

## Introduction

Professionals' podcasts from LearnEnglish help you to improve your English for your career in the workplace, and cover a large number of business and work themes. They are suitable for learners at intermediate to advanced level.

This support pack accompanies the Professionals' podcast:

### **Writing a CV**

Listen to John Woodrow, a Human Resources professional giving some advice on writing better CVs.



To read or listen to the article online, go to:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/professionals-podcasts/advice-writing-cvs>

This support pack contains the following materials:

- a pre-reading vocabulary activity;
- the article;
- a comprehension task
- a language task

## Before you listen

Match the words and phrases in the table to their definitions.

1. recruitment	2. CV	3. post	4. database
5. candidate	6. flexible	7. relevant	8. reference

## Definitions:

- a. A person who is competing to get a job
- b. A document that describes your qualifications and working history to support a job application
- c. Able to change or be changed easily according to the situation
- d. The process of finding people to work for a company or become a new member of an organization
- e. A computer system that stores lots of information
- f. Connected with what is happening or being discussed
- g. A person who knows you can say why you are suitable for a job
- h. A job in a company or organization

## Transcript: Writing a CV

- Interviewer:** Learn English Professionals is talking to John Woodrow, who works in the Human Resources department of a large UK-based company. John, tell us about your work...
- John:** I work on recruitment, especially – so I'm the person who reads the hundreds of CVs we get sent each year!
- Interviewer:** Do you accept CVs as part of your recruitment process?
- John:** When we advertise for a particular post, we send out our own application form, which is tailored to our company, and we can use it to make sure we find exactly what we're looking for...
- Interviewer:** So a CV is useless?
- John:** No! Not at all – we're happy to accept CVs from people even when we're not recruiting. That way we can build up a database of possible candidates, and as our company is always changing – we're very flexible in our needs right now (laughs) – it's good to know what kind of people are out there. We do keep everything on file, and will get back to people who look promising.
- Interviewer:** So we should be sending you our CVs?
- John:** Yes, absolutely, yes!
- Interviewer:** What advice can you give us on writing a CV?
- John:** Keep it short, keep it simple, keep it relevant. Anything longer than three pages will automatically go into the bin. Just tell us what we need to know. Make sure it's clearly written – and that there are no spelling mistakes on it! And no fancy fonts...or photographs. We don't need to know what people look like, just what they've done, and what they're capable of...
- Interviewer:** So we're going to look at a couple of CVs now...
- John:** Yes – these are a couple that arrived just this morning, so let's take a look...(sound of paper unfolding)...ok, I can see straight away that we have a good one and a bad one here...
- Interviewer:** (laughs) How can you tell so soon?
- John:** Well, as I just said, this one here is...how many...one, two, three, four pages long, it's written in tiny type, I can hardly read it...and, wait, yes, there's a photograph attached to the front!
- Interviewer:** Too much information?
- John:** Yes...just leafing through it, I can see he's written about where he went to primary school – that's just not relevant...
- Interviewer:** What kind of educational background should be included?
- John:** Perhaps your high school, but it's mostly further education we're interested in, university or college, then any professional qualifications you may have, as well as work experience of course...
- Interviewer:** That's important?
- John:** Oh yes – placements or internships all count!

- Interviewer:** What about personal information?
- John:** A bit is necessary...but look, this guy has written he was a member of the stamp collecting society in secondary school...! Not interested...
- Interviewer:** What about the other CV?
- John:** Ok, again, I can see right away this looks more promising...only two and a half pages, lots of space on the page, easy to read, well-organised. Hmmm, a couple of impressive looking references, that's good. And, yes, they've included language skills – very important...
- Interviewer:** What languages are you looking for?
- John:** Well, English, obviously – as we're a UK-based company and English is still the language of global business, and then, well, anything really – Spanish is useful, Russian, Mandarin Chinese too...
- Interviewer:** Ok, we'll get studying! Thanks John!
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## Comprehension task

### True or false

Decide if the following statements are true or false.

1. Part of John Woodrow's job is deciding which new people his company will employ.
2. Woodrow reads hundreds of CVs every month.
3. His company does not accept CVs.
4. Woodrow's company keeps lists of potential employees on a computer.
5. Woodrow will ignore a CV which is too long.
6. He thinks the first CV he looks at is too short.
7. One problem with the first CV is that it includes irrelevant information.
8. Woodrow suggests that placements are not important when describing your experience.
9. The second CV has too much space on it.
10. The second CV includes information about the languages the person can speak.
11. Woodrow is only interested in people who can speak Spanish.

## Language Task

### Fill in the gaps

Pronunciation: weak forms in connected speech.

Listen to the audio again and complete the text by writing the missing words into the gaps below.

1. John, \_\_\_\_\_ about your work.
2. It's good to know what \_\_\_\_\_ people are out there.
3. What advice \_\_\_\_\_ give us on writing a CV?
4. Anything longer \_\_\_\_\_ pages will automatically go into the bin.
5. Make sure it's clearly written and \_\_\_\_\_ no spelling mistakes in it.
6. We don't need \_\_\_\_\_ what people look like.
7. We're \_\_\_\_\_ a couple of CVs now.

## Answers

*Before you read: 1 - d, 2 - b, 3 - h, 4 - e, 5 - a, 6 - c, 7 - f, 8 - g*  
*Comprehension Task: 1 - true, 2 - false, 3 - false, 4 - true, 5 - true, 6 - false, 7 - true, 8 - false, 9 - false, 10 - true, 11 - false*  
*Language Task: 1 - tell us, 2 - kind of, 3 - can you, 4 - than three, 5 - that there are, 6 - to know, 7 - going to look at*