



HAYS Recruiting experts
in Architecture

FINDING A JOB IN ARCHITECTURAL TECHNOLOGY YOUR GUIDE TO SUCCESS

In collaboration with

hays.co.uk/architecture



SETTING THE FOUNDATION FOR A GREAT CAREER



Finding a job can be stressful and is often challenging, especially if you are a recent graduate and looking for your first employment opportunity. It can also be a fun process, a great learning curve and an enjoyable experience for you.

To assist you in achieving the best results whilst trying to find a job, I'm delighted that we are working with Hays to bring you this guide on preparing your CV, online professional profiles and how best to apply, together with guidance on how to approach and perform well in job interviews.

The Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists is here to assist and support you throughout your professional career, from student membership as you progress and evolve to ultimately reaching the pinnacle of your profession. Being a member of CIAT and having your competence assessed by a professional body gives you a clear market edge, as it results in a Chartered qualification which is both a protected and world renowned quality mark. As a Chartered Architectural Technologist you'll gain the ability to lead on any project from inception through to completion in a variety of different fields.

Paul Laycock MCIAT
Vice-President Education
CIAT



On behalf of Hays Construction & Property, I am delighted to be working with CIAT to help students find their first careers in the industry. As the UK's leading recruitment specialist in architecture, we feel it's our responsibility to help people find their place in the world of work.

You are entering a diverse and changing landscape, where the technical requirements for many roles are constantly evolving. Demand is fierce and processes for finding work are ever more complex. It is our hope that the information we've provided in this guide, in collaboration with CIAT, will help you to overcome the competition and find the right role for you.

We coach our candidates daily in these techniques, and tailor our approach to match each position and candidate. We place thousands of people per year and are happy to provide you with advice and insights from our local offices.

We wish you the best of luck in your future job search, and are here to help you find new opportunities in your area whenever you need us.

Richard Gelder
Director
Hays Construction & Property

PREPARING YOUR CV

The first step to securing any job is to make sure your CV is as good as it can be. This is your public face, and is the first impression an employer will have of you, so make sure you follow the advice below, and put your best foot forward.

Presentation and layout

Your CV must look clean and well structured, with enough white space to enhance readability. It should be no more than two pages long unless your industry has its own standards; for instance, if you are expected to include your publications or details of many projects. Use a simple font like Arial, 10-12pt, and keep formatting like italics and underlining to a minimum.

Bullet points are extremely useful as they allow you to highlight key points succinctly and keep the document looking tidy. Try to start each one with an action verb if you can ('created', 'managed', 'increased', 'improved' etc.), rather than overusing 'I'.

Spelling and punctuation must be perfect, so after you proofread and spell-check it, give it to a friend to do the same. Employers are inundated with many applications and unnecessary mistakes can mean yours ends up in the reject pile.

Basic CV structure

Name, address and contact details

Be sure to use the phone number and email address that you use most often so that you can reply to employers in a timely manner. There is no need to include details such as date-of-birth, sex or marital status.

Personal summary

This is optional, but it's a good opportunity to highlight in a few sentences what you hope to achieve in your next position and what you feel you can uniquely offer the employer. Tailor this section to each job position that you're applying to.

Skills summary

Including a skills section can capture the employer's attention by making it immediately clear what you can offer. Compile a brief bulleted list of any skills and experience which are relevant to the role. Wherever possible, use the same adjectives as those used in the job advertisement.

For instance, if the ad specifies someone who has 'effective administrative abilities and excellent interpersonal skills', these should be addressed under your skills section with brief evidence as to where you gained those skills. Make sure to always tailor your skills and expertise to the individual position you are applying for rather than sending the same CV out to all the jobs you apply for.

Relevant experience

This is your work history and includes paid work and any relevant volunteer or work experience placements. Work backwards from your most recent job and don't leave any gaps; you don't want to give potential employers any cause for concern. If you took a year out, carried out an interim assignment or travelled for six months, say so, and focus on the fact that it gave you some excellent skills and experiences.

Achievements

A future employer will be interested in occasions where you went above and beyond your duty and achieved something great. So if you've been 'employee of the month' for three months running, say so. All achievements should be quantified, for example if you over-achieved on your sales targets, say by what percentage and over what period.

Education and training

Use your common sense here. If you have an advanced degree, few people are going to be concerned about the exams you took when you were 16 years old. Ensure you also include any training courses that you have completed that are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Interests

These are optional, but should you choose to include a section on hobbies and interests, keep it very brief. Avoid saying anything that could be contentious (e.g. political or religious affiliations), and wherever possible, use the space to show how your personality is suited to that of the business to which you're applying.

References

Actual references are rarely included on resumes, it is usually fine to simply say 'References are available on request'. The employer will then make later arrangements to contact the referees.

ENHANCING AND TAILORING YOUR CV

The closer your CV fits with the culture and characteristics of the company, the better your chances of standing out from the crowd. Tailoring your CV for every application might sound like a time-consuming process, but it can dramatically improve your chances of getting to the top of the pile and securing an interview.

Here are some important tips to help you adapt your CV so that it closely reflects what the job description is asking for, and speaks directly to the recruiter in a way that no generic CV can.

Look for key words and phrases

The best place to start the CV tailoring process is to go through the job description, highlighting the keywords and phrases. List these on a separate piece of paper, grouping them into the following categories: soft skills, technical abilities and job experience.

This will make it easier to incorporate the keywords and phrases into the relevant sections of your core CV, the personal statement, skills and employment history respectively.

Tweak your personal statement

Next you should tailor your personal statement. Explain to the reader why you are keen to work not just in this specific industry, but with this particular company.

Make sure that your personal statement mirrors the qualities, character and experience specified by the job description, and try to fit the tone of your statement to the style of the job description. This will grab the recruiter's attention and pitch you as the perfect fit for the job.

Go over your educational and work history

Finally, take some additional time to polish your education and work history. It is important not to embroider the truth, so everything in your employment history must be true, but you should adapt it by making sure that you highlight those duties and achievements that are also mentioned in the job description. This will further underline how well suited you are to the role.

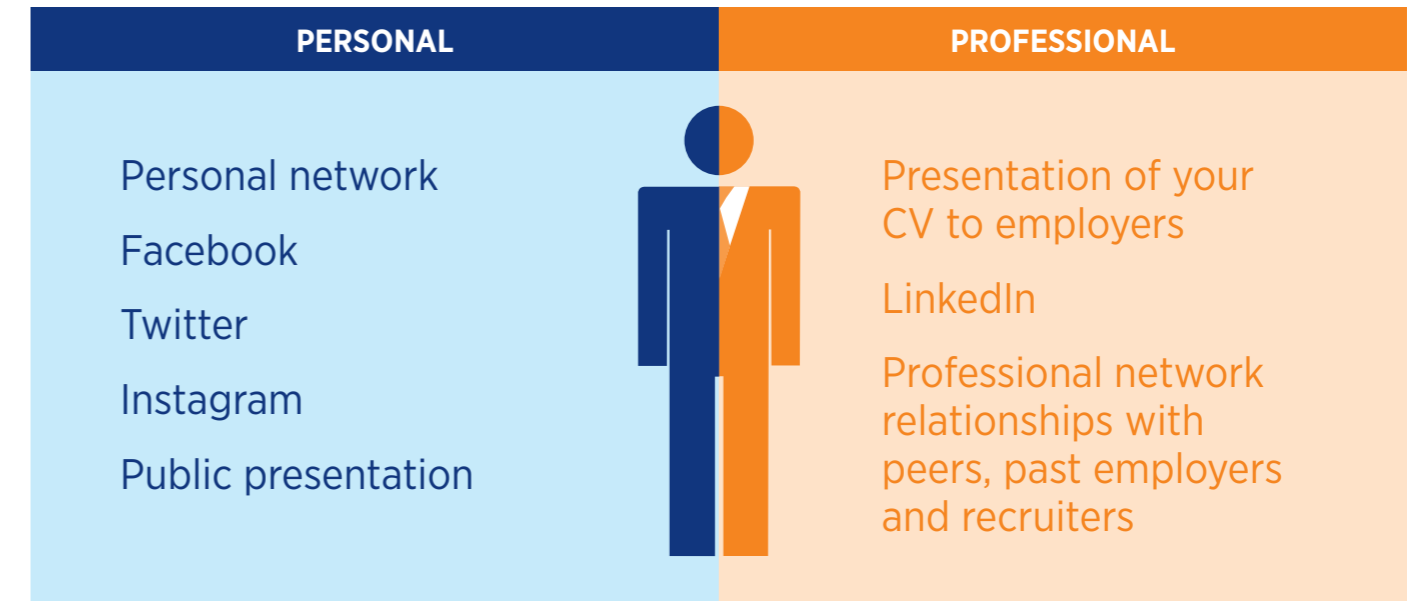
Tailoring your CV does require a little extra time, and probably means that you can't fire out dozens of applications a day. But when it comes to today's ultra-competitive job market, quality always wins out over quantity. So give yourself the best possible chance of standing out and make sure every CV you send out is tailored and targeted towards the most important result, getting that interview.



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SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUR ONLINE BRAND

Social media is used by employers to get a better sense of who you are, LinkedIn should certainly be part of your professional brand, along with your CV, but you should consider the impression you make on all forms of social media.



Your personal and professional brand

Any social media profiles you have should be considered a part of your personal brand, and as important as your appearance and personal network. Be aware that potential employers are likely to look at these to get a reflection of you. Always be careful about what you post or share, and make sure you're always presenting your best side.

Your professional brand is how employers and peers see you, and is no longer solely about your CV. LinkedIn by far is the most useful tool you can use to build a profile, network with other professionals and demonstrate your skills.

How to use LinkedIn

Post ideas

LinkedIn provides the opportunity to showcase your skills and interests. Make sure to post articles that are of interest to you and relevant to your industry. You can also share other people's posts, share other member's posts and ask questions.

Make connections

One of the most important aspects of LinkedIn is the ability to connect with people. Be careful of overextending however as the quality of your connections on LinkedIn is more important than the quantity, so only connect with people you feel are relevant to you.

If you see someone you'd like to connect with, try personalising the message you send to them along with your connection request.

Get involved with Groups

Groups are where professionals from the same industry or sector come together to discuss relevant subjects. They provide the opportunity for you to learn more about your industry by asking questions and networking with others. Groups are tailored to interests and industries, so search for the ones most relevant to your industry and location.

Follow companies

LinkedIn is built to help people find jobs. You can therefore choose to follow any company you would be interested in working for. Company pages contain general information, business overviews, lists of employees and some choose to list jobs.

By looking for people working for the company with a similar job title to yours, you can review their profile along with their key responsibilities. This gives you an idea of what you should be aspiring to should you wish to work for this company in the future.

THE JOB INTERVIEW

Here are eight key actions to follow before, during and after your interview.

1. Do your research

Before you enter the interview room, do your homework. Take time to review the company website, search for existing employees' LinkedIn profiles, and take the time to follow and study the company's social media channels.

Through proper research you will be able to get real idea of the DNA and culture of the organisation, so you can then reflect that knowledge during the interview. In doing this, you are demonstrating to the interviewer that you have made a real effort to do thorough research, implying that you are very interested in the role.

2. Practice makes perfect

It's also worth considering some of the key interview questions you may be asked and prepare some answers that you may like to give. What are the most common interview questions for this particular role and sector? Do you have an idea of how you would answer these?

Study the job-specification and cross reference it with your CV. Are there projects, specific training courses or examples from your previous jobs that are particularly relevant? Have clear details of these that you are prepared to talk about.

Practice your answers out loud at home beforehand and, if you can, have someone listen and give you feedback. This kind of preparation will ensure that your suitability and keenness for the role comes across in the form of concise and composed answers that resonate strongly with the interviewer. This will also demonstrate that you have taken the time to practice your interview technique, so must care about the opportunity.

3. Bring a portfolio

Be sure to prepare a portfolio and take it to the interview as it will reflect your capabilities and experience within the discipline in more detail. Only include evidence that has been produced by you and demonstrates your current skill level. This should consist of relevant coursework from university/college and/or evidence from work placements. As your career progresses, your portfolio will grow and should be tailored accordingly.

4. Make a good first impression

The first few minutes of an interview are arguably the most important, as this is when your interviewer will gain a first impression of you.

Make sure you arrive for your interview 5-10 minutes early, but not so early as to interrupt their schedule. Ensure beforehand that you know where you're going and are clear on who you are meeting so you can be confident when you arrive. Dress smartly, even if it is not necessarily expected from the day-to-day job as this indicates a level of respect for the interviewer and your willingness to put effort into securing the job.

5. Ask questions

The interview is a great opportunity to learn more about the role and get a feel for the company. Consider asking if the position is new. If not, how has it evolved? This will provide you with some insight into the direction the business is taking.

Ask about the stakeholders of the position, the measurements of success and the tools you will have at your disposal to ensure you will exceed expectations. You may also learn something interesting about the organisational culture from these questions.

Remember to ask the interviewer for details of their background too as this will help build your rapport with them and show your people skills.

Asking the above questions will show that you want the job on a number of levels. It will show enthusiasm and demonstrate your curiosity to learn more about the role, the interviewer and the business. You will also be able to strengthen your answers based on any insights that you get from asking these questions, demonstrating your attentiveness throughout the interview.

6. Don't overlook the importance of non-verbal communication

A smile, eye contact, a good handshake and control of your hands while speaking all contribute to transmitting your enthusiasm to add value in the company.

Demonstrating your passion will certainly give you a competitive edge over the other candidates and provide you with the best possible chance of starting work in your dream job.

7. Your final pitch

Once the question and answer segment is over, but before you leave the room, think about giving a one or two minute 'pitch' which wraps up why you're so interested in this role specifically.

This is your last chance to make an impression, so be clear and precise. This may well be how the interview panel remembers you. Make it good. It may be sensible to practice this at home.

8. Follow up with a thank you

The last thing to think about is some basic manners; follow the interview up with a thank you email that emphasises your keenness for the role and company. Send this to your recruiter to pass on to the hiring manager at the company but keep it short, sweet and to the point. This is the polite and professional finish to a great application and interview.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

If you've had a successful interview and have been offered a position you should be very excited. However, it's not the end of the process, you still have much to consider before you accept or decline a job offer.

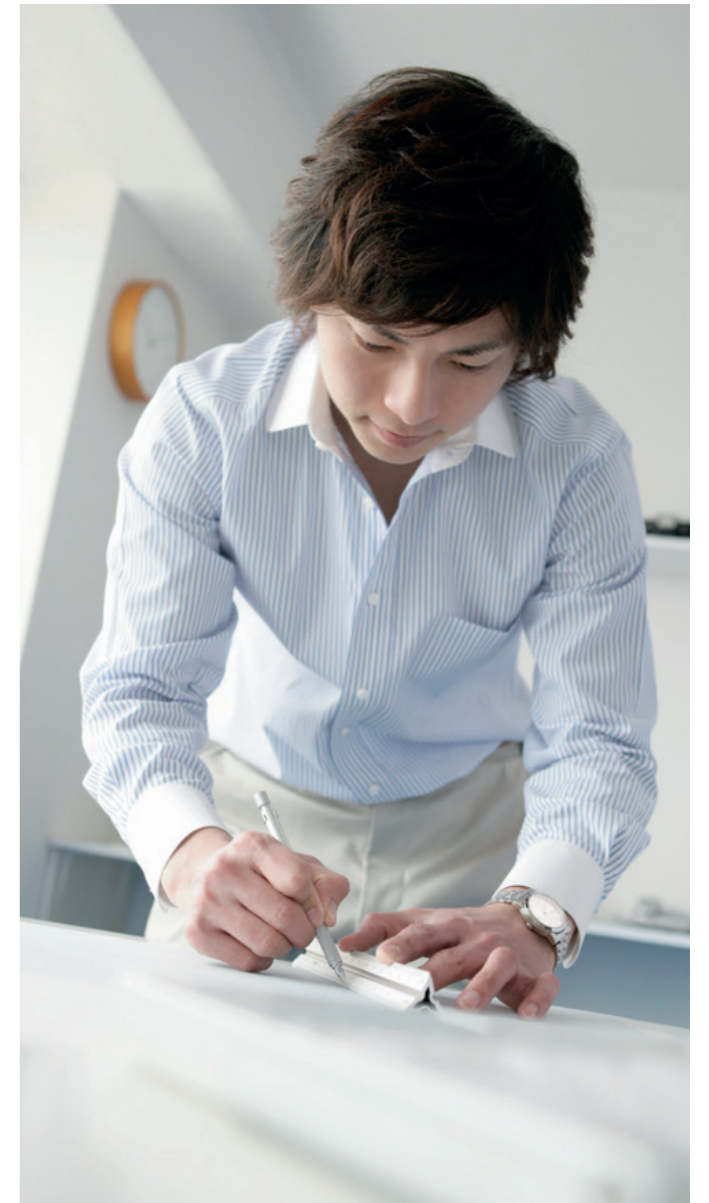
Don't act before you've had a chance to think, take some time to consider the offer. Give the hiring manager a time frame you can stick to and speak with your recruitment consultant if you have one. Once you make your final decision, you should let the hiring manager or your recruiter know as soon as possible.

If you decide to accept the position, remember that realistic negotiations are part of the process, so explore the possibility of any potential movement on salary and benefits. Make sure you read your offer details thoroughly and confirm everything via email so that you have a written record.

Finally, be excited. This is the first step in your career. Convey this excitement to the hiring manager to further underline that they have made the right decision.

If you follow the tips outlined here, you could be well on your way to securing your first job in architectural technology.

For more career advice and insights visit hays.co.uk/architecture



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