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CVs

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Learn to:

- Write and format a persuasive CV that will get you noticed
- Sell your best skills and highlight your achievements
- Bounce back from redundancy
- Use online recruitment methods

Joyce Lain Kennedy

Careers columnist and bestselling author

Lois-Andrea Ferguson

Careers and CV consultant



CVs For Dummies[®], Portable Edition

**by Joyce Lain Kennedy and Lois-
Andrea Ferguson**



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About the Authors

Joyce Lain Kennedy is America's first nationally syndicated careers columnist. Her twice-weekly column, CAREERS NOW, appears in newspapers and websites across the land. In her four decades of advising readers – young, old and in-between – Joyce has received millions of letters enquiring about career moves and jobs searches, and has answered countless numbers of them in print.

Joyce is the author of seven career books.

Lois-Andrea Ferguson is Managing Director of Professional CV Services Ltd and Senior Consultant / Developer for www.professional-cv-services.co.uk. Like many readers, Lois has switched careers over the last 20 years: from being an international journalist and writer to legal advisor on Privy Council issues, then professional fund-raising, securing more than £15 million for various community sector groups, then into the recruitment and selection sector.

Lois-Andrea has also conducted interviews with people such as former US President, George Bush Senior, and former US Secretary of State, Colin Powell. She had the memorable privilege of interviewing Dr Rob McNain, an astronaut who, two weeks after the interview, sadly died in the *Challenger* explosion. Lois has also contributed to BBC World Services and published short stories in North America and the UK.

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Introduction

Take a trip down memory lane, to 20 years ago, when CV writing was so simple and straightforward. Those were the days when you scoured the dailies for job advertisements, sent your CV on plain paper, stating your name, your address and more often than not, your land line number along with your employment and education history. Then you listened out for the telephone to ring for an interview.

Today the journey is more hurried, with lots of clicks and the electronic voice 'You have email!' Sometimes, you no longer only send your CV through the post. You sit at the computer, uploading your targeted CVs, filling in countless agency forms and contributing to a massive database which picks up key words you've had the insight to include. Then you await an offer of an interview perhaps via email or text.

About This Book

Getting to grips with the modern world of recruitment means figuring out the difference between the scannable CV and the Internet plain text CV (ASCII). Relax – there's also the tried and proven traditional CV which is formatted for employers to read in their hands, not by flicking down a scrollbar.

In this book, we explain the way CVs work in today's hi-tech world without saturating your brain with science. We hope this book will be a vital tool for all job-hunters, from young school-leavers struggling with a blank CV, all the way through to the senior professor writing a document to avoid being a victim of ageism. Whatever your circumstances, we tell you everything you need to know to create a targeted CV.

In these pages, we demonstrate how to scale the fence of success with hard-hitting advice to enhance your confidence and make you stand out amongst the hopefuls. A fierce labour market is out there. But flip the pages at your own pace and gain invaluable tools for your journey to those employers' doors!

Foolish Assumptions

We assume you picked up this book for one of the following reasons:

- ✔ You like where you are today but want more from life than blooming where you're planted.
- ✔ You've heard about sweeping technology-based changes in the way people and jobs find each other. You want to be sure your CV is in sync with the very latest updates.
- ✔ You're a school-leaver venturing into the labour market for the first time and want an experienced, friendly hand on your shoulder.
- ✔ You're a recent graduate with a little bit of experience seeking clarification between the CV and application form process.
- ✔ You're a parent who's nurtured children for years and is ready to return to the workplace but needs to know what's changed.
- ✔ You're a manager or senior director wanting to climb the next rung on the corporate ladder and know it's time for a CV makeover.

We further assume that you're someone who likes information that cuts to the chase, sometimes with a smile.

How This Book Is Organised

The aim of this book is get you up and running (which in this case means happily employed) as soon as possible. This book is divided into five distinct parts and each part is divided into chapters. Here's the break-down on what each part covers.

Part I: Pitching Your CV in a Fierce Marketplace

This part covers the big picture trends and developments, and what you should do to make your CV stand out amongst the Web giants.

Part II: The Rise and Reign of the Targeted CV

This part shows you how to make your targeted CV hard-hitting to beat competitors to the employers' doors. We pay special attention to recognisable groups of people such as recent graduates, those who have vast experiences but worry about ageism, military personnel entering the civilian world and parents who want to resume work after bringing up children.

Part III: Bringing It All Together: Sample Targeted CVs

In this part we give you a sampling of targeted CVs for different circumstances, by industry and experience. We also explain ways of changing directions with the same CV contents.

Part IV: Launching Your CV Into Orbit

This part shows you how to use references to your advantage, successfully start your job campaign and prepare for that elusive interview.

Part V: The Parts of Tens

For Dummies readers know that the Part of Tens is a collection of single-subject chapters that cut to the chase in a ten-point format.

In these lists of ten, we offer ways to back up your CV claims, identify actions to avoid driving recruiters barmy, suggest simple adjustments to quickly improve your CV, and give you a CV checklist to rate your work.

Icons Used in This Book

We use *For Dummies* signature icons in the margins of the book to rivet your attention on key bits of information.



People have differing opinions about certain aspects of CV writing and recruitment. The gavel reminds you to make the best decision for your situation.



This icon directs your attention to great techniques to create a winning CV.



The knotted string alerts you to the really important points to remember.



Head here for information that can make a difference in the outcome of your job search.



This icon warns you avoid certain pitfalls that can reduce your chances in securing that job.

Where to Go from Here

You can start anywhere you want to in this book – each chapter stands alone so you can flip through to different sections as you like, using the Table of Contents and Index to pinpoint the most useful information for you. To be in tune with current standards and practices, go to Part I. If you're writing your first CV, the chapters in Part II offers worksheets, words to make your CV sing and tips on how to present your CV for instant attention from the employer. Want to see a selection of sample CVs? Head to Part III.

Otherwise, jump in where the topic and samples look inviting and applicable – we've done our best to make it all outstanding.