

Should you put your photo on your CV?



This is a topic that does cause heated discussions between job seekers, recruiters and hiring companies, because they all believe they know the answer!

Well, the truth is that there is no definitive answer, it is just opinion!

It is interesting though where the opinion sits.

- Job seekers often put their pictures on CV's thinking it will give them the edge.
- Recruiters often remove photos from CV's that candidates send them before they send them to their clients.
- Hiring companies don't necessarily expect CV's to have a photo on them, so they are not fussed either way.

Let me explain why I think that you should not put your photo on your CV.

There are two words why I don't advocate putting photos on CV's and they are PREJUDICE and DISCRIMINATION. Now you may be shocked or surprised, but let me assure you that in the recruiting process of many, many companies discrimination happens at many levels.

You may say that there are laws prohibiting this, and of course you are right. But does it stop it happening?absolutely not!!

Let me explain why.

I first just want to add, that my opinion is based on my experiences over 20+ years of being in the human resources and recruitment industry, across many different sectors, so I feel that there aren't too many things I haven't seen happen!!

You have all heard the advice that is given to you prior to interviews, that you have 20-30 seconds to make an impression on the interviewer. How is that impression made? - your looks, what you are wearing, your handshake and your demeanour. So before you have even sat down, you have likely been judged and decided upon - especially if you don't conform to "normal" work clothes and appearance (i.e. facial jewellery, coloured hair, extreme makeup, tattoos etc). The fact that you could do the job equally well, if not better than others interviewed becomes irrelevant after that first 30 seconds. The decision has been made!

Now if the hiring company is doing their recruiting properly, then they will likely be using competency interviews and you will be judged on your experiences (hopefully), not your appearance. But in reality many (I would go as far as to say the majority) hiring managers are conservative and likely to be in the generation X or boomer age groups. So straight away, generational influences have come into play, and they make a BIG difference, and prejudice comes into play, especially when they are hiring gen Y'ers

So back to the CV. Unfortunately, the same applies to photos on CV's as above - you will be judged on what you look like. And before you cry that it isn't fair - you are absolutely right, but it happens every day in the world of employment!

So, when you are looking for a job, you need to remove any barriers to you being selected for an interview. The photo is such a barrier, and it can stop your progress through an interview process, before it begins with many companies. So the answer, is to let yourself be judged on your experiences and skills, and simply not include your photo at all.

So to conclude, give yourself the best chance of getting an interview by leaving your photo off your CV, and sell yourself on your skills and suitability only.