Explaining a gap in your CV because of your disability

Introduction

It is important that your CV provides a clear and accurate picture of your education and employment history, including any periods away from school, university or work. Wherever possible, avoid leaving gaps unexplained, as employers are likely to notice them and may make assumptions if no explanation is provided.

If a gap in your CV was related to a disability or health condition, you may choose to include a brief explanation. This can help employers understand the context of your application and focus on your skills, experience and potential. How much you share is entirely your decision, and you only need to provide enough information to explain the gap.

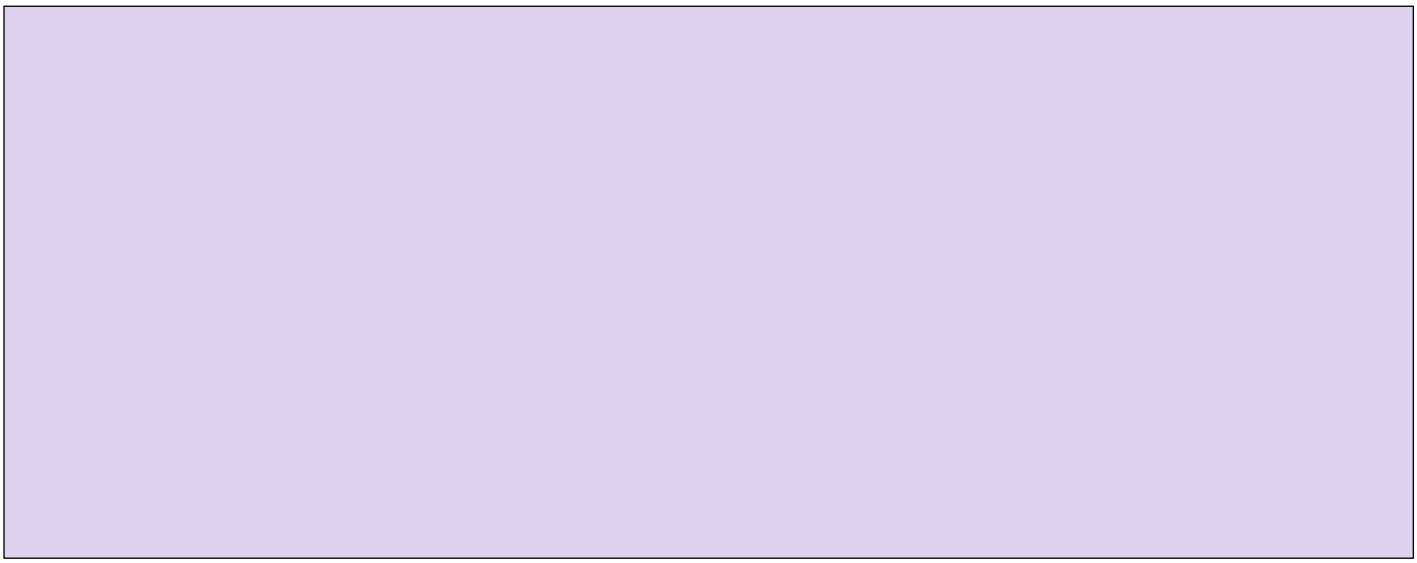
This guide will help you think about how to explain any gaps in your CV confidently and professionally. You can also use the accompanying downloadable, example template to help you draft and refine your own explanation.

Step 1: Describe your disability / health condition

Start by choosing a few words that describes your disability / health condition; avoid using negative words such as unfortunately, suffer, sadly.

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Step 2: What were the circumstances that resulted in a gap in your CV?



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Step 3: What was the outcome?

Concentrate on the strategies you took to overcome the challenges you faced.

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Step 4: Pull this together in one short paragraph

Step 5: Make it yours

Read your draft out loud or practice it with friends and family.

Ask yourself: Does this sound like me? Would I feel comfortable saying this out loud? Does it focus on resilience rather than limitations? Am I happy / proud to share this with an employer?

You may find that different versions of your statement work better in different situations; this is normal and it may evolve over time.

Top tops

- Only share information that is relevant; you don't need to go into all the details of your disability
- Don't use complicated medical terminology when talking about your disability
- Be confident in sharing your experiences, the challenges you faced and how you resolved the situation

Final thought

Your disability does not define your limits however your experiences can shape powerful skills and strengths despite having gaps in your CV. Taking the time to recognise and articulate them is an important step in owning your value and advocating for yourself with confidence.

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