

The Art of Professional Storytelling: CV Building for Physicians

9

CHAPTER 9

*Your guide to
CV writing*

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATION

Six years experience
for a quality NAIA v
successful track re
recruiting, and dev
involved in faculty
include:

- Budgeting
- Staffing/
- Graduated

Curriculum Vitae





Tanja Getter

Residency Education Lead Director for Community Health Systems, Inc.

Tanja Getter is an expert on career planning for medical residents. Since 2010, Tanja has presented 60-minute workshops to more than 300 residency programs across the US, educating more than 6,000 residents and fellows on best practices on how write an effective CV and cover letter.

In addition, Tanja is a frequent speaker at national conference meetings and including, American Academy of Family Physicians, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American College of Physicians to name a few. At these conferences, Tanja provides one-on-one CV consultations with physicians to provide an employer's perspective on what they are looking for in a CV.

Tanja has written several CV and Cover Letter articles for a variety of professional organizations, including, the American College of Physician and the American Academy of Family Medicine.

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In This Chapter

When you began your clinical training, you were schooled in the art of writing a SOAP note. Not only was that form of communication a time-honored tradition, it was a standard mechanism to communicate vital patient information from one physician to another.

Each component of a SOAP note relays specific information in a specific order; however, the verbiage used to craft each note was as unique as each physician writing that note. There may be multiple consultants evaluating the same patient, but the words and tone used to describe the patient's condition varied with the physician. A curriculum vitae is very much the same as a SOAP note. There are rules to learn, formats to follow, and information to be reported. Just like a SOAP note, there are tips and tools that can make your message stand out.

You're about to discover how to format and customize your CV in a way that will catch the attention of an employer so they will want to pick up the phone and schedule an interview on the spot. This chapter will give you specific instructions on how to format your CV and customize it to stand out above the crowd, show the physician recruiter that you clearly have what it takes to make an impact on their organization, and get you a ticket to the interview show!

OUTLINE

1. The Curriculum Vitae
2. CV and Resumes Defined
3. Lengths and Other Myths
4. The Components
5. Formatting Tips
6. The Job Search CV
 - a. Clinical CV
 - b. Academic CV
7. The Digital CV
8. Ethics and Integrity
9. Editing and Feedback

GOALS

- Identify characteristics and components of an effective CV.
- Develop a curriculum vitae (CV) that is clear, concise, organized, and differentiates your qualifications and experiences from other applicants.
- Capture the attention of recruiters immediately to help you soar past other candidates for highly desired positions.
- Prepare a keyword-rich, targeted CV to position yourself for success.

LET'S GET STARTED





READ:

The Curriculum Vitae:

It's that time in your training when you start thinking about life after residency; the start of your medical career out in the real world. So where do you begin? What is the first step? While figuring out where you want to live and where you want to practice, you will want to be prepared for the opportunities you find in those locations.

First things first; creating your curriculum vitae. Similar to a resume, and most commonly referred to as a CV, this document is basically a timeline of your education, experience and accomplishments. Your CV needn't read like a Pulitzer Prize winning novel, but you don't want it to read like the financial section of the newspaper - endless data that is legible only to those with business degrees. Just keep it simple.

In this chapter, you will come to find you will need various forms of your CV: one for your job search, one for grants, presentations, and publications, and yet another for marketing and advertising.

Your CV is a Lifetime Investment

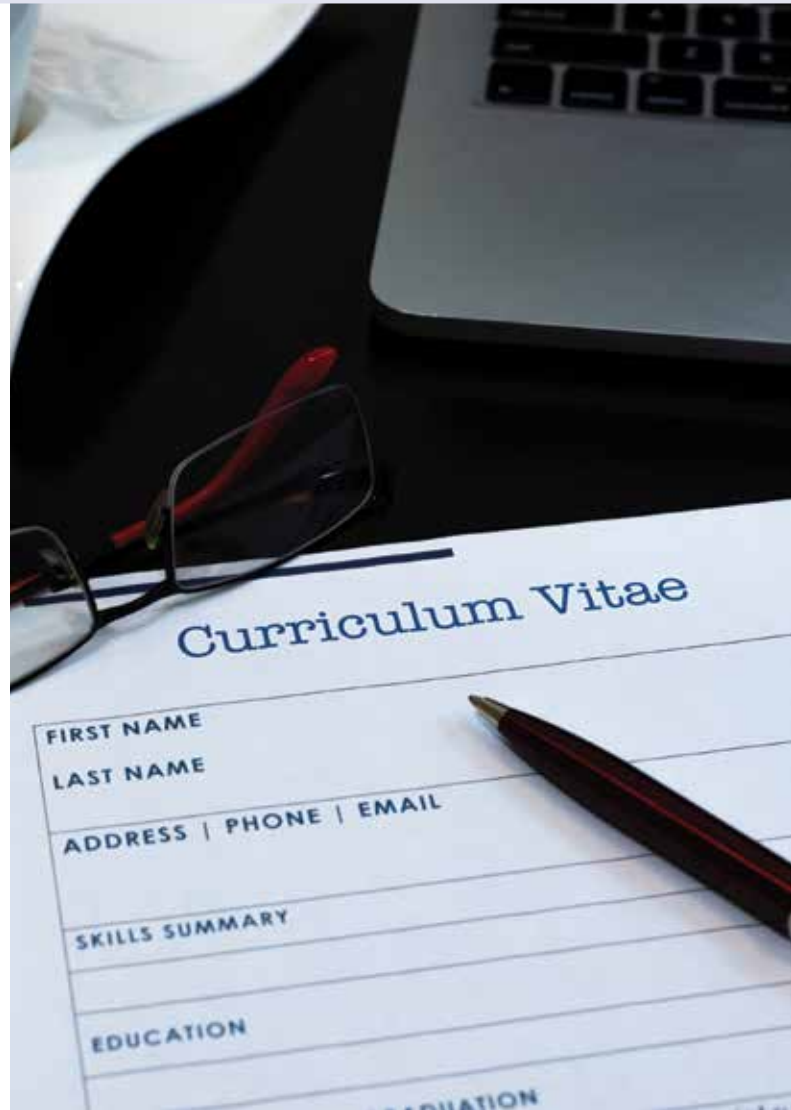
A CV is a physician's constant and ever-evolving companion. At most every major professional milestone and accomplishment, your CV will both introduce you and grow with you. Your CV can get you an interview for your dream job, a highly-competitive fellowship, or a multi-million-dollar grant. Your CV is potentially worth millions, so make it shine!



READ:

CVs and Resumes Defined

You know what a CV is, but how is it different from a resume? A resume, usually limited to one page, lists your education and work history and is primarily used in business settings. A curriculum vitae, Latin for “course of life”, is used in academic and medical settings. A CV provides the same information as a resume but in much more detail including achievements, certifications, awards, publications, etc. Because it offers much more information, and continues to expand with your career, a CV can grow to be many pages long.



READ:

Length and Other Myths

Depending on the purpose of your CV, size matters: too long and you'll overwhelm and bore your audience; too short and you'll look inexperienced and unqualified for the position. Again, think of the SOAP note analogy: too many words on the page and your eyes glaze over; too few and you have no idea what is wrong with your patient. Unfortunately, many candidates either leave off all sorts of defining qualifications and experience for academic CV or they include too many details on a clinical CV.

We are going to begin the CV building guide by discussing length before delving into detail about content; some physicians are so preoccupied with length that size becomes the overarching mindset when crafting their CV. Let it go. Honestly, keeping your CV to no more than two pages is optimal, but there's an exception to every rule. It's not uncommon for a seasoned academic CV to be dozens of pages long; full of presentations, publications, clinical experiences, reviews, consulting services, and



other professional activities. A clinical CV, on the other hand, might be relatively brief and to the point highlighting training and clinical practice.

Regardless of length, you can use the same CV for more than one job opportunity, but you may want to have two different versions: one for clinical practice and one for academic opportunities

You should get in the habit of updating your CV on a regular basis. When you accomplish something, update your CV that very same day. Many residency programs now require that residents submit an

updated CV annually, documenting the past year's clinical load, research accomplishments, and service to the department, institution, profession, and community.

Starting off with a blank page can be somewhat intimidating when creating your CV and is usually the hardest part. This is common and easy to overcome. Later in this chapter, we will provide you with sample CVs to use as a "jumping off" point if you are struggling to get started.

Just remember, the devil is in the details. You can spend hours finding the treatment for a giant "zebra" of a case, only to be trampled by the "horse" that's riding shotgun for the same patient. Remember this basic rule: As long as you build your CV so that it shows your timeline and is easy to read, you will be in good shape.

So, what goes in a CV anyway? How do I use it to land that esteemed fellowship? First gig in a teaching hospital? A job at that family practice in your hometown? Read on to learn what exactly should be included. Don't sweat it - the following will help guide your draft.

READ:

The Components:

Your first page is the most significant and should always include the following: contact information, undergraduate and medical education, licensing/certifications, and experience. Assume that the physician recruiter or search committee will only see the first page.

Since you may use your CV for multiple reasons, you may want to create a master CV and change it

depending on who you are sending it to. Candidates who have an academic background but are applying for a non-academic position could consider deleting the academic parts, i.e. publications and presentations and include a line at the end of your CV stating "publications upon request".

Let's get started...

1. Your Name and Credentials

Always list your full legal name, regardless if you use a nickname or middle name. You can still include the other name by using quotes; i.e. James "Jim" Smith, MD. This will help employers identify you, especially if you are using an email address with your nickname or your outgoing voicemail message states your other name.

Your name and contact information doesn't need a category header like other sections. Your name is the title of your CV. You should, however, avoid the common mistake of using "ego-sized" font (meaning a font that is significantly larger than the rest of your text). A little bigger, no problem. Just remember that aesthetics are important.

Before jumping into contact information, consider adding your specialty underneath your name. It acts as an objective statement and helps a recruiter categorize your interest.

2. Contact Information

Listing your contact information is a no-brainer, but pay attention to detail. Make sure your contact information is accurate. Double-check the spelling of your street address. Use your home address as this is where an offer letter or contract will be sent. Never use a work address as that could end your current job before you land a new one!

Some CVs offer cell phone numbers, office telephone numbers, and home phone numbers. We recommend you list the phone number that is most accessible and likely to be answered. Make sure that your voicemail box is not full so that employers can leave a message if necessary.

List addresses, both email and physical that you check often. By now you should have signed up for a relatively professional email address from a common carrier – one that can follow you through life, and that you won't lose once you graduate from your residency program.

You may want to also include professional websites or blogs that direct the reader to additional information or work samples. If so, double check to make sure these links are correct and active.

QUICK TIPS

YES

- List your legal name at the top of your CV
- Include your specialty underneath your name; i.e. Family Medicine, Family Medicine w/o OB, Family Sports Medicine
- Include your home address
- Use a phone number that's yours and yours alone (like a cell phone)

NO

- Never use attention-seeking email addresses (brown nosing the search committee, making inappropriate or immature references, or humorous plays on words) which may exclude you from serious consideration. Some of examples of this include, smartdoc@email.com, futureMD@hotmail.com, sexyfellow@gmail.com.
- If you use a professional web portfolio or website, avoid including personal information and pictures, especially from your honeymoon or your bachelor(ette) party.

3. Education/Training

The hallmark of any CV is the section that deals with academic training and educational achievement. It is the one section that, with few exceptions, will always be on the first page of your CV. This section often immediately follows your name and contact information. Remember, this is your timeline. One of the most important things to keep in mind is that you want to include dates for every section of your CV.

When listing education and experience, include both the start and end date including both the month and year as employers will be looking for any

time gaps. Also, record this information in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent. Be sure to list your current training program and the date you will finish, even if you have just started so that employers know when you will be available.

You'll find multiple ways to format this section with regard to page layout; however, there are four details that must ALWAYS be included in each entry: degree, institution, location, and dates. There is no need to include details with your training entries, but you may want to note special honors such as chief resident, intern of the year, magna cum laude, etc. But remember, keep it short and sweet.

FIELD NOTES

"Start and end dates allow a prospective employer to understand the timeline of a provider's training and experience and most importantly, allows for easy identification of any gaps."

– *Nicole Gillard, Sr. Regional Director, Community Health Systems*

QUICK TIPS

YES

- Highlight your academic pedigree. Make it easy to discern your educational background. A potential employer shouldn't need a terminal degree to learn where you got yours.
- It's a great idea to highlight your institution or your advisors (especially if they're well known in the field).
- This is your timeline, dates are important! Include both the start and end date including month and year (June 2017 – June 2020) or (06/2017 – 06/2020).

NO

- No high school! While high school may have been the time of your life...the time to share it with others has long passed. Search committees are truly only interested in your life after high school.
- No GPAs! If you've made it this far, we know you're a good student.

4. Certifications and Licensing

Employers will always look to see if you are licensed to practice medicine in their state and whether or not you are board eligible/certified. List your state medical license(s) and include the effective dates of both active and inactive licenses. If you have already applied for a state license, indicate that on your CV by stating "pending", "in process", or "applied for".

If you are not yet board certified, you can state that you will be "board eligible upon completion of training." When you complete training, you can change this to "board eligible" and once you have passed your exams, change again to "board certified". Also include the date of certification.

We live in a world of numbers, codes, and licenses. At some point in the employment process, you'll be required to submit some of this information, including Social Security Number, documentation of residency/work authorization status, and license and certificate numbers. Wait until this information is specifically requested before providing it to individuals and never include on your CV. While your CV should be detailed, you can avoid providing enough detail to make you a victim of identity theft! You will certainly list licenses and specialized certifications on your CV, just don't provide specific numbers, codes, or special identifiers.

5. Experience

Your experiences form the basis of your unique professional identity. Experiences, perhaps more than any other information on your CV, need to be formatted in such a way that draws attention to your particular strengths that apply to the position you are aiming for. The difficulty with the "experience" section is that you may not have any experience to add to their CV. Several of you went to college and then to medical school and then continued straight into your residency training. You may not have had yet a chance to 'work in the real world". Yes, you have been gaining "experience" during residency, but this still falls under "education".

There are many types of experience that are appropriate to include under experience in your CV. Moonlighting, medical volunteer work, mission trips, and any teaching or medically-related activity are all valuable experiences that demonstrate your value to an employer. You may not be receiving a paycheck, but that doesn't mean you aren't getting the experience. Don't shortchange the value of an activity or experience that is unique to you these are often the things that will make you stand out and help a potential employer not only remember you, but connect with you as well.

If you do have experience to fill into this section of your CV, format it the same way you did for your education. In this section, the four details you must

FIELD NOTES

"The first thing I always look for in a CV is if they are licensed in the state they plan on practicing. If they are not licensed, it would be nice to know if they have applied and when they sent in the application. This gives me an opportunity to discuss a realistic time frame of when they could start their practice in the community. This starts off our relationship with realistic expectations."

– *Jace Jones, CEO, Brownwood Regional Medical Center*

provide with each entry are: position/title, employer, location, and dates. As before, include start and end dates, listed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent first.

It is not necessary to include details and descriptions of your experience (or education) since your position/title will probably be self-explanatory. If it isn't or requires additional explanation, use bullets to list those details. You can also note specific responsibilities such as overseeing Advanced Practice Providers or teaching residents, etc.

There are multiple examples to follow in CV Samples – find one that suits you both in terms of your level of experience and your intended outcome. If you are seeking a faculty position, you'll certainly want to

characterize yourself as someone capable of carrying out the mission of your particular institution. Some institutions place great emphasis on teaching, while many others focus (sometimes exclusively) on research. It is a matter of institutional preference: find your fit.

NOTE: Some of you may not have traveled down the "traditional" education path; more than a few of you may have had a career before going into medicine. You will want to provide this part of your journey on the first page of your CV and title it "Previous Employment". This is important to because it will give potential employers some insight into who you are as a person and what life experiences you will bring to the table. Both are invaluable in creating the picture of who you are and why you are the right candidate for the position you are applying for.

FIELD NOTES



"Your CV should highlight the experiences that will help search committees feel confident that you are capable of exceeding the expectations of the job. I don't have time to search for the evidence I need to put you in front of patients."

– *Clinical Director, Family Practice*



QUICK TIPS

- | | |
|---|---|
| YES | NO |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Go from broad to specific: begin with the most relevant and typically the most current experiences you've had.○ Always play to your strengths. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Never begin with your first job out of high school.○ Don't provide excessive details and certainly don't be repetitive for each clinical experience. |

6. Publications and Presentations

The expectation that medical professionals publish and participate actively in their profession is widely regarded as the hallmark of how medical practice differs from jobs outside of medicine. Many residents have the opportunity to participate in research during their training, and this should be included in your CV. Use your program's preferred citation style to list research-based papers, poster presentations, grand rounds presentations, etc.

7. Additional Category Headings

Since there is no "industry" standard CV or a "one size fits all" format, there are multiple categories and details that can be included on a CV. While the categories we mentioned above are found on nearly every CV, there are certainly occasions when very detailed and specific information is relevant. For example, physicians applying for special grants or fellowships to provide for teaching or research opportunities abroad, an International Experiences category might be relevant. For individuals applying for grants or seed money, relevant research in the



funded area is particularly germane. You may have multiple categories on your CV but be aware that excessive or padded use of categories is not to your advantage. Bottom line: through intentional and deliberate attention to effectively using CV categories and descriptive content, you'll arrive at your necessary goal.

QUICK TIPS

YES

- Include all publications, but don't treat them all the same. Create a hierarchy and use subcategories to distinguish between publication and presentation types (peer-reviewed articles vs. newsletters, national conferences vs. local meetings).
- Make sure it's very clear what kind of presentation you gave (poster, invited address, etc.). Candidates have had offers rescinded because of unethically representing their work.
- Separate out your publications, presentations, posters, i.e. by using numbers or bullets and include adequate spacing so that the sections don't run together.
- Highlight your name in bold so that the reader can quickly see if you were an author, co-author, or presenter.

NO

- If you have been a prolific publisher, you don't need to begin each publication with your name. Just start with the title. If you've published with other authors, be sure to include their name(s) e.g. "with INSERT NAMES."
- Don't include work you don't want people to see.

The following list references additional category headings you may want to include in your CV. (Do not feel as though you need to incorporate every category; only those which apply to you).

- **Leadership**
- **Committees**
- **Memberships**
- **Affiliations**
- **Awards**
- **Honors**
- **Skills**
- **Languages**
- **Academic Achievements**
- **Publications**
- **Presentations**
- **Grants**
- **Scholarships**
- **Teaching**

Many of the terms represent slightly different ways of saying the same thing, for example, Academic Background and Education. Grouping key activities in meaningful categories draws attention to education, experiences, background, and scholarly activities. Take a quick look at the myriad of category headings and identify the ones that most represent you and your work.

We want to take a minute to mention "Service". In today's world, a greater emphasis and value is being placed on service activities in which residents

are not only "experts" but also participants. In this sense, service includes volunteer opportunities, experiences that extend out from the institution or discipline, along with those that are not related at all to the discipline. In those instances, service shows you understand the value of working with individuals different from one's self, that you value the community in which you will live and/or work, and that you have the capacity for empathy and communication.

Keep in mind, there is a difference between volunteer work experience and community service. As previously mentioned, you can include medical volunteer work under the experience section and indicate your position/title as "Volunteer Physician", whereas service activities might include public speaking engagements, service-learning experiences, and community involvement and engagement like Habitat for Humanity or Big Brothers-Big Sisters. In this interdisciplinary world, much can be said for experiences that enrich us as humans and that help connect us to individuals outside our hospital hallways. Employers are keenly aware that you have the intelligence to complete years of training to become a physician; what they are seeking are individuals who can communicate effectively and compassionately represent the mission and values of their organization. Service helps paint the total picture of who you are as a person, not just as a physician.

8. The Missing Link?

Question: Are there any particular sections that employers like to see on the CV that most people don't include? Answer: A personal section! (Especially if you are looking at relocating.) Employers like to see an area within your CV that shows your personal interests and hobbies and tells a little bit about you as a person. These are also good conversation starters and you will notice that these things often come up during the interview. Some people also include personal information in this section such as marital

status, children, birthplace, citizenship, visa status, etc. Employers like knowing these things about you because shows who you are as a person, not just as a doctor, and how you will fit into their organization and community for the long haul.



FIELD NOTES

“Aside from the CV being easy to follow and containing the standard training, education, and experience timeline, what really stands out to me on a CV are a candidate's hobbies. These are personal and not only speak to what a candidate would be most interested in within a geographical area, but offer the opportunity for members of the recruitment team and other providers to bond over shared interests. Hobbies often reveal the “whole person” - these details are crucial to finding the perfect blend of opportunity, location and work/life balance. Securing a long-term fit is a win/win for the team and the community served.”



– **Crissy Dale, Physician Recruitment Coordinator**
Community Health Systems

READ:

Formatting Tips

There are some universal basics to keep in mind when formatting your CV. Keep it short and sweet. Use simple fonts, such as Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman which are all easy to read. Do not use multiple font colors, as this can be distracting and employers will most likely print your CV in black and white anyway. Don't use a font size smaller than 10 or larger than 12 so that it is easy to read when printed, but but doesn't make the CV unnecessarily long. Using bold

fonts to highlight important details will help make them stand out but you don't want to get too cute and use a lot of italics, as that can make it difficult to read. Search committees appreciate attention to aesthetics and consistency.

Remember that the first page is the most important. If you are trying to fit your CV onto one page, or trying to keep it from flowing onto another, you can modify the margins to the “narrow” setting. If your CV extends beyond one page, include your last name and page number at the bottom of each page so that it is easy to keep in order.

Use formatting techniques such as bottom borders, to help clearly separate your sections. You can also bold the section headers and use a slightly larger font size.

Spacing also plays an important role in formatting. Do not use columns or tables to create your CV as it will make it much more difficult for you to modify in the future. Employers may also upload your CV into a database and formatting of columns and tables may not download correctly.

Consider taking copies of your CV with you to interviews, career fairs, and conferences. When you send your CV electronically, attach it as a .PDF file to your cover email as this will allow the recipient to view and save the file as formatted.

Some people include a photo, but honestly most people don't. If you do make sure that it is a professional photo and that you look like a professional! Wear a professional suit or your lab coat. Keep in mind that first impressions are important and a smile makes a great first impression.



The Job Search CV

The CV that you use for your job search is markedly different from the one you used during med school and residency in terms of both the content and the nature of your formatting. By the time you make it to the job market, topics such as coursework take a backseat to the clinical experiences with

Quick Tips:

As you've gone through medical school and residency, you've probably learned one indispensable fact – it's not only what you know, but whom you know. You've probably also learned that there are key players within your program and/or community, and these people are often those with whom you should share your CV.

It's never out of line to ask a mentor, advisor, or faculty member to review your CV and offer guidance on content and suggestions on areas which deserve greater attention. Remember to be sensitive to their time - give them a well-polished CV to review. There are important differences in what is expected on a CV depending on how you are using it and to which institution you are making an application. Find someone who is familiar with your goals to review your CV for relevancy.

In an ideal world, advisors and program mentors would require residents to submit their CV for an annual review throughout residency. If you are in a program that doesn't require this, consider doing this as an annual ritual for yourself to establish the practice of updating your CV on a regular basis.

which you've been occupied. Some of you reading this book will be applying to large teaching hospitals, while others prefer the environment and atmosphere offered at a small-town family practice. Both come with their rewards and challenges. Expect your CV to speak to the unique demands

of the position to which you're applying if you hope to make the final cut. Remember to work smarter, not harder: You can repurpose your job search CV to customize for fellowships, grant applications, promotions, presentations, etc.

Employers searching for someone to fill a clinical practice position will be looking at key points, such as where you have trained, where you went to medical school, are you licensed in their state, are you board eligible/certified, do you have any applicable experience? And then, what are your interests/hobbies? Is their location a good fit for you and your family? They are hoping to find someone who will be a long-term investment and not just practice for a year or two and then move on. Having these key pieces of information right from the start gives them a snapshot of you and increases the likelihood that they will reach out to you for an interview.



FIELD NOTES

"I look first at education and training, and then current professional affiliation (clinic and hospital) and working backwards to past jobs. Additional skills tied to the physician's specialty are good to know (like robotic trained, or G.I. with ERCP, etc.).

Listing licensure in Texas is great to highlight. I also glean valuable information from personal information about spouse, children with ages, and favorite activities outside of work.

I am far less focused on college affiliations (fraternity, student foundation, etc.), and I don't spend time looking at how many times the physician was published. I don't blame them for listing those publications, and they have a right to be proud, but it carries little weight in our candidate screening."

– **Michael D. Murphy, FACHE, CEO,
Abilene Regional Medical Center**



Those Who Can, Teach: Teaching, Research, and Academic Opportunities

For those of you hoping to be competitive based on your research and past experience, make sure that all relevant information is included. Graduates from large research institutions are at a distinct advantage because of their training. They often highlight their research skills immediately in the first section of their CV along with their clinical training. Astute researchers are well aware of the research requirements of the institution to which they're applying. When submitting your CV for consideration include research that might be particularly valuable to the hiring department. Also include relevant lab and clinical experience, and use annotated entries that highlight research skills, lab experiences, clinical populations, or settings which might be advantageous in your application.

Candidates looking to capitalize on their teaching experience or those who hope to land a position at an institution with an emphasis on teaching over

research, should likewise, emphasize experiences and interests relevant to teaching and student interaction. Activities such as peer tutoring, didactic or bedside teaching, and pre-clinical course grading should be featured prominently if you are pursuing an academic career that is heavily focused on teaching.

Applicants at institutions with a teaching mission should be prepared to demonstrate skills as researchers as well. Rarely are positions filled with individuals who possess only one skillset. Faculty at these institutions may also be required to fulfill more departmental committee obligations, work as undergraduate student advisors, provide specialized seminars, and provide education at community outreach. Know the intricacies of the role you are seeking before you throw your name into that ring.

FIELD NOTES

The most important attribute we want to see in an applicant for a resident faculty position, and that we look for in the application, is evidence of strong interest in teaching, particular teaching resident physicians and medical students. Academic teaching physicians generally aren't paid as well as clinicians who exclusively do patient care, and academic positions usually require longer hours associated with faculty administrative duties. For those reasons an applicant needs to possess a real passion for education and teaching if they are going to enjoy, do well, and survive in academic medicine. Evidence of that in their CV, personal statement, and references from colleagues is highly desirable.

Additionally, prior graduate medical education experience teaching medical students or residents is certainly helpful. This includes activities such as precepting student and resident providers in free clinics, their training clinics, or in the hospital. Seeing this prior experience not only indicates that they likely already have some degree of competence in education, but further demonstrates their passion for academic medicine.

– **Dr. John Manning, Family Medicine Residency Program, Baylor Scott and White**

Finally, as in all job searches, be sure you're familiar with the expectations and culture of the institution to which you're applying. The only way to know is to do your research and ask your advisors and mentors what advice they might have or what they might know about the institution. The better you know about the place you are applying, the more you can decide if the environment seems like a good fit. Then your CV can be crafted accordingly.

Additional Application Materials

As you begin to look for positions, you'll notice that just about every institution requests material be sent, uploaded, or forwarded to the search committee. Many employers require that applicants send letters of recommendation and/or reference letters. We recommend having these letters of recommendation ready to send when you submit your CV so that they don't have to wait long for your references.

With some employers, the recruiter will call your references for verbal recommendations and feedback on why you are the right fit for the position. But proceed with caution here. Never ask someone for a reference if you don't feel they will provide a good one. Take the time and ask each individual if they feel comfortable providing you with a strong reference, in general and for the specific position for which you are applying. If they say no, ask for feedback and then move on. If they are agreeable, be sure to respect their time with the following tips:

- Give plenty of notice for when the reference is due
- If the employer wants to speak with your reference, verify how they wish to be contacted
- Provide your reference with a copy of your CV! Just because they know you personally doesn't mean they know everything you've accomplished professionally or personally
- Be clear about what you are applying for and what your future career goals include

In addition, many institutions require multiple items to verify a candidate's full qualifications and potential for success. Searches are very costly and organizations are willing to make a major investment to get the right candidate. It's important that you communicate a consistent message in all the materials you send, starting with your CV and cover letter.

Here's a list of additional application materials that you may be asked to submit along with your CV:

- > Letters of reference
- > Explanation of gaps in CV, if applicable
- > Self-query report from National Practitioner's Database
- > Documentation on background history



Recommended Tool

Your Guide to Writing the Perfect Letter – Connecting Through Storytelling.

Use this tool to share your story and paint the picture of why you.

www.mdcareers/Ch10



Submitting Application Materials

One of the basic rules physicians need to follow is reading directions carefully. We've all heard horror stories about patients receiving wrong-side surgery or receiving devastating, but inaccurate, diagnoses. Applying for first attending position is one of the most important steps in your medical career; take the time to read the directions thoroughly!

Read all job postings and/or applications carefully and follow the directions exactly as they are written. Most employers today request that CVs and application materials be submitted electronically,



READ:

The Digital CV

More often than not, employers require that candidates submit application materials electronically, including: CVs, cover letters, and letters of recommendation, among other relevant materials. This is no surprise, considering the tremendous number of applicants that any position can draw. Electronic application databases allow committees to quickly scan and process the documents, providing a greater deal of

and you may be asked to upload to a secure application portal. If this is the case, don't call to see if they accept paper applications; by the same token, do not call the committee chair to ask if they accept applications electronically if they request that your dossier be submitted by mail. It would be devastating to miss out on your "dream" opportunity simply because you didn't follow directions.

You've come this far. You only have one chance to make a good first impression – whether it's on paper or in person.

If you're like most candidates, you'll apply to multiple positions. Use a tool you've likely mastered by now: organization. Keep your records straight. We recommend making separate folders, either physical or electronic, to store all your application materials. Once you are licensed, create another folder clearly labeled "licenses/board certification" so you know where your information is at a moment's notice. This will serve you well not only in applying for jobs but for the multitude of credentialing processes you will need to go through once hired. Your CV should remain relatively unchanged regardless of where you're applying with the exception of the minor tweak here or there to highlight this or that.



transparency while still upholding the highest levels of confidentiality. Not to mention, it's just easier to manage this enormous paper trail online. It's actually more likely that you'll be asked to share your CV digitally versus providing paper copies.

As you share yourself digitally, here are two critical recommendations:

1. Follow Instructions

It's not that hard, really, to just follow instructions – search committees and others rely on you to do just that. If they want three recommendations, send or upload three. Never send more or less than requested.

Upload documents with recognizable file names, typically using your last name, followed by document type:

- Dokks_Imma_CV
- Dokks_Imma_Coverletter



Ethics and Integrity

Honesty during the job search is imperative. Consider your career GAME OVER if you're caught embellishing the truth. Search committees are under greater pressure and more scrutiny than ever to make sure that the physicians they're hiring are who they say they are. After a series of scandals in the early years of the new millennia you can be pretty certain that just about every detail of your application materials – from dates to deeds – will be double checked by someone. Never forget this wise adage shared by a faculty member: "If you crawl out on that branch someone is going to cut it off." Don't go there. There are some trees you just shouldn't climb.

2. Share only PDFs of your Documents

Your CV is a grammarian's worst nightmare. When search committees open your Word document, anything might show up with a green or red squiggly line. Those red and green lines send messages to your brain – ERROR!

Your CV is formatted to the nines. Glue everything in place with a PDF. You'll be grateful you did. When not sent as a PDF, the formatting can become distorted and difficult to read.

You've come this far. You only have one chance to make a good first impression – whether it's format on paper or in person.



While the CV is not the place to list infractions against the law, it is important to maintain honesty and integrity in all materials. Chances are that the physician recruiter will do a background check once they receive your CV and cover letter. First things first, they will do a Google search on you and then check other databases to see if any red flags appear. Do your homework and search yourself to see what someone may find so that you are prepared to discuss any issues that arise.

Candidates can expect to submit paperwork authorizing a criminal background check. Most applications provide some area to list criminal offenses; make sure you're forthcoming with this information at the appropriate time. The time you peed in the bushes outside the student union will probably not bar you from an interview or even the job, but remember, some institutions have policies in which the intentional omission of criminal offenses, regardless of the severity, your candidacy is automatically denied.

- Be prepared to answer the following questions if they apply to you...
- Do you have any gaps/program changes in your training? Please explain.
- Do you have any gaps/changes in your work history? Please explain.
- Do you have any malpractice cases past, present or pending?
- Do you have any history of disciplinary suits, actions, or litigation, past or present?
- Has your license or hospital privileges ever be suspended or revoked?
- Have you been reported to the National Practitioner Data Base? Please explain.

Addressing CV Gaps

Employers are looking for consistency within your timeline and if there are any time gaps they will wonder why. If you took time off between undergrad and medical school and pursued another career, then you can easily show this in a previous employment section, separate from your experience section.

Knowing what you did during that time frame eliminates the gap. If there is a situation that you are unable to address on your CV, you will want to explain it in your cover letter. This can be done by including a one-liner such as, "As you can see on my attached CV, I took time off between medical school



and residency, during which time I took care of my sick grandparent" or "You will notice on my CV that it took me an additional year to complete medical school as I went on maternity leave between my second and third year".

International Applicants

Some institutions now require that candidates demonstrate a legal authorization to work in the United States as a condition of employment. Listing this information on your CV and cover letter saves

you and employers time. If you already have legal authorization to work in the US, by all means, share that with an employer.

Do your homework and search yourself to see what someone may find so that you are prepared to discuss issues.



READ:

Editing and Feedback

Just like in medical practice - there is no room for error on your CV. Again, remember your clinical training in medical school. The only way you mastered the art of crafting a clear, concise, yet detailed SOAP note was by seeking out and accepting constructive feedback. The same rules apply here. There are two key factors to consider on how you get that feedback for your CV. First, consider the source: Who is reviewing your CV? Asking someone who is in the type of position you are seeking will be very beneficial to see things from their perspective. They can provide insight into what a potential employer will be looking for and how to best craft your experiences to your advantage.

Second...consider the source! Do not seek feedback from someone who has been stagnant in their career or position for years. Seek out feedback from those who are role models as physicians, academicians, researchers, etc. and emulate the path you want to follow in your career. And remember, the most crucial part of getting feedback is receiving it graciously. Even if you are unpleasantly surprised at what you perceive as negative feedback, remember: that person's job is to look out for your best interests and help you succeed, not to make you happy. Choose wisely and be grateful that someone you

trust is taking the time to be supportive and honest with you now to save you potential embarrassment in the future.

Putting It All Together:

The Final Product

As we noted earlier, starting a CV from scratch can seem daunting. Remember the first time you wrote a SOAP note? Your hands likely trembled at the thought of getting something "wrong.". However, like you've been taught in crafting SOAP notes, if you follow some very basic rules, drafting a stellar CV is well within your skill set. The more you practice now as a resident by updating it regularly, the more proficient you will be in revising and providing it in the future. By putting the time and effort in now, you will be saving yourself energy in the future that you can spend on other more pressing (or more enjoyable!) tasks as you embark on your career as a physician.



Chapter Tool Box

The **CHAPTER TOOL BOX** consists of **RECOMMENDED TOOLS** featured throughout the chapter, along with additional resources and recommended links.

These tools will help you gain valuable insight about **CV Building for Physicians**.

YOUR GUIDE TO WRITING THE PERFECT LETTER – CONNECTING THROUGH STORYTELLING

www.mdcareers/Ch10

SAMPLE CVS

<http://md.careers/S-02>

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

<http://md.careers/S-03>





Chapter Bibliography

Congratulations on reading CV Building for Physicians!

NEXT STEP: Track your progress with THE TRACKER – an action plan for you to apply *CV Building for Physicians* lessons learned.

This step-by-step action plan consists of reading assignments, exercises, checklists, assessments and additional resources to help you transition from training into your work/life by making good, sound decisions.

To access your CV Building for Physicians TRACKER, go to md.careers/T9.

Adventures available. Across the country.



Private practice? Joined a group? Employment?

For a wide range of options, talk with a team that can offer a wide range of opportunities. We are one of the nation's leading operators of general, acute-care hospitals. Our affiliates own or operate 100+ hospitals in 18 states* and these locations can provide ideal environments for personal and professional success. Give us a call to find out more about our 700+ opportunities.



*as of July 2019



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