

# CV health check

Once you have a few years of post admission experience, the curriculum vitae (CV) that you prepared pre-articles will need to be updated to include the experience that you have gained. You may also be at the stage where you will need to prepare a marketing profile for promotional purposes for your firm. Set out below are some basic tips that will set you on the right track to revising your CV or preparing your marketing profile.

## Format

The best CV or marketing profile is concise and logically arranged. In the case of a CV, there's no fixed rule on length, but anything over 4-5 pages should be carefully reviewed. Don't distract the reader with detail about your university jobs or seasonal clerkships: in most cases, a summary will be sufficient.

## Detail

You need to ensure that the information about your qualifications and experience is set out close to the start of the document and in reverse chronological order. Important details that you should incorporate into your CV include:

- **Personal details** including your name, postal address, email address (a non-work email address preferably) and a contact number (a mobile number is usually the best).
- **Education/qualifications** in reverse chronological order including year of admission to practice, course/s studied, university and years of attendance. Include your awards and achievements related to your studies in this section. Do not re-type your academic results as most employers will request a copy of your official academic transcript.
- **Employment history**, again, in reverse chronological order you should detail the firm/organisation, your title, and the month/year you started (and, if applicable, finished) in each role. More information with regard to details of your work experience is discussed below.
- **Interests** are not essential, but if you would like to share three or four of your key interests feel free. When discussing your interests be discerning and remember your target audience.
- **Referees** do not necessarily need to be set out in your CV, this is particularly important if you anticipate your referees to be partners from your current firm. An easy approach is to say "Provided on request". Firms will generally not contact your referees without your consent; this is usually done when a job offer is imminent.

## Work experience layout

A review of your CV or marketing profile should give any reader the details of your area of practice and the specific types of work you have experience in for each role.

For example, if you are a property lawyer you should set out the areas in which you have developed expertise or experience:

- compulsory acquisition,
- adverse possession,
- commercial leasing,
- conveyancing,

- subdivisions, and
- commercial and retail sales/acquisitions

Under each of these points you should summarise your particular skills. For "Commercial leasing", you might add, experience in drafting, reviewing and negotiating leases under the *Retail Leases Act 2003*, drafting special conditions/clauses relating to "make good", GST, termination of lease provisions, and drafting, reviewing and negotiating transfers of leases. Do include details of significant transactions or cases on which you have worked, i.e. represented vendor in sale of CBD office building (put in more detail if possible, keeping in mind confidentiality restrictions) or *Smith v Jones* (1989) 23 VCL 452 (with a summary of the case).

Similarly, if you are a transactional lawyer you will need to list the areas of your expertise and the transactions you have been involved in. This would include any:

- mergers and acquisitions;
- project finance;
- corporate re-structuring; and
- securities.

Again, summarise your particular experience and/or list the transactions in which you have been involved.



By Megan Drysdale, Consultant, Mahlab Recruitment

**A Guide to Preparing your Resume**

**Mahlab Recruitment**

123 Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
 Tel: (02) 1234 5678  
 Email: info@mahlab.com.au

**A Guide to Preparing your Resume**

Your resume is your primary selling tool. It must be well laid out and concise. Start by writing the usual: Name, address, telephone, fax, email, date of birth, date of admission to practice, qualifications, current position, previous positions, referees, interests, and hobbies.

**The Layout**

<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>Professional Information</b>	<b>Education/Qualifications</b>
<b>Work Experience</b>	<b>Interests/Hobbies</b>	<b>References</b>

**Mahlab**

For a guide to preparing your resume, see [www.mahlab.com.au/files/A-Guide\\_to\\_Preparing\\_Your\\_Resume.pdf](http://www.mahlab.com.au/files/A-Guide_to_Preparing_Your_Resume.pdf)

## Remember . . .

Your CV or marketing profile is the tool that you use to sell yourself to prospective employers (in the case of a CV) and prospective clients (in the case of a marketing profile). The people reading your CV will read possibly hundreds each week, so, you need to ensure that you have used a clear font (Arial is usually good), lots of headings, dot points and white space.

Often, for a marketing profile, your firm will generally seek your input on content only; format etc. will be managed by the marketing department.

Also, once the document is prepared, do take the time to go back and check your grammar and spelling.

If you would like your CV reviewed by a consultant at Mahlab Recruitment please send it to [megan.drysdale@mahlab.com.au](mailto:megan.drysdale@mahlab.com.au).