



# **Crafting Your Curriculum Vitae**

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# Contents

<b>CV versus Resume .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Preparation .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Structure .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Process.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Key Action Verbs .....</b>	<b>5</b>

The Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a vehicle for presenting your qualifications and accomplishments. Its contents outline an individual's lifetime of relevant achievements, not just previous jobs and education.

## CV versus Resume

**International.** When applying for international opportunities, it is important to determine what is preferred – a CV or a resume. Each country has specific expectations -- far too numerous and diverse to cover in this document. Instead, Center for Career & Life Planning offers an online resource for country-specific requirements: GOINGLOBAL. This resource covers career-related information for over 30 countries plus major cities in Canada and the United States. To use GOINGLOBAL:

1. Visit the Center for Career & Life Planning website: [www.rollins.edu/careercenter](http://www.rollins.edu/careercenter)
2. Login to your Handshake account (call Center for Career & Life Planning with questions about your Handshake account)
3. Select Resource Library, then search for Online Resources and select GOINGLOBAL
4. Click on the appropriate country to see its specific Resume/CV Guidelines

**Academia.** Some graduate school applications require a CV; some require a resume. To be sure that you submit the correct document, pay careful attention to each program's requirements as defined through their website or materials.

In both the CV and the resume, there are four essential elements.

1. **Accuracy.** The content must be as accurate as possible, avoiding misleading statements or exaggeration. At the same time, vivid language should be used in order to create a lasting mental image. One important aspect of accuracy is the inclusion of the month and year that each experience began and ended.
2. **Consistency.** Consistency increases readability and visual appeal, motivates the reader to read further, and illustrates the writer's attention to detail and quality presentation. Some tips for maintaining consistency include:
  - Use standard fonts (10-14 point for sans serif fonts; 11-16 point for serif fonts)
  - Avoid templates that limit your formatting and design options. Templates are difficult to format and are not necessarily a good fit for you and your unique experiences.
  - In Experience, Activities, and similar sections, maintain consistency across the type and order of information you list. Be sure to consistently include all of the following four elements:
    - a) employer or organization
    - b) city and state
    - c) your title
    - d) dates you held the position or appointment
  - Maintain the same style for each of your section headings. For example, if you choose to use **BOLD ALL CAPS** for your headings, verify that each heading fits your **BOLD ALL CAPS** design choice.
  - Align similar elements consistently. If dates are aligned at a 4.5" tab stop, verify that each date is aligned at that tab stop.
  - Use the TAB key rather than the SPACE bar. Space widths vary as do letter widths (notice the width of an "i" compared with the width of an "w"). Using the space bar results in inconsistent alignment. When arranging the elements of your resume, the tab key assures consistent alignment.
3. **Focus.** Determine your goal. The goal you establish for your document will help you decide what to include and what to leave out. When in doubt about whether or not to include an item in your CV, think about its relevance to your goal. Tailor each CV to fit the opportunity you are targeting.
4. **Quantifiers.** Your CV is strengthened by numbers. If you can, include numerals that illustrate your impact, accomplishments, and the scope of your abilities (see the following example from a sample CV):

### EXPERIENCE

**Rollins Office of Residential Life**, Winter Park, FL

*Resident Assistant*

August 2011 – Present

- Support academic, social, and personal development of 35 first-year students
- Counsel students on roommate issues, homesickness, and other adjustment concerns

# Preparation

Begin by establishing and maintaining a complete record of your experience, including internships, work experience, leadership/involvement activities, research experience, etc. In this record, be sure to include:

- Company or organization name
- city and state location
- your title
- start date (month and year) as well as end date (month and year)
- detailed information about your efforts, impact, and accomplishments in the form of bullet statements that begin with a descriptive action verb

This record also includes any academic awards, professional achievements, publications, presentations, recognitions, and collegial activities. Be sure to record the important details of each, including dates and locations.

A *targeted CV* is a document that is judiciously assembled from this complete record.

# Structure

**Identification / Heading.** The heading is located at the top of the first page and should include your name (using a larger font size, all caps, bold, and/or italics to emphasize your name) and contact information (address, telephone number, and email). Remember, an employer may call at any time, so:

- list a phone number where you can be reached and where you will receive messages
- record a professional greeting for your voice mail
- if you do not already have one, get an *appropriate* email address – as professional and simple as possible

**Objective.** An objective is not necessary in a CV/resume you submit for graduate program admission. The objective is a focused statement that informs the reader exactly what you're applying for and what skills are most relevant to that opportunity. Since the resume/CV is submitted as part of a graduate school application packet, its objective is obvious.

**Education.** Academic degrees earned after High School are listed on the CV in reverse chronological order.

List the degree(s) you are currently pursuing, complete with:

- The title of the degree, spelling out Bachelor's degrees fully (e.g., Bachelor of Arts)
- Academic discipline
- Institution
- Location (city and state)
- Expected date of graduation (month and year)

List all degrees you have earned previously, complete with

- The title of the degree, spelling out Associate's and Bachelor's degrees fully (e.g., Associate of Arts)
- Academic discipline
- Institution
- Location (city and state)
- Date of graduation (month and year)
- Thesis / Dissertation title or topic

Optionally, you can add information such as:

- Relevant coursework (coursework relevant to the program for which you are applying)
- Areas of concentration in graduate study
- GPA (if included, GPA should be included consistently across degrees -- and only if it is 3.0 or above)

**Relevant Experience.** Detail your relevant experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first). Begin with the four elements essential to each Experience listing:

- 1) employer (or organization)
- 2) city and state
- 3) your title, and
- 4) the dates you held the position or appointment (start month and year as well as end month and year)

Next, use bullet statements that begin with a strong action verb to describe your achievements, approach, and goals. The list provided at the end of this packet, Key Action Verbs, is an excellent source of descriptive verbs you can use to start your bullet statements!

**Additional Categories.** CV style, format, and content may vary by discipline. It is important to know the requirements of your career field when composing a CV. Research discipline-specific requirements by:

- Visiting the website for the department you are targeting
- Visiting websites for professional organizations affiliated with your career field
- Seeking guidance from advisors or faculty members in your chosen field

Your research may reveal a need for additional categories on your CV. Some examples of common categories are:

- |                      |                           |                                                  |
|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| • Education          | • Consulting Experience   | • Academic Accomplishments                       |
| • Experience Summary | • Course Highlights       | • Academic Awards, Scholarships, and Fellowships |
| • Field Study        | • Honors and Affiliations | • Committee Involvement or Leadership            |
| • Field Work         | • Language Competencies   | • Foreign Study / Travel Abroad                  |
| • Publications       | • Outreach                | • Internships or Graduate Practica               |
| • Related Experience | • Principal Teachers      | • Professional and Association Memberships       |
| • Research Awards    | • Research Interests      | • Professional Competencies                      |
| • Senior Thesis      | • Service                 | • Professional Licenses and Certifications       |
| • Teaching Interests | • Special Training        | • Professional Papers and Presentations          |
| • Technical Skills   | • Workshop Presentations  | • Teaching / Research Assistantships             |

## Process

**Brainstorm.** Start with the categories listed above and simply brainstorm; list everything you can think of within each category. Give it all you've got -- *without judging or editing* -- until you have a comprehensive list. When applying for an academic program, research the institution and the program thoroughly, looking for key words and phrases to include.

**Rank Order.** Using the information from your brainstorming session, begin to sort information into rank order. Evaluate categories by relevance to the program for which you are applying. Leave the least relevant for last, or eliminate sections (or items) completely if they do not significantly add to your CV. Remember to maintain reverse chronological order of your listings within each category.

**Edit.** Let the focus of the CV be your guide. Consider each item for inclusion based on its ability to strengthen your CV and, subsequently, your candidacy. Make the difficult decisions to eliminate information that does not enhance your CV.

**Finalize.** When you have assembled your CV, review it carefully to ensure that it is well-organized, packed with relevant information, and free from errors. Consult with a Center for Career & Life Planning professional for critique and recommendations for improvement.

# Key Action Verbs

Your resume must be action-oriented in order to catch the reader's eye. Listed below are a few ideas to help you get started.

## Communication Skills

Advertised	Contacted	Facilitated	Negotiated	Proofread
Arbitrated	Corresponded	Informed	Notified	Publicized
Authored	Demonstrated	Interpreted	Presented	Published
Clarified	Drafted	Mediated	Persuaded	Translated
Composed	Edited	Moderated	Promoted	Wrote

## Creative Skills

Built	Constructed	Directed	Generated	Performed
Composed	Created	Established	Initiated	Piloted
Conceived	Designed	Formulated	Invented	Planned
Conceptualized	Developed	Founded	Launched	Produced
			Originated	Revised

## Helping & Counseling Skills

Advised	Assessed	Collaborated	Encouraged	Mentored
Advocated	Assisted	Counseled	Guided	Represented
Aided	Coached	Diagnosed	Inspired	Served
		Directed	Led	Supported

## Leadership Skills

Achieved	Effectuated	Headed	Led	Presided
Clarified	Enhanced	Improved	Marketed	Recommended
Decided	Exceeded	Inspired	Motivated	Succeeded
Delegated	Excelled	Instigated	Participated	

## Management & Organizational Skills

Administered	Controlled	Engineered	Increased	Procured
Arranged	Correlated	Evaluated	Maintained	Provided
Assembled	Determined	Executed	Managed	Scheduled
Completed	Directed	Expanded	Planned	Solved
Conducted	Eliminated	Implemented	Prepared	Supervised

## Research Skills

Analyzed	Compared	Experimented	Interviewed	Studied
Clarified	Contrasted	Explored	Investigated	Summarized
Coded	Evaluated	Inquired	Reported	Surveyed
Collected data	Examined	Interpreted	Reviewed	

## Teaching Skills

Advised	Conducted	Evaluated	Illustrated	Mentored
Assessed	Demonstrated	Explained	Informed	Planned
Clarified	Developed	Facilitated	Instructed	Trained
Coached	Educated	Guided	Led	Tutored

## Technical Skills

Analyzed	Calculated	Developed	Maintained	Programmed
Budgeted	Computed	Financed	Manipulated	Repaired
Built	Correlated	Handled	Operated	