

CV Writing Workshop

Mohammad Ahmadpanah

mohammad.ahmadpanah@chalmers.se

<https://smahmadpanah.github.io>

Sep 14, 2022



What is a Curriculum Vitae? (or why are you here?)



What is a Curriculum Vitae? (or why are you here?)

- Something for **initiating** a conversation with an employer (or a professor) to apply for a **specific** position
- A simple, clear, concise document that *sells* you
- Answer the following questions:
 - How could I sell myself?!
 - Can I do that in 30, 40, or at most 70 seconds?
 - How many pages do I need to do so?
 - Should I provide more than one version?
 - Oh, I won the swimming trophy when I was 7. Which section is the best place to bring it in my CV?

Are they different things?

- CV
 - long, covers your entire career, static
- Résumé
 - short, no particular format rule, highly customizable
- LinkedIn profile
- GitHub/Stack overflow/Quora
- Personal webpage
- ...



Main structure

- Personal information
- Education/research interests
- Work experiences
- Skills
- Honors and awards
- Other activities (voluntary, extra curricular,...)
- References
- ...



Personal information

- Name
- Contact information
 - Phone number [holding music]
 - Email address(es) [e.g., ilikechocolate1378@hotmail.com]
 - Physical address
 - Webpage [You just download my CV from there!]
 - Social media accounts
- Photo? [Eastern Europe/Iran?]
- Age/date of birth? Height? Weight?
- Marital status? Number of children? Their names?
- Nationality? Religion? Political tastes? ...

Education

- **High School and University**
 - Names
 - Degree
 - Duration [expected]
- **GPA**
 - Two last semesters
 - Specific/related courses
 - Thesis
 - Supervisor
 - Minor
 - Rank



Work/research experiences

- *Recent* and *Related* ones first
- Paid and unpaid jobs (internships/trainings)
 - Company name
 - Job title/position
 - Tasks
 - Impressions (positive, quantified)
 - Duration
 - Reason of leaving (optional)



Skills

- **Categorized**
 - Languages
 - Programming languages
 - Tools
 - Operating systems, Databases, Typesetting,...
- **Proficiency**
 - Familiar, Professional, Expert, Creator
- **Related and Recent ones**
 - Adobe Premiere for an applicant of CS PhD position?
- **You will regret if you put items you just heard about!**



Interests and hobbies

- “I jog at park every evening” – put it or not?
- Some European and American companies might consider it as positive characteristics,

Only use this section if you’ve had extra space (have you?)

- “Hanging out with friends”
- “Sharing great tweets”
- “Playing the piano”
- “Huge fan of the Swedish national soccer team”
- “Hiking/climbing”
- ...



Other activities

- Voluntary work
- Associations/committees
- Online courses
- Audited courses
- Extra curricular activities which make you *uNiQuE!*



References

- List of the people who REALLY know you
- Good recommenders (you'd better verify it before!)
- Both in academia and industry
- Name + Affiliation + Contact info
- Think wisely about the order
 - Supervisor
 - Advisor
 - Dean
 - Head of Group
- “Available (up)on Request”?





General tips (I)

- Do not use unconventional words (Latin, old-fashioned)
- Do not use fancy or complicated words
- Do not use ambiguous words or slangs
 - Be specific, accurate, and tailored
- Use your own language
 - Not subjective
 - Not first or third person sentences
- Use simple and clear fonts
 - English: Times New Roman, Helvetica, Arial, Calibri, Gill Sans, Georgia
 - Persian: B Nazanin, IR Mitra, IRANSans
- Physical paper: just print it on white papers, not colored



General tips (II)

- Use spell checker (Grammarly)
- Proofread it (As many times as you/your friends can!)
 - typos
 - grammar errors
 - same words/verbs multiple times (solution: *power verbs*)
- Name the pdf file with the combination of the first name, last name, date, and “CV” keyword.
- Do not use abbreviated words
 - Unless it is well-known or mentioned earlier in the document



General tips (III)

- Put most relevant and recent items, not everything you have done in your life! (exception: long CV)
- Customize it for each application
 - How do you feel when you get non-specific Nowruz greetings?
- You will be **judged** by the person who read your CV
 - That person is also a human!
 - What image of you would be created in their mind?
- Keep some information for the upcoming interview(s)
- Boost your strengths, hide your weaknesses
 - NEVER think of lying!



General tips (IV)

- Should be easy to read and skim
- Emphasize the important words
 - Larger size
 - Bold
 - *Italic*
 - Underline
- Do not use colors (b/w printers)
- Itemize with bullets
- Use gerunds or past/present sentences without subject
- Do not be too funny! :P



General tips (V)

- **KISS!** [keep it short and simple]
- **Keep it**
 - brief! (max. 2-3 pages)
 - updated
 - integrated
 - beautiful
- **Only PDF**
 - Not doc, docx, tex, pages, odt, ...
- **Make it in English and Persian (check the requirements)**
- **Double-check everything before pressing the “send” button**

Power verbs

- PDFs
- Notes
- <https://www.engvid.com/english-resource/power-verbs-in-english/>

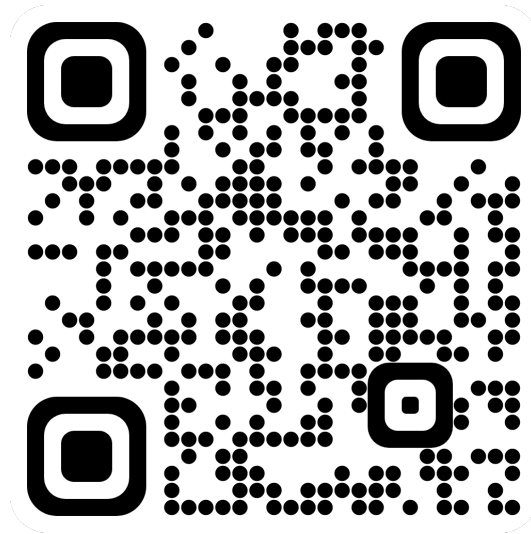
Tweets

- Attached...
- [https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-write-cv-phd-application-maryam-ziaei-ph-d-/](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-write-cv-phd-application-maryam-ziaei-ph-d/)

Sample CVs

- Attached...

Any questions?



<https://smahmadpanah.github.io/cv-workshop/>