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## **SHARPEN YOUR CV**

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### **What is this document?**

A Curriculum Vitae is a detailed and lengthy academic resume that allows employers, peers, professors, and you to view your academic achievements on one piece of paper. It contains a structured list of your education, research, publications, projects, presentations, awards, and work history. A CV is a helpful reference when asking for a letter of recommendation, applying for a job or scholarship, and filling out applications. A mid-career candidate may have a CV as long as twenty pages.

### **What is featured on a CV?**

The CV should highlight:

#### A – Your Educational History

- What schools have you attended? Degrees? Honor programs? Study abroad? GPA's?

#### B – Your Awards and Accomplishments

- Have you received any titles? Honors? Scholarships? Awards?

#### C – Your Leadership Experience

- Have you been an officer in a club? Created your own program/business? Initiated a project?

#### D – Your Volunteer/Service Experience

- Have you given at least 10 hours to one program? Have you volunteered to help the community?

#### E – Your Work/Internship Experience

- Have you worked while being a student? Have you had any academic internships?

#### F – Your Research Experience

- Have you ever done your own research project? Have you ever helped a faculty mentor do research?

### **How do I make a CV?**

Step 1 Create a header with your name and contact information at the top, center

Step 2 Write down all of your qualifications that fall into these categories

Step 3 For items C-F, give a brief description of your role/involvement in each item. Make sure to mention dates of involvement and particular achievements therein

Step 4 Make sure the formatting is organized and clear

Step 5 Have someone from the SOP or Career Center look over it for you

## CVs vs. Resumes

- **Length:** A resume emphasizes brevity, often limiting the writer to one page. A CV, by contrast, is at least two pages long.
- **Content:** A resume summarizes your skills, experience and education. A CV provides additional details about your educational and academic backgrounds. Examples of items to include on a CV:
  - ▶ publications
  - ▶ presentations
  - ▶ objective
  - ▶ papers (including current submissions)/compositions
  - ▶ performances/exhibitions
  - ▶ grants awarded or written/edited
  - ▶ professional memberships
  - ▶ professional licenses or certifications
  - ▶ honors/awards
  - ▶ professional service work
  - ▶ specific technical skills
  - ▶ foreign language skills
  - ▶ international study
- **Purpose:** Resumes are used primarily in the U.S. CVs are commonly used internationally, but are also expected when applying for faculty, clinical, research or scientific appointments, acceptance into graduate programs, and when applying for fellowships and grants.

## DOs

- Maintain plenty of white space (in the margins, between listings, etc.)
- Use large enough type; 12-point in Times New Roman font is easy to read.
- Keep information on one side of the page.
- Use active verbs when generating short descriptions for each entry, emphasizing your role in the process and the conclusion.
- Preserve order by labeling each page with your name and the page number.
- Organize content by clear explanations and intuitive listings/sections.
- Proofread information several times to catch errors.

## **DON'Ts**

- Overlook spelling or grammatical errors. Your computer program's spell check function won't detect when you've substituted the wrong word.
- Use incorrect words (e.g. effect vs. affect).
- Ignore aesthetics: Common pitfalls include cramming content together, minimizing margins or lumping separate ideas into lengthy paragraphs to conserve space. Separate and emphasize independent points so your CV will be easy to read.
- Include private personal information such as age, ethnicity, political affiliation, religion, social security number, hobbies, marital status, place of birth, height, sexual orientation, weight, or health information.
- Over-rely on templates. Your CV should tout your unique talents and experiences, not hide you among the crowd. Find or devise a format that highlights your strengths.
- Disregard details. Conveying specific skills will help you assert your eligibility for highly specialized scholarships. For example, fluency in foreign languages and athletic accomplishments expand the pool of scholarships for which a student may be qualified.

### **Notes**

Yes, it's okay if you don't have a lot of experience in one category, now you know what you need to work on! Give a copy of your CV to anyone writing a letter of recommendation for you. More help is available at the Career Center for this document.