

The Importance of CV Discipline

Making sure that your CV is up to date doesn't have to be the long and arduous task that it often turns out to be whenever you have to start looking for another job or have to start applying to courses. The start of the recruitment process is stressful enough without having the added pressure of trying to remember the achievements you made 5 years ago or the exact date you started your last job. This is where CV discipline is key to ensuring that your CV is accurate, current and relevant.

The art of CV discipline is to ensure that you regularly update your CV with significant changes or events within your career or academic life. These could include increases in responsibility, major achievements or successes within your career or any additional qualifications that you have earned or training courses that you have attended. It is far easier to write these points down as and when they happen rather than looking at them retrospectively and trying to recall exact information such as who was running the course and the exact dates and course title. Recording achievements within a CV is the first chance you will have to show a potential employer how you have demonstrated the skills that you claim to possess. If these achievements are included as last minute afterthoughts just to pad out your CV then they certainly won't have the same impact as achievements recorded immediately as they occur, where you will be able to remember every detail that made your success so impressive.

To have good CV discipline means that regularly updating and checking your CV should become a habit. Whenever you are praised by a senior member of staff for successfully managing a project, or for meeting a strict deadline, or for working to budget you should automatically record your success within your CV. Whenever you start a new job, record your start date within your CV and in the same way, whenever you leave a job, record your end date within your CV there and then. It is small points such as inconsistencies or vagueness with employment start and end dates that employers do not look favourably upon and these points could cost you a job!

To ensure good CV discipline you should use the following 5 steps:

1. Record employment start and end dates as and when they happen
2. Record training courses or qualifications as and when they are achieved
3. Record career successes as and when they happen
4. Record new skills that you have developed as and when they occur
5. Regularly review your CV to ensure that it still reflects who you are, what you have achieved and the things that you can do.