

FIELD GUIDE № 01

# The CV that gets read.

A practical, personal guide to writing a CV that stands out in a crowded market. No filler. No recruitment-speak. No AI-written sameness. Just the things that move a CV from *another applicant* to *we need to meet this person*.



! Recruitment, said **out loud** . ● LOUD, THEN SETTLED. ● THE MARK SHOUTS. THE WORDMARK CLOSES THE MATTER.

00 THE ROUTE

## A CV in **seven stops**.

Most CVs go wrong in the same seven places. Fix each one in turn and the rest takes care of itself. Two universal don'ts first. Then the seven stops.

- 01 Header & contacts
- 02 Personal statement
- 03 Key skills, with proof
- 04 Career history
- 05 Interests & hobbies
- 06 Education history
- 07 Skills-match exercise



TWO DON'TS

Get these wrong and the rest doesn't matter.



DON'TS BEFORE YOU WRITE A WORD

# The two things that end the conversation.

Get either of these wrong and the rest of the work won't save you. Recruiters notice instantly when one has happened. And the CV goes on the no pile.

DON'T # 1

## Don't have AI write it.

If a model writes your CV, your CV reads like everybody else's CV. The pattern is recognisable within seconds, and the moment it's recognised you stop sounding like a person.

✓ DO THIS · Use AI to spell-check and tidy grammar. Then stop. The voice has to be yours.

DON'T # 2

## Don't apply for 200 jobs.

Spraying the same CV at every role is a numbers game you lose. Apply for two roles instead, and spend the time you saved restructuring your CV so it lands hard on each one.

✓ DO THIS · Never lie. But you decide which skills and experience to lead with on which application.



01 STOP ONE. THE HEADER

# Name. Contact. Easy to reach.

Recruiters shouldn't have to hunt for how to contact you: name at the top, contact details right under it, done in seconds.

Your name here

THE ROLE YOU'RE APPLYING FOR, IN ONE LINE

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• NeilCopping@ComquatTalentUK.onmicrosoft.com • +44 7000 000 000 • City, UK

• linkedin.com/in/yourname • youtube.com/intro-video

**Include LinkedIn** only if your profile is strong and reflects who you actually are. A weak LinkedIn link does more harm than no link at all.

**Recorded an introduction video** for a specific role? Host it on YouTube and add the link. It puts you in front of the reader before they've even met you. (See Field Guide № 02.)



STOP 02

## Be a person, not a press release.



# Be a person. Not a **press release**.

This is the first thing they read about you: if it sounds like a LinkedIn buzzword salad, the connection is already broken. Some people call it a professional statement. Call it whatever you like. Just make sure it sounds like you wrote it.

## AVOID THIS

### The buzzword salad

A creative, structured marketing professional with the ability to engage with customers in both effective and impactful ways...

→ SAYS NOTHING. AND IT'S AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE.

## DO THIS

### A real human

I'm a marketer who learned the trade running events for my mum's café: twelve years on, I still believe the best campaigns start with knowing one customer properly. I work best in honest teams. My border collie thinks I should retire and walk her more.

→ SPECIFIC. WARM. MEMORABLE.

## Bring yourself to life on the page.

- A bit of your story. How you got here
- Your personal values. What you care about
- How you like to manage, or be managed
- A touch of your education, if it shaped you
- The kind of workplace you do your best work in
- The thing your life revolves around: dog, garden, goldfish. Anything real



# A scannable list. With receipts.

Sit this directly under your personal statement. Think of it as a shopping list a busy recruiter can scan in fifteen seconds and conclude: this person has what we need.

01

## Name the skill

One short, clear label. Match the language to the job advert. **Client relationship management. Attention to detail. EDI. Stakeholder influencing.**

02

## Highlight it

Bold it, set it apart. Whatever helps it leap off the page when someone is scanning. The eye should land on each skill in turn.

03

## Write a "prove it" line

One or two punchy lines next to it. What have you actually done? What was the result? Not an essay: real insight, fast.

04

## Match it to the job

The skills you lead with should mirror the role you're applying for: different role, different ordering, different emphasis. Same honest you.

SKILL

## Client relationship management

— PROVE IT

Held the top three accounts in our region for four years running. 100% retention, with an average 22% year-on-year spend uplift through one-to-one relationship work.

SKILL

## EDI & inclusive hiring

— PROVE IT

Designed and ran our blind-shortlisting process. Within a year, candidate diversity at interview stage doubled, and we won the regional inclusive-employer award.



STOP 04

Tell the whole story.



# Tell the **whole story**.

Latest job first. Work backwards. For each role: company, title, dates. Then bullet your key responsibilities, and underneath them, your key achievements.

2022. NOW

## Senior account manager

BRIGHT NORTHERN LTD · MANCHESTER

- Lead a portfolio of 14 enterprise accounts across the UK and Ireland
  - Own quarterly business reviews, renewal forecasting, and client growth planning
- 
- ★ Grew portfolio revenue by £1.4M in two years
  - ★ Winner: internal Client Hero award, 2024
  - ★ Built the QBR template now used company-wide

2020 TO 2022

## Account manager

HALTON GROUP · LEEDS

↳ Reason for leaving: promotion at Bright Northern.

- Managed 30+ SME accounts and a junior coordinator
- 
- ★ Cut churn from 18% to 9% in a single year by redesigning onboarding



## Always include your reason for leaving.

If you've moved a few times in a short stretch, **tell the reader why**. If you don't, they'll make up a reason themselves. And it usually isn't kind. Three honest reasons (a promotion, a relocation, a contract ending) read very differently from silence.

Roughly ten years of detail is enough: anything older than that, just bullet the role, the company, and the dates. The reader doesn't need the full anatomy of every job you held in 2008.



# Underrated. **Powerful.**

People dismiss this section. They shouldn't. Interests are how a stranger reading your CV finds a reason to like you before they've met you: if the reader runs and you run, you've already found your interview opener.

01

## Be specific.

"Trail running" beats "running".  
"Restoring Vespas" beats "cars".

02

## Be real.

Don't list things you don't actually do. It comes out at interview.

03

## Mix it up.

A team thing, a solo thing, and a creative thing tells a fuller story.

04

## Echo the top.

If your personal statement mentions your dog, it can land here too.

05

## Show range.

People are interesting when they're more than one thing.

06

## Volunteering counts.

A window into your values, not just your spare time.

07

## Keep it short.

Three to six well-chosen lines is plenty. Not a memoir.

08

## Make them curious.

The best interests make the reader want to ask you about them.



# Don't be **vague.**

Where, what, when, and. If they're good. What you got. Vague education sections quietly suggest you've something to hide.

**Got strong grades?** Say so. A first, a distinction, top GCSE results. They belong on the page. Don't make the reader assume.

**Add any meaningful training:** certifications, short courses, professional bodies: if it's relevant to the role, it earns its line.

★ INSIDER NOTE

The further you are into your career, the smaller this section gets. Three lines is fine for a twenty-year veteran: for a graduate, this is where you make your case. So use it.



# Hand them the answer key.



# Hand them the **answer** **key**.

This is the move that separates good applications from impossible-to-ignore ones. Take the job spec. Line it up against what you've done. Hand the reader the receipts.

Put it on its own page, or attach it as a separate document. Every line of the job spec gets a matching line of **proof from your career**.

## WHAT THE JOB ASKS FOR

## WHAT I'VE ACTUALLY DONE.

**5+ years managing enterprise client relationships**

✓ 7 years across two firms; current portfolio worth £4.2M.

**Experience designing onboarding journeys**

✓ Built the onboarding flow that cut churn from 18% to 9% at Halton Group.

**Working knowledge of Salesforce**

✓ Daily user since 2019; trained two cohorts of new starters on it.

**Commitment to EDI in commercial settings**

✓ Led blind-shortlisting rollout; doubled diversity at interview stage in 12 months.



+ THE FINAL POLISH

# Two things that finish the **job**.

A great CV alone is rarely enough. These two moves multiply its effect.

## 01

### **LinkedIn. Make it match.**

If you've pointed someone at your LinkedIn, it has to reflect who you actually are. Same tone as the CV. Same story. A recent photo, a headline that says something, a summary written the way you'd speak. Anything less creates doubt where there shouldn't be any.

## 02

### **The intro video. Your secret weapon.**

A short, well-made video introducing yourself for a specific role puts you in front of the hiring manager before they've even seen the rest of your application: done well, it's the single most powerful thing you can attach. Look out for Field Guide № 02 on producing one.



END THE PLAYBOOK

# Now go write yours.

Take your time on the two you're going to apply for. Make each CV unmistakably yours. Match the story to the role. Tell them why you're moving. Bring yourself to life on the page.



Field Guide № 01 · *The CV that gets read*. A practical, personal guide to writing a CV that stands out. Issued for candidates working with Shout.

REF RELATED FIELD GUIDES

- FG-01 The CV that gets read
- FG-02 Producing your introduction video
- FG-03 LinkedIn, properly
- FG-04 Interview preparation