story of when you worked alongside someone else to bring great benefits to the workplace.*

# **CV TEMPLATE**

Full Name

Email address

## **Personal statement**

Motivated, hard-working former School Netball captain with 9 GCSEs (grades A-C) and good literacy and numerical skills. Practical work experience in a variety of part-time and voluntary roles. Looking to build on my skills and experience in a full-time healthcare role whilst studying at college.

## **Education**

### **Hollyoaks College, Chester, Sept 2013 – June 2015**

A levels: English (grade C), Maths (grade C) and Biology (grade D)

### **St Joseph's School, Chester, Sept 2006 – June 2013**

9 GCSEs: Including English, Maths, French, Geography, Science and General Studies

## **Work experience**

### **Volunteer - Help the Needy Charity Shop (Jan 2012 – present)**

Duties and responsibilities:

- Serving customers at the till/handling money
- Accepting and sorting customer donations
- Assisting with stock replenishment and dressing display windows

### **Weekend bartender at Premier Sleep Hotel – (Dec 2010 – June 2011)**

Duties and responsibilities:

- Actively involved with order taking and cashiering
- Gained experience mixing and serving drinks at the bar
- Assisting with stock take at the end of shifts

## **Additional skills**

- IT skills: Fully proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel & PowerPoint), basic HTML
- Customer service: Retail and hospitality
- Admin: Filing, diary management and computer literate

## **Hobbies & interests**

- Captain of local hockey team (demonstrating leadership and team player)
- Currently doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award (demonstrating commitment and adaptable skills)

## **References available upon request**



Think about the **skills** you have gained at school. These could include leadership, team player, time management, communication skills etc.

Focus on your **strengths**. Remember you are letting people know why they should choose you

## I AM AMAZING BECAUSE...

Your CV is your chance to sell yourself and highlight what you can offer as an individual.

Don't worry if you haven't got any work experience or had a job before. Skills can be gained in many ways.

Are you part of a team or group? Have you ever volunteered? Maybe you joined a club at school?

Babysitting for friends and family shows you are responsible and reliable.

Perhaps you took part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme? This could mean you showed leadership skills or maybe it highlighted that you were good at problem solving.

# PREPARING FOR INTERVIEW

- 1. Do your research** – Make sure you know a bit about the organisation/college etc. that you are applying to. This shows you are genuinely interested and have taken the time to prepare.
- 2. Be prepared** – Think about what sort of questions you might be asked, get your outfit ready, plan your route, think about questions you might like to ask at interview.
- 3. Practice** – Ask friends or family to help you with role play and get them to ask you questions based on the job description/role you are applying for.
- 4. The night before** – Get a good night's sleep! Interviewers will pick up on tired applicants and you won't be at your best. Print a copy of your CV off in preparation and recap on why you are applying, any questions you have for them, focus on your strong points and what you have to offer.
- 5. On the day** – The more relaxed and calm you are at interview, the better. Be prepared and follow the above tips. That way you will feel far more in control of yourself and your surroundings. Use positive language and enjoy the experience!



## Remember...

An interview is not only for the organisation to decide if they want you to join their team, but equally a chance to see if they are the right fit for you.

# LINKS AND FURTHER HELP



Below you will find some useful links to websites that can help you strengthen your CV and give you further advice on attending interviews. These are useful websites to look at before attending college/Sixth form interviews and for the future too!

## LifeSkills

Created with  BARCLAYS

Follow the below link and register for an account, choosing the 'Young People' hub.

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-to-prepare-for-an-interview/school/>

There are some really good tips and videos on this site. Check out the 'Virtual Job Interview' page, where you can have a go at answering popular questions.

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-to-prepare-for-an-interview/school/virtual-interview>

Have a go at 'Play the Boss' and choose the CV's you think should be chosen for the role, against the clock!

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-help-applying-for-jobs/school/play-the-boss>

## Careerpilot

Have you registered for an account yet? If not, follow the below link and start using the many career tools and information available.

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/>

**Note:** Click on the 'Register' button in the top right hand corner. You can use your school email address when registering for an account.

There are many online quizzes and some really useful areas such as 'Your choices at 16' to explore.

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/your-choices-at-16/help-with-choosing-your-post-16-options>



# How to decide what to do after leaving school

When you started school, decisions were made for you. You were told where to sit, what to wear and when to take a break. But now you are entering the adult world and, as exciting as that is, it also brings a new challenge crucial to the workplace.....\*drum roll\*.....**MAKING DECISIONS.**

**So, what are some of the options available to you?**

## **1. Go to sixth form or college**

Sixth Form is still part of a school, whereas a college is not. Both offer further education (colleges generally offer a range of courses such as T-Levels, City and Guilds, Higher National Diplomas and A-Levels) and you can gain qualifications this way. If you are not sure which college or sixth form is right for you, check them out at open days and evenings, to get a feel for the place and the courses they offer.

At present, most further education providers offer online tours and will have contact details if you wish to speak with them and ask any questions you might have. Qualifications gained at further education providers can then help you with further choices such as university.

## **2. Do an apprenticeship or a traineeship**

These help you learn new skills and set you up for the working world. They are good if you don't want to give up learning but have had enough of a traditional school set up. Do some research on how to get an apprenticeship or traineeship, and which ones are best for the sorts of careers that might interest you. Amazing Apprenticeships is a good website to start with and explore your options. Colleges also offer apprenticeship opportunities.

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>

### 3. Get a job

You can earn a proper wage and your first taste of working life. Jobs are advertised in lots of places: try looking at recruitment sites, LinkedIn, social media, local newspapers and by asking people you know and trust. Once you've found some you want to apply for, make sure your CV is up to date and ready to send out.

#### How do you decide?

##### 1. Do your research

So, you've thought about what you like doing. Now, think about careers and how to get there. Find a job ad for your chosen field and look at what they want. If they're after experience, how can you get it? If they want a degree, what are the entry requirements? By working backwards, you can map out your course of action.

##### 2. Don't worry

A lot of people think choosing a career path at age 16 is the only decision they'll ever make. It's not. If you change your mind, you can change your career. You can always go back to school, change your degree or job, do another apprenticeship, or even re-train.

Think about where you'd like to be in two, five, even ten years' time. Sit down and create a plan of how you might get there. Why not take inspiration from people you admire? How did they get to where they are? Remember, every journey is different so focus on what feels right for you. Mentors can be really useful in helping you discover and decide on your next steps.



# Notes

**Further Education choices I wish to explore:**

**Career paths I am interested in:**

**My strengths are:**

**Subjects I enjoy at school:**

**Apprenticeships/other opportunities I am interested in exploring:**