

Preparing Your CV

A well written, clear and concise CV is your opportunity to ensure that first impressions count. A good CV, which presents your experience in the best light, is clearly an invaluable tool in your search for a new position. The most important sections we would recommend are Personal Details; Education & Training; Career History (including your key experience); and Personal Interests.

Do:

- Try to keep your CV to 2 – 4 pages.
- Make your CV easy to read; choose a clear type face such as Arial 11.
- Include all educational details (including university and law college attended, qualifications and overall grades attained) in chronological order. For Assistant level positions, firms/companies will also expect you to include your A-level subjects and grades.
- Put work experience in reverse chronological order (ie most recent experience first.) This section should seek to give reasonable detail of your career path and experience to date and endeavour to give an impression of your role, status and achievements in the positions that you have held.
- Try as far as possible to use headings to categorise your experience and bullet points under each to describe your major deals/cases/other pieces of work. Try to include details such as names of clients/parties and amounts involved where possible. This should be fine where a deal/case has completed and is in the public domain. If this isn't the case, then try to describe the matter in general terms.
- Also include any relevant marketing and/or practice development experience you might have gained.
- Include some outline details of your current interests, although it is best to exclude potentially sensitive areas such as religion or politics from the CV.

Don't:

- Include any information that is misleading or inaccurate in any way. This can lead to instant dismissal if subsequently discovered.

- Make your CV too lengthy or include extensive historic information that is not relevant to the position you are seeking. A concise and positive image of your relevant experience is what's needed.
- Attached a photograph to your CV. Do you really want prospective employers to evaluate you on your appearance instead of your ability to do the job?
- Include age information in your CV. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 Act came into effect on 1 October 2006 and makes it illegal to discriminate on the grounds of age. You are therefore not required to supply a date of birth, age or other age-related information on your CV, although you may be asked for this information in a Diversity Monitoring Form.
- Leave unexplained gaps in your career history. It's best to indicate when you have been travelling, unemployed, taking a career break, etc.
- Include reference details on your CV. These are only taken up at the end of the process, once you have accepted a position and given notice at your current firm/company. It is worthwhile however, considering who you'll put forward at that stage. Your current employer will be needed, as well as your previous employer or an academic reference/alternative if you are newly qualified.

Tips for using Recruiters

1. Choose your recruitment consultancy carefully. Good consultants will know the legal market thoroughly. At Garfield Robbins Legal Recruitment, all of our private practice consultants are qualified lawyers with in depth knowledge of the markets in which they operate.
2. Limit the number of recruitment consultancies you instruct, as different consultancies will cover similar parts of the market and will be duplicating efforts. Garfield Robbins Legal Recruitment is preferred supplier for the majority of the UK and international law firms, as well as an array of corporate and banking groups, and can keep you informed on a variety of potential opportunities in your chosen area.
3. Ensure you keep a comprehensive list of where your cv is being sent (it should only be sent after you have given express consent) and ensure that your cv is not sent to a firm by more than one agency – this can seriously jeopardise your chance of securing an interview.

4. Be open and honest. It is better to tell your consultant at the start if you have left a previous job position in difficult circumstances or if there are other factors that may complicate the moving process. Your consultant will be used to dealing with matters such as these and can present your case in the best light to prospective employers.
5. Be clear. Give your consultant full details of the type of roles you would and wouldn't be interested in. To help manage the process, you should also make them aware of any pending applications you might have made as well as their current status.
6. Don't forget that potential employers will ask consultants for their views on your personality, commitment, aspirations, etc, so it's best to try and leave a positive and lasting impression with your consultant.
7. Don't be afraid to ask for advice at any stage of the process. Garfield Robbins consultants are available to guide you through the recruitment process and will provide you with a full briefing pre-interview; a "mock" interview session with one or more consultants if desired; continued assistance throughout the interviewing process; and finally, negotiation of the salary package on your behalf.
8. Keep your consultant informed as to changes in your circumstance, for example, increased salary, change of address, other pending interviews/job offers etc. This helps greatly to keep the process running smoothly and applications in tandem where possible.

For more information on drafting your CV and using your Recruiter effectively, contact us on 0845 671 0199. Email: info@garfieldrobbins.com

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