

How to include volunteering on your CV to get noticed

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FULL TEXT

Volunteering is undoubtedly a rewarding experience both for the recipient of the collaboration and for the person who practices it, who, in addition to personal satisfaction, may be learning new skills or developing the ones he or she already has. According to the online CV creation platform CVapp.es, including these experiences in the CV can be positive, especially if there are gaps in the work history, as it shows that the candidate is a passionate and focused person with a lot to offer.

"Including volunteering on a CV can be a great way for future employers to see those skills - such as fundraising, community planning, patient care or event management - as well as showing that we care about the world around us," says Rolf Bax, content specialist at CVApp.

In any case, it is important to know how to place these types of volunteer activities in the right place on the CV to benefit the overall impact. The platform's experts have come up with the following tips:

It's not a job, so it shouldn't be included in the work experience section alongside other paid positions. But? highlight it if it is relevant to the specific position you are applying for. So if our industry is business administration or finance, we can say, for example, 'Experience as a fundraiser' (Volunteer fundraiser, Citizens for a Cause, May 2013 to June 2015)."

And also if it's very different: It may be rare or high-level skills that can give you an edge over other candidates (e.g., extreme high mountain animal rescue, which will demonstrate out-of-the-ordinary physical abilities).

Never lie or 'inflate' volunteer hours: Apart from the dishonesty involved, you never know for sure who has what connections (perhaps the person reading your CV knows someone at the place where you say you have volunteered).

Creating a specific section within the CV is a good option if we have been doing this volunteering extensively and for quite a long time, with different positions in this field, so that we can mention them in detail.

But make it relevant and recent: it is important not to overcrowd, so it is best not to specify volunteer work from more than ten years ago unless it is directly related to the application you are currently applying for. Also, we should try to do it in one sentence, no more than 100 words.

And in a consistent order: If we have been volunteering for a long time, and there are quite a few positions to mention, we should first list the volunteering that directly relates to the desired new job.

Letters of recommendation: Sometimes prospective employers may ask for proof of volunteer experience on your resume. Since we may not have had a formal employment contract, it may be a good idea to request a letter of recommendation from the organization we have worked with to corroborate the activity.

In any case, mentioning our volunteering activities on our CV will help us to be seen as a community-minded and team-oriented future employee, while showing parts of us (and 'hard' and 'soft' skills) that may not be as clear in our work experience or training. Does volunteering increase employability? Yes, absolutely!

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