Resumes vs. CVs

Depending on the type of job, you will need to create a curriculum vitae (CV) or a resume. Both documents put your qualification in writing, but they are used for different audiences and use a different format. The Georgia Tech Graduate Career Education Team has developed this information guide as a helpful resource for developing both.

When to use a Resume

In the United States, most employers use resumes for non-academic positions, which are one or two page summaries of your experience, education, and skills.  Consider this your “calling card” to an employer, as employers rarely spend more than a few minutes reviewing a resume, and successful resumes are concise with enough white space on the page to make it easy to scan.

For more information on developing your resume, please consider visiting [Optimal Resume](https://gatech.optimalresume.com/). You can also make an appointment with a graduate career development advisor if you would like a resume review, as well by [visiting our website](http://career.gatech.edu/graduate-career-services).

When to use a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A CV is a longer synopsis of your educational and academic background as well as teaching and research experience, publications, awards, presentations, honors, and additional details. CVs are used when applying for academic, scientific, or research positions. International employers often use CVs as well. Ph.D students looking for academic and/or tenure track positions should be using or have a CV for those positions.

A CV is a comprehensive statement emphasizing:

* professional qualifications
* education
* experience
* accomplishments
* activities
* special qualifications

A CV can vary from two pages to several pages. Professionals seeking academic positions and non-academic positions in science, higher education, research, and health care typically use a CV. It is also used to seek a fellowship or grant and is expected for some positions overseas. Consult with faculty members in your field to determine what is expected and appropriate for your field.

Guidelines for Preparing a CV

* The order of topics in a CV format is flexible.
* Arrange sections to highlight strengths for the position you are seeking.
* Elaborate on accomplishments and skills within categories.
* List items within each category chronologically, the most recent appearing first.
* Include additional headings when appropriate to reflect certifications/licensures, workshops/training, languages, book reviews, etc.
* Present information in an easily accessible and attractive style.

Resources

* Faculty advisors are the most knowledgeable resource for determining what constitutes effective content in your discipline and we advise you work with them first
* For formatting assistance and to see more examples of  CVs, you can always make an appointment with a graduate career development advisor by [visiting our website](http://career.gatech.edu/graduate-career-services).

Sample CVs

* [Non-academic samples from the University of California, San Francisco](https://career.ucsf.edu/cvs-resumes-cover-letters)
* [Academic samples from the University of California, San Francisco](http://career.ucsf.edu/grad-students-postdocs/career-planning/academic-jobs/applying/academic-samples)

Electronic Version of CV

When sending electronic versions, attach a file or cut and paste the CV into the text of the email message. State your objectives and career interests in the first few lines since they may be the only items seen on a screen. Other tips:

* Use language and acronyms recognized in your field.
* Avoid using bold, italics, underlining, lines, or graphics. Use all caps for emphasis.
* Put your name at the top followed by address and each phone number on a separate line.

Many employers use websites for applicants to apply for positions. Although each form may be different, some elements may be similar. Save parts of your CV in a format that can be cut and pasted for each individual web-based form, such as saving a bulleted list of work experience.

Transforming Your CV into a Resume

You may need both a CV and a resume for your job search. Sending the appropriate document (CV or resume) tells employers that you can distinguish the differences between the academic and non-academic environments and that you can adapt your skills to either environment. Most employers in industry prefer a resume. When rearranging your CV to make it a resume:

* Do not exceed two pages.
* Re-evaluate your experience. Think creatively about how your academic experience can be translated into the necessary skills for a non-academic environment. Consider skills of project management, leadership, teamwork, effective communication, and meeting deadlines.
* Choose action verbs to describe your experience.
* Put your strengths first. List your professional experience or your degree first, depending on which is most important for a specific position.
* Include a well-written job objective; state the type of position and work setting you are seeking, skills or abilities you possess, and long-term goals. Be sure that your resume supports your job objective.
* Emphasize skills and accomplishments.
* List relevant presentations, publications, and papers, but not all.
* Have someone proofread it.