



® CV Writing Guide

Your CV is your initial contact with a company. It's one of the most important documents that you'll ever write and genuinely will make the difference between working somewhere and not working somewhere.

This short guide is there to give you the basics, to build on from with a CV, with a brief example at the end.

Must-haves on a CV:

- Full contact details (ALL of address, mobile, landline, email, twitter) whether you like it or not, you will get a number of calls but do put a number on there
- Profile, scientific CV's are technical in nature and profiles can be short or long but will bring out the person behind the CV
- Degree, an overview of the course studied is essential. Include dissertation, main lab skills covered and reference anything in your background related to the job you are applying to
- Experience, most recent jobs have them most written about them. Key talking points being duties but also achievements, awards, promotions & what you are proudest of.
- Skills either in dedicated section or referenced throughout and interests / hobbies

CV's are a challenging means of communicating your skill as a scientist. Science is a dynamic field and your skill level at the bench is tough to summarise on paper. However, they are the best means we have, bluntly, as long as it gets people to ring you, then it is performing ok. Also poorly written CV's still get the good candidates behind them interviews. However a well written CV can make the process unfold far easier.

How does a CV work to get you an interview? The diagram below sums it up, you write this, enter it onto a job board or use it to build a LinkedIn profile, and the messages of interest come in. In between, the job board keyword matches you and allows the CV to come up in a search. More and more, we are seeing this driven by algorithm. So, going back to the above lets say you are an analytical chemist in pharmaceuticals and you'd missed the skills off the CV and instead focussed on core competencies, with a clear reference to being an analytical chemist in the job title but not mention of techniques used. Reasonable enough, however if I'm emailed or posted your CV, I can tell you'll have the skills for a job and will call. The problem is you're out there looking, I'm over here with a job and we need to connect. How does this happen?

Most people will send their CV to a job board or large database. Even in sending a CV to a large corporate one will still likely go onto a database that's searchable by the recruitment team so consider big companies and job boards under the same light. By job board I mean websites like Reed, Totaljobs, Indeed, CV Library, Jobsite, Monster etc (others are available). These are only as good as the information that goes in, and this counts for the AI too. The 'higher quality' this information is, the better.

CV Example

Jennifer Khan
31 Prime Avenue
Rheinmann Town
AB1 2BC

Mobile 07 ---- --
Landline 02 --- ----
Email jenny@----- .com
Twitter @j-----

Profile

I am an analytical chemist who has worked for two years in the pharmaceutical industry, seeking a new challenge and more room for progression in my next role. I enjoy my field of work a great deal and am eager to seek out new opportunities to train and develop myself to offer more to an organisation.

Education

University of ----- 2014
BSc (Hons) Chemistry 2:1

Dissertation project: *Comparison of shop purchased pharmaceuticals for drug content.* This project focussed on the over the counter pharmaceutical market and compared chemical analysis to packaging claims on drug content.

Skills used were: HPLC, LC-MS, UV-Vis, IR-Spec, and NMR. Project highlighted some issues with packaging indicating dosage and also had us investigate some unknown chemicals hence use of NMR. Awarded prize for best project.

Core modules: analytical chemistry, skills for chemists, formulation, synthetic organic chemistry, inorganic chemistry

Experience

Teak Pharmaceuticals
Analytical Chemist
August 2014-present

I work in the quality control department of a pharmaceutical company ensuring products do not get released to market unless they match the quality standards. I use chromatography techniques mainly, specifically HPLC, LC-MS and GC with work carried out in a GLP and GMP compliant environment.

I partake in audits and played an active role in preparation for our recent one, and have recently volunteered for the quality committee which is a group of representatives from each department meeting monthly to discuss improvements to quality. While I'm working in a small organisation I've taken on responsibilities as they are presented and have been recognised for going the extra mile on a number of occasions.

References on request

If you flip the question of a finding a job on it's head, how does the job find you? Well we need to take into account **every single** possible way of you having written your CV.

So in the example, it's not uncommon at all to not mention the specific skill of HPLC. Or perhaps it's High Performance Liquid Chromatography on yours. High Pressure Liquid Chromatography on others... you can see where this is going people just write things differently. This is alright as recruiters will search for all variants.

Job boards are not 'smart' and how it comes out is ruled by Boolean or something close to it but effectively it's looking for words and phrases spelt correctly to be frank! So just focus on getting the main skills pertaining to the role / field of interest and the automation should take care of the rest.

So... if it's not on the CV then it doesn't come up in the search. This is why the skills are critical.

If we consider the CV on the left (it's a bit basic you can have two pages) – though would it come up in the above search? Absolutely and this is a key part of CV writing, do the basics and the recruiters will find you.

Should you want advice on your CV or a review of it then don't hesitate to contact us and we'll be pleased to help email admin@licasci.com

Finally: try and apply from a PC / Mac where you can drag and drop your CV, check it ahead and take time. At the moment, a huge amount of CV's come into our inboxes and each one is read. Those who show some personal touches, reference the ad and generally look to 'go the extra mile' in effort genuinely create a strong impression.