Maitland Kabir

RECRUITMENT: TAX MARKET INSIGHT

Maitland Kabir's Guide: How to Write a CV That Gets Noticed in the Senior Tax Market

A practical guide for seasoned tax professionals looking to communicate their expertise, demonstrate commercial impact and stand out in a competitive UK market.

AT A GLANCE

A strong CV at Senior Tax Manager, Tax Director or Tax Partner level needs to do more than outline career history; it must demonstrate measurable achievements, leadership and commercial value. As recruitment processes increasingly incorporate applicant tracking systems and AI-assisted screening, tailoring your CV to each opportunity has become more important than ever. This guide explores how experienced tax professionals can sharpen their CVs, strengthen their LinkedIn presence and position themselves for their next career move.

For seasoned tax specialists in the UK, a CV needs to do more than summarise a career. It should demonstrate technical expertise, commercial impact, leadership capability and the value you could bring to your next role.

At **Maitland Kabir**, we regularly speak to senior tax professionals with impressive track records who struggle to communicate their experience effectively on paper. In a competitive market, even accomplished candidates can be overlooked if their CV fails to convey their achievements and distinguish them from others at a similar level.

The key is not simply to list what you have done, but to demonstrate what you have achieved and the value you could bring to your next opportunity.

1. Start With a Strong Foundation

Before tailoring your CV for a particular opportunity, create a comprehensive record of your career, including significant roles, projects, achievements, qualifications and leadership responsibilities.

Maintain a separate career timeline highlighting:

- Major tax projects and transactions
- Team leadership and development
- Revenue generation and cost savings
- Tax risk management and governance improvements
- Promotions and career progression
- Client wins and relationship development

Think of this as your **Master CV**. It provides the material from which you can build a focused, relevant application for each opportunity.

2. Tailor Your CV to the Opportunity

One of the most common mistakes experienced professionals make is using the same CV for every application.

Different employers have different priorities. A firm looking to expand its international tax offering may value different experience from one seeking to strengthen its private client practice or develop its indirect tax team.

To improve your CV's relevance:

- Use terminology from the job description where it accurately reflects your experience.
- Include full terms and acronyms where appropriate.
- Adapt your professional profile to the role.
- Prioritise the experience most relevant to the opportunity.
- For example, if a position emphasises global mobility tax or transfer pricing governance, ensure these areas feature prominently if they form part of your expertise.

The objective is not to repeat the job description, but to make the connection between your experience and the opportunity immediately clear. Remember that some employers also use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to help manage and screen applications, so a clear structure and relevant terminology can help.

3. Focus on Achievements, Not Just Responsibilities

At senior level, a list of responsibilities is rarely enough to distinguish one candidate from another.

Most experienced tax professionals will have managed compliance, advised clients or led teams. What matters is how effectively they performed these responsibilities and what they achieved.

Rather than:

Responsible for managing the corporate tax compliance process.

Try:

Led a tax compliance transformation programme that reduced preparation time by 30% and improved submission accuracy across six jurisdictions.

The second example demonstrates leadership, initiative and measurable impact.

Where possible, quantify your achievements using meaningful measures such as:

- Tax savings or improvements in the effective tax rate
- Operational efficiencies and cost reductions
- Team growth and development
- New business won and revenue generated
- Client retention and relationship expansion
- Improvements in tax governance and risk management

Not every achievement needs to be expressed in numbers. Successfully managing a complex transaction, influencing senior stakeholders or developing a new service offering can be equally compelling when explained clearly.

Focus on the situation, the action you took and the outcome (The “STAR” method). This helps demonstrate the value you bring rather than simply describing your duties.

4. Write a Compelling Professional Profile

Your professional profile should sit beneath your contact details, providing a concise introduction to your experience, expertise and career strengths.

Focusing on what is most relevant to the role and keeping it to maximum of 5 lines. It is often easier to write this section last, once you have decided which aspects of your experience deserve the greatest emphasis.

For example:

International Tax Director with 15 years' experience advising multinational organisations across EMEA and APAC. Experienced in leading regional tax teams, delivering complex transformation projects and reducing tax risk whilst supporting business growth. ACA and CTA qualified, with expertise in transfer pricing, tax governance and cross-border transactions.

Avoid generic statements such as "highly motivated professional with excellent communication skills". Your profile should establish your professional standing and give the reader a clear reason to explore your experience further.

5. Get the Structure Right

For most Senior Tax Managers, Tax Directors and Tax Partners, a reverse-chronological CV remains the most effective format, allowing recruiters and hiring managers to understand your career progression quickly.

A clear structure would typically include:

- Name and contact details
- Professional profile
- Core areas of expertise
- Career history
- Key achievements
- Professional qualifications
- Education
- Professional memberships, where relevant

Keep the presentation clean and professional. Elaborate templates, multiple columns, graphics and text boxes can make a CV harder to read and may interfere with ATS parsing.

6. Align Your LinkedIn Profile With Your CV

Your CV and LinkedIn profile should tell a consistent professional story.

Recruiters frequently use LinkedIn to understand a candidate's background, career progression and professional network. Significant inconsistencies between the two may prompt unnecessary questions.

Ensure your profile includes:

- A professional photograph and appropriate banner
- An up-to-date headline reflecting your expertise
- A well-written: About section
- Relevant skills and endorsements
- Recommendations from colleagues, clients or professional contacts, where appropriate

Your CV should provide a focused account of your suitability for a particular opportunity, while LinkedIn offers a broader view of your professional background and interests. Both should reinforce your credibility.

7. Avoid Common CV Mistakes

Even highly experienced professionals can overlook details that undermine an otherwise strong application.

Common mistakes include:

- Spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors
- Excessive length or unnecessary detail
- Generic professional profiles

- Outdated LinkedIn information
- Achievements that lack evidence of impact
- Unexplained career gaps
- Including references or salary information when not requested
- Overusing passive language
- Providing unnecessary personal information
- Using heavily designed templates that compromise readability

Before submitting your CV, review it from the perspective of someone unfamiliar with your career such as:

- Is your progression clear?
- Can the reader understand the complexity of your work and the contribution you have made?

Most importantly, it needs to be immediately apparent why you are relevant to the role.

8. Use AI to Refine Your CV, Not Invent Your Experience

AI tools can be useful when preparing a CV or application. However, AI should support your judgement, not replace it. Your experience, achievements and qualifications must remain accurate and authentic. Generic AI-generated language can make a CV sound polished but impersonal, obscuring the qualities that distinguish you from other candidates.

Always review suggested changes carefully and take appropriate care when entering confidential client or commercially sensitive information into AI tools.

9. Do Not Overlook the Cover Letter

A well-written cover letter can explain why an opportunity appeals to you and why your experience makes you a strong candidate. Remember, a cover letter should complement your CV!

A simple structure works well:

Can you do the job? Highlight the experience, qualifications and achievements most relevant to the position.

Will you do the job? Explain your motivation for considering the opportunity and what attracts you to the role or organisation.

Will you fit the team? Demonstrate an understanding of the organisation's culture, commercial priorities and leadership expectations.

At senior level, motivation matters. Employers want to understand not only your technical capability, but also why you are considering a move and what you hope to achieve next.

10. Prepare for the Changing Landscape of Tax Recruitment

Recruitment processes continue to evolve, with some employers incorporating video interviews, recorded responses and AI-assisted screening. For senior tax professionals, the ability to communicate complex technical issues in straightforward commercial terms remains essential.

You should be able to articulate not only your technical expertise, but also how you have influenced decisions, managed risk, developed teams and contributed to commercial objectives. The strongest candidates combine technical credibility with commercial awareness and the ability to communicate their value with confidence and clarity.

Final Thoughts

A strong CV for a Senior Tax Manager, Tax Director or Tax Partner should answer one fundamental question:

Why should an employer choose you over other highly qualified professionals?

The answer should be evident throughout your CV: In your career progression, the complexity of your experience, your measurable achievements and the contribution you have made to clients, teams and the wider business.

Ultimately, a CV should do more than document your career to date. It should make a persuasive case for what you could bring to your next role.

At Maitland Kabir, we work closely with senior tax professionals to understand their experience, ambitions and the opportunities that best align with their next career move. If you would find it helpful, please get in touch with us for a **Master CV template** to help you organise your experience, achievements and career highlights in one place.

ABOUT MAITLAND KABIR

Maitland Kabir is a UK search firm focused on senior appointments across the UK tax profession. Founded on a long-standing partnership and deep sector experience, the firm works directly with clients and candidates on senior, often discreet, searches across the tax market.

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