



12 TIPS TO GET YOU **HIRED!**

By Dionne Lewis-Reid

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12 TIPS TO GET YOU HIRED!

So I have put together 12 of my most useful tips to help you to get hired;

1. READ THE ADVERT AND ANY DOCUMENTATION ABOUT THE JOB THOROUGHLY

The trick to making a great application is to cover all the points in the Job/Person Specification. In these sections the potential employer actually tells you exactly what they're looking for in a candidate, your job is to show how you meet their criteria and why they should interview you!

2. REWRITE YOUR CV

For many people it's been a while since they've had to update their CV. Make sure you get expert advice on your CV but in that absence make sure you have the following;

- Name
- Address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Personal Profile or Statement
- Key Skills or Achievements
- Career to date – *remember you only need to go back 10 years (unless a potential employer requests differently) start with your most recent post with short paragraphs or bullet points which, as well as telling the potential employer what you did, also sells you!*
- Education
- Other qualifications and certificates – *if you are in a profession where you need to have relevant qualifications this section should appear below your Personal Statement*
- Other interests – *these should be innocuous or relevant to the role you are applying for, but DO NOT say you regularly Ski if you only once ever learned to snow-plow on a dry ski slope 20 years ago!*
- References – *available on request (never put the details on your CV)*

You CV should only be two pages long and cover the last ten years of your work history. However, if there is a great job that shows another element of your diversity that you had within the last 15 years then include that too. The reason for not having your entire work history is to give a potential employer less opportunities to discriminate against you on the grounds of age, (although this is sometimes requested by employers, especially if the role is a senior one, or you are in a position with lots of responsibilities). For similar reasons do not add photo's which could possibly lead to race or gender discrimination.



If possible, keep your CV to two pages long, however if you absolutely can't fit all your greatest achievements on two pages then certainly no more than three pages. According to most specialist recruiters they spend approx 30-60 seconds looking at each CV before they make the decision whether they are interested in you or not, but if the first couple of paragraphs grab them they will continue reading.

For reasons of personal safety and to avoid identity theft don't include your National Insurance number or date of birth. There are many people who send 'Phishing emails' - Phishing is a way of attempting to acquire sensitive information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details by masquerading as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication. This information is often used in identity theft scams.

3. ALWAYS CHANGE YOUR CV FOR EVERY JOB YOU APPLY FOR

Change your Personal Profile (sometimes called a Personal Statement) to highlight the points the potential employer asks for in the Person and Job spec, and when showing how well your previous experience matches their criteria make sure you list your strongest qualities first using words that sell you well. i.e. 'excellent organisational skills', 'able to work well under pressure', 'able to communicate well at all levels', etc.

4. HAVE LOTS OF WHITE SPACE ON YOUR CV

Do not add boxes or anything distracting. If the pages look 'busy' it is easier to put it on the NO pile, than the YES pile. Also don't try gimmicks like printing your CV on coloured paper to get you noticed, recruiters will see through it. Let the content of your CV speak for itself!

5. NAMING YOUR CV

Many people tend to name their CV, 'My CV', but no matter how great it is how professional will it look if you fail to change the name before you email it to a potential employer? Can you imagine how many copies of 'My CV' companies receive? So rule 101 is, name your CV with your first name and surname, i.e 'Dionne Lewis-Reid's CV'. If, like me you have several template CV's that I tweak according to the job I'm applying for then you can add, 'Dionne Lewis-Reid's CV – Training'. So you know immediately which CV you're looking at.

6. EMAIL ADDRESSES

Make sure the email address you include on your CV is as simple, plain and inoffensive as possible. Ideally it should be your name but if that isn't possible create

an email address that is close to your name. Can you imagine receiving a CV from a potential employee who has the email address 'sexkitten@simply.com'. Well, would you want to employ them for a serious role?

7. GAPS IN YOUR CV

If you've got a gap in your CV due to unemployment, think about how you can close it. Two easy ways are;

- Do some voluntary work – not only will it help close the gap but it will give you a focus and a reason to get out and meet people.
- Retrain or get qualified – Is there a something you've always wanted to study that will possibly create a new career.

8. COVER LETTERS

Whether you're applying online OR in writing ALWAYS send a cover letter. If applying through a Job Bank (Monster, Total Jobs etc) don't use the standard cover letter it automatically creates for you but create your own and make sure you match your skills to the points in the potential employers Person Specification. A good cover letter will sell you almost as much as a good CV.

9. APPLICATION FORMS

Most people are filled with dread when they see an application form, but for an employer they are simply an opportunity to level the playing field for applicants because everyone has to provide the same information and it is at the Supporting Statement section where you really get to sell yourself. This is where you put #Tip 1 into practice and make sure you match your skills to their requirements. At the risk of teaching Grandma to suck eggs, when completing your statement look at the Person and the Job specification and make sure you summarise using 'competency' based answers to show how you match that criteria, tell them;

- What was the issue or problem
- When and where were you working at the time when the issue or problem arose
- How did you resolve the situation
- What was the outcome

It is NOT enough to say 'I have experience of dealing with dealing with angry customers', better to say, 'in my role as Account Manager at Star Prints I had to deal with an angry customer who thought we'd lost his photo's, after I'd calmed him down I went off to check our manual records and found his photo's were filed in the wrong order, I then gave him the customer a 10% discount as a gesture of good will, and the outcome was that the customer was very happy'.

A final point on application forms; most companies are happy to send electronic versions of application forms, if possible complete it on computer as it is neater, easier to read and you can use the spell check facilities as well!

10. NETWORKING

Think about the phrase 'six degrees of separation', it suggests that within six connections we can get connected to anyone in the world. Well this is certainly true in terms of networking. Right now you could be less than six connections away from your next employer.

Networking is something we unconsciously do a lot of the time. We do it when we meet our extended family, our friends, the people we go to church with, the people we meet in the barber shop or hair salon, in short anyone we meet and have conversations with. We forget that these people have jobs and connections with people who may have opportunities that are perfect for us.

So, to get the best of your connections sit down with a piece of paper and draw a circle in the middle, that's you, then draw another four circles outside of yours with connecting lines back to you, these are your first line connections, they can be your family, friends or the people closest to you. Then finally draw three circles attached to each of the four circles with connecting lines attaching them to your first line of connections. These are your second line of connections, because they're not directly connected to you, but to the people in your first line, that should give you four inner circles and twelve outer circles.

Now start to write names into these circles, remember these are your first line contacts, then think about who each of those connections know, and you'll be amazed at how quickly and easily you manage to fill in the names. See below for a general idea of what a 'Network Map' would look like.



Once you have your 'Network map' populated with names, contact them, introduce yourself and tell them what work you've done in the past and what you're looking to do in the future. Don't be pushy, just state the facts.

Another tip, if you're speaking to someone you haven't met before because they're your second line contact. Ask them for their opinion or advice, people love to be asked for their advice.

11. INTERVIEWS

Strike fear into the hearts of most of us, but dealing with interviews is just a matter of preparation and planning. Below I've listed some ideas of how you can prepare for your interview;

- Confirm that you are able to come to the interview, the venue and time details
- Read over your CV thoroughly to re-familiarise all the details so that you can discuss it at length without forgetting dates and sounding like it belongs to someone else (or bring a copy of your CV with you)
- Make sure you research the company so you can ask relevant questions about the job or the company at the end of the interview;
- Know where you're going and how long it will take you to get there.
If possible do a 'dummy run' preferably at the same as you will have to get there for the interview. If you're doing a dummy run at 2pm in the afternoon and your interview will be at 9am, the height of rush hour, on a Monday morning make sure you make allowances for delays which may occur during busy times of the day.

12. CONFIDENCE

The best and most successful interviews I have ever had have been times when I had an unshakeable faith that I was THE best person for the job and went into the interview to convince them why they need to give me the job.

If you shuffle into an interview, slump in a chair, and cross your arms and legs and mumble answers, and don't make eye contact do you think you'll impress the interviewer enough to give you the job? I don't think so.

But if you confidently walk into an interview, engage with the interviewer, look interested and make eye contact (don't stare, but meet their eyes), speak clearly and answer questions in a way that shows you know what you're talking about, do you think you might be offered the job? Yes, you may well be offered the job.

If you lack confidence and self belief on great way to give yourself a much needed boost to get you through the interview is to fake it. Yes, I said Fake it! Have you ever heard the phrase 'fake it till you make it?'. What that really means is act as if you are already successful and it will generate more feelings of confidence and ultimately more success.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR DIONNE LEWIS-REID

Dionne Lewis-Reid has spent many years delivering coaching and training in the Welfare-to-Work sector, and delivering Redundancy (Outplacement/Career Transition) workshops both through Lewis-Reid and Hays the UK's largest Recruitment specialist for various public and private sector companies and organisations.

Dionne's works is all about helping people to create or update their CV's and giving them the skills and confidence to either go back to work, or get the next job if it's career transition.

Lewis-Reid provides some of the following services;

- Outplacement Training and Coaching
- Organisational Development and Change Management
- Leadership Development
- Goal Setting Workshops
- Delivering Welfare-to-Work programmes (long term unemployed)

Current and previous clients include;

- Hays Resourcing
- Lewisham Council
- Hammersmith and Fulham Council
- Kensington and Chelsea Council

Dionne is happily married and lives in South East London with her husband.

For more information on Lewis Reid Consultancy please visit www.lewis-reid.co.uk.

Lewis  *Reid*

With many years spent working in the Welfare to Work sector, and delivering workshops for various organisations including Hays delivering Career Transition Workshops and helping people to create or update their CV's and giving them the skills and confidence to either go back to work if they're unemployed, or get the next job if it's career transition.

This book forms the basis of many years of experience which we hope you'll find useful!



Now go and get HIRED!



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