

Why We Recommend Adding Interests and Hobbies To Your IT CV



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An effective IT CV is your first opportunity to leave a lasting impression on your employer. However it's important to keep this document concise.

That's why many candidates often omit sections referencing their hobbies and interests.

It's easy to assume your passions are irrelevant to your employer's hiring decisions. But, when they're implemented correctly, they can offer useful insights into your personality, skills, and potential cultural fit. A well-crafted hobbies and interests section could differentiate you from the competition in a complex IT job market.

We recommend including hobbies and interests in your CV and our top tips for ensuring they make the right impact.

THE AVERAGE
HIRING MANAGER
ONLY LOOKS AT A
CV FOR

6-7
SECONDS

before moving on...



The Benefits of Including Hobbies and Interests

In the seconds it takes for an IT employer to scan your CV, you need to **grab their attention** and encourage them to spend more time getting to know you.

The right collection of hobbies and interests can highlight your skills, pave the foundations of an emotional connection, and give you an edge over other candidates. When they're carefully infused into your CV and relevant to the role you're applying here is how and why hobbies and interests can help:

- ✓ Forge an Emotional Connection
- ✓ Reinforce Relevant Skills
- ✓ Demonstrate Cultural Fit



The Benefits of Including Hobbies and Interests

Forge an Emotional Connection:

Hobbies and interests humanise IT candidates, providing a deeper insight into who they are as a person. They can help employers visualise what you'll be like to work with. For instance, if you're applying for a position as an IT team manager, sharing that you enjoy coaching your son's football team shows you're passionate about helping others succeed.

Highlighting specific hobbies can even establish common ground with hiring managers. After reading a company's "about page", if you notice a CEO spends her free time taking cooking classes discussing your love of baking, it shows you have common interests.

Hobbies and interests also show commitment and passion, two things most hiring managers are looking for in any IT candidate. Employers love candidates with drive and enthusiasm.

In many cases, hobbies and interests can also help to break the ice during interviews. When hiring managers have more information about you, it feels less like they're speaking to a stranger. They can ask you questions about your hobbies and start forming bonds with you as a person.



The Benefits of Including Hobbies and Interests

Reinforce Relevant Skills:

Used correctly, hobbies and interests in an IT CV are an excellent way to draw attention to relevant, transferrable skills. Many hobbies offer an insight into your skills that may not be evident based on your qualifications and previous work experiences. For instance:

Playing team sports

Team sports like football show you're comfortable working well in a team. If you lead the team, you can demonstrate leadership skills, such as solving problems, managing conflict, and motivating others.



Volunteering

An interest in helping shows you care about others and are committed to giving back something to the people around you. It demonstrates that you're not driven solely by monetary rewards and have a strong sense of purpose.

Coding or tech hobbies

Coding and technology-based hobbies demonstrate a passion for learning and discovery. They can highlight critical thinking, problem-solving, and numerical analysis skills. They also show you are adaptable, as you can follow a fast-paced industry.



The Benefits of Including Hobbies and Interests

Demonstrate Cultural Fit:

Hiring for cultural fit can help IT employees reduce onboarding costs and improve their chances of retaining talent. Employers are increasingly searching for candidates who can **add value to their culture**, help them achieve their diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, and contribute to excellent team dynamics.

Your interests and hobbies can provide insight into whether you'll fit well with the company culture. They demonstrate a commitment to work-life balance, indicating that you're invested in your wellbeing and are less likely to suffer from burnout.

They can also demonstrate that you share the same work ethics as your colleagues. For instance, sharing a passion for travelling in your CV can show you have strong cultural awareness and sensitivity. It also demonstrates excellent organisational and time management skills and an ability to adapt rapidly to changing circumstances.



How to Choose Which Interests to Include



While including hobbies and interests in your IT CV can be valuable, preserving the right balance is important. Your passions shouldn't overwhelm your experience and credentials but augment the information you provide.

When choosing which interests to include, focus on:

- Relevance to the Job Role
- Honesty and Authenticity
- Preserving Balance

How to Choose Which Interests to Include

Relevance to the Job Role

Every skill or interest you mention should be relevant to the role you're applying for. If you're applying for an IT managerial position, it makes sense to draw attention to hobbies that have improved your leadership skills. You might mention that you're the captain of a sports team or responsible for event planning as part of a charitable initiative.



Honesty and Authenticity

While it might be tempting to try and tailor your hobbies to what you think your hiring managers are interested in, it's important to be honest. Don't tell employers you love fishing because you've heard the CEO goes fishing. There's a good chance you'll be asked questions about your hobbies that reveal you haven't been truthful.

Preserving Balance:

Even if your hobbies are a big part of your life and potentially relevant to the role, don't focus on them too heavily. Use your hobbies as supportive evidence of your skills and competencies, but focus primarily on your professional skills and experiences. Remember, a CV should only be one or two pages long.

How to Incorporate Interests on Your CV

Each IT CV you send to a company should be tailored to that organisation, and the role you're applying for. When incorporating your interests and hobbies into your CV, think carefully about:

Placement and Formatting:

How you position your hobbies and interests in your CV, will depend on the value they'll add. The most important information about you should be placed at the top of the first page. If you feel a specific hobby demonstrates how effective you'll be in a role, you may mention it at the top of the page in your personal summary.

If your hobbies and interests are less important, you might position them further down the page, underneath your skills and qualifications. Alternatively, you may look for ways to include them in other sections, such as an "accomplishments" section.



How to Incorporate Interests on Your CV

Relate Each Hobby/Interest to a Skill

Ensure each of the hobbies and interests you outline relates to a specific, relevant skill that will be valuable to your hiring manager or IT employer. Concisely draw attention to how your interest improves your employee value.

Here are some examples:



Tech enthusiast:

I enjoy exploring the latest technological advancements, staying up-to-date with new trends and developments, and networking with other technology fans.



Volunteering:

I believe in giving back to the community, using my IT skills to benefit others, and expanding my industry knowledge.



Fitness:

To maintain a healthy work-life balance, I engage regularly in physical activities that help improve my endurance.



Adding Hobbies and Interests to CVs

It's easy to assume that hobbies and interests should be omitted from CVs in favour of more traditional professional insights. However, including the right information about your passions can help you to boost your chances of getting the ideal role.

Drawing attention to relevant interests and hobbies can help forge a **personal connection** with hiring managers, **demonstrate crucial skills**, and **differentiate you** from the competition.

Use your hobbies and interests to augment your CV and ensure you stand out in the competitive IT job market.



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At Constant Recruitment, we are passionate about connecting talented IT professionals with leading organisations across the UK. The right talent can transform organisations and drive innovation and growth, and we are dedicated to matching the right talent with the right opportunity.

Our founder, Rachel Constant-Taylor, started in recruitment in 2006, the same year her youngest daughter was born. With a background in the IT industry since leaving school, moving into IT recruitment was a natural fit for her, combining her real-world knowledge of working in Tech companies with her love of people. She saw an opportunity in 2012 to create a unique recruitment agency of her own that delivered exceptional service and expertise.

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