

## Preparing a Curriculum Vitae

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### 1. Introduction

These notes are intended as a guide for persons needing to prepare a curriculum vitae for the purposes of getting a job or position. The Oxford Dictionary defines *curriculum vitae* as "a brief account of one's life". Such an account will frequently be requested by potential employers, funding agencies, conference organisers etc. As such you should regard as always having an up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) as part of your life as a professional. You should start early in your career to create your CV and add to it as time passes and new material arises. Great care should be taken in preparing your CV. A potential employer is not likely to be impressed with a CV that is untidy, contains spelling errors, is not scrupulously honest or omits important data. Employers are usually busy persons and may have to look over very many CV's if the job is greatly sought after. A concise CV rather than one that is excessively verbose and stretching over many pages is likely to be preferred.

It is possible to find commercial firms who will prepare CV's for a fee. I personally would prefer to see a CV prepared by the candidate him/herself as part of my assessment of the ability of the candidate. The preparation of your CV is an opportunity to exhibit your ability to communicate. In many respects the preparation of a CV is a personal matter with personal preferences as to style and construction. These notes are given simply as a guide. It is a good idea to start the preparation of your CV early in your career, prepare it as a computer file and update it as you develop your career. The actual CV you present to a potential employer may require some changes to given focus to the employers requirements but at least you have your CV available and can quickly make any necessary changes. In that way you always have available most of the data required.

The headings and subjects given below are only a guide and you may well decide on a different order. Some of the subjects may not be appropriate to your current status and may be omitted

### 2. Presentation

Nowadays it is rare for an employer to request a handwritten application and in general you should prepare your CV with a good quality wordprocessor and print it on good quality clean white paper. Use **boldface** type for headings and ordinary type for textual material. If your CV covers several pages you may wish to bind it into a folder but that is usually not necessary. My personal preference is for a simple rather than pretentious presentation.

### 3. Personal Data

A CV will normally commence with statements of personal data such as

**Name:-**

**Family Name:-**

**Given Names:-**

**Birthdate:-**

**Place of Birth:-**

**Citizenship:-**

**Passport No.:-**

**Marital Status:-**

**Children:-**

**Dependents:-**

It is usually a good idea to put your family name in capital letters to clearly distinguish it from your given names. How much personal data to give sometimes depends on the country. In some countries it

may be forbidden for an employer to enquire of your age or marital status. In some cases an employer *may* take into account the number of your children or dependents in determining a salary offer.

#### **4. Education**

In some cases a full description of your education may be required starting with your early schooling leading up to your highest educational experience giving the appropriate places, dates and qualifications received. In most cases it will not be necessary to give more than your university education. It might look something like this:-

**University Education:-** (1975-78) Tanjin University, Tanjin, (China). B. Sc. (Major in Physics, Minor in Music)

(1979-81) Singapore National University (Singapore) M. Sc. (Physics, First Class Honours)

(1982-88) University of Leiden, Leiden (Holland) Ph.D. (Physics)

#### **5. Awards**

If you have received any special awards you could mention them here. This might include fellowships, scholarships, special prizes, medals etc. In other words anything that might distinguish you from others.

#### **6. Current Position**

Here you can indicate your current position, address of employer, business address, telephone and FAX numbers and e-mail address.

#### **7. Employment History**

If you have had several positions prior to your current position then list them chronologically giving the relevant dates

#### **8. Other Positions Held**

This could include positions other than employment such as President of the Students Society, Secretary of the Polish Physical Society, Polish representative in the Mathematics Olympics (If you won a place then this might appear in **5** etc.

#### **9. Research Interests**

Here you could briefly outline your research experience and interests. A comment on your Mgr or PhD research and later any Post-Doctoral research.

#### **10. Teaching Interests**

If you have done some teaching you could mention it here. If you have special teaching interests likewise mention it here, especially if the prospective employment involves teaching.

#### **11. Conferences, Workshops and Seminars**

Have you been invited to give a seminar somewhere, attended a conference or a workshop. This could be mentioned here. If you gave a presentation give the form and title with dates.

#### **12. Other Interests**

Some employers will want to know if you are a narrow specialist with no outside interests or of a broader perspective. If you have special interests such as a hobby, sport etc mention it here.

#### **13. Referees**

You should give the names of three persons, together with their addresses, who could be contacted by the potential employer for a confidential opinion on you as a person and scientist. Care should be exercised. Never put down a name without first informing the person that you would like permission to use their name. Referees are often displeased to get requests from persons who have not given prior consent. If you are a new graduate then certainly your research supervisor should be one of the referees. If there is a person outside of your institute who has expressed a professional interest in your work you may be able to get them to agree to be a referee. Unless a specific request is made for a character reference family friends etc are not appropriate. In most cases professional references are sought and most referees who know you will comment in their report as to your character.

#### **14. Publications**

You should include a list of your publications of research studies and update it whenever you publish

something new. Use a standard form for listing your publications giving the names of all authors, including your own name in the order it appears on the paper, title of the paper, name of the journal with standard abbreviations, volume number, page numbers (first and last page) , year of publication.

**15. Finally**

USE A GOOD SPELLCHECKER TO CHECK YOUR ENTIRE CV!