



careers advice pack

11. CV language



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CV language

If you haven't written a CV in a while you might feel that you don't know what words to use - it can feel like writing in a foreign language. The best places to find the sorts of words you'll need to use in your CV are job adverts and job descriptions - they'll show you which words employers are using.

Below, you'll find some vocabulary ideas to start you off. And at the end of the document there's a brief guide to writing style.

Words to describe your skills

Communication

Creativity

Influencing and persuading

Project management

Coaching and developing others

Administration

People management

Financial management

Selling

Marketing

Business development

IT and systems

Relationship management

Crisis management

Attention to detail

Numeracy

Budget control

Organisation



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Words to describe your qualities

Accurate	Resilient
Conscientious	Reliable
Dependable	Resourceful
Determined	Supportive
Empathetic	Successful
Flexible	Tenacious
Focused	Team player
Innovative	Versatile
Motivated	Willing

Action verbs for your examples

Developed	Organised
Created	Established
Planned	Designed
Completed	Co-ordinated
Devised	Managed



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Controlled

Supervised

Instigated

Persuaded

Led

Demonstrated

Achieved

Delivered

Won

Increased

Writing style

The aim is to get across as much relevant information as possible, in as few words and little space as possible. CV language is therefore traditionally 'clipped' to remove unnecessary words.

- Use an impersonal style (no 'I')
- Write in the past tense
- Use strong action verbs
- Remove small words, provided doing so does not change the meaning.

Example of how NOT to write:

I have 2 years' experience of managing a database of over 1.5 million records. In that time I proved I have excellent attention to detail, as there were never any errors in the correct use of fields when the monthly data audit was conducted.

How to 'clip' the above example into CV language:

2 years' experience managing a database of 1.6 million records. Excellent attention to detail evidenced by zero errors in monthly data audit.