

**JANUARY 22, 2015 REU DINNER SEMINAR**

**CV's, Resumes  
and  
Cover Letters**



## WHAT IS THE CV?

Your Curriculum vitae is used primarily when applying for academic and research positions, as well as fellowships and grants.

The most notable difference between a CV and resume is the length. Resumes are usually limited in length to 1-2 pages, whereas a CV *can* run over three pages.

A subtle yet equally important distinction are the goals: a resume is to construct a *professional* identity, whereas the CV goal is to establish a *scholarly* identity.

Thus, your CV will need to reflect very specifically your abilities as a teacher, researcher, and publishing scholar within your discipline.



# CV FORMAT:



- Use 11 or 12 pt simple font: Serif (Times, Garamond) best
- Most Important Info (title, organization) on Left; Less important (date, city) on Right
- Margins approximately 1”
- Spell out words and define acronyms for the first use
- Utilize these 2 strategies throughout CV:
  - **Gapping:** use of incomplete sentences to present info clearly and concisely
  - **Parallelism:** keep structure of phrases and/or sentences consistent
- UPDATE your CV Early & Often!



## CV ORGANIZATION

- The most relevant and compelling information is at the beginning with less pertinent information at the end dependent upon position description.
- Should be tailored to the job/position description.
  - Ex: If the school to which you are applying emphasizes teaching over research, list teaching before research experience, while the reverse is true for research institutions.
- Split long lists into subcategories.
  - Divide your list of conference presentations into subcategories by location, topic, professional affiliation, etc.
- List entries within each section in *reverse* chronological order.



## Your Name - Curriculum Vitae/CV

### Personal Details

- Name
- Address
- Phone numbers
- Email
- References are available on request.

If you prefer, show your contact details at the bottom of the CV. To make more space reduce font size in CV to 9 or 10pt. Continue on a second page if really necessary. One page is best, especially if you are young and have less information to include. Add date/ref and page number if more than one page, bottom right of CV, or if space is very tight, in a vertical text box as shown below in this example.

### Personal Profile/Personal Attributes

- Create 5-7 descriptive bullet-point phrases that describe your strengths and attributes.
- These statements should also reflect the personal qualities that the employer seeks.
- Keep the statements simple and clear; one line for each statement.
- Use a consistent format and readable typeface; use professional, concise, intelligent language.
- Use good, appropriate punctuation; semi-colons are effective for joining word-strings.
- Ensure you can provide an example (at interview) for every statement you make on your CV.

### Experience/Specialisms/Strengths

- Create 5-7 professional statements which explain your experience/specialisms/strengths.
- Think about what the employer is seeking and try to match these requirements.
- Your statements here should be examples/evidence of how you fit the needs of the job.
- Statements can describe experience, skills, strengths, knowledge, style, attitude, etc.

Personal Profile is you as a person. Experience/Specialisms/ Strengths are your capabilities. Make all points very relevant to the job/employer needs.

### Achievements

- Create 3-7 professional statements which describe your achievements.
- Show achievements that best illustrate your capabilities relevant to the needs of the new job.
- Show achievements which demonstrate that you could 'make a difference' relevantly in the job.
- Achievements need not be work-related, especially for young people with little work history.
- Importantly, give scale, facts, figures to your achievements - be concise and specific.

These points build evidence and credibility. Relate them to the job requirements. They need not all be work-based. They can be from other activities, but must show you can 'make a difference', relevantly.

### Career History

- mth/year-mth/year - job title/function/responsibilities - employer/city - industry/sector
- mth/year-mth/year - job title/function/responsibilities - employer/city - industry/sector
- mth/year-mth/year - job title/function/responsibilities - employer/city - industry/sector

### Education and qualifications

- school, college, dates, etc
- qualifications

Briefly list your past jobs, employers, industry, and mth/yr (from-to). Most recent first. Layout in neat columns ideally. Briefly state responsibilities if not self-explanatory from the job titles. Insert education, hobbies, interests, personal and contact information. Make details neat, concise and relevant to the job opportunity.

### Hobbies / Interests

- Show hobbies/interests indicating personal qualities that are relevant to the job requirements.

## UNNECESSARY ITEMS

- Objective section: *Cover letter does this*
- Summary of qualifications
  - *Unless* grad student or alum with job experience
- References or “*References Available Upon Request*”
- Personal information (age, gender, political/religious affiliation, photo)
- High School information
- Pronouns “I” or “Me”

# GOOD CV EXAMPLE



Temporal  
Dynamics of  
Learning  
Center

Page 1 of GOOD CV

Good CV Page 1

Good CV Page 2

Bad CV Page 1

Bad CV Page 2

Mandy Good

23 Black Dragon Lane, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2DE

Mobile: 0778 123456

[mg999@kent.ac.uk](mailto:mg999@kent.ac.uk)

## Personal Statement

A Business Administration graduate from the University of Kent. I have skills and knowledge essential for managing key areas of an organisation and the problem solving skills needed in finance. I am looking for a graduate trainee post in marketing where I can use my strong influencing skills.

## EDUCATION

### 2004 - 2007 University of Kent

#### BA (Hons) Business Administration 2:1

Modules included:

- Human Resource Management
- Accounting and Finance
- Marketing
- E-commerce
- Strategic Management
- Business Mathematics

#### Completed two dissertations in final year:

developed a marketing communications report and presentation on a new travel agency for the elderly and developed a fully working website for an estate agency. Both projects received good results and gave tremendous experience in project management.

### St. Mungos School, Bedford

#### A Levels 2004

History A  
Geography B  
Psychology B

#### GCSEs 2002

8 GCSE passes including English grade A and Mathematics grade B

The **name** is in a large font size to stand out.

The **address** is in a neat, space-saving format.

Make sure you include your **email address** as it's often the most convenient way for recruiters to contact you. Also include your **mobile number**. **Date of birth** is no longer essential due to age discrimination legislation, but you can add it if you wish to.

If you use a **personal statement** it needs to be short, punchy and targeted at the skills required for the job you are applying for. If you are not sure, leave it out and use your covering letter to sell your skills.

See our pages on [Covering Letters](#).

And our page on [Personal Statements](#)

Here key **modules** relevant to the candidate's career are mentioned as are relevant **projects/dissertations** which demonstrate research, planning and possibly group work skills. Note that the modules are neatly ordered in **two columns**. This saves space, suggests a well organised person and also hints at good computing skills to achieve this layout.

This CV is in **reverse chronological order** where the most recent (and usually most important) comes first. See our [other CV examples](#) for **skills-based** and **creative CVs**

Here **A Levels** are spread out to draw attention to the good grades.

**GCSEs** are summarised. However if you have a string of A grades it's probably best to list all of these in two columns.

**Spelling and grammar** on the CV have been checked carefully, giving the impression not just of someone whose English is good enough to trust with business correspondence, but more importantly suggests someone who pays **attention to detail** and **quality** in their work and has a **professional** attitude. Sloppiness in such a crucial document as your CV suggests you will carry the same attitude to your work environment!

# GOOD CV EXAMPLE (PG 2)



## WORK EXPERIENCE

### June - Sept. 2006 Iceland Stores Margate, Kent Store Assistant

Worked in a busy team sometimes under pressure. Provided a quality service to customers

### 2004 - 2005 Barmaid, The Plough Pub (Part-time)

Was often left in sole charge of the bar and learned the valuable art of dealing sensitively but firmly with drunken individuals near closing time.

All of my work experiences have involved working within a team-based culture. This involved planning, organisation, coordination and commitment e.g., in retail, this ensured daily sales targets were met, a fair distribution of tasks and effective communication amongst all staff members.

## INTERESTS

**Leadership.** Project Leader for our Third Year MIS project, where my planning and organisational skills came to the fore. Have found "active-listening" a very useful skill when working in a group.

**Sport.** I believe a healthy body is the key to a focused mind in today's hectic society. Enjoy a range of martial arts which require a high level of dedication and motivation.

**Living Life.** We only get one shot at this life so I aim to get the most out of it. I love the thrills of gliding, skiing and caving as well as travelling to different countries. Have recently returned from a trek across the deserts of Peru.

## SKILLS

• **Computing.** ECDL qualifications in MS Word, Access, PowerPoint and Excel. Can write basic web pages

• **Languages.** Good conversational French

• **Driving.** Full current clean driving licence

References are available on request

Here the focus is on **people skills** developed in the job.

See our [skills pages](#) for help with how to do this.

Many students question the need to mention menial jobs **such** as waitressing in the CV, but it is important to do so. This nicely worded paragraph shows how effectively the skills gained in these jobs can be sold.

**Interests** are divided into groups, and flags up a key skill by starting with leadership. Again sports are not just listed, but the key qualities are brought out. "Living Life" is a rather unusual heading but this section is written with panache and suggests an outgoing, active individual.

Here **skills** are listed using **simple but effective bullets** which give order and clarity to the page. **Computing skills** are carefully detailed, as is the precise level of French language skills.

You shouldn't need to include your **references** at this stage (although it is perfectly OK to do this). References are normally taken up at the interview stage. The exception of course is when the advert for the job explicitly asked you to apply giving references.

See our page on [Choosing and Using Referees](#) for more help with these.

# BAD CV EXAMPLE



Temporal  
Dynamics of  
Learning  
Center

Good and Bad CVs

Page 1 of BAD CV

Good CV Page 1

Good CV Page 2

Bad CV Page 1

Bad CV Page 2

## Curriculum Viti

Mandy Poor

Address  
23 Black Dragon Lane  
Canterbury  
Kent  
CT1 2DE

[boozyfloozy@hotmail.com](mailto:boozyfloozy@hotmail.com)

Nationality: British

Personnel Statement

I have good teamworking and communication skills.  
I would like job in business.

## EDUCATION

St. Mungos School, Bedford  
GCSEs 2002

I have 8 GCSE passes including English grade A and  
Mathematics grade B

A Levels 2004

History A, Geography B, Psychology B

2004 - 2007 University of Kent

BA (Hons) Business Studies

2:1

Work Experience

June 2006-Sept 2006 Iceland Frozen Foods

You don't need the words **Curriculum Vitae** at the top. It's obvious what the document is and just adds clutter to the CV. If you do put it in, at least spell it correctly!

Make sure you include your **email address** as it's often the most convenient way for recruiters to contact you. Also try to have something sensible: *boozyfloozy* might not make the best impression!

You don't need an "**Address**" title above your address. It's pretty obvious what it is! If however you have a home and term time address you will need headings to specify which is which. You also don't need to give your **nationality** if you are British. Other unnecessary items include **National Insurance Number** and **place of birth** unless specifically asked for these.

It should be **Personal** Statement not **Personnel**! Personal statements mentioning teamworking and communication (not **communication of course**) skills send selectors to sleep. A very vague career aim. See the [skills map](#) for more powerful and specific words.

This CV is in **chronological order**. (with schools before university). Normally **reverse chronological order** is best as then the most recent (and usually most important) comes first.

Here **A Levels** are pushed together which hides the good grades. Comic Sans MS is a nice font for letters, but a little too informal for most CVs

No mention of relevant modules here. As this is a vocational degree, you should **include modules** relevant to the careers you are interested in e.g. Finance, Marketing. Also there is **no mention of projects** which demonstrate a range of skills. There is no space between degree and A levels and no emboldening of the degree title.

The candidate **has split her work at Iceland over two pages**: this looks very disjointed and suggests a poorly organised individual.

# BAD CV EXAMPLE (PG 2)



## Page 2 of BAD CV

Good CV Page 1

Good CV Page 2

Bad CV Page 1

Bad CV Page 2

21 Station Road, Margate, Kent

Store Assistant

Involved stocking shelves and operating the tills

2003 - 2004 Bar person, The Plough Inn

### INTERESTS

I enjoy all types of fitness. and do martial arts. and skiing I have a high level of fitness. I also enjoy train spotting, reading and playing computer games.

### SKILLS

- COMMUTING

\* LANGUAGES. I SPEAK FRENCH

\* SWIMMING. I HAVE A BRONZE CERTIFICATE

References available on request

*There is a large empty space at the end of the page giving the impression that the applicant has run out of things to say. It's best to try to use one full sheet or two full sheets: spread the content out if necessary.*

Only the menial parts of the job are mentioned. **Focus on the people skills** instead: "Working in a busy team sometimes under pressure. Providing a quality service to customers" would sell the job related skills involved much better. You don't need to give full addresses of employers, just the town. For the second job, even less detail is given. See our [action verbs page](#) to sharpen your CV text.

No evidence of **contact with other people** here. This candidate comes across as a loner who doesn't get on with other people. Also sections like this are easier to read if in **bulleted lists**. This section is also **misaligned** with the rest of the page. Note also the **change in font**. This looks messy. Try to be consistent in font styles. It's OK to use one different font for headings and subheadings.

**Bullets are used in the skills section**, but they are inconsistent: a mixture of dashes and asterisks. Dashes make poor bullets. Also this section is entirely in CAPITAL LETTERS which should only be used for headings. Also no details of **computing** (which they have mistyped as **commuting** which would get through a **spell checker**) **skills** are given. Can they use Access or Excel for example? You need to carefully read the CV for such mistakes. And what is their level of **French**: basic or fluent? Should **swimming** be in this section unless they are applying for jobs where it may be required?

You shouldn't need to include your **references** at this stage (although it is perfectly OK to do this). References are normally taken up at the interview stage. The exception of course is when the advert for the job explicitly asked you to apply giving references.



## TECHNICAL ASPECT OF COVER LETTERS

- Should not simply restate your CV; Give new information: what do you want them to know about you?
- Weave academics, activities, and employment together to provide a complete picture of what you bring to position.
- Concise, varied sentence structure and a clean flow of ideas will keep reader's attention.
- Avoid telling what you don't have - focus on transferrable skills and experiences you do have.





# TECHNICAL ASPECT OF COVER LETTERS

(CONT'D)

- Make sure your energy, enthusiasm and confidence come through in your writing!
- Provide **quantifiable** examples of applicable skills.
- Should be approximately 1 page, single spaced text, double spaced paragraphs.
- A cover letter is a sample of writing ability. **Proofread it!** Ask peers and your mentors/PI's for feedback.



# COVER LETTER FORMAT



## I. Salutation

- To a specific person whenever possible. Call the company for the correct name, title, address, email, or fax number. If no name is available, a generic greeting such as “Dear Committee Members” is acceptable.
  - Email: “Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening” is a good address
- Write each cover letter specifically for the company and/or position you are seeking.

## II. Introductory Paragraph

- State the position applying for and how found out about it.
- In a summary sentence state interest in position and how you are a unique fit.



# COVER LETTER FORMAT (CONT'D)



## III. Middle Paragraph(s)

- Tie qualifications to the position/lab/school.
- Emphasize strongest attributes that relate to position.
- Summarize directly related experience and/or education so reader can reference it in CV.
- Tell why interested in this field/position/company.

## IV. Closing Paragraph

- Restate interest and demonstrate how your unique qualifications fit.
- If appropriate, let the reader know you will follow up and you look forward to discussing the opportunity further.
- Thank reader for his/her time and consideration.



# ADDITIONAL CV RESOURCES

## ***UCSD Job Search Handbook:***

- <http://career.ucsd.edu/files/JobSearchHandbook.pdf>

## ***UCSD Career Services Center:***

- <http://career.ucsd.edu/undergraduates/prepar-resume-covlet/index.html>

## ***University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Cover Letters:***

- [http://cet.usc.edu/resources/academic\\_resources/docs/AcCoverLetters.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/academic_resources/docs/AcCoverLetters.pdf)

## ***University of California at Berkeley:***

- <https://career.berkeley.edu/PhDs/PhDAcademic.stm>

## ***University of Chicago:***

- <https://career.berkeley.edu/PhDs/PhDAcademic.stm>

## ***University of Pennsylvania:***

- <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradstud/resources/>

## **Curriculum vitae Writing Tips and Templates**

- [www.businessballs.com/curriculum.htm](http://www.businessballs.com/curriculum.htm)



# CAREER PLANNING RESOURCES



- [UC San Diego Research Intelligence Portal](http://ric.ucsd.edu), a new resource for the campus community to develop and search faculty profiles, identify new federal funding opportunities, and form research teams. <http://ric.ucsd.edu>
- [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) – Features articles on teaching, research, administration, and student life and includes an extensive job bank
- [Council of Graduate Schools](#) - A national organization dedicated to promoting graduate education and research
- [Harvard University's Office of Career Services](#) resource pages for the academic job search provide additional information on strategic thinking when applying for academic jobs.
- [The Higher Education Recruitment Consortium](#) - Advancing the efforts of their member institutions to recruit and retain outstanding and diverse faculty and staff
- [Index of American Universities](#) - A comprehensive list of university homepages.
- [National Coalition of Independent Scholars](#) – A list of resources for anyone interested in continuing a research program without institutional affiliation.
- [National Postdoc Association](#) - A resource for graduate students thinking about and looking for postdoc opportunities, and for current postdocs seeking information on professional development, benefits, additional postdoc opportunities, visa issues, and more.
- [Scholarly Societies Project](#) - A comprehensive listing of international scholarly societies.
- [Conference Alert](#) - Listings of academic conferences around the globe (many, but not all disciplines are represented)

# PROFILE ON RIP



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## Carmela Arstill

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### My Research Profile

If it's your first time here, we strongly recommend that you contribute some basic information about your research interests and expertise. It will yield a snapshot of your research that can be viewed by potential collaborators. [Instructions on building out a profile.](#)

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