

WRITING A GREAT CV



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The Life Sciences team in Brightwater often get CV related questions from candidates. We compiled some suggestions to help you update your existing CV or construct a new one from scratch.

Some of the questions we often get asked include the following:

- How long should my CV be?
- What should I include on my CV when applying for a new role?
- What does a good CV look like?
- *"Do you have an example of one / a template I can use?"*

An impactful CV is well structured, concise, and relevant to the role you are applying for. The content and formatting are important – it is an extension of your personal brand and represents your achievements.

Here are our top tips for writing a good CV.

CV length

How long should my CV be? This is one of the most asked questions. Broadly speaking, having a CV that is between 2 to 5 pages long is the average. Any less and there is not enough information, any more and it is too lengthy for the receiver. More experienced candidates or candidates who might have moved around more in their career will naturally have more content. But it is important to tailor your CV to the role you are applying to and ensure you keep all the relevant information.

Layout / CV Structure

A typical CV will have the following layout:

- Contact Details (Email, Phone Number, LinkedIn profile)
- A Profile Section
- Education and Additional Certificates / Awards (can go on the first page of the CV or directly after work experience)
- Professional Work Experience Details – present and previous (keep it relevant to the job) Include the following:
 - **Company name (and some detail)**
 - **Role / Title**
 - **Key Responsibilities**
 - **Key Achievements**
- Technical section: Include your Systems / Equipment / IT expertise
- Interests / Hobbies - if you are going to have an interests section make sure it's genuine

Regarding reference details – it's best to exclude these:

Provide references when you are progressing through an interview process, or provide them to your Recruitment Consultant who you are partnering with, so they have them on file.

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Should I include a profile section?

It is completely your own preference. For CV's that include a profile section at the beginning of the CV, it personalises your CV. You should include a few lines about your experience (years of experience), areas of expertise / industry sectors and what your goals are for your next career move. We suggest 3-4 lines and tailor it to the role you are applying to. A well worded, relevant profile section acts as a mini cover letter. But don't use adjectives or buzzwords like hard working, passionate and team player.

CV Content

Company detail:

Do not presume the reader will know the difference between the organisations you have worked in. Including one or two lines about the site and the activities explains to the reader the types of environments you have worked in – by sector, size, operation. Have you worked in a hands-on testing role in a Biologics manufacturing facility, or have you worked in Analytical Services capacity in an organisation's commercial global headquarters? Working on a production site versus working in a commercial setting offers different experiences and skills so it is important you outline the types of environments in which you have gained your experience.

Be role specific:

If you are applying to a leadership or management role – it's important you highlight your experience as a leader. Mention the team size, who directly reported to you (what levels did they sit at), and what you were responsible for – hiring, onboarding, training, performance management and reviews. If you are applying for a role that involves Project Management - discuss the scope of the projects (size, budget, who was involved, result). Projects focussed on Sustainability, Lean, Continuous Improvement – these are all areas future employers are seeking so include them if you have worked on significant projects and added value to your organisation.

Testing and equipment information:

If your role is a hands-on lab-based role, site based, or operations focussed it's important you include details on your testing and equipment expertise through your work experience section but also have a section on your CV that highlights your technical expertise.

IT / Systems:

It is important to include what systems you use day to day.

As mentioned above, there are a few guidelines and pointers we suggest you follow to write a great CV.

If you are a job seeker interested in a move this year or thinking about a move for 2023, please feel free to reach out to the Life Sciences team in Brightwater. We would love to partner with you to support you on your career journey.

If you are interested in discussing the formatting of your existing CV OR you would like to receive advice, please contact c.breaw@brightwater.ie to learn more.