

PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

March 2017



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about our 'healthy living' habits!

Top workplace perks

Cultivate a culture of happiness
using this 5-Step guide

How to write a CV: tips for 2017

innovative ways to use your Smartphone

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We tell 20 fibs a week about our 'healthy living' habits!

The majority of Brits (61%) are in complete denial about their health, according to new research. A new study into the nation's attitudes towards their wellbeing has revealed we tell on average 20 fibs a week regarding our lifestyles – that's 1,020 every year.

And it isn't only our friends we try to deceive, it is also partners, doctors – and even ourselves, according to the research by KP Nuts.

In fact, a staggering 61% of the adults who took part in the study admitted they were in denial about their health – with 16% claiming they "always" paint a healthier picture of their lives to others.

15% have told acquaintances that they are a non-smoker when it wasn't the case – and further a 13% routinely play down the level of alcohol they consume.

A further 12% claim they are "gym-goer" – regardless of how often they actually frequent the gym.

However, the biggest fib to emerge from the poll was how much water we drink – with 18% claiming they drink more than one litre of it every day.

Other regular fibs to emerge from the research included "I never eat take-aways" (7%), "I don't watch television" (14%) and "my children aren't allowed sweets" (6%)

But regardless of age, mums are the people we are most likely to lie to about our health to – with

19% of adults STILL pulling the wool over their mother's eyes about how healthy they are.

16% tell lies to their other half about their lifestyle – and a further 16% admitted going to the school playground in their gym gear to give off a healthy vibe to the other mums and dads.

More worryingly – 19% of us routinely lie to our GP about our lifestyles with 41% filling medical forms inaccurately to give off a better impression.

36% exaggerate how healthy they are on social media – and men are the worst culprits (43%)

When asked why, 26% of those polled said it was because of peer pressure – and 14% said it was because of celebrity influences.

51% said they felt pressure to keep up with the Jones's in terms of their health.

A spokesperson for KP Nuts who commissioned the research says, "We're all a little guilty of fibbing about what we've really been snacking on, but the truth is, we don't have to take supplements and pump iron at the gym to be healthy. Some foods that we write off in a bid to eat well, can be far more nutritious than we give them credit for. It's not about following food fads, it's about knowing



which foods taste good and still give you the nutrients you need. A handful of peanuts for example (or 25g) can provide around 7g of protein, and tastes great too."

But despite the trend for healthy living – real or fake – millions of Brits believe many of their friends are also not being entirely honest about their lifestyles.

Around one in four (23%) said 'everyone does it', while 35% agreed because 'no-one can be super-healthy all the time'.

Another one in five (20%) confessed their 'crime' but added: 'I am nowhere near the worst culprit'.

TOP HEALTH AND FITNESS FIBS

1. I drink more than 1 litre of water a day
2. I don't watch much telly
3. I only drink at weekends
4. I visit the gym regularly
5. My kids aren't allowed sweets
6. I have a normal BMI
7. I never eat takeaways
8. I don't really like chocolate
9. I don't like the taste of alcohol
10. I'm not a fan of fried food
11. My kids love vegetables
12. I never eat fast food
13. I lift really heavy weights
14. I only shop at organic supermarkets
15. I don't eat any saturated fat
16. I won't have processed food in the house
17. I have never tried a kebab
18. I don't eat carbs at all
19. I've run a marathon
20. My children never eat fast food

10 innovative ways to use your Smartphone

Smartphones have taken over our lives so much that they now go wherever we go—which is everywhere. People are seen using their smartphones for taking photographs and selfies, playing games, listening to music, reading articles, texting or calling, checking their emails and notifications, and posting or commenting on various social networking websites.

However, innovative people are looking at smartphones not just as a convenient way of communicating, but also as a tool that has near infinite possibilities. Here are ten interesting things that you may do with your smartphone.

1. Avoid oversleeping by amplifying your phone's speakers

Smartphone speakers are usually not good enough to wake up heavy sleepers or listen to music to. However, you can boost the volume by putting your phone in a drinking glass, coffee mug, empty pitcher or vase, as the sound will reverberate inside the glass. Despite the fact that it is not the best amplification technique, it works well for an alarm.

Not only does it amplify, but for turning the alarm off you actually have to pull the phone out of the glass, making it a bit tougher to ignore. However, make sure that the glass is empty. Also, be careful where you keep the glass if the phone vibrates when ringing, since it might not be a pleasant thing to wake up to a glass crashing off the table.

2. Improve the world

Smartphones can also help you make a difference in the world by providing you with volunteering opportunities and helping charities. There are

a number of apps available that can help you in this regard if you make a commitment to do something purposeful.

For example, Donate a Photo is an app that accepts one photo per day, which can be anything from sunsets, animals to any other appealing picture, which are then turned into donations for various campaigns. Similarly, the app Feedie helps in feeding children when you visit a participating Feedie restaurant and share a photo of the meal you have there. The restaurant makes a donation equal to one meal to The Lunchbox Fund. This is something easy for a smartphone owner as it helps you do something rewarding for doing a thing that you were planning to do anyway.

3. Keep track of your expenses and incomes

With your smartphone, you can also keep track of all your incomes and expenses in order to understand your financial position and make budget efficiently. There are a range of apps that allow management of your daily expenses and monitoring of all your outflows and inflows quickly and easily.

These include Daily Expenses 3, My Finances, Expense Manager and Money Saver, and Daily Income Expense Manager to name a few. All the basic expenses, such as travel, food, education,



clothing, entertainment etc. are categorized to give you an analysis of the remaining balance and the expenses. There you can review the reports daily, weekly, monthly or yearly. So organize your expenses and have better control on your money.

4. Become more focused

While a lot of people find their smartphone to be a means of distraction, this tool itself can help you in boosting your productivity by keeping you focused on what you really need to do. For this too, there are a number of apps to help you out.

For example, the app 'Moment' limits the amount of time you spend on your phone. 'Flipd' helps you spend less time on your phone by creating a lock screen that removes distractions by games, social media, and other apps. Similarly, 'AppDetox' also helps you in spending less time on your phone and taking a digital detox. Hence, you can rely on these apps for regaining the focus at work and

boost your productivity.

5. Measure your Heartbeat

Now there is no need to take a trip to a hospital to get your heartbeat checked as there is a smartphone app for that. The camera of your smartphone combined with the flash built into your device can make a heart rate monitor.

All you have to do is place your finger on the camera lens and flash for a few seconds, and the apps, such as Heart Rate Plus and Instant Heart Rate, can read your pulse and provide you with a count of your beats per minute.

6. Control other devices with infrared

You are sitting in front of the TV watching your favorite show and suddenly you want to change the volume, but the only device you have near

Continued ►

is your smartphone. The good news is that your smartphone can now be used to control your TV. An increasing number of smartphones are now being released with infra-red port. You only need to setup your smartphone to be able to control your TV or set-up box.

For this, first you have to download some remote app, such as 'Peel Smart Remote'. This app allows you to turn your phone into a remote for your set-up box, TV, audio system, DVD player, as well as some home appliances like heaters and air conditioners. Hence, the next time you can't find your remote you won't have to get up or go digging through the couch. Simply use the smartphone in your hands.

7. Diagnose a leaky window

When it is wintertime, it is important to have windows that are tightly sealed to make the room comfortable. In those chilling days, a leaky window with cold air seeping through is the last thing that you want. In such a scenario, your smartphone can be turned into a thermal imaging camera with 'FLIR ONE Thermal Imaging Camera' attachment.

The add-on translates thermal energy into color images making it easier to identify the area from where cold air may be seeping into the room. Apart from identifying possible cold and hot air leaks, it can also be used for identifying potential water leaks in walls, ceiling or floors. It can also be used when trying to search for pets lost at night.

8. Scan barcodes and QR-codes

While shopping, it often happens that you wonder whether you are getting a good deal or not. In such a situation, again it will be your smartphone that can come to your rescue. Simply pull it out, and point its camera at the barcode of the product.

Google search is also an option to find more about the price and details of the product, but code scanner apps available provide a convenient way of bringing myriad of data with only a tap.

Some apps also allow comparison of product prices at various online stores. Similarly, QR codes, the square-box codes that are often found on products to direct to specific information, can also be scanned from smartphone using apps.

9. Translate languages

This is another amazing use of the smartphone and its camera. When traveling abroad, there are a number of times when you encounter language that you have no clue about. Gone are those days of cluelessness with the arrival of the Google Translate app.

The only thing you have to do now is aim the camera of your smartphone at the text and the app will translate that into the language of your choice. Although the app currently supports only 29 languages for camera translation mode, there are many more languages it can translate in other modes such as conversation, handwriting, etc. making it an indispensable tool when travelling abroad.

10. Use your smartphone as a mic

When it comes to communicating with people over the internet, making audio recordings, or using speech recognition, a good microphone is needed. Although headphones usually come with a mic or there is a built-in microphone in the computer, there are times when the audio quality is not good or the microphone stops working while you are in a middle of a conversation. In case of such an incident, your smartphone right beside you can come in very handy.

There are many apps available for this purpose, but the one that is easy to set up is 'WO Mic' by Wireless Orange. All you have to do is to download that free app on your smartphone and WO Mic Client program and WO Mic device driver on your PC. You can then use your smartphone as a mic using WiFi or Bluetooth or USB.

Mehwish A. Wahid
www.lifehack.org

Top workplace perks

Forget the 'fads' – workers want more money and flexibility. New research from the job site, CV-Library, reveals just how important workplace perks are, with nearly two thirds of professionals stating that they consider these to be a key factor when looking for a job. Just over one in 10 said that they would turn down a job if the company didn't offer workplace perks.

The survey of 1,000 professionals also revealed that nearly three quarters of UK professionals aren't currently receiving any perks at work. This is despite 70% of workers believing that all business should offer them. When asked what they'd like to receive, the most desirable workplace perks were:

1. **Flexible working (47.2%)**
2. **Seasonal bonuses (39.1%)**
3. **Extra holiday (37.3%)**
4. **Staff discounts (22.6%)**
5. **Paid time off on your birthday (21.3%)**
6. **Casual dress code (19.8%)**
7. **Free fitness facilities or classes (18%)**
8. **Free office snacks and drinks (18%)**
9. **Parties and social activities (8%)**
10. **Nap or games room (5.2%)**

Lee Biggins, founder and managing director of CV-Library comments: "It's interesting to see that today's workers are shying away from the more whimsical perks that have become somewhat of a fad in recent years. For example, 'nap pods' and 'office bars' are being shunned in favour of the more practical benefits, like flexible working and bonuses. However, it's concerning to learn that less than a third of workers are receiving these perks: during the job search candidates should be sure to look out for companies that are offering

the full package."

Workers also revealed the top perks that they receive in their current jobs, with staff discounts (42.9%), casual dress codes (40.5%) and flexible working (38.1%) topping the list. But despite stating that these perks are important to them, a staggering 85% of professionals admitted that they would rather see a pay rise than receive other kinds of benefits or perks.

Biggins continues: "It's unsurprising that the majority of workers would prefer to see a pay rise over perks, especially post-Christmas when money is tight. And while workplace perks are important, these should not be offered as a substitute for fair salaries. It's important to take these perks into consideration when applying for jobs, as these are often a sign of good company culture and an employer that appreciates their staff"

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



Cultivate a culture of happiness using this 5-Step guide

Direct marketing and sales specialists, Complete One attributes their continued success to their company culture and are encouraging companies to cultivate a culture of happiness using their 5-step guide

Research undertaken by economists at the University of Warwick reveals that happy workers are 12% more productive than the average worker, while unhappy ones are found to be 10% less productive. Outsourced direct sales and marketing company Complete One has always seen a close connection between happiness and productivity and is investing a great deal into creating a working environment, which promotes happiness.

Glen Lowes, Managing Director of Complete One, says: "While many companies focus a lot on innovation and results, some seem to forget that happier people perform much better than unhappy ones." Being on their way to becoming one of the UK's market leading direct sales and marketing firms, Complete One explains how they spread happiness within their business by following these five steps:

1. Listen to what they have to say

People want to feel that their opinions and hard work are valued. Complete One finds it important to say how much their workforce matters to them. In addition to that, the firm says that business owners should show their appreciation daily

through action, for example letting people attend important meetings to feel involved, giving them some time outside the office and having an open door policy, being there for them.

2. Implement an incentive programme

Complete One insists that incentives increase motivation and encourage workers to achieve better results as they push further in order to make these incentives more attractive for them. "Incentives are not just beneficial for the workforce, but increase greater financial results for the business," explains Glen Lowes of Complete One.

3. Let them understand their impact

People make an important impact on the business. They are the ones meeting with customers and representing the company. Complete One, therefore, recommends communicating business goals to them. By introducing individual and team targets, people can understand how important their impact is on the business' success. This makes them feel important and gives them a true sense of purpose and a feeling of satisfaction.



4. Make their day

Complete One has made it their mission to make everyone in the business smile at least once a day. "This is important and it encourages everyone to engage with each other," states Glen Lowes of Complete One. The firm has made it a ritual to speak with their workforce, joke with them and listen to their stories. In addition to that, they do little things, such as bringing in coffee in the morning or bringing in chocolates.

5. Build trust

Businesses who foster a culture of trust throughout all levels are more likely to have a happy workforce that loves working with them. Complete One says it is crucial to be open with each other and also discuss new career growth opportunities with workers. "People will stay and feel happy if they have their own personal development plan and see how the business can help them achieve their personal goals."

10 signs you should quit your job and move on

If you hate your job and are looking for a change, you are not alone.

CV Library recently conducted a study that explored the attitudes of UK workers and discovered that disliking your job is a topic on more workers' minds than you would have thought. In fact, a massive 84% of UK workers are looking for a new job this year, and over a third of you admit to thinking about quitting your job frequently or often. Here are ten signs you should quit your job and look for a change of scenery.

1. Bad management

Over two thirds of workers (69.3%) think their boss has an impact on how much they like or dislike their job, and so it's no wonder that 47.3% of you ranked bad management as the top reason for wanting to quit your job. If you find your boss is grumpy and rude to you, micro-manages you, or treats you like a cog in a machine, it's probably time to do something about it.

We advise you to speak directly to your boss and confront the problem, but make sure you handle the issue delicately no matter how fed up you are. If you really don't like the idea of talking to your boss, you should pay a visit to your HR department and discuss your concerns there. If a solution doesn't seem to present itself, it might be time to start looking around for a new role where you'll be managed properly.

2. You're underpaid

33% of you ranked being underpaid as a top reason for wanting to quit your job, and we don't blame you. Firstly, it's important to remember that your employer should never expect you to do your job for free, nor should they try to get away with paying you as little as possible. However, you

shouldn't overestimate how much you should be earning, so make sure you do your research.

Think about how much experience you've had in your industry, what qualifications you have, and what your duties and responsibilities are at work to see if you're due a raise. For example, you may find that you've been given more responsibilities during your time with the company, which could lead to increased stress levels. This is not to say that being entrusted with more responsibilities is a bad thing, but it could be if you aren't compensated for your extra work. If you feel you're taking on roles above your pay grade, perhaps it's time to apply for a more senior role, or move on.

3. The company culture is poor

32% of you believed poor company culture is a key reason for wanting to seek out new career opportunities. The ideal company culture is one where there's a buzz of positive vibes, where the employer respects and values staff, and where you're rewarded with employee perks and other morale boosters. If you find things have gone a bit sour and you're struggling with colleague conflicts

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Find New Job

and a lack of down time, then it's time to start looking for a job with great company culture.

4. Lack of development opportunities

31.2% of you said lack of development opportunities was a top reason for wanting to quit your job. We can tell you that your employer shouldn't expect you to remain static during your time at the business. Industry high-flyers are always talking about how we should be learning new skills and developing in order to climb the career ladder, and they're right. The

whole point of your career is to enjoy yourself, become better at what you do, feel challenged, experience success and be rewarded for your efforts. If your employer doesn't offer you the chance to do this, you should first speak up by asking about progression opportunities and any training courses you could take to develop your skills. If this gets you nowhere, then it's time to look elsewhere for a more senior position that will provide you with growth.

5. You're undervalued

Do you feel undervalued? 30.5% of you listed this as a top reason for wanting to quit. If you feel like you aren't appreciated for the work you do, whether that's via how much you earn, how much praise you receive, or how much responsibility you've got, it's time to have a catch up with your boss ASAP. It might be that things have become a bit manic at work and unfortunately your feelings of underappreciation are collateral. But having a catch up with your boss is an easy way to realign focus on you and boost your morale. However, if this has gone on too long, a fresh start may be the way forward where you'll be recognised for your worth.

6. You've lost all enthusiasm

24.1% of workers ranked being bored at work as a key reason to quit. Having a passion for what you do is essential. You spend an average of eight hours a day at work through the course of your 45-year career, which is a significant chunk of your life, so you'd better make it something you like! If your passion for your job is dying, perhaps try jumping on a training course and revamping your skills. Or maybe talk to your manager and see if they can mix up your workload a little more. If that still

doesn't give your job a new-found buzz for life, it's probably time to look for a new job, or even a new career.

7. Poor work-life balance

All work, no play? 21.3% of you ranked a poor work-life balance as a key reason for wanting to quit your job. As you progress through your career you can expect your work life to spill over into your home life a little bit. Although, this is particularly easy to succumb to no matter where you are in your career these days seeing as most of us get

work emails on our phone, or take work home with us when the office closes, or have to endure lengthy commutes.

No matter what your job role, you should always take time outside work to enjoy your free time. If you find your personal life has become non-existent, and that all your conversations with friends are dominated by your complaints about work, then it's time for a change. It's okay to be dedicated to your job, but it's important to maintain a good work-life balance.

8. You're too stressed

Sometimes the stress of the job can take its toll on your health, and 20.3% of you said too much stress was a key reason for wanting to quit. If you frequently get headaches, colds or physical symptoms of stress, it could be a sign you need to change jobs or take on less responsibility. This is also the case if you find yourself feeling depressed about work when you aren't even there.

9. Your workload is bigger than you are

17% of you ranked an unbearably high workload as a top reason to quit your job. If your workload is swamping you and you feel like you can't tread water for much longer, then it's time to speak up. You might find that getting an extra pair of hands in will help resolve the pressure. In addition, if you feel like you're practically running the place, then maybe it's time to sort out a promotion or a pay rise to compensate. Alternatively, a step onto pastures new might be your best port of call.

10. You dislike your boss

Whether it's overloading you with work, or actual bullying, your relationship with your boss can make or break a job and 11.3% of you ranked a poor relationship with your boss as a key reason for quitting your job. If the most stressful part of your day is having to deal with your supervisor, your relationship could be beyond repair and it could be time to find a new job.

www.cv-library.co.uk

How to Write a CV: Tips for 2017

When it comes to job hunting, your CV is paramount. Get it right, and you'll have an interview in no time; get it wrong, and you'll face rejection after rejection. Every CV is different — you want to show why you're unique, of course — but all follow a similar structure. This guide will show you how to write a great CV for 2017.

What is a CV?

Your CV, short for curriculum vitae, is a personal marketing tool used to sell yourself to prospective employers. It should tell them about you, your professional history, and your skills; it should show why you're the best candidate for the job.

The basic CV format

There are particular sections that employers expect to see on your CV regardless of industry or job role, so we recommend using the following structure:

- Contact details
- Personal statement
- Experience
- Education
- Achievements
- Hobbies and interests
- References

Contact details

The first part of your CV, positioned at the top of the page, should contain your contact details. This is the very basic stuff: your name, physical address, email address, and phone number, although you might choose to include your LinkedIn URL, too. It's not necessary to include personal details such as your date of birth, marital status, or religion.

Personal statement

Your personal statement is one of the most important aspects of your CV. It's where you give an overview of who you are and inject a touch of personality. You should tailor it to every job you apply for, highlighting specific qualities that match you to the role. Aim to keep your personal statement short and sweet, and no longer than a few sentences. To make the most of this section, you should try to address the following:

1. Who are you?
2. What can you offer the company?
3. What are your career goals?

Experience and employment history

This section gives you a chance to outline your previous jobs, internships, and work experience. Your experience should be listed in reverse chronological order. You should state your job title and the dates you worked, followed by your responsibilities. It helps to choose the duties most relevant to the job you're applying for, especially if it's a long list. You can experiment with the format, but in this section, bullet points are useful for clarity and highlighting key skills.

Like the Experience section, your education should be listed in reverse chronological order. Include the name of the institutions and the dates you were there, followed by the grades you achieved. If you have a lot of qualifications, there's no need to list them all; just choose the most relevant. If you have a degree, you could list a few of the most relevant modules you took.

You might look at this section and think you have no achievements, but achievements don't have to be formal awards. If you've done anything you're particularly proud of, like completing a project or receiving a promotion, you can and should include it. It's only going to help the recruiter build a picture of you and your successes, so don't worry about what qualifies as an achievement — if you're proud of it, let them know.

You don't need to state your hobbies and interests on your CV, but they help recruiters know more about your personality. If you have any interesting hobbies that make you shine, or if your hobbies relate to the industry you're going into, you can use this section to build a bigger picture of you as a person. If you're running low on space, don't worry too much; just remember that, if worded well, this section could really make you stand out.

Your referees should be your previous employers or your educational tutors, but there's no need to list all their details in this section. A person's name, physical address, contact number, and email address are common things to include.

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Explaining a gap in your CV

Whether you've been travelling or unemployed, sometimes there can be gaps in your CV. Though you may be worried, you should avoid lying about these gaps; every situation can be explained and some even used to your advantage. There are legitimate reasons for gaps, and short breaks shouldn't make a huge difference to your CV. If you've been out of work for a long time, though, you'll have to explain them eventually.

If you took time out to go travelling, you can describe your cultural experiences, and you may have even worked while you were away — it's not all about full moon parties and putting pictures of sunsets on Instagram. There are many interpersonal skills you can demonstrate from your time abroad, as well as other desirable characteristics like leadership, adaptability, and financial planning. List this in your Experience section as you would if it had been a previous job.

If you took a prolonged period of time off due to sickness, you shouldn't have a problem being honest as long as the illness doesn't affect your ability to do the job. State that, due to a medical condition, you had to take some time away from work but have now returned to full health and are looking to re-enter the workplace.

Likewise, if you were made redundant and became unemployed for quite some time, explain that your company had to make cutbacks that unfortunately led to a reduction in the number of staff. Your CV only needs to go back to a maximum of about ten years' experience, so any gaps before then will be ignored anyway.

7 Tips for CV Success in 2017

1. Be creative

Experiment with the format of your CV and try to add your personal flair to the layout. In recent years, candidates have even gone digital in the form of video CVs and games, but this is usually only worth it if you're in a creative industry.

2. Be careful

If you choose a more creative format for your CV, don't let it be detrimental — don't choose anything too distracting or difficult to read from.

3. Proofread

Make sure you triple check your CV; you don't want avoidable errors to hinder your chances before you're even through the door. Have someone else check over it, too.

4. Don't make it too long

Your CV should be no longer than one or two A4 pages. Recruiters aren't likely to have the time to read five pages, no matter how talented you are.

5. Tailor each CV

Every CV you send out should be tailored to the role you're applying for. Choose relevant examples and skills to demonstrate why you're the best person for the job.

6. Keep it up-to-date

Update your CV whenever you gain a new skill or qualification. Remember that your career goals may change over time and that your CV should reflect this. With the New Year just around the corner, now is the perfect time to get your CV up to scratch for 2017.

7. Sending your CV online

In today's digital world, it's likely that you'll be sending your CV via email or through a job board like CV-Library. Save your CV with the .PDF file extension to ensure that recruiters can open it on any device. A PDF will also maintain formatting, so you can be sure that employers are seeing your CV as you intended.



Frequently asked CV questions

Should I include a picture?

This is becoming an increasingly important discussion in the recruitment world — should CVs include pictures? With access to social media profiles, some argue that putting a picture on your CV doesn't make much difference. Others argue that it could lead to discrimination. It's ultimately your choice, but common practice is to not include a picture.

If you do decide to attach a picture of yourself, make sure it's a professional one — perhaps a professional headshot or LinkedIn photo. Snapchat selfies aren't going to make the best impression. And definitely don't include a full-frontal naked picture.

Should I use bullet points or paragraphs?

Bullet points can help to divide the layout of your CV and make it look clearer, especially in the Experience and Education sections. They can also draw attention to certain skills and key points.

Paragraphs work better for your personal profile, but if you're being creative with the style, you might play around with this format. It's up to you, but bullet points can help to prevent your CV from being one big block of text.

How far back should my employment history go?

Your employment history should go back no further than the last ten years; an exception could be made if you've completed a very long stint within a company. But if you've had numerous jobs, you shouldn't worry about going any further than ten years.

Next steps

Get your CV right from the outset, and you may well find a job more quickly. Your CV is your chance to make a great first impression and secure yourself an interview, so follow this guide and be as creative as you can.

www.cv-library.co.uk

4 things to try if you're bored at work but not ready to quit yet

Going to work used to excite you. But these days, you're pressing your snooze button a couple of times, and your go-to mantra has become, "At least it's almost Friday."

Sure, you don't hate what you do now—hate is such a strong word. And, you're not quite ready to pack up your office supplies and quit. That's a big decision, and before you put the time into a long search, you want to know you did everything you could to make your current job work.

So, if the motivation and passion you used to feel is at an all-time low, try the options below to see if you can make a job you've outgrown work for you again.

1. Offer to Help Other Departments

When you help others, you'll often learn about projects that are outside of your normal day-to-day routine. And trying out new kinds of work can make your job interesting again. Plus, people will see that they can count on you, making you a reliable and valuable asset to others at work.

So, if you see something that intrigues you, you can say something along the lines of:

"My schedule is very flexible on Wednesday and Friday, and I'd love to lend a hand to [project] if that would be helpful."

2. Be an Expert at What You Love

When I was struggling to find meaning at work, I made a conscious decision to discover what I

actually enjoyed doing. I realised that I wanted to be more creative than my position allowed me to be, so I started looking for ways to infuse my creativity wherever I could.

At times, it definitely took more work. And initially some people were surprised (yes, even confused and hesitant) that I was constantly asking to help with creative projects. But, eventually, my co-workers started tapping me for this expertise and I became the go-to person for projects that required some imagination.

To get other people on board, I'd say something like: "I saw that you're working on a presentation for our new client. I'm really good at graphic design and I'd love to help. Do you have some free time this week to loop me in so I can come up with some sketches for you?"

After the project is done, follow up with: "Anytime you need help with graphic design in the future, please don't hesitate to let me know. It's one of my favorite things to do."

Over time, the balance will shift and you'll no longer have to keep pitching to others what you like to do best. People will start asking you to use your talents and assigning you those parts of the project. Once you're doing more of what you love, you'll be more excited about going to work each day.

3. Step out of Your Comfort Zone

You're doing the same things every day, and it's boring the heck out of you. But, be honest: Is that because no one ever approaches you with anything new, or because the last few times a boss or co-worker asked if you'd be interested in trying something else, you declined?

There are lots of reasons why (even completely bored) people might turn down interesting opportunities. That's because, instead of the opportunity coming with a flashing sign that reads: "Interesting!" or "Exciting!" the message you see might be more along the lines of a "difficult, new, with a risk of failure."

But sometimes, the only way to do new and exciting things is to be willing to step out of your comfort zone. I get that it can be challenging, so the next time there's an opportunity you're thinking of passing on because it's unfamiliar, ask a question instead. Try, "Could you explain a bit more about [whatever you're confused about]?"

Sometimes the trick to making your job more exciting is stepping out of your own way.

4. Talk to Your Boss

Yes, the best managers have a pretty good idea of how engaged their employees are. But, they're still not mind readers.

If your job was fulfilling to you early on, and you haven't spoken to your boss about it since, he may have no idea how bored you are. Or maybe, you broached the subject and got assigned a new project, so he assumes the problem is solved. (But in reality, you're still not happy.)

Because you've tried the steps above and still



aren't happy, you'll be able to approach your supervisor with more information. You'll be able to share how you tried to troubleshoot your workload, but it still isn't right.

Try this:

"I'd love to touch base with you about my current workload. Over the past [time frame], I've volunteered on [team names] and also taken on more work related to [your interest area], but I still feel there's so much more I could do. Are there other projects where I could add value?"

The fact that you accepted your job tells me that you were excited about it—or at least thought it was the best option—at one point. And so, I understand why you might hesitate to pack up and leave before giving it one last push.

So try these tactics above. And if you're still dreading the workday after that, consider looking for something new. The fact that you tried your best to make it work means you won't look back and wonder if you could've done anything differently.

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