

CVs and Covering Letters in Brief

The CV

These notes are meant to be read alongside the sample CV, which has been put together as an example of how to present a CV. We would like to stress that the degree subject was chosen at random and for no particular reason.

There are different styles of CV and at the Careers Service we find the one that tends to work best is the Reverse Chronological CV as it 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 relevant experience.

Format and Structure

- It is important to remember that the average length of time spent reading a CV is under a minute. A CV therefore has to be easy to read and well presented. A good test is the 'arm's length' one where you check to see what a CV looks like from afar. If it appears densely written, it probably needs revising.
- Most UK CVs should be two A4 sized pages, unless otherwise stated by the employer.
- To check the protocol for global CVs, *Going Global* is a useful resource:
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/students/findingwork/overseas/goingglobal/
- 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 heading eg Legal Work Experience, Financial 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, Extra-Curricular activities.
- Be wary of putting lines between sections and using boxes or tables as these can clutter up the CV and make it difficult to read. Tables without borders can be useful for formatting neat columns.
- Use a standard font that is easy to read and looks professional. Use the same font style throughout.
- Save in a standard file format so when attached to an email the CV is easy to open.
- A career objective/personal profile (a few lines included under your name and address) is optional on this kind of CV. It may be useful to include one when preparing a CV that you will hand out or when applying for a job in the creative industries, as they tend to favour these. A career objective/personal profile should be written in the third person and tailored to each role applied for. Think carefully before including because although they are only a few lines long they can be difficult to write well.

Degree information

- Consider what information is of most interest to the person receiving your CV.
- You may want to include relevant modules, brief details of a dissertation, a summary of transferable skills gained, language competency, your study abroad year and any awards.

Style

- Keep sentences short and concise.
- 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, particularly US ones.
- All skills claims must be backed up by evidence.

References

Unless otherwise stated provide 2 references. Who you provide depends 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. It is more personal and is 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 to each job. Although tempting to do, 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!

**For more detailed information, please refer to
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/students/applicationsinterviews/**

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

To assist account team by developing and demonstrating high standards in marketing essentials:

Account handling skills

- Writing: agendas, contact reports, press releases, technical features.
- Media liaison: develop a good understanding of UK or foreign media (as appropriate) and other media as appropriate to the trainee's language skills. Research and develop media lists for specific clients/projects. Liaise with selected media and develop contacts.
- Media monitoring: read relevant and specialist publications as appropriate and develop an awareness of opportunities and items of general interest.
- Media evaluation: monitor and track press coverage, present in company format, analyse in line with set objectives.
- Client liaison: establish and maintain professional and effective relationship with client(s).
- Supplier negotiation: develop relationship with key suppliers and demonstrate ability to achieve optimum outcome for agency/client.
- Event management: assist in organisation of exhibitions, photocalls and other events.
- Print and design management: develop understanding of print, photography and design terminology.
- Accompany account handlers on client meetings, supplier briefings, photographic shoots, and assist at press conferences.
- Develop an awareness of team working, workload planning and meeting deadlines.
- Develop good telephone manner: importance of clear message taking and responding to information requests. Manage press ring-rounds, eg exhibitions and product launches.
- Provide administrative support to team as required.

International

- Use relevant language(s) – both written and spoken – on a regular basis in a business context.
- Travel to attend client meetings/exhibitions as required; amount of travel will depend on client portfolio.

Knowledge

- Develop a good understanding of the role of public relations and the range of techniques available to PR practitioners in the UK and abroad.
- Develop understanding of client business and industry issues.
- Ensure compliance with company procedures to generate best practice.

Commercial skills

- Ensure profitable relationship with clients by maintaining service to agreed levels.
- Juggle workload/work across a number of clients effectively.
- Demonstrate effective time management.

Personal skills

- Demonstrate flexibility.
- Support the company culture and positioning.
- Proactively seek and suggest solutions to problems.
- Take joint responsibility for learning and development of self.
- Build sound and productive relationships internally and externally.
- Communicate well to a wide range of people and audiences.

Jack Watford

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LinkedIn.com/xxxxx

A dynamic, highly motivated and versatile individual used to working within organisations focused on the delivery of products to meet the highest standards of customer satisfaction. Excellent interpersonal and language skills, and accustomed to working as part of a team within a service industry environment.

Education

2009 - 2013 The University of Manchester

BA (Hons) German and Russian Expected result 2:1
First year result: 62% Second year result: 65%

- Developed a comprehensive grounding in German and Russian languages, literature, culture, history and linguistics
- Studied Business German: Wirtschaftsdeutsch and Business Russian to gain enhanced understanding of applied business language
- Managed a group project and gained 72% in Innovative Approaches to Deutsch als Fremdsprache module. Working in a team, developed an online learning tool to aid German grammar acquisition "DenglishApp" - our team was shortlisted for the Annual Student Team Working Awards, sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers. Developed website (200 unique hits/month), Twitter profile (100 followers) and mobile app to increase visibility of the app and project is currently ongoing:
<http://DenglishApp.tk/> <http://twitter.com/DenglishApp>
- Spent a year abroad studying at the Universität Hamburg, Germany (6 months) and St Petersburg State University, Russia (6 months)
- Awarded the Manchester Success Scholarship for previous academic achievements

2002 - 2009 Park Royal High School, Surrey

A levels: English (A), German (A), Economics (B)
AS level: French (B)
GCSEs: 9 (5A, 3B, 1C) including Maths and English

Relevant Work Experience

Aug 2012 Account Executive Intern Euro RSCG, Manchester

- Independently organised a two-week placement at Euro RSCG using LinkedIn to network with industry contacts
- Gained valuable experience of writing press releases, contacting journalists, drafting community reports and drawing up VIP guest lists
- Enhanced my IT skills, using Excel and Access databases. I also familiarised myself with the Gorkana database
- I have negotiated ongoing work experience at the company throughout my final year

Oct 2011 - Nov 2011 Account Executive Intern Euro RSCG, ABC Hamburg

- Secured three-week placement at Euro RSCG ABC Hamburg office following speculative approach to the business
- Gained exposure to international business environment and improved my business German
- Shadowed staff working in press office, accounts department and attended several client meetings and pitches
- This experience confirmed my interest in international marketing

Other Work Experience

- Feb 2012 - June 2012** **Teacher - English First Language School, St Petersburg, Russia**
- Worked as an English teacher with Russian students of all ages and abilities. I had to be engaging, friendly, and think on my feet to keep the classes fun, interesting and effective. This experience greatly improved my confidence and communication skills.
- Sept 2009 - June 2011** **Sports Editor - The Mancunian (student newspaper)**
- Coordinated editorial content for the sports pages of this successful student newspaper. My responsibilities included managing this section, recruiting writers, ensuring accuracy and meeting deadlines for print, liaising with the design team, and uploading the weekly content to the website. To view the website, visit: www.student-direct.com
 - I plan to rejoin the editorial team now that I have returned from my study abroad year.
- Sept 2009 - Sept 2011** **Front of House Team Leader - Lorenzo's Tapas Bar, Chorlton, Manchester (term time)**
- Promoted to Team Leader after working for the company for six months. Managed a team of five. Motivated them to meet individual sales targets by devising a graph which plotted the amount of bonuses they could earn through securing additional sales.
 - Successfully trained two new members of staff to be able to perform well in all areas of the business.

Positions of Responsibility

- 2009 - 2011** **Mentor – Reachout, Manchester**
- Established a mentoring relationship with a high school student from an inner city school who was interested in applying to University to study languages. Met weekly throughout the school year to offer support and encouragement.
 - Managed a summer programme of training junior mentees and supervised pupils involved in group activities.

Additional Skills

IT Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office, including Excel and Access to create spreadsheets and analyse complex data sets. I am a confident user of social networking tools, such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter and have basic web design knowledge. Competent user of Gorkana database.

Languages Fluent German and Russian (degree level)
Intermediate French (AS Level plus visits)

Driving Full clean driving licence.

Interests and Activities

Societies Member of the Debating Society and enjoy participating in competitions and events. I recently organised an evening of guest speakers from industry to speak on persuasive public speaking.

Sport Completed the Race for Life in 2012 independently raising £75 for Cancer charities. Regularly participate in softball matches at Oak House, my former Hall of Residence.

References available on request