



# How to create a winning CV

It's a matter of trust



# The role of the CV

Never more, than in these very strange times, has the role of the CV been more important. Unfortunately, so many professionals are finding themselves out of work due to the pandemic so competition for every role is strong.

CVs are the first impression a hiring team, HR Manager or law firm Partner will receive of you so it's vital to get it right.

A great CV is your ideal chance to stand out from your fellow applicants, set yourself above your competition and ensure you get invited to interview.



## RedLaw: Who we are

Although our specialism is working with lawyers and professionals working within private practice law firms, the tips and themes covered in this guide are practical tips transferable across any industry.

We hope the information provided in our guide assists you with your job search.

Wishing you the very best in securing a new role.

The RedLaw team.



# Length

There is no hard and fast rule. Forget the old “keep to two sides” recommendation, which is outdated. A CV should be as long as it needs to be

That said, when it comes to CVs, less really is more. Your CV should only include key information that will impress the HR team/your potential boss and encourage them to invite you to an interview

Keep in mind that they see an awful lot of CVs and have limited time to read them. So, if you want to be singled out for an interview, it's imperative that you make an impression – and make it quickly

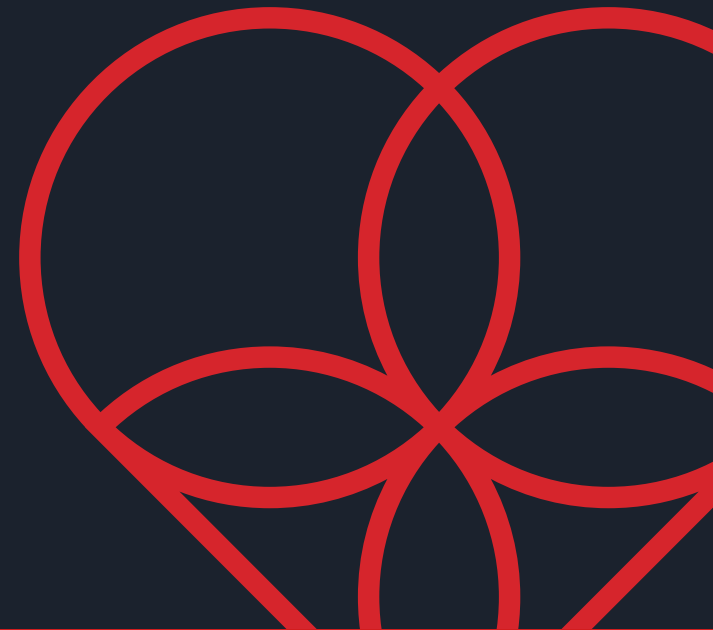
## #Tip

Unnecessary material  
will serve only to  
reduce the impact of  
the good stuff



# Content

Your future employer wants to see a clear and concise layout of your education and work experience



## Structure & format

- **Personal information:** insert your name and full contact details as the header of your CV
- **Personal statement/profile:** this should be an attention grabbing overview or summary of your experience, abilities and your professional aims
- **Core skills:** present your core skills in bullet point format to provide a clear snapshot of your key offerings
- **Career summary:** list your professional roles in reverse chronological order starting with your most present role. Include job title, name of company and dates
- **Education & qualifications:** start with any degree(s) and work backwards. If applying to a law firm, provide a list of A-levels (subjects and grade) and GCSE grades. Do not list every single training course ever attended!
- **Work experience:** list all of your recent experience keeping this relevant to the role you are applying for

## What else to include...

- Visa status: where appropriate
- Gaps: explain any breaks in your employment history
- Hobbies & interests: only if they add value

## What not to include...

- Date of birth: as a result of age discrimination legislation, it is not necessary to include this (although some companies/firms require this for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring)
- Ethnic background: as above
- Photo: this is not a requirement but a choice
- Referees: there is no need to add the names of referees to your CV. If you should be offered a position you will be asked in due course ask you to provide details of two referees

## If you are a lawyer...

- Firms will often require a copy of your academic transcripts if you are an international lawyer
- Provide as much detail as possible of the transactions you have worked on. Detail cases you have worked on, the case concerned and your involvement in it
- Use bullet points and employ sub-headings to break up the different areas of your experience. Include full details of the matter you worked on (names or descriptions of clients, headline details of the matter and value) and then explain your role in the matter and the duties you performed
- If you are a junior lawyer, list all of your training seats but keep this information brief
- The same applies for summer/university jobs. If you have had a previous career, then provide details of it, together with your reasons for moving into law
- Business development: Detail external and internal articles, seminars and any other client events you have been involved in. If you have had repeat referrals or built a client following, provide details. Firms are very interested in your marketing and client generation activities
- Additional internal responsibilities: (i.e. mentoring junior members of the team, participating in graduate recruitment, training etc.) This information is particularly useful where the role is pitched at a mid-senior level
- If you already have excellent references or strong appraisals, include them with your CV

# CVs: steps for success

It's so important to make a first draft of your CV take the time to review it. Don't rush it; remember this could be the one and only chance you get to make a great impression. Use the top tips which follow to go over your draft and finalise.







# Before you get started...


There's some basic rules to keep you on track - we've also included some of our top tips on the next couple of pages.

The most important rules are:


- be concise and clear in both the format and your detail to keep attention and interest of the reader;
- use bold headings so the reader can easily navigate to your most valuable skills;
- ensure your CV is tailored with your skills and experience clearly highlighting a relevant and exact match to the role requirements.

## We can help

We know what hiring managers or partners in law firms look for and want to see. You get one chance to get your CV right and that's where we come in. We offer a personalised CV appraisal service upon request. We will work with you to ensure that your CV represents you in the best way.



Our top tips  
for creating a  
winning CV  
follow...



## Top Tip 1

### **Prepare:**

Research the firm, its culture, values, areas of specialism. And re-read the job description and person specification (if you have one) over and over. Your CV needs to showcase your skills and experiences to mirror their expectations and requirements of the role.

## Top Tip 2

### **Don't leave gaps:**

This allows room for doubt to set in. Eliminate any suspicion which could arise from breaks in your employment and clearly explain any breaks. You may have taken time out to travel or care for a family member; these life experiences are almost always viewed positively by employers, so don't worry.

## Top Tip 3

### **Tailor your CV:**

So, you're applying for a few different roles and using one generalist CV to cover all avenues right? Wrong! It's vital your CV is tailored and targeted specifically to the firm and role you are applying for. Your skills and experience needs to exactly match the requirements set out in the job description.

## Top Tip 4

### **Create a great 1st impression:**

Be clear in your format and concise in your information to keep the attention of your reader. Make sure your CV stands out from the crowd by drawing attention to your most valuable skills and abilities.

## Top Tip 5

### **Hobbies and interests:**

Should these be included on your CV? Only if they add any real value to show who you are as a person or helps to show your personality and make you stand out from the crowd. In a good way! Don't include anything too wild or outrageous which could give a potential new employer grounds to question your suitability for the role.

## Top Tip 6

### **Contact details:**

This may seem obvious but you'd be amazed at how many CV's we see with no email or mobile number on.

Ensure your name and contact details are clearly displayed at the top of your CV.

# Final checkpoints: Have you...



## ...tailored your CV?

Use the same keywords as used in the job description or person specification. Pull out the skills, experience and qualifications which exactly match what the firm is looking for. At a glance of your CV the Hiring Manager or Partner should know exactly that you would be the perfect candidate for the role above all others.

## ...checked for spelling errors?

Your CV needs to be flawlessly professional. No room for errors. Employers will judge you on this.

Spelling errors show a lack of care and attention to detail. Ask a couple of friends to review your CV to help check for errors before submitting.

## ...kept to the truth?

Your CV is your sales tool but don't get swept away in creating the perfect employee. You must always be totally honest and transparent on your CV. Always tell the truth about your abilities and experience and be authentic to yourself. You won't have a copy of your CV in front of you at interview but the panel will.

# Contact information

This guide has been brought to you by RedLaw, legal recruitment specialists.

We're committed to adding value to our clients and candidates, especially in these challenging times, and aim to provide you with useful market information and current insight. If you would like to discuss any aspect of legal recruitment raised by the lockdown, please do get in touch.



**Amy Hambleton**

Director

[amy.hambleton@redlawrecruitment.com](mailto:amy.hambleton@redlawrecruitment.com)

M: 07969 954 229



**Mark Neal**

Associate Director & Head of Business Services Team

[mark.neal@redlawrecruitment.com](mailto:mark.neal@redlawrecruitment.com)

M: 07789 766 995

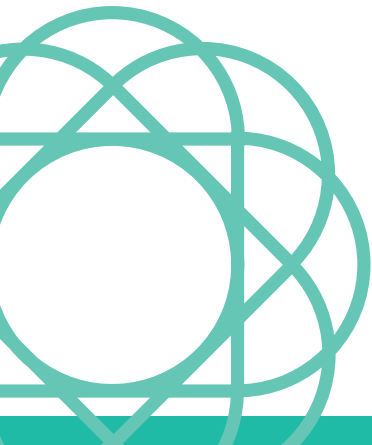


**Ria Karnik**

Senior Recruiter, Associate Team

[ria.karnik@redlawrecruitment.com](mailto:ria.karnik@redlawrecruitment.com)

M: 07384 514 027





Contact information:

200 Aldersgate  
London EC1A 4HD  
[info@redlawrecruitment.com](mailto:info@redlawrecruitment.com)  
[www.redlawrecruitment.com](http://www.redlawrecruitment.com)