

“Crafting your Curriculum Vitae”

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Speakers: Dr. Bérénice Benayoun, Dr. Carolyn Phillips, Dr. Irene Chiolo, and Dr. Steve Finkel

Introduction/General Remarks

Dr. Benayoun:

- Keep your CV straight and to the point, utilizing the text to highlight the relevant information. Leave the personal statement for the cover letter.
- Keep it short and sweet, with 2-3 pages as the maximum to highlight the most important

Dr. Chiolo

- It depends on what the CV is targeted for/what position you are applying for. Target your CV for the career position you are looking for:
 - If you are applying for a postdoc position, focus is first directed to important background information (university graduated for undergraduate and graduate education), followed by important accomplishments (publications, important discoveries).
 - If you are applying for a graduate student position, focus is first directed at skills and bench experience.
 - If you are applying for a lab technician position, lab experience may not always be the focus, but rather experience indicating you are ready to learn.

Dr. Phillips:

- Attention to detail is very important, make sure your CV is grammatically correct!! A sloppy CV looks unprofessional, and like the applicant did not take the time to put it together, which may be an indication of a greater problem that may not be desired by the interviewer.
- Organize your accomplishments in order of importance

- Organizing your CV for the position is critical. A CV for an industry position versus an academic position may look very different

Dr. Finkel

- What makes a good CV varies from person to person and position to position!
- Formatting is essential, it is a reflection of you
- The CV serves two purposes:
 - To express who you are as a scientist and scholar
 - To keep tabs of your professional accomplishments, which can

While it's good to keep a list of all of your professional accomplishments, utilize this list to tailor your CV to highlight your best self for the position you are applying for

General/Structure

What are the main differences between CVs and Resumes?

Dr. Finkel:

- The main thing is the CV has no size limit. The CV needs to be as long as it needs to be to include all of the experience you would like to highlight: your accomplishments, your publications, your relevant organization work, etc.
- The resume may also highlight the skills or a biographical statement, the CV should highlight the facts and deliverables

Content

What should a graduate student highlight on a CV if they have no publications or presentations at a conference?

Dr. Benayoun:

- Manuscripts in progress can be included to show productivity. However, including manuscripts in progress on your CV is position and advisor specific. Including these manuscripts in preparation when applying can highlight productivity, but should be selected carefully

Dr. Phillips:

- “Manuscript in Preparation” can be good to include, but don’t overuse it. It can feel empty without tangible results/deliverables. Including a copy of the pre-printed manuscript may highlight the accomplishment and may be a stronger demonstration of productivity

Dr. Finkel:

- Including organizational memberships, service experience, community service, and other works can also be included to highlight your involvement. Teaching/every course you have TA’d for can also be included.

Should we include experimental skills?

Dr. Benayoun:

- It doesn’t necessarily hurt to include, depending on the skill:
- For faculty positions, I would not recommend highlighting specific skills.
- When applying for other positions, skills that may be relevant to more current works (more specialized techniques (ex. Flow Cytometry) of the position you are applying for could be important to highlight under the right context

Dr. Chiolo:

- If you include a skill make sure you have it and are ready to utilize that technique if you are hired on to the position

Dr. Phillips:

- The skills will also be highlighted in the publications, and may clutter your CV if included separately. Certain skills you may deem important to highlight can also be included in the cover letter or the resume.

How long is the typical CV you are reviewing?

Dr. Chiolo:

- For a postdoc position, a CV should be 2-3 pages at most

Dr. Benayoun:

- Keep it short and sweet. You can have a long version that includes an up-to-date list of your accomplishments, and then highlight your relevant work depending on the position you are applying for. 5 pages should be the very maximum I recommend.
- Grant applications are completely different, and vary from application to application. Some emphasize personal contributions rather than publications, which makes it a completely different exercise.

Should we include the monetary amount that each scholarship/fellowship has awarded us?

Dr. Benayoun:

- Personally, it doesn't matter.

Dr. Finkel:

- Sometimes if the award is really big, it can be important to highlight, however it usually doesn't matter. It is more important to highlight that you received the grant/fellowship/scholarship more so than including the monetary amount received.

Dr. Chiolo:

- It may be important to highlight if it is uncommon, or that the award may cover salary amount, however typically it's not relevant.

Opinion

In what types of applications is it appropriate/inappropriate to list mentorships where you were the mentor? How many pages before you stop reading a CV?

Dr. Finkel:

- Your CV should reflect how you spent your time. Highlighting mentor/mentee relationships demonstrates how you spent your time, and that is occasionally important to highlight!

Dr. Benayoun:

- While it does serve a purpose, calling it back to order of importance, this would probably be of low importance to include in your CV.

What format is most widely accepted? Do you prefer to receive CVs in PDF or word?

Dr. Chiolo:

- I've never received a PDF in Word.

Dr. Benayoun:

- That really depends on who you are tailoring your CV for. If it is being tailored for a lab, PDF is easier to open and therefore preferred. However for some positions, using a word document may be important word searching functions utilized in some careers.

Where did you learn to write a CV?

Dr. Benayoun:

- Going to your mentor is a great place to start, but there's really no rule book

Dr. Chiolo:

- Network within your own community and reach out to someone who successfully applied for that fellowship or position and look at their CV

What is the best way to form your CV?

Dr. Phillips:

- Keeping a long form version of your CV is a great template to work from for future applications. You can then take clips from that to include in any future CVs.

Dr. Finkel:

- The CV is a great document to keep track of all accomplishments. As soon as I submit a paper I add it to my CV. It is a wonderful way to stay up-to-date on everything you have done, and should be a document that is constantly updated.

Additional Questions:

Is it appropriate to add a picture of yourself on the CV?

Dr. Chiolo:

- It is not common practice in the states

Dr. Benayoun:

- It also calls into question the ethics of discrimination associated with presenting an image of yourself, so I would not recommend it.

Per Irene's CV, stating the role of each author on a publication, is that only when you have a lot of authors or possibly collaborative projects?

Dr. Chiolo:

- This is something that is included for tenured faculty positions