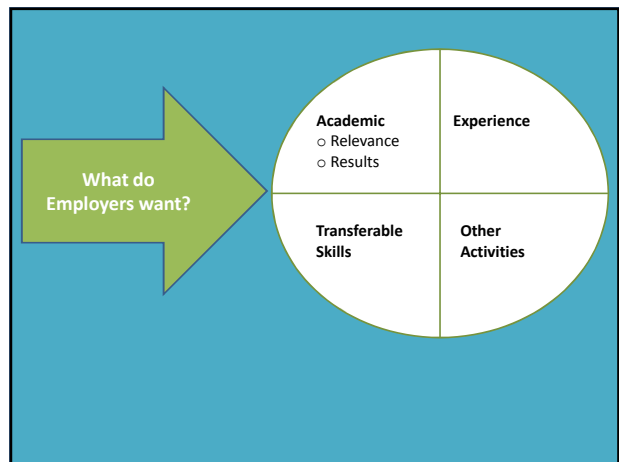




Agenda

- Getting started
- Developing a CV
- Writing a covering letter
- Online applications
- Questions



Transferable Skills

“They are skills that all study, work and careers have in common. Thus they serve as a bridge from study to work or from one career to another. Once you have demonstrated or mastered a skill in one career, you can easily transfer it from one job to another, from one field to another, from one career to another.”

Adapted from Nelson Bolles (1996)

Most Important Transferable Skills*

- Oral communication
- Time management
- Teamwork
- Presentation skills
- Ability to multi-task
- Managing one’s own learning
- Written communication
- Planning
- IT skills
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking

* Transferable Skills Project

Transferable Skills – Economics

- **Communication**
 - Presenting findings and explaining complex data
 - Contributing confidently in group discussions
 - Preparing written technical and non-technical materials
- **Numeracy**
 - Handling complex data presented in a numerical form
 - Applying mathematical and statistical analysis methods to the data;
- **Problem-solving**
 - Extracting relevant information, drawing conclusions and making logical recommendations
- **IT skills**
 - Using specialised software to analyse data
- **Time management**
 - Completing specific tasks within designated time frames
- **Analytical skills**
 - Analysing research methods, methodologies, data, conclusions and recommendations
 - Critically evaluating government policy and assessing performance against home and global economies

Why is your CV so important?

Your CV is important because....

- It is your 'sales brochure' - first contact with prospective employer – **20 SECONDS** is the likely read time!
- It is **YOU** until the employer meets you
- It has a critical role to play in getting you an interview and ultimately winning the job that you want

Before you start writing.....

- Why do you want this job?
- What is required to do this job well?
- What do you have to offer?
- How can you support your claims with compelling evidence?
- How can you tailor your CV to the employer's needs?

Analysing Job Adverts

1. Underline key words 2. Read between the lines 3. Transferable skills

EMPLOYER NEEDS

Communication

Initiative

Leadership

MY EVIDENCE

Conference Presenter

Group Home

Member of Cork Community Games

CONCRETE EXAMPLES

Delivered paper at Nursing Conference

New approach to housekeeping

Chaired a WG to review competition procedures

Job advert exercise

1. What is important to the company?
2. What sort of skills, competencies, personal attributes does the job **require**?
3. What other skills, competencies and personal attributes might be **desirable**?

At KPMG, we pride ourselves on being experts across Audit, Tax and Advisory. For clients, it means we can provide exceptional service. And for you, it means we're able to offer exciting graduate opportunities. Join the Advisory area of our business, and you'll find yourself part of a multi-disciplinary team that's never been more in demand.

In our Economics and Regulation practice, we use economic arguments supported with numbers to build compelling cases for our clients in disputes, in negotiations with regulators, and in discussions with the competition authorities. You'll be expected to put your economics knowledge to practical use to help our clients, on both projects and proposals, communicating findings that shape our clients' policies.

You can also look forward to a strong commitment to your development and many of the specialist areas within Advisory offer professional training. You'll need to be naturally ambitious and highly motivated, but we'll help you to develop the technical and personal skills you need to act as a trusted advisor to our clients.



Before you start writing.....

- Why do you want this job?
- What is required to do this job well?
- What do you have to offer?
- How can you support your claims with compelling evidence?
- How can you tailor your CV to the employer's needs?

1. Know yourself
2. Know the job
3. Know the organisation

What makes a good CV?

Characteristics of a good CV

- Good structure & presentation
- Tailored to what the employer is looking for
- Complete yet concise – 2/3 pages max
- Accurate/factual
- Contains strong active verbs
- Makes a positive first impression
- Gives the employer a reason to meet you

Format Guidelines

- Font size 11 or 12
- *Avoid funny fonts*
- Avoid **wordArt** and graphics
- Avoid abbreviations
- Make sure bullet points are the same size
- Check indentations and spacing are consistent
- Avoid large blocks of text
- Use **bold** for emphasis but don't overdo
- If sending electronically check that it also looks ok when printed

Sample CV structure

1. Personal details
2. Education
3. Employment History
4. Key skills Profile
5. Achievements / Interests
6. References

1. Personal Details

- Name across the top – the employer knows that it's a curriculum vitae!
- Footnote name on subsequent pages
- Keep this section brief & clear
- Address, telephone number, e-mail address
- Keep the e-mail address professional – 'bigcheese@hotmail.com' may not go down well!
- Usually don't need information on age, gender, marital status etc.

Personal Details - Example

Joe Bloggs

13 Park Road, Woodvale, Dublin 22

Tel: 087 88888888

E-mail: joebloggs@hotmail.com

Personal Profile

- Some people like to include a 'personal profile' or 'career objectives' section up front
- A well-written profile is a charm **BUT** it's easy to get it wrong
- Avoid generalisations and/or clichés
- Qualify your statements

Example Personal Profile – Good or Bad?

Hard-working, committed and ambitious I am passionate about the environment and aspire to making a difference. I am seeking a role that allows me to grow as a person and achieve my vision for a better future. While the EnviroServe website that I founded has not been as successful as I had hoped I know I have a lot to offer and would relish the opportunity to prove this.

2. Education

- Reverse Chronological order– most recent first
- Second level onwards
- Include:
 - From/to dates
 - Qualification
 - Grade achieved
 - Name of institution
 - Location (full address unnecessary)
 - Relevant subjects/modules
 - Projects, dissertations, placements if relevant

Education - Example

Education

Oct 2005 – Jun 2008

BSc. Psychology (2.1)
University College Dublin
 Modules included Counselling Psychology, Social Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Health Psychology.
 Final year Dissertation: "Negative stereotypes influence graduate career decisions."

Sept 2000 – June 2005

Leaving Certificate
St. Mary's Secondary School, Limerick.
 Higher: English (C1), Irish (B2), French (C3), Biology (B1).
 Ordinary: Chemistry (B2), Maths (A2)

3. Employment History

- Reverse chronological order
- Include:
 - Name and location of employer
 - Job title
 - From/to dates
 - Concise description responsibilities – not a list of all your duties
 - Highlight key achievements
- Highlight work experience examples that are most relevant for the job – you can use separate sections if you wish

Employment History - Example

Employment History

Sept 2009 – Sept 2010

Commercial Intern, Tesco

- Project-managed analysis of product placement on the shop floor and customer flow. Results were presented to the commercial manager and re-organisation of confectionary and deli goods took place as a result.
- Supervised staff on tills when full-time supervisors were on holiday. This involved developing staff rotas, maintaining cover in line with business needs and dealing with customer complaints.
- Organised a promotion of Fair Trade products and increased sales by 20%.
- Worked as a member of a team with challenging work-related targets to meet monthly. I exceeded my targets each month during my three-month contract.
- Developed an understanding of the need for close working relationships between all areas within the business such as commercial, HR, finance and logistics for the store to be successful.

4. Key Skills Profile

- Allows you to demonstrate the transferable skills that you can bring to the job
- Use strong, clear, concise language
- Tailor your Key Skills Profile to each application
- Remember to give evidence to support the skills you are highlighting

off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



offthemark.com
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Key Skills Profile – Example 1

- My track record in environmental conservation speaks for itself
- I am very organised with excellent attention to detail
- I have great communication skills and am empathetic to the needs and concerns of others
- I am an accomplished entrepreneur
- I can think on my feet and am flexible in the face of change.
- I have outstanding language skills (A2 in Leaving Certificate French)

Key Skills Profile Example 2

- Through routinely working in teams on laboratory, desk and field-based research I am well-versed in project management including planning, execution and evaluation
- Accustomed to manipulating and presenting various data using a range of ICT formats.
- The complex 'real-world' nature of Environmental Biology research has required me to be flexible and adaptable with the confidence and initiative to deal with the unexpected.
- Passionate about conservation of the environment and sustainability as evidenced in my voluntary work on conservation projects.
- Excellent business acumen developed through work in a Retail environment and entrepreneurship.

5. Achievements/Interests

- Opportunity to demonstrate that you are motivated to pursue other activities and develop new skills
- Keep it fairly concise and ideally focused on areas that are in some way relevant to the job
- Be conscious of the impression you are conveying – you may want to leave the pole-dancing out!
- Avoid generalisations – listening to music, going out etc.

Achievements/Interests - Example

Membership Secretary, UCD Ladies' Soccer League

- Through promotional activities turned a declining membership into a 20% increase in 2009/2010.
- Organised social events to develop team spirit and for social purposes.
- Have developed my understanding of teamwork and the importance of getting the right person for the right job: we had to reorganise player positions after a bad loss to maximise our strengths and minimise weaknesses.

Volunteer Assistant Environmental Scientist, Ghana

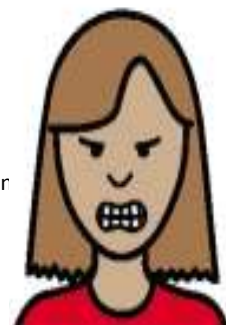
- Volunteered as an Assistant Environmental Scientist with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), based in Kumasi during the summer of 2010.
- I worked with a team of scientists undertaking field work, including the collection of soil samples from a range of environments.
- I performed laboratory work such as testing samples for soil fertility in order to monitor the level of soil and food crop contamination due to heavy metals in mining communities and providing suitable management recommendations.

6. References

- Don't necessarily have to include references unless requested
- If asked include two references
- Try to choose referees who you can trust to give you a glowing testimonial
- **BE SURE** to get permission before you quote someone as a reference

Recruiter's Pet Hates

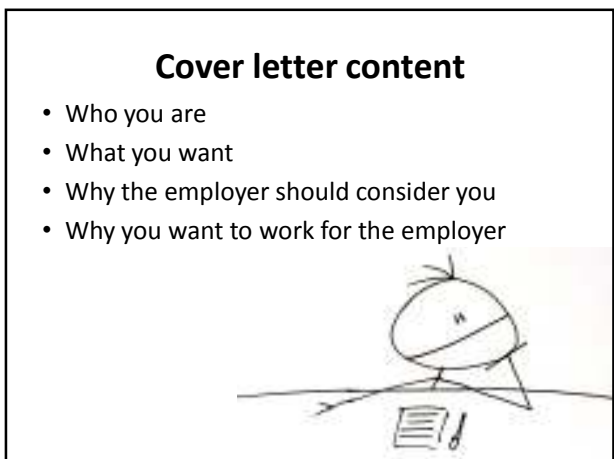
- Spelling mistakes/typos
- Clichés
- Incorrect grammar
- Txting lingo is nt gr8
- Busy format
- 'One size fits all' approach
- Irrelevant information
- Inaccurate information or just plain lying





Remember that spell check can't do everything.....

- Extra Circular Activities
- At secondary school I was a prefix
- In my spare time I enjoy hiding my horse
- I am a conscious individual.
- I have a desire to work with commuters
- Dear Madman
- My hobbits include - instead of 'hobbies'



Pitfalls

- Two common mistakes:
 - Writing a covering letter that is little more than a cover note
 - Reproducing the content of the CV in letter format.



Sample cover letter



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Online applications

- **ALLOW ENOUGH TIME!**
- Print the application form
- Draft your answers in Word
- Demonstrate a strong interest in the job/organisation
- Positive and enthusiastic
- Clear, concise, and within prescribed word limits



Competency-based questions:

Past performance is the best predictor of future performance

Competencies are behaviours that employees must have, or must acquire, to input into a situation in order to achieve high levels of performance

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

Common competencies

- Drive / Achievement Orientation
- Teamwork
- Commercial awareness
- Problem-solving ability
- Analytical thinking
- Initiative
- Flexibility
- Emotional intelligence

Example questions

- Think of a time when you have had to influence others to do something they were reluctant to do. What was the situation? How did you do it? What was the outcome?
- Achieved a goal
- Dealt with a challenging situation
- Had to meet a tight deadline
- Worked as part of a team
- Took the lead

Competency Examples

- Clear, concise tangible examples
- From course, work experience, extra-curricular
- Avoid generalisation and vague or espoused statements
- STAR
 - Situation
 - Task
 - Action
 - Result



Competency 'Scoring'

Teamwork

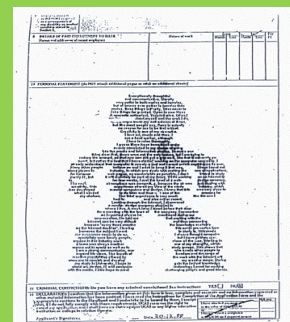
- Worked in conjunction with others to develop and work toward shared goals
- Exhibited cooperativeness when requests for help/support made by other team members
- Participated in and supports positive conflict resolution
- Put needs of the team ahead of personal needs
- Speaks positively of fellow team members

Competency 'Scoring'

- 5 Significantly exceeds expectations
- 4 Above expectations
- 3 Meets expectations
- 2 Below expectations / requires development
- 1 Significantly below expectations



Personal Statements



Personal statements

- Reasons for applying + other information relevant to the job specification, including your knowledge, skills and experience
- Must relate directly to the specifications of the job
- Address each point in the job specification in a clearly themed paragraph:
 - First sentence - short statement summarising how you meet or relate to the requirement
 - Follow with concrete example of the assertion(s) you have just made.
 - Final sentence - reflection that adds depth to the point you're making.

Example – Commitment to Equal Opportunities

- *'I have always tried to ensure in my personal and work life that I am sensitive to and inclusive of the cultures and circumstances of other people. In 2006, I worked as a mentor/facilitator to a group of students on the Aim Higher project to encourage pupils from non-traditional backgrounds to consider university. I designed projects and activities that recognised and focused on the diverse experience within the group to ensure participation. The programme was successful for the pupils and a rewarding learning experience for me. The experience showed me that working together with mutual respect is more productive and rewarding.'*

Make sure....

- You use language that conveys enthusiasm for both the role and the company
- You demonstrate that you have researched the company
- Highlight their strengths as an employer (without being sycophantic....)



Questions



Resources

www.ucd.ie/careers

Career Development Centre Resources

- Quick Query
- Guidance appointments
- 'Profiling for Success' psychometric tools
- Graduate job and internship vacancies
- Workshops
 - Developing your CV
 - Interview preparation
 - Career planning
- Employer visits