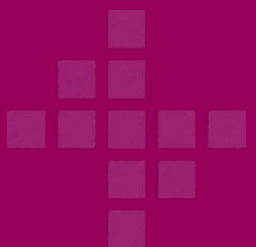


Pharmaforce

A Pharmed Group Company



CAREER GUIDE

PHARMACEUTICAL, MEDICAL DEVICES & HEALTHCARE SPECIALISTS

CONTRACT OUTSOURCING | COMMERCIAL SOLUTIONS | HR & RECRUITMENT

ABOUT US

Pharmaforce is a full service resourcing and outsourcing company. We provide a range of key Commercial, Sales and Marketing, and Recruitment and HR services.

Pharmaforce is part of the **Pharmed Group** and has been providing resourcing and outsourcing solutions to pharmaceutical and healthcare companies across Ireland for over 20 years.

Building your CV for Success

Your CV is your chance to show employers that you're perfectly suited to the role and deserve to be shortlisted for an interview. Remember: keep in mind: How Can I add value to this business?

What to include in your CV:

Your CV should give the employer an insight into you as a person and encourage them to want to meet you to find out more.

Cover the following to present evidence of how you've developed relevant skills and gained valuable experience through your academic, work and personal life:

- **Personal statement** - if a supporting statement is required, this should be well-structured - possibly using headings to set out how you meet the job criteria.
- **Work experience** - list the main duties of your current job, or any positions that you've held in the past and start with most recent. Keep an eye on the job advertisement and relate your skills to those required for the specific job.
- Show how you meet the person specification for the role, by promoting yourself as the best candidate for the job.
- **Educational background** - you'll usually be expected to provide information on institutions attended, courses taken and qualifications gained. Start with post-secondary school education.

Most applications require a minimum of two referees; so ask permission in advance. Current employer reference can be asked for after you have received a formal job offer

Never lie on your CV. Not only will you demonstrate your dishonesty to a potential employer, but there can be serious consequences too. For example, altering your degree grade from a 2:2 to a 2:1 is classed as degree fraud and can result in a prison sentence.

Style tips

Your CV can make a strong impression if you:

- use power verbs, such as 'transformed', 'delivered', 'achieved' and 'inspired';
- choose descriptive words like 'effective', 'consistent', 'determined' and 'adaptable';
- focus on the job specification requirements rather than waffling or being too vague;
- select appropriate examples of your achievements from past experience;
- demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for the role.

Disclosing personal information

You're not obliged to divulge personal details regarding your age, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation, and so shouldn't be asked to do so here. Only include information that you feel would help with your application and support your suitability for the role.

You may be asked to complete an equal opportunities form. This information is treated confidentially and will not be used as part of the selection process. The form is normally separate from the application, and used solely for monitoring the employer's commitment to equality and diversity.

Do your research

Applicants that have done their research into the company never fail to impress and it's easy enough to do. Employers will have lots of information on their websites and it's key that applicants have a good understanding of who they are applying to, what the organisation does and current issues that the organisation might be facing. Read 'about us' pages, research competitors and look for any recent news items.

Make sure you've really thought about why the job you are applying for is right for you and not just about what you need to do to get the job

Include relevant skills and experience

Read the person specification carefully and make sure to include all relevant skills and experience. Evidence these skills with specific examples to really make an impact.

Show your personality

While academic ability is important you shouldn't underestimate the value of personality.

Avoid common mistakes

When you ask employers about the most common application mistakes their answers are always the same. Submitting a generic CV usually features on the list. You should always aim to tailor your skills to the company's needs. Aim to adapt past experiences to the role being advertised. Generic applications that fail to give enough detail will automatically find their way onto the 'no' pile.

Lying is another. Employers will check the information that you provide on your CV and may withdraw your job offer if there are any discrepancies.

Sell your achievements

In most cases your CV and cover letter is the first chance potential employers have to get to know you, so don't waste the opportunity to sell yourself. While following the above advice is a great start, you'll need to go the extra mile to set yourself above the competition.

Be convincing

Until you meet in person (hopefully at interview) applications are all about convincing potential employers that you have what they are looking for so before you press the all-important 'send' or 'submit' button, make sure you've really thought about why the job you are applying for is right for you and not just about what you need to do to get the job. If you haven't convinced yourself, you'll struggle to convince employers at interview.

How to make a CV online

Building a CV can be a tough task to tackle alone. Luckily, there are a range of online tools and tips to help you do it. CV templates are a great way to ensure the information you're including is appropriate, and is presented in a clear and concise manner. All you have to do is download one that matches your situation and what you're looking for, and you'll be able to tailor it accordingly.

CV Layout Do's and Don't

Even the best written CV in the world can be let down by a lack of proper presentation.

And although the content is undoubtedly of paramount importance, a CV has to be both well written and presented professionally in order to catch a recruiter's eye and make the most of an application.

It is worth noting that, when it comes to formatting, the approach may depend on the industry. But there are a few simple rules which should generally be adhered to, and if implemented correctly could dramatically increase your chances of success.

Here's our list of CV layout dos and don'ts:

✓ DO

Keep it short and sweet. The most effective CVs aren't just informative, they're also concise. Try and get straight to the most pertinent points, and ideally take up no more than two pages of A4.

Choose a professional font. A professional font ensures that your CV can be easily read and simply scanned. Remember: Comic Sans is not your friend. Use Caliber or Arial

Present things in a logical order. Use sufficient spacing, clear section headings (e.g. work experience, education) and a reverse chronological order to keep things clear and easily legible. Also highlight your most recent achievements.

Play to your strengths. Format your CV to maximise the impact of your application. For example, if you feel a lack of experience is holding you back, lead with education instead. As long as you can relate it back to the role in question, how you order the sections is very much up to you.

Use bullet points. They're a great way to draw attention to any key facts or relevant information, allowing a hiring manager to skim the document easily and find out your significant achievements without having to wade through the hyperbole.

Other things to do: Include contact details, keep email address professional (madforit33@email.com does not count), maintain consistent formatting, ask someone to check.

✘ DON'T

Be afraid of white space. Don't fear the gaps. Even if you think your CV looks quite bare, as long as you've included all the relevant information and applicable, quantifiable achievements, you needn't worry. Remember: Sometimes less is more.

Try to include too much. The ideal CV should be a checklist of all of your accomplishments. It should not be your life story. Tailoring your CV to the role is a great way to skim some of the fat and keep all waffle to a minimum.

Include irrelevant information. Before including any points in your application, ask the same question: will it help you get the role. If the answer is no, take it out. Hobbies and interests are a great example. If they don't help you stand out, don't waste valuable space.

Forget your cover letter. Although it is often seen as a different entity all together, your cover letter is attached to your CV and both are vital in helping you clinch the right role. Utilise yours properly, and your CV becomes the perfect document to reinforce your talent. Oh, they didn't say include one? Still do. Every extra opportunity to sell yourself should be taken.

Experiment with size. You may think that changing font size is a great way to fit your CV onto two pages. But whether you're using large font to make your application seem longer or you're using smaller font to make sure everything fits, you're not fooling anyone. See also, margin size.

Other things not to do: Use crazy colours, use crazy fonts, include unnecessary references, include a selfie.

Make the most of your synonyms

In order for your CV to be successfully found by a recruiter, you need to think like a recruiter.

Most hiring managers use CV search to look for a specific keyword, either on its own or in combination with other words (e.g. Sales, Retail Assistant, Retail AND Manager etc.). For this reason, just a simple difference in terminology could mean you'll miss out.

For example, if you're a Retail Assistant, and the recruiter is searching for a Sales Advisor, your CV will not rank very well in the listings (if at all), despite the fact that you have all the appropriate skills.

To combat this, think about if your previous titles could be referred to by any other name. If the answer is yes, try and mention these variations at some point in your CV. Alternatively, if you're going for an entirely different position, include the title you aspire to. That way, you're covering all the bases.

Be industry specific

Aside from searching for job title, many hiring managers will use CV searches to look for specific skills. To help maximise your potential, use any industry terminology or jargon to your advantage.

For example, if you've used any particular software during previous roles, or learnt anything whilst studying which may improve your chances, always make sure you mention them, even if they don't seem particularly applicable to you at the time.

This may seem obvious, but you'd be surprised at the potential omissions and oversights you could be making. Even something as simple as stating your proficiency in using CRM systems, or mentioning your previous experience mitigating changes to facilitate business challenges, could help set you apart.

Include and expand

Don't just include every piece of industry specific jargon that applies to you. *Expand* on it.

For example, saying you're proficient in Microsoft Office, although potentially true, could be underselling your exact abilities. Instead, stating that you are adept at using Microsoft Powerpoint, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel (et al) not only underlines your knowledge, it also makes you much more likely to appear in CV searches.

To further increase your chances for success, try stating your current level in a few key areas. Saying you're an expert in Microsoft Excel/Microsoft Excel expert can be much more effective than merely expressing your competency.

Check spelling

Finally, the age old problem: Spelling.

Although this point should undoubtedly be made for every CV, it holds particular importance in this scenario. Think about it. Although it looks unprofessional to miss your typos when applying for a vacancy, some recruiters may give you the benefit of the doubt if they like the rest of what they see.

But when it comes to CV search, having the correct spelling is absolutely vital, as searches will not pick up those terms that are spelled incorrectly.

Remember: Re-read *everything* again and again before submitting. Spell check is not infallible.

How to Respond to a Job Rejection

Being on the receiving end of a job rejection can make maintaining a positive attitude extremely difficult. However, there are many things you can do to keep your spirits up

Whether you're struggling to land an interview or falling at the final hurdle, the latter stages of finding a job can be disheartening. Indeed, many students and graduates overlook the sheer competitiveness of the application stage; with some allowing several knockbacks to destroy their confidence entirely.

Don't give up at the first hurdle and remain positive.'

So, if you've just been turned down, don't take it personally. Instead, read this advice to help you bounce back...

Contacting the employer

While the thought of dealing with the person who rejected you can be daunting, getting feedback can have a positive impact in the long term - even if you've been knocked back at the pre-interview stage.

Send your contact an email within a week of the rejection, politely thanking them for their time and asking that they retain your records for any future opportunities. You should also ask what you did well, as this can help you to approach the next application confidently. 'Keep it professional, brief, positive and - most importantly - grateful. Explain that you're disappointed not to be selected, but you want feedback on how to improve next time.

Some employers won't give feedback at all, while others will provide bland, generic advice. If you do receive an inadequate response, there's no harm in requesting further information - provided that you don't hassle or appear disrespectful of their decision to reject you.

If they say you needed more experience, ask what experience the successful candidate had. You will be clearer on what was required and can fill that gap for yourself.

Improving your employability

Being unemployed, even temporarily, provides you with the opportunity to devote time to building your skills. Employability-boosting ventures include taking an internship, learning a new language or volunteering in the local community. You can really take control of your future, so make it count.

We recommend that those struggling to make the breakthrough should develop an action plan of achievable mini-goals such as:

- improving your CV;
- gaining extra work experience;
- developing a speculative job-seeking approach;

- job hunting using social media (e.g. creating a LinkedIn profile);
- finding new vacancy sources.

The most poignant of these are perhaps the latter two, as the most underappreciated way of finding work is through networking. More than 60% of jobs aren't advertised publicly, and those positions that are frequently go to well-connected applicants. You should therefore be looking to meet or connect with new people whenever you can through, for example, industry events and social media.

Employers often have to wade through hundreds of online applications for a single role, and sometimes the best way to capture their interest is by getting your name out there. You could even try introducing yourself to a potential employer; they're usually happy to answer phone enquiries, and a call can help you to stand out.

Improving your applications

To improve your chances, you must focus on the things that your applications have been missing. Lorna says that the most common reasons for rejection include:

- bad spelling or grammar;
- not addressing the job description;
- not answering the questions;
- not taking enough time to research the job and organisation.

The most common reason for rejection is failing to tailor your CV, cover letter or application to the specific opportunity - and therefore not providing sufficient evidence that you meet the job requirements.

You must be self-critical and revisit your application through the recruiter's eyes, considering why you weren't the employee that they were looking for. 'The focus should be on what you can offer the particular employer,' says Elena. 'Succinctly respond to the specific requirements outlined in the job description, with concrete examples.'

If you aren't even getting interviews, then taking a back-to-basics approach is important. You may be applying for positions that are unsuitable for entry-level candidates. You should consider whether the vacancies you're applying for are truly compatible with your skills, qualifications and experiences.

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