

UNIT 2

Writing an impressive CV

- Structuring your CV
- Avoiding common CV mistakes
- Creating a strong first impression
- Identifying your key skills
- Highlighting your work experience
- Detailing your education and qualifications
- Demonstrating your interests
- Providing references



Structuring your CV

You've researched yourself and identified your dream job. You've researched the market and found a vacancy. So how do you put together a CV that will guarantee you an interview?



1 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What does CV stand for?
- 2 What is a CV commonly called in American English?
- 3 What is the main purpose of a CV?
- 4 What are the key qualities of a successful CV?
- 5 How many sections are there in a typical CV? What are they?
- 6 What is the best way to structure the contents of your CV?

b ►2.1 Listen to Silvia and her friend, Sophie, discussing CVs. In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What are the two most popular ways of structuring a CV?
- 2 What are the key differences between the two most popular ways of structuring CVs?
- 3 Does any of Sophie's advice surprise you?

c ►2.1 Listen again and complete the following CV structures.

Chronological CV

- 1 Your name in large letters
- 2 _____ details
- 3 (_____)
- 4 _____ / Academic qualifications
- 5 _____
- 6 Activities and _____
- 7 Additional _____
- 8 _____

Skills-based CV

- 9 _____ in large letters
- 10 _____
- 11 _____ / Career profile
- 12 Key _____
- 13 _____ details
- 14 _____ / Professional qualifications
- 15 _____
- 16 _____

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d Look at the two versions of her CV that Silvia prepared. Which approach has she followed for each version? Which CV do you prefer?

e Complete the following CV using a past form of the verbs in the box.

achieve complete coordinate develop hold
organise persuade represent research work

Silvia Carnali

Home address: 42 Hampstead Rd
London NW3

Date of Birth: 14 February 1986

Nationality: Italian

Telephone: 44 (0) 207 862 4567
Email: s_carnali@hotmail.com

Education

2008–present The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)

- MSc (Hons) Development Studies (2.1 expected)
- 7000-word dissertation on reforestation in Kenya

2004–2007 University College London (UCL)

- BA (Hons) Geography (2.1)

2004 Diploma Maturità Scientifica (58/60) – Liceo A.Tosi, Milano

Professional Experience

2008 Project Volunteer: *Sustainable Solutions (NGO)*, Kenya (6 months)

- 1 worked as part of an international team to increase awareness of sustainability in Kenya
- 2 planned communication strategies to ensure that our message was delivered effectively
- Established, managed and maintained relationships with key stakeholders
- 3 met local community leaders to increase the level of reforestation in Kenya

2006–2007 Communications Officer: *University College London* (1 year)

- Organised and managed catering for more than 10 separate UCL events for up to 300 students
- Liaised with student council board members, catering suppliers, venues and performers
- 4 organised University College London at a series of event conferences
- 5 attended two-week event management training course

2005 Activity Leader: *Concord College Summer School*, Shropshire, UK (2 months)

- Led sports and drama activities for 200 international students
- 6 organised weekend adventure trip in Wales, including leading a walking expedition for twenty students
- 7 led daily meetings with other members of the activity team. Provided training and support for less experienced members of the team

Activities and Interests

2007 Sept Mountain Trekking in South America (1 month)

- 8 planned and planned group mountain expedition in the Andes, Argentina
- As sole Spanish speaker I acted as spokesperson for the group. Reacting to unforeseen events required frequent revision of plans, responding to group members, tour operator and airlines.
- 9 organised aims of crossing the remote central part of the Southern Patagonian ice cap in Los Glaciares National Park, improved Spanish language skills, stayed within budget

2003–present Greenpeace Active Member (5 years)

- 10 organised a campaign against nuclear power. Persuaded 1000 people to write to their local MP demanding the Government to reconsider renewable energy resources as a viable alternative to nuclear power.

Languages Italian (mother tongue), English (fluent), Spanish (upper intermediate)

Computer Skills Full command of Microsoft Office Suite

Driving Full current driving licence

References References available upon request

f Complete the following CV using the skills headings in the box.

Adaptability and resourcefulness Communication and teamwork
Energy and motivation Research and computer skills

Silvia Carnali

42 Hampstead Rd, London NW3

Tel: 44 (0) 207 862 4567

Email: s_carnali@hotmail.com

Well-organised, highly motivated communications strategy adviser. Geography graduate with recent professional experience developing communication strategy for positive change. Currently completing Master's in Development Studies with specific focus on sustainability. Fluent spoken and written English. Self-motivated, resourceful and able to motivate others, with excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Education

2008 – 2009 The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, MSc (Hons) Development Studies (2.1 expected)

2004 – 2007 University College London, BA (Hons) Geography (2.1)

1 _____

- African NGO 'Sustainable Solutions': Six-month volunteer project to educate Kenyan people about the importance of reforestation. My role was to assist the project team in devising and implementing strategies to communicate this message to local residents in different regions in Kenya. To do this effectively, I had to remain calm, polite and persuasive when talking to community leaders. (2008)
- As communications officer at UCL I represented the university at conferences and organised student union events. As part of the student union team I was responsible for dealing with suppliers, bands, etc. and I also worked in collaboration with the marketing team advertising and ticketing events. I assisted in organising and managing 12 successful events, all of which made a profit. (2006–2007)

2 _____

- In Sept 2007 I successfully completed an eight-person expedition to Austral Andes in Argentina, in the southwest of Santa Cruz on the border with Chile. Three months of training and fundraising preparation resulted in the successful crossing of the remote central part of the Southern Patagonian ice cap in Los Glaciares National Park. As the sole Spanish speaker I acted as spokesperson for our group, organising bookings and negotiating the expedition itinerary. (2007)
- I organised and led sports and drama activities for 200 international students at a summer school in Shrewsbury. My role included motivating and supporting the less experienced members of the activities team. I devised a number of sporting tournaments for the summer school students and motivated the children and staff to get fully involved, culminating in an international volleyball competition. (2005)

3 _____

- I worked with a large international team in Kenya. The nature of the project meant that I had to travel regularly throughout the country at short notice, and share basic living conditions. (2008)
- I handled a wide variety of tasks and projects throughout the six-month project, each requiring different skills and approaches in order for targets to be achieved and obstacles to be overcome. I suggested an alternative communication strategy of meeting with local community leaders to discuss sustainability. I convinced community leaders to implement alternative farming methods. The successful approach was adopted by the entire team across the country. (2008)

4 _____

- I researched top international universities for my degree course. I am currently completing in-depth research on reforestation techniques for the African subcontinent for my Master's degree dissertation. Research for my dissertation includes substantial use of the Internet and professional journals, and interviewing experts in the field. I have an excellent command of Microsoft Office Suite.
- I updated and modified the website for Sustainable Solutions, resulting in a 40% increase in website traffic. (2008)

Employment History

Sustainable Solutions (NGO) 2008 Project Volunteer, based Kenya

Concord College summer school 2005 Activity Leader, based Shropshire, UK

Languages

Italian, English, Spanish

References available upon request

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