

## *Fact Sheet No2: Five basic principles for a great CV*

### *1. Concentrate on the essentials*

- Employers generally spend less than one minute reading a CV before deciding to reject it, or to shortlist it for detailed consideration. If you fail to make the right impact, you missed your chance.
- If applying for an advertised vacancy, always ensure that you comply with any application process entirely. The vacancy notice might specify: how to apply (CV, application form, online application), the length and/or format of the CV, whether a covering letter is required, etc.
- Be brief: two A4 pages are usually more than enough, irrespective of your education or experience. Do not exceed three pages. If you hold a degree, include your secondary school qualifications only if relevant to the job in question.
- Is your work experience limited? Describe your education and training first; highlight volunteering activities and placements or internships.

### *2. Be clear and concise*

- Use short sentences. Avoid clichés. Concentrate on the relevant aspects of your training and work experience.
- Give specific examples. Quantify your achievements.
- Update your CV as your experience develops. Don't hesitate to remove old information if it does not add value for the position.

### *3. Always adapt your CV to suit the post you are applying for*

- Highlight your strengths according to the needs of the employer and focus on the skills that match the job.
- Do not include work experience or training which is not relevant to the application.
- Explain any breaks in your studies or career giving examples of any transferable skills you might have learned during your break.
- Before sending your CV to an employer, check again that it corresponds to the required profile.
- Do not artificially inflate your CV; if you do, you are likely to be found out at the interview.

## *4. Pay attention to the presentation of your CV*

- Present your skills and competences clearly and logically, so that your advantages stand out.
- Put the most relevant information first.
- Pay attention to spelling and punctuation.
- Print your CV on white paper (unless you are asked to send it electronically).
- Retain the suggested font and layout.

## *5. Check your CV once you have filled it in*

- Correct any spelling mistakes, and ensure the layout is clear and logical.
- Have someone else re-read your CV so that you are sure the content is clear and easy to understand.
- Don't forget to write a cover letter.

