

Lesson: Career / Work – CV Builder

Level: Intermediate - Advanced

Age: Upper Secondary / Adult

Time: 90 minutes

Language objectives: Creating a CV. This activity can be used with pre-service learners, learners who are looking for a new job and those who work in the recruitment area of HR.

Key life skills: gathering and organizing information, prioritisation, motivation, goal setting and values

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student



Teacher's notes

Procedure

The procedure varies slightly depending on whether the learners are seeking to create a real CV which they can use as part of a job application or are HR professionals looking to expand their knowledge of the language used in CVs.

Job-seekers:

The activity works best if the learners have a specific job in mind. Get them to scan the job advertisements from a newspaper or use the following websites:

- <http://www.monster.co.uk/>
- <http://www.reed.co.uk/>
- <http://www.eurojobs.com/>
- <http://www.fish4.co.uk/>

With intermediate learners or groups it is better to focus on a single advertisement. Advanced groups can take an advertisement per person. Advanced groups could also create their own advertisement to respond to, using existing advertisements to provide examples of appropriate language.

HR professionals:

The learners create a job advertisement for a position inside their company / companies. Advanced learners can work independently while intermediate groups should work in pairs or all together with the teacher monitoring and correcting the writing. Again, existing advertisements can be used as models.

1. Hand out the worksheet.
2. Ask the learners to work in pairs to write an answer to the question "What is the purpose of a CV?" The learners write their answers in the box on the worksheet.

Suggested answer:

A CV is a document that lists your qualifications and previous and current employment. It is included as part of a job application and is intended help to you sell yourself and your abilities to a potential employer.

3. Ask the pairs to compare their answers. If there are marked differences in opinions allow a short time for discussion but be careful not to let this take over the lesson.

4. Before creating the CV, refer the learners back to the advertisement chosen or written earlier. Ask them to use the second box on the worksheet to list the requirements outlined in the advertisement.

5. The next stage is the creation of the rest of the CV. Ask learners to choose at least six of the categories in the list and place them in the order they believe to be best. There is no correct answer to this and it depends on the status of the learner and the intended use of the CV. However, if the group has already written personal profiles this is a good time to re-emphasize their importance at the beginning of a CV.

6. The learners then transfer their chosen categories to the second page of the worksheet and make notes on the content of their CV. They may not have the necessary information to hand at this stage. Before they start, discuss issues such as in which order to arrange dates; how much detail to give and how to express it in note form:

e.g.

- Responsible for leading regional sales team and training new sales personnel.
- Achieved 23% increase in sales during last quarter of 2013.

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- Passionate footballer: captain and secretary of local team.

7. Learners should then have an opportunity to work at computers and produce a first draft for correction and recommended changes by the teacher. Give help with vocabulary and grammar. The final results can be shared with the group using a whiteboard or projector. Other learners can give their opinions of each other's efforts. Job-seekers may wish to borrow phrases and expressions from other's CVs that they think apply to them and will make their CV more effective.

Extension

Once the CVs have been completed, an extension of the exercise is to role-play an interview. Each group member takes it in turn to be the interviewee for the post s/he saw advertised or created at the beginning of the activity. The interviewer(s) ask the interviewee to explain and expand on the information in the CV as well as the typical questions used in a job interview.

Tips

1. It is useful to have some sample CVs, especially for pre-service learners who have not applied for a job before. There are plenty of websites offering tips on writing CVs. Consult one yourself to collect some examples or set a research task before starting this activity.

- <http://jobsearch.about.com/library/blcv.htm>
- <http://www.livecareer.co.uk/>
- http://www.prospects.ac.uk/example_cvs.htm

2. Draw attention to the fact that the term CV is used in the UK while, in America, *résumé* is more common.

3. Like everything, what constitutes a good CV differs from country to country. Remind learners that they have to conform to the culture of the country in which the company they are applying to is located.

4. During every stage of writing and correcting, keep reminding learners that accuracy of language is vital in CVs and that even minor mistakes can result in their application being rejected.

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You are going to write a CV.

What is the purpose of a CV? Brainstorm with a partner and write your answer in the box below.

Your CV should demonstrate how you meet the requirements described in the job advertisement. List them in the box below.

Which of the following categories of information do you want to include on your CV? What order should they go in?

- Personal profile
- Personal details
- Contact details
- Education history
- Professional training
- Professional qualification
- Employment history
- Current employment and responsibilities
- Skills
- Interests
- References
- Memberships of professional organisations

Use the table on the next page to draft your CV.

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Hint: Be careful to avoid mistakes in spelling and grammar. These can give a bad impression to a potential employer.

Using the table, fill in each **category heading** with the categories you have selected from the list on the previous page. Write in the details box under each category the most relevant information for your skills, experiences and your chosen job advertisement.

Worksheet

Category heading:

Details:

Category heading:

Details:

Category heading:

Details:

Category heading:

Details:

Category heading:

Details:

Hint: Remember to think about the order of your experiences, starting with the most recent. Are there any gaps in dates? If so, make sure you can explain to an employer how you were developing during any breaks between jobs or work experiences.