# Chapter 2
# Applying in a digital world of work

## Annex 10 – 14 Items checklist to take an high-quality CV photo

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1.** | **Is it customary / legal to put a photo on CVs in the country where you want to work?** | ✓ | ✗ |

*Check what is the standard practice in the country and sector you want to apply for.*

**Determining whether to include a photo hinges on what country the job you're applying for is.** In some countries to include a picture in your resume is **illegal**, mainly because discrimination might be quite a sensitive subject or because of strict privacy regulations. In other countries, including a photo in your CV is **optional**, while in some others it is **mandatory**. While in the UK, Canada and the US recruiters typically frown upon resumes with photos, it is standard practice in other countries, particularly within Asia and Continental Europe to expect a photo on your CV. For example, in Spain, France, Japan and China you have a lot more chance of being chosen if you include a CV photo. Employers in countries like Cyprus, Greece, and Russia, on the other hand, are a little more forgiving. Though it is common and greatly appreciated to include your picture in your application, it is not necessary. That said, nobody can legally ask you to supply a picture if you don't want to. In most developed countries, legislation is in place to protect your right to privacy – so if a potential employer requires a photo without justifiable reason, they may be breaking the law.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2.** | **Will the picture be taken by a professional photographer?** | ✓ | ✗ |

*Take a high-quality headshot.*

It is better if you engage a professional photographer to take your CV photo, as a professional **head-shot** will paint you in a significantly better light than if you were to have a friend or yourself snap a quick photo of you. However, if you can't ask a photographer keep in mind the following rules of thumb: **don't take a low-resolution photo of yourself! Don't use full-body shots! Always use high-quality portrait pictures!**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **3.** | **Do I have eye contact with the viewer?** | ✓ | ✗ |

*Look straight into the camera.*

When taking a CV picture, **look at the camera**, as you would do for your passport picture. This is because you want to give the impression that you are confident of your skills and experience; like what you should do once in a face-to-face interview. Looking the interviewer straight in the eyes shows confidence and interest in what he/she says.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **4.** | **Is the face well-lit and easy to recognize?** | ✓ | ✗ |

*Choose a luminous place to take a well-lit pic.*

Make sure that the picture has the **appropriate lighting**. Avoid poorly lit or blurry pictures, as well as special effects or other filters. This is what Facebook and Instagram are for.

YOU4NIQUE EU

| 5. | Have you used a CV picture specifically captured for this reason? | ✓ | ✘ |
|---|---|---|---|

*Take a specific CV picture to present yourself professionally.*

A CV picture should not be limited to an ID picture shot that will look boring, losing a good chance to be shortlisted. It is always good to use a CV picture that you look nice in, but do not forget that your primary reason is to make a positive first impression to the recruiter. Hence, in your CV picture, you should **highlight your professionalism**, rather than your charm!

| 6. | In the picture, do you wear unnecessary accessories? | ✓ | ✘ |
|---|---|---|---|

*You should aim for a clean and sharp look.*

No holiday snaps! Try to refrain from unnecessary accessories that may cover part(s) of your face (e.g. sunglasses, hat, hoody) or distract the viewer (e.g. big necklaces, a colourful sweatsuit, a palm in the background). The first impression is important. If the employer is not able to **immediately see your facial characteristics**, it is quite likely that he or she will not consider you in the recruitment process due to your diluted image!

| 7. | Are the clothes chosen to match the job? | ✓ | ✘ |
|---|---|---|---|

*Ask yourself what kind of clothing you should have in the application photo to fit the desired job and do some research in this respect. Remember that overall, the attire should be smart-casual.*

The way you are dressed is quite important: **wear solid colours that complement your hair or eyes and a smart-casual attire.**
The application photo aims to create an optimal impression at first glance: **you want to show that you fit the desired position.** The clothing on the application photo should fit the desired job. A conservative application portrait is thus less suitable for a creative profession and vice versa. For example, if you are a banker, you should look like a banker in the photo. People in a creative field, like graphic design, fashion, architecture, performing arts, or film, often have more freedom to express their personality in the resume. **Submit subtly through the photo you are already an employee of the company to increase the application opportunities noticeably.**
However, there are also faux pas that you should avoid when wearing clothing on the application photo: Women should not wear off-shoulder tops or too low cut-outs. For men, shirts with short arms are an absolutely no go. For both sexes, patchy and wrinkled clothes are a taboo for application photos.

| 8. | Does the hair sit, and the skin have a natural tone? | ✓ | ✘ |
|---|---|---|---|

*The hairstyle is neat, the hair is well combed and doesn't stick out in all directions; the skin has a natural tone.*

On women with backcombed or raised hair, the HR specialists placed far more leadership skills than on those with loose hairs. In any case, it is important that the hairstyle is neat, that the **hair is well combed** and that it doesn't stick out in all directions. Therefore, a visit from the hairdresser of trust and a face treatment do not harm you before you take your application photos.

| 9. | Does your facial expression suit the message you want to convey to a potential employer? | ✓ | ✘ |
|---|---|---|---|

YOU4NIQUE EU

*Express your serious intentions with an authentic smile.*

Avoid all facial expressions that might cast doubt on your serious intentions as well as those where you look too serious or even angry. **The applicant who smiles in the application photo looks immediately sympathetic and open-minded.** A smile is more than enough to illustrate your professionalism and positive character.
An authentic smile with an open and direct view of the camera sounds easy but may require some experimentation. Therefore, **practice** in advance and work on **your facial expression**. Have some pictures taken by friends, your partner or family member at home to understand how different facial expressions work and find a suitable one to enhance your application photos. Also, experiment with different head postures and perspectives. Even a slight tilt or twist can completely change the look of your profile.

| 10. | Is the background calm and neutral? | ✓ | ✕ |
|---|---|---|---|

*The photo background should be neutral and solid and match the rest of the picture.*

**The photo background should be neutral and solid and match the rest of the picture.**
Ideally the wall colour harmonizes with the clothes (in colour photos) and the lighting does not throw any ugly shadows (very important in black and white shots!). If the contrast is again too high (chalky white background), faces quickly appear pale and sick. It is never advisable to have multi colour backgrounds, highly intense colours like red, neon, etc., or those with designs. However, photos with natural backgrounds but blurred to focus only on the person is also acceptable in many companies these days. Candid photos and blurry photos are not sellable because they communicate that the applicant is not serious with the application.

| 11. | Did you insert the photo directly on the first sheet of the CV above the first line? | ✓ | ✕ |
|---|---|---|---|

*Check whether in the country you are applying for it is normal to put the image on the top-left or top-right corner above the first line of your CV.*

The picture should be inserted above the first line of the CV. Whether right or left depends on the country standards. For example, employers in Germany expect to see a photo in the top right-hand corner of your CV, while many others on the top-left corner. The rule of thumb: **always look into the page, never out!** If you are using a cover page or a so-called third page, the application photo will be included there.

| 12. | Is the format of the picture suitable for a job application? | ✓ | ✕ |
|---|---|---|---|

*Check the standard size of CV pictures in the country where the job you are applying for is.*

The usual size of a CV photo should be a square measuring 5,08 cm on each side (5,08×5,08cm). However, some companies also accept the passport size photo which has a 4.5×3.5 cm dimension.

| 13. | Is the CV picture in black and white? | ✓ | ✕ |
|---|---|---|---|

*To use colour pictures is preferable.*

Photos in the resume should be **in colour**. Although there are no rules to it, black and white pictures have almost zero attraction to the recruitment team of the HR department in most companies.

YOUNIQUE4EU

| 14. | Does the picture look like you? | ✓ | ✗ |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|---|

*Choose a pic that looks like you now.*

Have you ever seen someone's picture online and then met them in person only to find they look completely different? It can be an incredibly startling experience for anyone, and it can make potential employers question your credibility, especially if they think you're catfishing them. So, make sure the picture you use is a recent one, and not one taken five years ago!

*Sources:*
*© 2017 CareerProfessor.works*

*Visual cv photo-tips*

*Fischer and Partners; Source 4: Quick Scribe*

*Careeraddict*

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

YOU NIQUE 4 EU