CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

How to Write a Curriculum Vitae

Why a CV?

A curriculum vita (CV) outlines your personal background, education, and experience concisely. Unlike a resume, a CV provides more comprehensive information and is usually over two pages in length. For recent graduates, CV's are generally 4-6 pages long.

Important Guidelines

1. Brainstorm before you start writing. Make a list of each group you have belonged to and identify the tasks performed fulfilled.
    a. Ask yourself "what qualifies me for this position?"
2. Consider how to will format your CV
    a. It is suggested to not use a template to create your CV, as many recruiters spot them easily and may perceive your CV as less original than other candidates' documents.
        i. There are plenty of templates online or in Microsoft Word if you wanted to start from there and make your own changes.
    b. Choose an easy to read font such as Times, Arial, Calibri, or Helvetica.
    c. Use a 10-14 size font (with smaller fonts like Times, don't go below 11).
    d. Beware of bold, italics, and underline overload. These features should only be used to guide readers to important topic headings.
    e. Make sure your formatting is consistent throughout the entire document. For example, if you end a descriptive statement with a period, make sure all other descriptive statements also end with punctuation.
    f. Send your CV as a PDF rather than a Word document in order to eliminate formatting errors across computer systems.
3. Prioritize your skills and experience
    a. Identify your primary career objective – this will help you know which skills and experiences you will want to emphasize.
    b. Ideally, each CV you submit will be tailored to fit the specific job or program you are applying for.
4. When sending your CV electronically, label your document with your first and last name – example: "Smith Tom_CV."
    a. CV's easily get lost when just labeled "CV" or "My CV."

Organizing your CV

CV's usually contain a variety of information and will vary from person to person. Most individuals have 8-12 sections on their CV. These sections may include:

1. Contact information
    a. This includes name, address (optional), phone number, and email address. No other personal information is needed.

2. Education
    a. Information should include most recent information first. Include your institution, title, date of graduation (or expected date), major, and honors awarded.
    b. Include GPA only if above 3.0.
3. Licensure and Certificates
    a. Include the awarding organization, license number, date of issue, and expiration date or most recent renewal date.
4. Professional pharmacy experience
    a. List work experience in reverse chronological order. Include the organization's name, location position held, dates of employment, and bullet pointed descriptions of your accomplishments.
5. Rotations (IPPE's and APPE's)
    a. Include all completed and pending experiences (if they have been scheduled).
    b. For each one, include preceptor's name and credentials, site of experiences, and the dates they were completed.
6. Teaching Experience
    a. List your title (Lecturer, Teaching Assistant) and course title.
7. Research experience
    a. Research experience can be listed similarly to work experience – include the organization's name, location, position held, dates of employment/ research, and bullet pointed descriptions of accomplishments.
8. Publications: List all publications using appropriate citation style.
9. Presentations: List tile, inviting or sponsoring organization, location, and date of each presentation.
10. Professional membership and leadership
    a. Be careful about listing memberships if you feel you didn't contribute significantly to the group. Your interviewers will likely ask you about this, and you don't want to be embarrassed in your interview for not having anything to say.
11. Service activities: How did you contribute to the cause?
12. Awards and honors
13. Skill section
    a. Can be used to highlight special qualifications such as language proficiency, computer knowledge, research skills, or grant writing ability.

How to Use Bullet Points for CV's

A great CV describes your accomplishments and previous experiences and how well you completed those experiences. A well-written CV with bullet points grabs the reader's attention and effectively describes your experiences and how you delivered results. An easy formula for writing accomplishment- oriented bullet points is:

Action Verb + Subject + Rationale and Result

1. Action Verbs: Try to start every bullet point with an action verb. Action verbs give your bullet points power and direction. List all current positions and projects in the present tense, and all past positions and projects in the past tense.
2. Subject: Focus on what you have done. Including key words can improve your odds of securing an interview.

    a. *See attached list of pharmacy related keywords.*
3. Rationale and Result: Include information about the outcomes you contributed to as well as information about why your project, role, or actions mattered to this employer. Words like “focusing on,” “to,” and “for” can help incorporate a rationale or result.

CV Don’ts

As a general rule, do not:

1. Use abbreviations (but you can abbreviate pharmacy organizations)
2. Include pictures
3. List unnecessary personal information (for example age, marital status, religion, etc.)
4. Use an unprofessional email address
5. Include erroneous or fabricated information
6. Over stylize
7. Only rely on spell check – check for errors yourself too!
8. Forget to have other proofread
9. Use an unusual font
10. Forget to have a cover letter
11. Send as a Word document if electronic, makes sure you convert it to PDF

Top Skills and Qualities Employers Look For:

1. Ability to work in teams
2. Problem- solving skills
3. Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work
4. Verbal communication skills
5. Ability to obtain and process information
6. Analytical/ quantitative skills
7. Knowledge related to the job
8. Proficiency with software programs
9. Written communication skills
10. Ability to sell or influence others