

## Making the first impression count

The details in your CV can sail or sink your boat

Sure enough there have been times when you have sent your CV to organizations feeling confident that with your credentials you would definitely make it to the interview. But, soon to your dismay, hopes turn to despair when you see months go by and you get no call.

Chances are that your CV got lost under the stack of other “ordinary” ones and you lost the opportunity just because your resume wasn't impressive enough! By now it's quite evident that the CV is the first impression an employer gets of you; in short your first (and probably last if you screw it up) chance to advertise yourself. In case I'm scaring you, writing a CV is not rocket science. Just keep in mind a few things and you're good to go.



The CV is your first contact

← A reaction you want to avoid at first contact

probationary period is for! Meanwhile, you can use in your CV to describe skills like language fluency, computer proficiencies, analytical abilities.

**6. Not all interests suit our interest** By definition, hobbies should include all that interests us. Resume writing, on the other hand, follows a different theory. No matter how much we love sleeping or long drives, it's always wiser to not put this in our CV (unless we apply for the position of a driver). Be calculative about the hobbies you mention. You can write meaningful hobbies like writing, traveling or reading. This gives the impression that you have a life outside your studies/work and at the same time reflects your eagerness to learn and develop important skills.

**7. Errors are your biggest enemy** Often we ignore slight mistakes that we believe employers won't notice. Apparently, there have been countless events where the employers pointed out mistakes and did not react favorably. There have been instances where “career” is written as “carrier”. Do not reply on spell check only. Read your CV thoroughly from top to bottom. If required, ask your friend to do it. Allow them to analyze your CV like they would if they were going to hire you. Also, ask yourself, if you were an employer, would you have considered the CV or throw it away in the nearest bin? Remember you don't get a second chance to make a first impression.

*The writer is an officer at the Career Services Office (CSO), BRAC University and is currently pretending to be very busy fixing CVs.*

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### 1. Tailored objective for every occasion

The objective is basically an attention grabber. If you can pull off a decent objective, the chances of your CV being read further increases. State your aspirations: what you expect to give and get from the workplace. But be sure you tailor it every time you send it to another employer. Remember to mention the sector you're applying for; this gives the impression that you are serious enough about the position and not simply forwarding your CV to every possible company.

### 2. Personal details should be kept mostly personal

True your personal information is necessary, but do not go writing your birthday, parents' name, their occupation etc; after all it's a professional CV to get you a job not a biodata to get you a spouse! Only include your name, phone numbers where you can be reached, home address and email address. However, do remember to have a professional email address; iamdon2010@.... or cutiepie@... is an absolute no-no. It's always best to use your name.

**3. A little creativity can do wonders** Every employer prefers prior experience in the relevant field, and it's only logical for a fresh graduate

or someone who wants to switch to a different field to have none. Think how you can relate club activities during university, internships or other voluntary jobs with the requirement. I know someone who has been a volunteer in a club recruitment program and mentioned in his CV that he has experiences in recruiting and hiring. However, that doesn't mean you have to lie. Chances are you will be asked questions regarding this in your interview and it won't be long enough before you make a total fool out of yourself. Nonetheless, there is a solution. While you are still waiting to pursue your “dream” job,

engage yourself in clubs and voluntary activities. I, myself have done two internships, and it has only been useful from an experiential point of view.

### 4. Simplicity is the best policy

Making the CV creative does not include playing with colors, font sizes or adding pictures. Keep the CV neat and only put relevant information. Do not fill it with essays of your experiences. Rather keep it short and precise. Use bullet points if needed. Nobody has the time to read never-ending essays. Make proper distinctions between categories and highlight the key

topics. It's always best to use Times New Roman, 12 being the font size (except your name, give that a larger font). As for pictures, a formal passport size photo is sufficient for the purpose; you can save the flashy pictures for Facebook!

### 5. Let them judge you and not by the cover

We all know we have to beat our own drums in the resume, but try to refrain from using phrases like “I'm hardworking”, “I have strong leadership qualities” etc. Let your employer be the judge and see for themselves whether your personality matches your claims. That's what the

## Learning to fly

## Ways to make the best out a new job

Making good first impressions are an integral part of our lives. Be that in class, or when landing a prospective date. Nowhere does the ability to make that necessary impact of a great first impression come in handy than it does at work. Especially a new job. After a lengthy student life, starting a job may seem like a desirable end point but it actually is just another beginning. The reason why a first impression is so important is because it's hardwired in the human brain to assess a person within about the first 30 seconds of meeting them. Here are some ways to make a good mark in the work place during the early 'just-hired' days.



### Let the beginning be on a high note

For the new employee, the best he or she can do to make an early mark and to solidify their spot in the organization is to win the management over. A good reputation and rapport cannot be built overnight, it does take a while but with certain gears set in motion early on can achieve good momentum along the way in the nick of time. For a good first impression, some small but necessary requirements are to be relaxed, comfortable and confident. It's better than appearing nervous. Being well dressed and having a firm handshake also exudes a polished and assertive personality.

### Follow the four P's

Be polite, be polished, be punctual, and be presentable. These may not seem as important as job skills but employees who exhibit such virtues always command a preference over those who don't. Take notes of everything and try to use proper grammar while communicating, both Bangla and English.

### It's never too late to set yourself apart

The new employee can make his mark by going all hands on deck from day one by bringing his ideas to the table from the very first meeting. He has to speak out and make himself heard (as required). Ideas are best presented with more people around if one doesn't want



a sole listener eventually hogging the credit. It's always best to jump right in rather than take the back seat the first few days.

### Get around and get by

Build yourself a circle of peers. You need to have a good eye to filter out the office politicians. Try picking people you can learn from. People will be more willing to forgive you of a mistake or two if they generally like you, so this is a powerful tool. Get a sense of the company culture. A good social environment can provide a drive to work harder. You can also learn the ins and outs and the ups and downs of working in the organization. Small



talk can go a long way.

### Work hard and seek challenges

Always show an affiliation for work. Arrive early, stay late, work through lunch, double check your work and keep focused. Once people know you have a positive reputation and a thirst for work, then you can feel at ease among your co-workers. Try to get more out of fewer hours. In order to develop in any organization, you need to ask to take on more work, offer new ideas or solutions, and show that you are thinking proactively about how to better the organization. If you offer new ideas too early, you risk appearing as though you

“know better than anyone else,” without really understanding the company. So do so but gradually although not too slow!

### Try winning the management over

Your job is, after all, to help them make theirs easier. Put yourself in their radar by helping them out whenever possible with things they need. The more they appreciate you for your efforts, the more likely they will look out for you when you need it.

### Be vocal

Voice your concerns and wants and needs whenever you have to. Do not shy away. Be vocal be articulate. Speak out whenever necessary. Whenever you feel things could be improved, such as the chairs, or your salary, ask for it.

### Be open to criticism

This is probably the biggest challenge. Staying positive towards constructive criticism seems to be impossible for a lot of people. They make a big deal out of it instead. Always be up for feedback and use criticism to help improve yourself. Ask for it from experienced co-workers who know their way around and can help you find yours. Learning is a never ending process and in this day and age, a penchant for learning constantly is a prized virtue.

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## Insights about people's career paths

Henry Ford had five failed business ventures before founding the Ford Motor Company in 1903.

Before starting a career as a world-class singer, Andrea Bocelli was working as a lawyer and moonlighting in a piano bar.

Before going to university, Tony Blair spent a year trying to make it as a rock music promoter in London.

On average, young professionals born after 1982 change jobs every 13 months.

Less than 20% of law school graduates entered legal professions in 2007.

**In 1989, 75% of Britain's wealthiest individuals had inherited their fortune. Today, approximately 78% of Britain's richest are self-made millionaires.**

86% of employees at small companies (less than 100 workers) report that they are happy, while only 78% of employees at large firms (1000+ workers) claim to be happy.

On average, investment banking analysts clock in 80 hours of work per week. Assuming they get 8 hours of sleep each night, they are left with just 5 hours each day – even on weekends – to do anything else.

Less than 20% of all marketing directors in the PathMotion community have a degree in marketing.

### CONNECT TO NEXT STEP

Take your next step to connect to us. Email us if you have an interesting story to share related to career. Tell us if it has been a bumpy ride for your career or has it been the exact opposite. Like us on facebook to stay updated. Mail us if you have any suggestions, feedback, and ideas.



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