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career services

Vienna School of International Studies



*Your home & anchor
after graduation*

Application Workshop: CVs, Cover Letters and Interviews 101

Diplomatische Akademie Wien – Vienna School of International Studies, 7 October 2020





You are not alone!
(Michael Jackson)



Time is of the essence!
(Mr. Spock)



I'm only human after all!
(Rag 'n' Bone Man)

1st step: Initial screening concerning formal requirements

2nd step: Basic screening concerning professional requirements



1st step: Initial screening concerning formal requirements

2nd step: Basic screening concerning professional requirements

3rd step: Thorough screening concerning professional requirements

4th step: Interview process / assessment centre

What HR professionals are looking for first ...

- Was the application deadline observed?
- Were the formal requirements met?
- Are there any obvious mistakes?

General issues to consider

- Read information in job ads carefully!
- Do not wait until the last minute to apply!
- Do not send unusual or very large files!
- Stick to truth and reality!



What is a CV?

- Your personal business card to pass employer's first screening
- Fully comprehensible within 10 to 20 seconds
- More appealing than the CVs of your competitors
- Demonstration of your professionalism
- Updated on a regular basis

- **In a nutshell: short, precise, no story-telling**

What is a CV not?

- A history of your past
- A personal statement on opinions and beliefs
- Some sort of creative self-expression

Important issues

- Length (one page per 10 years of professional experience)
- Formatting / design (easy to read, consistent spacing, columns aligned)
- Proofreading (no typos, ...)



Curriculum vitae

name: _____
born: _____
nationality: _____
citizenship: _____
address: _____
tel. _____
e-mail: _____

Education:

2006 Bachelor of philosophy ([University], Faculty of Arts, [City])
2009 Bachelor of International Relations + European studies ([University], [City])
2006 Master of the Xyz language and literature ([University], [City])
2008 Master of political science ([University], [City])
2009 Master of International Relations ([University], [City])
ongoing studies:
2011/09 – at present Ph. D. studies of International Relations at [University] (Faculty of Social Sciences) – specialization at conflict resolution in Sub-Saharan Africa

Languages:

English – Certificate of Proficiency in English – CPE (2010, C2)
Spanish – Basic State Exam (2008, B2)
French – intermediate (university courses, a course in the Alliance Française)
German - basics
Czech – mother tongue
Swahili – basics

PC:

MS Office, MS Project, MS Visio, MS Sharepoint, Internet Explorer, a range of specialized financial & bank software, Balsamique, CamStudio, SQL basics, XML basics, RQM, QC

Work experience:

2012 – 2015/08 Application Managers Team Leader [Country], [City]
responsibilities:

- leading a team of 11 experts in product development area - Accounts dept.
- the experts cover product/application development and maintenance, processes and methods
- team development (managing tasks, results, development of skills and capabilities of the team members)

2008 – 2009: external analyst / [Company]/

- temporary job, e. g. an analysis of the world food crisis 2008
- cooperation in creating development policies for the projects (public private partnership, build operate transfer - in cooperation with UNEEC, UN/ECE PPP Alliance)

Voluntary work:

UNICEF in [country] – various work, help to promote UNICEF and sell charity goods in the stand (at present)
Red Cross [country] (water rescue service) during studies (+ licensed life-guard)

Other:

Driving licence B (US: C)
Member of Mensa

Hobbies:

sport, puzzles, music

Education:

2006 Bachelor of philosophy ([University], Faculty of Arts, [City])
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2006 Master of the Xyz language and literature ([University], [City])
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- cooperation in creating development policies for the projects (public private partnership, build operate transfer - in cooperation with UNEEC, UN/ECE PPP Alliance)



NAME Citizenship:
address · 📧 · @

EDUCATION

Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, Vienna, Austria
Exchange Student 2014-2015

The Xyz School, Xyz University, Xyz, USA
M.A. Law and Diplomacy, Specialisation: _____ May 2015
Coursework: _____

Xyz School, Xyz University, Xyz, USA
Visiting Student 2013-2014

Xyz University, Xyz, USA
B.A. with Honors, Political Economy May 2011

WORK

University Xyz – Xyz Center, Mumbai, India 2014
Visiting Research Fellow

- Conducted original research on World Bank, economic development, property rights, and public-private partnerships
- Interviewed United Nations field officers, European Union's Business and Technology Centre, and US/British embassies

Xyz University, Xyz, USA 2013 - 2014
Emerging Powers Policy Forum – Steering Committee Representative

- Chosen to represent students at The Xyz School on British high commission's research for BRIC countries
- Developed consulate's communication strategy for Boston-wide programming for German Marshall Fund programme

Xyz Organisation, Xyz, USA 2012 - 2013
Project Specialist

- Drafted strategic plan for region to raise \$7.4 million and hire 350 teachers in low-income schools
- Stewarded relationships with board of advisors and donors (e.g. Bush Family Foundation, Perot Foundation)
- Managed \$1M operational budget

Xyz International Organisation, Xyz, Netherlands 2011 - 2012
Membership Coordinator

- Drafted 2012-2013 strategic plan of the Staff Union Council to address budget deficit
- Edited and designed publication for 10th anniversary of
- Produced reports on international labor law, UN common systems, ILOAT/UNAT jurisprudence
- Drafted official policy, speeches, memoranda, and reports for Staff Union President

Xyz Program, Xyz, Xyz 2009 - 2011
Peacebuilding Institute Coordinator, International Fellow

- Developed and implemented research institute with local NGO to bring international university students to Xyz for seminar with local students on topic of peacebuilding and good governance
- Edited all major publications and grants to USAID/German Fund donors

Xyz University, Xyz, USA 2007-2011
Honors Thesis Writer, Research Fellow

- Wrote 160-page thesis on transnational political economy and media

OTHER

Language: English, Hindi/Urdu, Spanish, American Sign Language, German

Technical: MS Office, Mac, XML, HTML, Adobe InDesign

Honors: Toyota Community Scholar (2007-2011), National Merit Scholar (2007-2011)

The Xyz School, Xyz University, Xyz, USA

M.A. Law and Diplomacy, Specialisation: _____

May 2015

Coursework: _____

Xyz School, Xyz University, Xyz, USA

Visiting Student

2013-2014

Xyz University, Xyz, USA

2013 - 2014

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Name ([Nationality])

@ [E-mail]

☎ [Phone]

ACADEMIC STUDIES

20__ - 20__
[City], [Country]
www.someuni.edu

Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, University of Vienna
Master of Advanced International Studies (MAIS)
Focus on _____

20__ - 20__
[City], [Country]
www.someuni.edu

[University]
Master of Arts in International Relations
Focus on _____

20__ - 20__
[City], [Country]
www.someuni.edu

[University]
Bachelor of Arts in International Law
Focus on _____

WORK EXPERIENCE

01|20__ - 02|20__
[City], [Country]
www.somejob.com

JCS "Executive Direction of Organizing Committee of the 7th Winter Asian Games"
Chief Media Relation Expert
Prepared a complete database of accredited domestic/foreign mass media; scheduled briefings and press-conferences; coordinated the work of press-centre; provided daily report and information of games

11|20__ - 12|20__
[City], [Country]
www.somejob.com

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Protocol Department
Volunteer – OSCE Summit
Drew up table of Heads of Foreign Delegations; prepared arrival/departure schedule; assisted in preparing daily report to Chief of Protocol and Foreign Minister

01|20__ - 03|20__
[City], [Country]
www.somejob.com

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Multilateral Cooperation Department
Intern
Annotated verbal notes; assisted in preparation of reports to the Committee of International Information; prepared official letters; managed administrative tasks

07|20__
[City], [Country]
www.somejob.com

UNDP [Country], Finance Unit and Procurement Unit
Volunteer
Archive; administrative tasks

KEY SKILLS

Computer Skills

Competency in Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point

Languages

Russian (Mother tongue), English (fluent)

Personal Skills

Developed and organized systems for administrative tasks
Piano player; Professional Dancer in Ballroom and Latin American Dances

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Member of [Country] Student Society in Austria
- Participant in organization of charity event "Together for a Safer World"- dedicated to children affected by Nuclear Test in [Place]

ACADEMIC STUDIES

20__ - 20__
[City], [Country]
www.someuni.edu

Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, University of Vienna
Master of Advanced International Studies (MAIS)
Focus on _____

20__ - 20__
[City], [Country]
www.someuni.edu

[University]
Master of Arts in International Relations
Focus on _____

20__ - 20__
[City], [Country]
www.someuni.edu

[University]
Bachelor of Arts in International Law
Focus on _____

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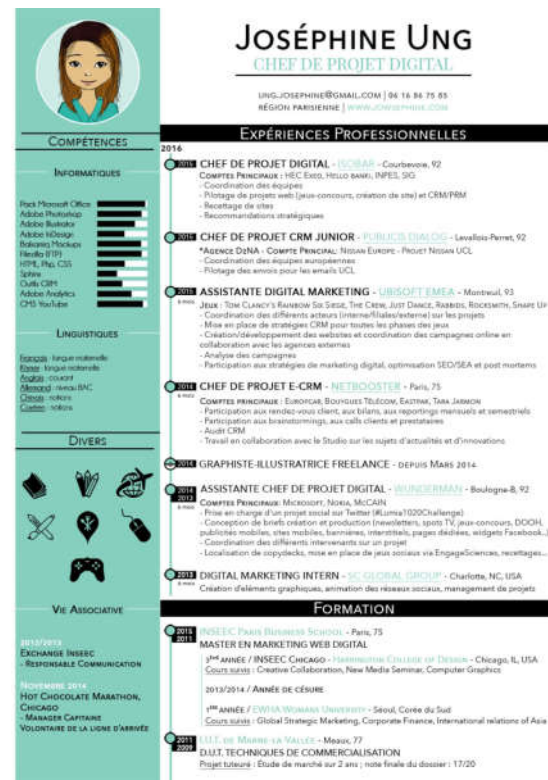
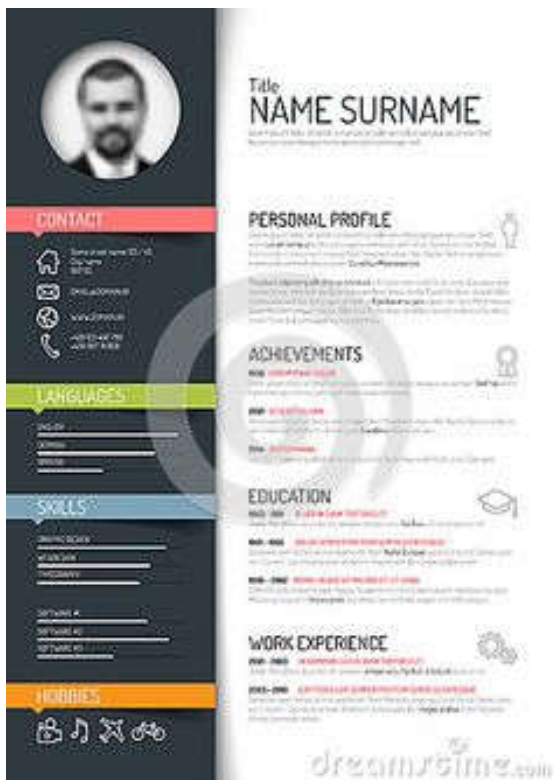
Languages

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Personal Skills

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Obligatory elements

- Personal details
 - Contact: name, @, ☎, ✉ (?), social media profiles (?)
 - Additional information: date of birth (?), citizenship (?), marital status (?)
- Education
 - Degrees, name of institution, location, date of (expected) graduation
 - When applicable: GPA, major/minor fields, honours, publications, projects
 - High school (?)

Obligatory elements

- Experience
 - Work experience (name of company, position, dates)
 - List roughly 3 important tasks, accomplishments, or skills gained at each job
 - Use action words to describe your achievements
- Key Skills
 - Include software / IT systems, especially when related to position
 - Language skills including level (beginner, intermediate, proficient, fluent)
 - List any other skills you have that relate to the job but are not included elsewhere



Optional elements

- Photo
 - If yes, then professional!!!
- Objective
 - State your desired job field, and what you hope to accomplish in that field
- Profile
 - Summary of your skills, experience and goals
- Extracurricular activities
- Interests and hobbies
 - If related to position (to prove that you are a team player, competitive, ...)

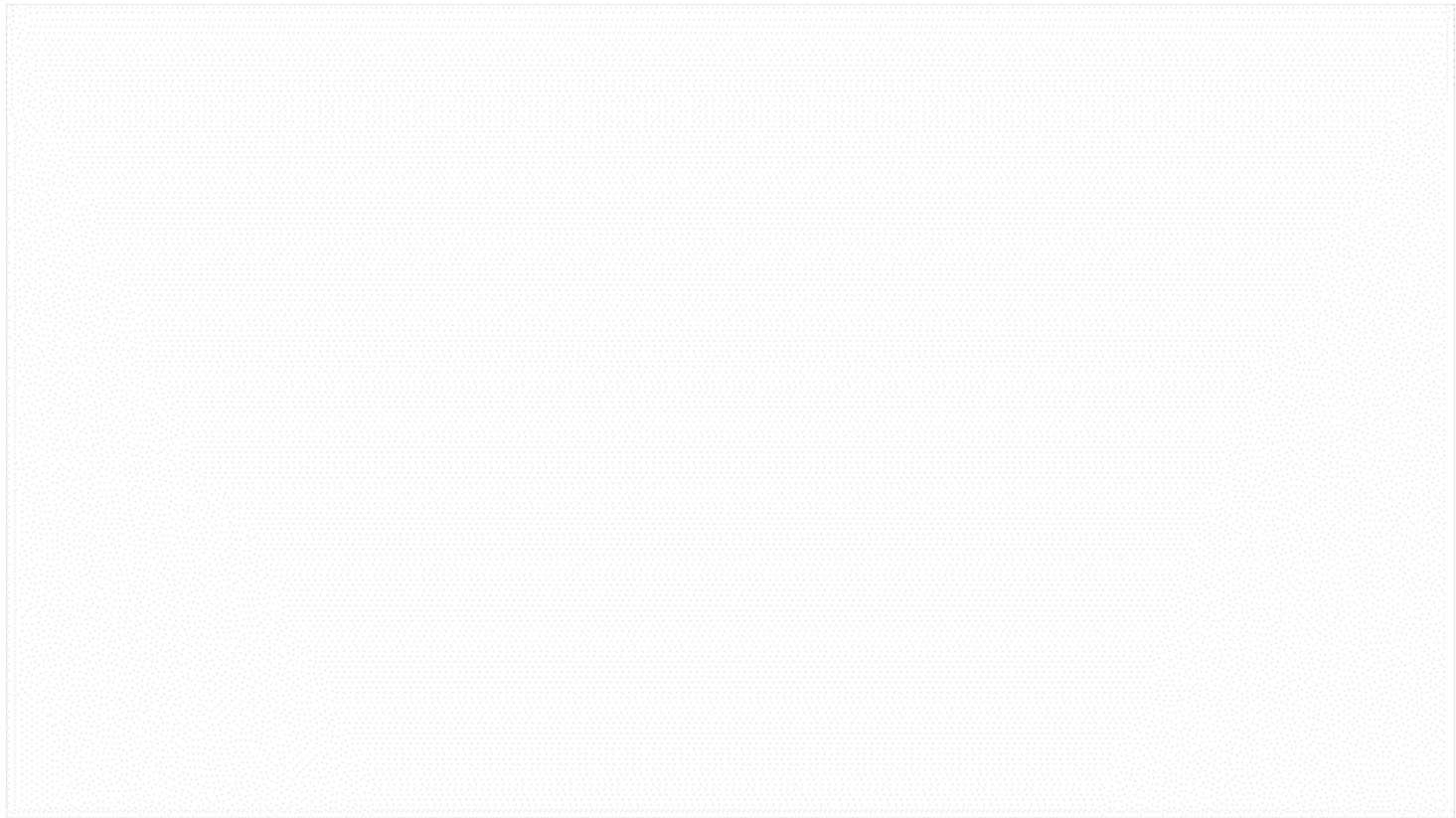


“Interviewers favor applicants who remind them of themselves.”

“Scanning the resume, his face lit up as he saw Sarah’s extracurricular pursuits. ‘She plays squash. Anyone who plays squash I love,’ he said smiling, and immediately ranked her first.”

*Lauren Rivera,
Assistant Professor of Management and Organizations,
Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University*

Source: https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/hirable_like_me



Source: https://youtu.be/XeuQrK_DEXk





What is a cover letter?

- Explain ...
 - how you found out about the offer
 - why you are interested in this particular job / internship
 - why this field of work / organisation appeals to you
- Answer ...
 - to the needs / requirements of the employer
(read the ad “between the lines”, find out who they are really looking for)



- Describe ...
 - who you are and how you do things
 - what your skills are and what you can do for the employer
 - your skills and experience by giving examples
- Announce ...
 - from when on you will be available
 - what you expect from the job / internship
 - when and how you will follow up (when appropriate)



- Do not ...
 - duplicate your CV
 - enumerate what you did when and where
 - include pictures and links
 - copy earlier cover letters – each letter is unique!
 - write more than one A4 page



Structure

- Contact details / letterhead
- Date
- Addressee (name, organisation, function, address)
- Reference / greeting
- Introduction
 - Explain what you are applying for and how you found out about it
 - Explain the reasons for your interest and what appeals to you



Structure

- Middle part: YOU
 - Explain how the experiences listed in your CV demonstrate your qualifications by identifying your most relevant skills or experiences (see job ad!)
 - Refer to relevant elements of your background (education/coursework, activities, experience, leadership) and use specific examples
 - Explain how your education, experience and skills might be of use to the organisation in this particular job
- Conclusion
 - Reiterate your interest in the employer and position
 - Focus on next steps







Competency-based approach

- Questions concern past achievements or failures
- Provide concise, specific, well explained and most relevant answers – PREPARATION!
- Do not avoid mentioning past failures but demonstrate what you have learned

STAR Technique

Situation

Task

Action

Result

CAR Approach

Context

Action

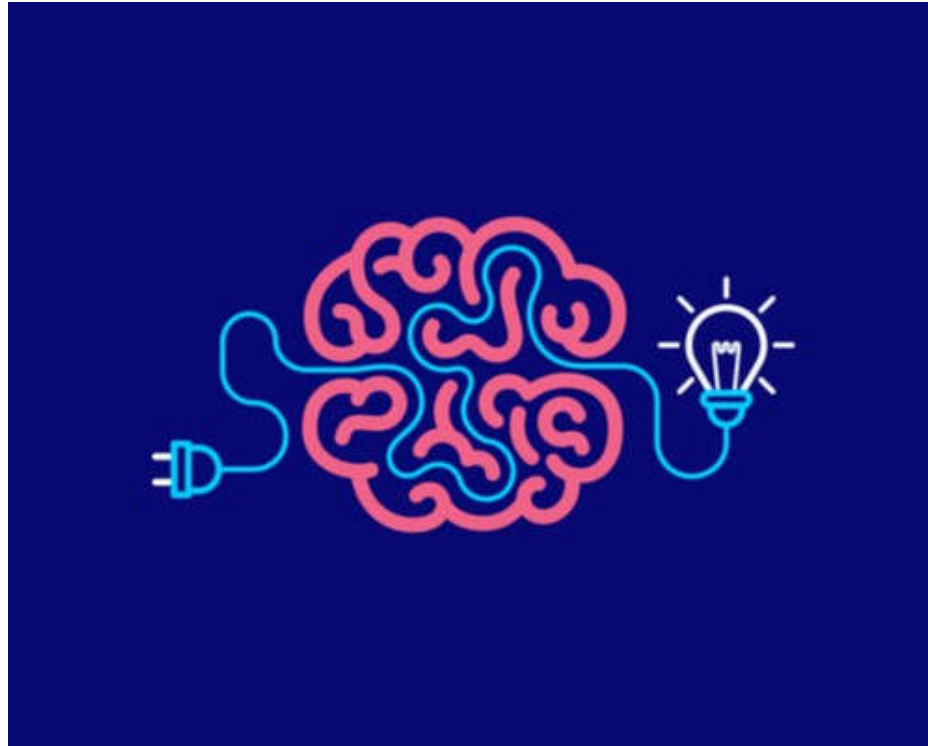
Result



The Guardian logo, featuring the word "theguardian" in white lowercase letters inside a dark blue circle.A small, faint version of the Guardian logo in the top right corner of the orange background.

Source: <https://youtu.be/ojMt2ktJEyQ>





Andreas Ehrmann

Education ~ Political Science, University of Vienna (1999-2008)

Professional experience

- ~ Compulsory military service (1998-99)
- ~ Content Manager / journalist, News Network (2000-2004)
- ~ Ski instructor, Ski and Snowboard School Zell am See (2005-2010)
- ~ Airline Security Supervisor, LIS / ICTS Europe (2007-2017)
- ~ Press and Information Officer (traineeship), MFA Austria (2007-2008)
- ~ Alumni Officer ... Head of Development, DA Wien (2009-...)





Time is of the essence!
(Mr. Spock)



You are not alone!
(Michael Jackson)



I'm only human after all!
(Rag 'n' Bone Man)



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da.link career counselling

Tuesday, 11.00-12.30 & 13.30-15.00 h @ Kaunitzzimmer or via ZOOM

Sign up at career@da-vienna.ac.at

da.link career talks/lunches

Wednesday, 12.00-13.00 h

da.link career skills

Seminars and workshops starting in October 2020

Sign up at <https://career.da-vienna.ac.at/Sign-up>





Andreas Ehrmann

Head of Development Department,
ClubDA Secretary General
andreas.ehrmann@da-vienna.ac.at



Katharina Dück

Development Officer
katharina.dueck@da-vienna.ac.at



Martina Sebastian

Development Officer
martina.sebastian@da-vienna.ac.at



Domenica Woltran

Development Officer
domenica.woltran@da-vienna.ac.at



Roswitha Strampfer

ClubDA Secretary
club@da-vienna.ac.at



Thorstein Gaissbauer

IT Admin
it-support@da-vienna.ac.at

