

CVs and Covering Letters in Brief

THE CV

The reverse Chronological CV is suitable for most situations. It lists education and work experience in reverse date order (most recent first). Evidence of skills and achievements are built into the CV against the relevant experience.

Format and Structure

- Most UK CVs should be two A4 sized pages, unless otherwise stated by the employer.
- Your best selling points should always come first within a section.
- Allocate space according to importance to the job for which you are applying – expand on areas of relevance.
- You can draw the recruiter's attention to relevant experience by grouping it together under an appropriate sub-heading eg Legal Work Experience, Financial Work Experience, Scientific Work Experience, Technical Work Experience or Relevant Work Experience.
- Use headings which best describe the content of the section. Adapt the headings to fit your needs eg Awards and Achievements, Positions of Responsibility and Achievements.
- Putting lines between sections and the use of boxes or tables with lined borders can clutter up your CV making it difficult to read. Tables without borders can be useful for formatting neatly in columns.
- Use a standard font that is easy to read and looks professional. Use the same font style throughout.

Style

- Keep sentences short and precise.
- Bullet points can look effective and help you to write short, dynamic sentences. If you want to use paragraphs keep them short.

Content

- Must be tailored to the requirements of the reader. What skills and experience are they looking for?
- Spelling and grammar are very important; do not rely on spell checks.
- Personal profiles are optional; they are best suited to speculative applications or in circumstances where you are not using a cover letter.
- All skills claims must be backed up by evidence.

Structuring your examples - the CAR Model

Context – What was the situation – keep it brief, but specific.

Action – What did YOU do? What was your role? What actions did you take? Use action words.

Result – What was the outcome? What did you achieve? What was improved? Qualify and quantify.

References

Unless otherwise stated, provide names of two referees. These will depend on the role, your circumstances and what has been requested. More on references:

www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/students/applicationsinterviews/af/references

THE COVERING LETTER

When sending a CV, you need to include a covering letter. The covering letter is your personal sales pitch, where you introduce yourself as a candidate and discuss why you want the job. It should be professional and business like in style and layout. In brief it should cover:

1. Why you are applying to this company? - What makes them stand out from other similar companies?
2. Why you are applying for this role? - Your motivation for applying, show your understanding of the role.
3. The skills and experience you have that match the job description.

Covering letters should be tailored for each job. If you cut and paste the company name and use the letter for any other employer, your letter will not convince the reader that you want to work for them. Even the least experienced recruiter can spot a 'mailshot' at a glance!

Vacancy Title: Graduate Production Trainee

The chance to be part of our ongoing success is a huge opportunity and, naturally, we only want people with the potential to take our business to the next level. The graduate programme is a great place to start your career, especially if you want to experience real responsibility from the word go. Our two-year programme, spanning three key business areas, offers real roles with real accountability to people who want to make a real impact.

Whether you join us in Corporate or Commercial, or Creative Production, you'll work with some of our best and brightest managers on a variety of projects. You'll learn a lot and, with a comprehensive management development programme and supplementary learning to back up what you experience on the job, you'll have everything you need to develop your career.

Qualifications/experience: Final year students of any discipline with previous media experience

Skills:

We're looking for individuals who are bright, credible and creative, and who can show their drive through their achievements. That means that wherever you join us, we'll expect you to have a strong academic background. And, of course, you'll be as passionate about production as we are.

Beyond your academic achievements you'll be the sort of person we want to work with. Someone who grows great relationships, collaborates to achieve the best result and brings out the best in their colleagues. You'll be full of original ideas, proactive about setting and achieving your goals and always thinking about what's best for our company.

Daniel Lester

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PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

September 2012: Present: Head of Programming at RAW FM (Student Radio Station)

- Scheduled 63 shows in one week, three times a year
- Filled vacant role of **Head of Production** and used Audacity and Adobe Audition to create station imaging for events and commercial clients
- Created **editorial guidelines** for all on-air volunteers adapted from OFCOM and BBC editorial guidelines
- Attended **weekly committee meetings**, with input on financial, marketing and administrative decisions
- Helped devise a **strategy** for the **future** of the station

September 2011: Present: Science in the Media Project

- Authored a Literature Review, and a 1,500 word *New Scientist* article about the link between diet and mental health aimed at **different audiences**
- Created a podcast for the general public and evaluated its effectiveness using statistical analyses

October 2009: Week experience with the Head of Production at Zen FM

- Learnt how to use **Cool Edit Pro** (now Adobe Audition)
- Recorded vox pops from members of the public

PRESENTING EXPERIENCE

February 2011 – June 2012: Presenter at RAW FM

- Produced and presented a **weekly entertainment show**
- Created **novel features and items** for each show
- Connected with audiences using **social media**
- Interviewed musicians and listeners by phone and in person

February & April 2012: Presenter of *Take Me Out* for the University of Manchester Students' Union's Raising and Giving

- Presented two episodes of *Take Me Out* to sell out audiences
- Scripted jokes, interviewed contestants from the University and the ITV show
- Nominated as the '**Best Student Event of 2012**' and '**Best Student Fundraising Event/Project**' at the University of Manchester Student Union Awards

September 2010 – Present: Community Radio Presenter

- Presented a weekly news and debate show with two co-presenters
- Produced DJ mixes for a weekly show and edited in imaging with Adobe Audition

PR EXPERIENCE

September 2011 – Present: Street Team Member – Capital FM [*Paid*]

- Represent the radio station and its commercial clients in public
- Communicate with members of the public, and collect photographs for the website and audio clips for broadcast
- Read and adhere to briefs from the station and our commercial clients to deliver high levels of **customer service** to listeners and clients

September 2011 – March 2012: Student Ambassador – University of Manchester [*Paid*]

- Responsible for leading tours of students across the campus and delivering them to their interview
- Involved in the recruitment process for academics

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Adobe Audition (proficient)

Audacity (highly proficient)

IT Skills (A Level standard)

April 2012: National Student Radio Conference

- Attended seminars on station sound, social media in radio, producing radio, voiceovers and how to interview hosted by specialists from the radio industry

EDUCATION

September 2010 - Present: BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science, University of Manchester (Predicted 2:1)

July 2010: A Levels Computing (B), Biology (B), Maths (B)

July 2009: AS Level English Literature (B)

July 2008: GCSEs 2 A*'s, 8 A's, 2 B's including English and Maths

OTHER EXPERIENCE

February 2012 – Present: Samaritans Volunteer

- Giving emotional support to students by phone
- Completed 24 hours of training in student support and diversity

August 2010 – Present: Receptionist– Poole, Walsh and Co. Construction

- Answering telephone enquiries from customers, colleagues and contractors
- Supporting management with PA duties

October 2008 – August 2010: Shop Assistant – Tesco, Warrington

- Stock replenishment
- Delivering high levels of customer service to shoppers on the shop floor and at checkouts

REFERENCES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST