

Career Development Webinar: Tips for Job Searches

SIAM Career Opportunities Committee

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(This webinar is being recorded)

Topics we will cover today



- Overarching guidance for Job Searches
- Tips for Cover Letters
- General Guidance for Resumes and CVs
- Tips for Resumes
- Tips for CVs
- Tips for Interviews
- Other resources

Overarching Guidance for Job Searches

Be Specific

1

Match your skills and interests

2

Tailor application materials

Be Authentic

3

Convey sincerity and enthusiasm

4

Represent yourself accurately

Overarching Guidance for Job Searches

Be Specific

1 Match your skills and interests

- More applications != better chances
- Choose positions where you have at least *some* job qualifications
- Hiring managers see *all* postings to which you applied
- You will not appear serious if you apply to everything

2 Tailor application materials

- Generic applications are not impressive
- Do your research about the institution
- Highlight how your experience maps to the posting
- Use the keywords and phrases from the posting legitimately in your documents

Be Authentic

3 Convey sincerity and enthusiasm

- Why are you personally excited about the institution and position?
- Avoid generalities

4 Represent yourself accurately

- Be positive about your experience without inflating or exaggerating
- Be honest about gaps or missing qualifications
- Do not try to fool automatic filters
- Tricks (e.g., hiding keywords) are easily caught
- These efforts may backfire and hurt your candidacy

Tips for Cover Letters

Connect your experience to the role

- **Customize your letter to the institution**
 - Do your research about the institution and the job
- **Focus on the future & what you want to do**
 - Do not summarize your resume or CV
- **Explain what you bring to the table for this specific job**
 - Highlight relevant experience in your resume or CV
- **Convey enthusiasm**
 - Make it clear why you want this position
- **Be authentic/sincere**
 - Do not sound desperate or sycophantic
- **Be succinct**
- **Be serious**
 - Do not try to be funny; it usually falls flat
- **Explain any gaps or anything unusual in your CV or resume**

A strong resume or CV is...

Readable by humans

- **Customize the resume to the job**
- **State facts with evidence, not unsubstantiated claims**
- **Start accomplishments with action verbs**
 - Avoid “job descriptions” – say what you yourself did
- **Make it brief**
 - Convey information with as few words as possible
 - Omit irrelevant, unimportant, or outdated experience

Readable by machines

- **Many systems automatically pull information from resumes**
 - Use short, standard section titles
 - Use simple, common fonts between 11 and 12 point
 - Minimize white space
 - Use consistent formatting, alignment, and indentation
 - Use the same keywords and phrases as in the job description
 - Do not add extraneous images or graphics

Tips for Resumes – Key Components



Personal Information

- At the very top: full name, role title, and contact information (no picture in the US)
- Only list personal website, LinkedIn, and/or GitHub profile if you have invested effort to make them good



Professional Summary

- Summarize demonstrable experience; do not make unvalidated claims
- ~ 3 sentences to hook the reader



Relevant Work Experience

- Include the position title, employer name and location, and employment dates
- Focus on impact: Two or three bullets to describe effectiveness in each role
- *Accomplished X, as measured by Y, by doing Z* – point out *your* contribution



Education

- For students or recent graduates, right after the Professional Summary; list *relevant* courses
- List everything post-high school and after including colleges, universities, and certification programs
- Include graduation year, degree, institution, honors. Only include GPA if 3.5 or above and be consistent



Relevant skills

- List all skills *relevant* to the position, including soft skills (leadership, communication, problem-solving, etc.)
- Spell out jargon, brand names, and use proper cases (e.g., “JavaScript” and not just “JS”)



Certifications and awards

Tips for CVs – Key Components (part 1)



Personal Information

- At the very top: full name, role title, and contact information (no picture in the US)
- Only list personal website and GitHub profile if you've invested effort to make them good



Professional Summary

- Summarize demonstrable experience; do not make unvalidated claims
- ~ 3 sentences to hook the reader



Relevant Work Experience

- Full- and part-time employment, internships, teaching, research projects, lab work, field experience
- Emphasize experience based on the posting: teaching for teaching role, research for research role
- Include the title of the position, the name and location of the employer/advisor/PI, and employment dates
- Focus on impact: Two or three bullets to describe your effectiveness in each role
- *Accomplished X, as measured by Y, by doing Z* – point out *your* contribution to the accomplishment



Education

- List everything post-high school and after including colleges, universities, and certification programs
- Include graduation year, degree, institution, honors, dissertation title and advisors



Certifications, awards, fellowships, and scholarships

- Highlight any national awards or accolades

Tips for CVs – Key Components (part 2)



Publications

- List most relevant publications for the position in reverse chronological order
- Separate peer-reviewed from unreviewed publications
- Include manuscripts that have been submitted for review, particularly if pre-prints are available on arXiv
- Provide full bibliographic information; DOIs are very helpful



Presentations and Lectures

- List important talks and lectures, particularly invited and plenary (and indicate as such)
- Point is to demonstrate that you are active in the research community



Funding Grants

- List all grant awards in which you were involved in securing
- List title of proposal, funding agency, total funding, duration of funding, brief description of the goals/accomplishments of the project and what you contributed and/or your role
- Point is to demonstrate idea generation, ability to secure funding, and/or involvement in the community
- Proposals that were not funded are fine if they demonstrate these points, but do not list too many



Relevant skills

- List all skills relevant to the position, including soft skills (leadership, communication, problem-solving, etc.)
- Spell out jargon, brand names, and use proper cases (e.g. “JavaScript” and not just “JS”)

Tips for Interviews (v1)

Teaching

- **Presentation Skills**
 - Communicate complex topics to diverse audiences: students, faculty
 - Define your teaching philosophy and how this translates in practice
 - Prepare to give a practice lecture within the department you're interviewing for
- **Domain Expertise**
 - Demonstrate a mastery of your chosen area
 - Practice fielding questions within a classroom setting
 - Are you capable of teaching multiple different courses within the department?

Research

- **Presentation Skills**
 - Communicate complex topics to diverse audiences: students, faculty, varied research areas
- **Research Skills**
 - Articulate your research. Be prepared to discuss how to translate your work into a subset of: classes, publications, conferences presentations, and grant writing.
 - Define how your research agenda will expand beyond your dissertation or postdoc work.
- **Domain Expertise**
 - Discuss the latest developments within your chosen research area, the broader connections, and the impact to society
 - Practice fielding questions after a research talk.

Engineering

- **Skills considered *secondary* in other roles, may become *primary* in engineering interviews**
- **Does the position involve writing code?**
 - Practice HackerRank or LeetCode exercises
 - Practice pair-programming either with a friend or by yourself, talking through your coding process out loud
- **Focus on your problem-solving skills**
 - How do you think through problems?
 - What steps do you outline for yourself?
 - What questions do you ask yourself?
- **Subject matter expertise**
 - Be prepared to answer questions about your experience and depth of knowledge on specific technical skills

Some Online Resources*

- Cover letters

- ["How to Write a Cover Letter" by Amy Gallo](#)
- ["How To Write a Cover Letter \(With Examples and Tips\)" by Jennifer Herrity](#)
- ["How to Write a Cover Letter: Examples for Popular Jobs" by Kellie Hanna](#)
- ["How to Write a Cover Letter That Will Get You a Job" by Alison Green](#)

- Resumes

- ["Technical Resume Writing: Tips and Examples" by Indeed Editorial Team](#)
- ["Tech Resume Writing Tips for Writing a Good Resume" by Soumik Majumder](#)
- ["Beat the Robots: How to Get Your Resume Past the System and Into Human Hands" by Regina Borsellino](#)

- CVs

- ["Academic Curriculum Vitae \(CV\) Example and Writing Tips" by University of Arizona Student Engagement & Career Development](#)
- ["CVs for Faculty Job Applications" University of Pennsylvania Career Services](#)
- ["How To Write a CV: Tips, Template and Example" by the Indeed Editorial Team](#)
- ["How to Write a CV in 2024" by Danuta Detyna](#)
- ["How to Write a CV: Examples, Templates & Guide" by Kellie Hanna](#)

*These are provided as examples and do not represent an endorsement of the author or organization