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Unit 2. Job Search



Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/49627057@N00/149714046>

Thanks to Ana's help, Javier has learnt a lot about new information and communication technologies. He is now able to use them fluently to find information on the Internet, in forums, etc. He is prepared for installing and using the software tools he needs, too.

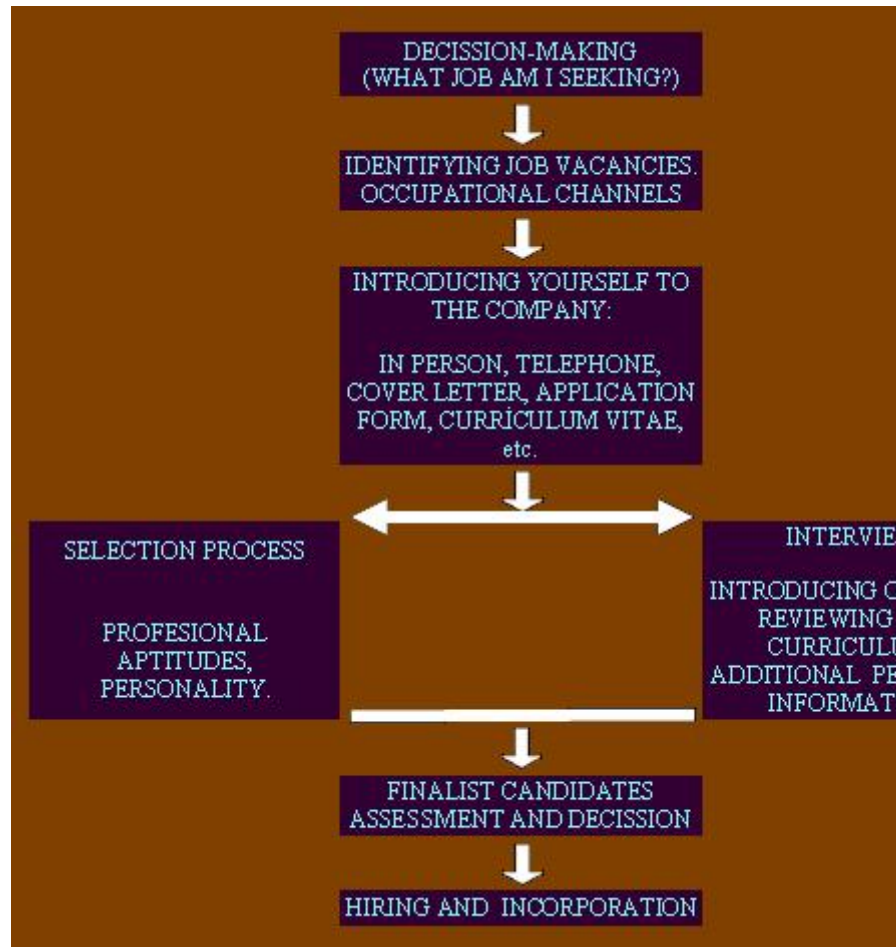
Javier feels confident about the knowledge he has learnt in his e-learning Vocational training and about the web 2.0 skills that Ana has taught him. However, he thinks that there is something left to face the challenge of seeking a job effectively. He needs to have an in-depth knowledge of different aspects related to job-seeking and job environment.

Javier goes to an Employment Agency. There he meets Monica and Oscar. Oscar will give him all the information and help he needs to look for a job: how to write a good curriculum and a good cover letter or how to prepare a job interview.

1 Efficient job hunting



Oscar asks Javier: "How are you going to begin to seek a job?" Javier answers him: "I have written some curriculums. I want to hand them in in some companies in the area." Oscar tells him: "It is a good idea to hand in curriculums to the companies you think are likely to offer you a job vacancy but I will show you how to make an efficient job seeking."



Source: Produced by the content's author

1.1 What job are you seeking?

The first step in the previous diagram consists of defining your primary objective in job seeking (What job am I seeking?). This step is rather

subjective and usually varies throughout each person's life.

No matter if this is going to be your first job or if you are changing your job, there are two tasks you have to carry out before starting job hunting.

Firstly, you should review your situation (being as honest as possible) to produce a personal profile:

- Decide what you want to do: state your short-term and long-term objectives, shortcomings, preferences, interests, skills, values.
- Identify what you can offer: skills, knowledge, experience, training, successes, talents, etc.



Source: Produced by the content's author

Then, you have to analyze the job options you are interested in, whether it is in your immediate or far-off environment, contrast them with your profile and consider the requirements you satisfy and the ones you do not fulfil. Once you have done all this, you will be able to write your professional project.

You will have to make an effort to find out which job best fits your skills and aptitudes; that is to say, you should spend some time analyzing the jobs which are most closely related to the jobs you are interested in.



Think about

You shouldn't mix up the terms job opportunity and job vacancy.



For further information

In the following website you will find a detailed description of different job profiles (job description, typical work activities, salary and conditions, entry requirements, related jobs, etc).

[Job profiles/Prospects.ac.uk](http://Jobprofiles/Prospects.ac.uk)

The website has different categories: A-Z job type (e.g. click E for 'educational psychologist', 'electrical engineer', etc), searching a specific job (e.g. 'health and safety adviser') or job category (e.g. 'Construction and property').



Self assessmet

A job as a shop assistant in a bakery, is a job opportunity?

Verdadero Falso

In order to define your personal profile, you have to think carefully what you want to do and what you can offer?

Verdadero Falso

1.2 Occupational channels

The second point in the above diagram is related to identifying job vacancies. Nowadays, there are many places where you will find employment information. Some of them are:

- Public organisms and entities: the job resource centre and register (INEM), employment centres like Sepecam, the autonomous region employment services, Town Halls, the County Council, the European Job Mobility Portal (EURES), BOE, DOCM, etc.
- Private entities and organisms: employment agencies, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, professional associations, y unions, temporary recruitment agencies, etc.
- Other ways: mass media, relatives and acquaintances, specialized magazines, industrial guidebooks, the internet, presenting your curriculum in companies. etc.

Apart from all these sources, you must take into account that you will find out about a very high percentage of job vacancies orally, even before they are published. It is sometimes said that someone has been very lucky (he was in the right place at the right time). However, those who lend a hand to luck are usually luckier.



- Create a contact list (phonebook and address book) because you may lose a golden opportunity if you do not get in touch quickly.
- Do not hand in your curriculum just to the companies which have published their job vacancies. Find out the name and address of any other company related to your occupation and take notes in your address book. Remember that a very high number of job vacancies are covered even before they are officially published. Who covers those vacancies? People who know other people or whose curriculums where in the right place at the right moment.
- It is important to bear in mind that you are offering your professional services; you are not begging a job.
- Make a list of twenty people (friends, relatives, former bosses, teachers, authorities on your employment area, to whom you can send your curriculum vitae). Having a list of individual contacts is the most efficient way to get personal contacts and an interview, without having to compete with other candidates.
- Get the addresses of 20-25 companies and send them your curriculum with a cover letter. Try to get in

touch with the person in charge of Human Resources and add this information to your phone book.

■ Job hunting is an active process. Get in touch with your social net weekly and with the rest of the people in your contact list at least monthly (including the people in charge of human resources) via telephone, e-mail, social networking websites or primary mail to know any possible job openings before they are published.



For further information

- Networking, the golden key of the job search process.
- Examples of network letters (these can be done via e-mail or phone too).
Colours have been used just to distinguish between characters. You should not use them in letters.
- Social networking sites
Include: LinkedIn, FaceBook, Twitter, MySpace, Ning, Doostang and other links.
- You can carry out a more aggressive analysis of labour market and at the same time get as much contacts as possible.



Self assessment

Networking, is the golden key of the job search process?

Verdadero Falso

Individual contacts is not an effective way to make new contacts and get an interview

Verdadero Falso

1.3 Introducing yourself to a company



- Encourage and interest the person or organization to invite you to an interview.

- Convince them that you are the appropriate person for the job.
- Motivate the company to invite you to an interview or to go on in the selection process.

Presentation tools include:

- Telephone communication.
Many job vacancies include a phone number to tell the candidate the address where they have to send the CV or to set up an interview. Apart from that, it is a very useful tool in active job hunting.
- The letter of introduction.
It is not just a formality, but, on the contrary, it will be your presentation card and it will be the first impression the company will have of you. It usually accompanies a CV. In that case it is called cover letter. It has to be brief and concise. The language must be formal. It must be typed in A4 format, unless required in other format, for example, handwritten. This letter has to be directly related with the job vacancy you are applying to. Therefore you should try to avoid "standard" cover letters.
- Prospecting letters
It is a presentation letter or phone contact which do not respond to any specific job vacancy. Its aim is to identify job vacancies which have not been published yet or to make networking contacts.
- Application forms to civil service administrations (local, provincial, regional, state or European).
This kind of employment is accessed via direct hiring via job banks (bolsas de trabajo), competition based on qualifications (concurso), competitive examinations (oposición) or competitive examination contests (concurso-oposición).
- Other ways.
Using the public employment services and recruitment centres. Their function is usually just matching employers and future employees.



Self assessment

Which statement is correct?

The letter of introduction is just a formality because nobody will read it.
Phone calls are useless in efficient job hunting.
The function of public employment agencies is only to match employers and future employees.
You can use prospective presentations to identify job vacancies which have not been published yet.

2 The phone contact



Oscar tells Javier that in a comprehensive job search, you will be using the telephone to conduct research, call

employers, make networking contacts, schedule meetings and to interview. Using the telephone is an efficient and effective use of your time and resources.

Before making a phone call, you should carefully plan in advance (you'd better write an outline down) what you want to say or transmit and bear that in mind while you are talking. You should have all your documents at hand, as well as a sheet of paper and a pen to take notes. If the purpose of the contact is to schedule a meeting, you should have your curriculum at hand, all the information you have about the company and the contact person, and some sample answers (all these documents will be looked at in following sections). During the phone call, you must try to modulate your voice and keep an appropriate intonation. Try to be as fluent as possible and show enthusiasm.



Source: <http://www.public-domain-photos.com>



- Have an objective for the call. You may be seeking information, trying to schedule a meeting or presenting your qualifications to a potential employer.
- Have a secondary objective. Often you won't achieve your primary objective, but every telephone call is an opportunity to solicit information.
- Know the name of the person to whom you wish to speak. If you don't know the person's name, then obtaining it becomes your first objective.
- Outline in writing what you want to say. This is important in the early stages of cold calling or when the call is very important. Later on, you'll script most of your calls in your head. Don't read your script. Your presentation should be natural.
- The script will depend on the goal of the call and whether you know the person you're calling. A good script should include the following:
 - Introduction--Tell the person who you are.
 - Lead statement--Make a quick statement designed to get the person's attention.
 - Body--State your purpose for the call.
 - Close--Accomplish your goal, ask for information, schedule the meeting, etc



For further information

- What phone etiquette is important for?
- How you act in a phone conversation
- A Telephone Preparation Form

3 The letter of introduction



Javier tells Oscar: "I have read that whenever I send a curriculum to a company I must attach a cover letter. Could you tell me what a letter of introduction is exactly?" Oscar tells him: "A letter of introduction is not just a formality, it will be your presentation card and it will create a critical first impression of you." When the introduction letter is attached to the curriculum it is called cover letter. However, there are many different kinds of introduction letters which can be used in the business sphere and in job hunting specifically, such as: cover letters, thank you letters, reference letters, follow up letters, broadcast letter to friends, etc.

The main objective of a letter of introduction is to request an interview; to make contacts or obtain information about those contacts, etc. to ask them for a meeting. Regarding content, it is a very flexible document. It will enable you to highlight or expand on key information from your curriculum and to ask for any relevant information about the company.

As has already been explained, this letter will provide the Human Resources Manager with a first impression, so you must be very careful when you write it. You must take into account the following aspects:

- It has to be clear and concise. Otherwise, it may end up in the dust bin.
- Language must be formal, friendly and respectful (never submissive). Use positive expressions (don't make them feel sorry for you).
- Describe your achievements and skills but try not to be too pedantic.
- You must sign it.
- It should be typed in A4 format, with margins, with double line spaces, in one page, unless otherwise required (e.g. handwritten).
- Address your cover letter to a named individual.
- It must be directly related to the job you are applying for, so you should avoid "standard" letters.
- If it accompanies a CV you should not repeat the information which already appears on it. A curriculum is a fixed document (you always hand in the same curriculum regardless the job you are applying for) whereas a cover letter is written specifically for a job vacancy. In this letter you should try to relate your curriculum to the information you have about the job vacancy, the company, etc.



Oscar tells Javier: "Most people only use cover letters. However, you'd better start writing different types of introduction letters so that you will have a "store" of letters that you may use in future situations along the job hunting

process. It is not advisable to write a complete letter because the final content will depend on each job vacancy. Nevertheless, if you draw an outline, it will be easier for you to complete the letter later just making a few changes."

Many people just send the curriculum and the cover letter and sit down to wait for an answer. This is a passive attitude. In active job hunting you have to get in touch with the company via phone call, letter or e-mail to let the company know that you are sending your CV with a cover letter, a follow up letter, a thank you letter, etc.



Samples of

■ Letters of introduction

3.1 The cover letter I

The cover letter, together with the curriculum, is the most frequently used presentation document. In fact, it is usually the only contact with the company.

Types of cover letters

- Response to a job posting
- Prospecting letter
- Updating your CV
- Cover letter for a temporary recruitment agency.

Mr. Vance Dorza, President
Edgie Marketing, llc
4545 South Main Street
Rainwater, MO 76777

Dear Mr. Dorza,

I was referred to you by Martha Wins from AKW company in New York. She recommended you as an excellent source of information on the communications industry.

My goal is to secure an entry-level position in communications. I would appreciate hearing your advice on career opportunities in the communications industry, on conducting an effective job search, and on how best to uncover job leads.

Thanks so much, in advance, for any insight and advice you would be willing to share. I look forward to contacting you early next week to set up a telephone informational interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Smith

Source: Produced by the content's author



What contents should a cover letter include?

To be effective, your cover letter should follow the basic format of a typical business letter and should address three general issues:

- Your contact information: name, address, city, state, zip Code, phone number, email address
- Date
- Employer Contact Information (if you have it): name, title, company, address city, state, zip Code
- Salutation: Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name, (leave out if you don't have a contact)
- First Paragraph (the introduction)- Why you are writing
- Middle Paragraphs (the body)- What you have to offer
- Concluding Paragraph (the closing)- How you will follow-up
- Complimentary Close: Respectfully yours, signature (handwritten signature for a mailed letter)

3.2 The cover letter II

The body of the cover letter should include:

■ Why You Are Writing

In some cases, you may have been referred to a potential employer by a friend or acquaintance. Be sure to mention this mutual contact, by name, up front since it is likely to encourage your reader to keep reading!

If you are writing in response to a job posting indicate where you learned of the position and the title of the position. More importantly, express your enthusiasm and the likely match between your credentials and the position's qualifications.

If you are writing a prospecting letter (a letter in which you inquire about possible job openings) state your specific job objective. Since this type of letter is unsolicited, it is even more important to capture the reader's attention.

If you are writing a networking letter to approach an individual for information, make your request clear.

■ What You Have To Offer

In responding to an advertisement, refer specifically to the qualifications listed and illustrate how your particular abilities and experiences relate to the position for which you are applying. In a prospecting letter express your potential to fulfil the employer's needs rather than focus on what the employer can offer you. You can do this by giving evidence that you have researched the organization thoroughly and that you possess skills used within that organization.

Emphasize your achievements and problem-solving skills. Show how your education and work skills are transferable, and thus relevant, to the position for which you are applying.

■ How You Will Follow Up

Close the letter by reiterating your interest in the job and letting the employer know how they can reach you and include your phone number and/or email address. Or bid directly for the job interview or informational interview and indicate that you will follow-up with a telephone call to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Be sure to make the call within the time frame indicated.

If you are applying from outside the employer's geographic area you may want to indicate if you'll be in town during a certain time frame (this makes it easier for the employer to agree to meet with you).

In conclusion, you may indicate that your references are available on request. Also, if you have a portfolio or writing samples to support your qualifications, state their availability.



For further information

In the following websites you will find some cover letters samples, as well as examples for other formal letters.



<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/coverlettsampl>



<http://www.cover-letters.com/Cover-Letters/Job-Search.aspx>



Self assessment

Read the paragraph below and fill in the missing words.
In a cover letter you must include you are writing, what you to offer and how you follow up

4 The Curriculum vitae



Javier has already written his curriculum vitae and has handed it in to some companies. However, he wants to know if it is a good curriculum. He has always had many doubts about the format and the contents that a good curriculum should include. So he phones Oscar to get an expert's opinion.

Oscar goes through Javier's curriculum and tells him that it is good: brief, concrete, positive, clear and well organized. But Oscar thinks that it may not be relevant for many job openings to include that he works as a DJ on Saturday nights. What's more, many employers may misunderstand his personal profile and directly rule out his curriculum.

Usually, the first thing a company receives after publishing a job vacancy is the cover letter and the curriculum. The aim of these two documents is to schedule a meeting.

A curriculum is a document which provides relevant information about the candidate's life and

qualifications, highlighting all his experience and the professional and personal achievements which best fit the job he is applying for.



Statistics show that 75% of the list of candidates is ruled out even before arranging an interview, so it is clear that the CV is a valuable marketing tool of the job seeker. Therefore, you must take great care over your curriculum.



Self assessment

You must include all your professional experience in a curriculum.

Verdadero Falso

4.1 Curriculum structure

The basic structure of a curriculum is common to all formats. The only difference is the specific order of the sections which make up the document.

A standard curriculum has the following points:

- Personal information: name, surname, address, contact numbers (house phone and mobile phone) and e-mail address.
- You may also include, although it is not compulsory, date and place of birth, nationality, your ID card number or marital status.
- Education and training: you must include a list of qualifications and the dates when you got them. You must also point out the name of organization providing the education and training. This section is very important for people who are seeking their first job because they do not usually have any other achievements to include in the curriculum. If you got really good marks, include them too.
- Complementary courses: If you had done any other courses or seminars specify them in this section.
- Languages: you must write the language you speak and assess your skills and competences (native, fluent, proficient or working knowledge).
- Computer skills: operative systems you are able to use (PC and / or MAC) and Internet competence.

Your NAMEHERE

PERSONAL DATA

PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH: Someplace, Italy | dd Month 1912
 ADDRESS: CV Inn 19, 20301, Milano, Italy
 PHONE: +39 123 456789
 EMAIL: name.surname@gmail.com

WORK EXPERIENCE

Current | Trader at ENOI s.p.a., Milan
JAN 2009 | Physical Natural Gas Trading
 Provided analysis of spreads, in particular time and location spreads, with emphasis on trading opportunities on the curve, also taking into account the availability of storage facilities. Became familiar with logistic implications of physical gas trading and developed knowledge of continental virtual hubs for gas exchange.

JUL-OCT 2006 | 1st year Analyst at LEHMAN BROTHERS, London
 Commodities Structured Trading
 Developed spreadsheets for risk analysis on exotic derivatives on a wide array of commodities (ags, oils, precious and base metals), managed blotter and secondary trades on structured notes, liaised with Middle Office, Sales and Structuring for bookkeeping.

SUMMER 2007 | Summer Intern at LEHMAN BROTHERS, Capital Markets
 Received pre-placed offer from the Exotics Trading Desk as a result of very positive review. Rated "truly distinctive" for Analytical Skills and Teamwork.

EDUCATION

JULY 2006 | Master of Science in FINANCE, Bocconi University, Milan
 110/110 summa cum laude | Major: Quantitative Finance
 Thesis: "Sublinear and Locally Sublinear Prices" | Advisor: Prof. Erio CARTAGNOLI
 GPA: 28.6/30 [Detailed Use of Exams]

JULY 2006 | Undergraduate Degree in LAW and BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
 110/110 summa cum laude, Bocconi University, Milan
 Thesis: "Portfolio Strategies with Target Prices" | Advisor: Stefano BONINI
 GPA: 29.85/30 [Detailed Use of Exams]

FALL 2005 | Exchange Semester at University of Southern California, Los Angeles
 GPA: 3.875/4 [Detailed Use of Exams]

JULY 2003 | Liceo Classico "E. Danti", Matera | Final Grade: 100/100

SCHOLARSHIPS AND CERTIFICATES

SEPT. 2006 | Scholarship for graduate students with an outstanding curriculum (€30,000)
JUNE 2006 | GMAT®: 730 (Q-30-V-39) 96th percentile; AWA: 6.0/6.0 (89th percentile)

LANGUAGES

ITALIAN: Mother tongue
 ENGLISH: Fluent
 FRENCH: Basic Knowledge

source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/the-cv-inn/3870577923/>

- Work experience: here you must write the dates and the companies or organizations you have been working for, as well as a brief description of your responsibilities. In this section you should emphasize the experience which is directly related to the job you are applying for.
- Additional information: Here you should include any other information that might interest a potential employer: voluntary work, hobbies, interests, references available, other relevant skills, etc. This section is not compulsory unless the company requires it.
- Professional objective: this is only advisable in case you are sending an inventory curriculum vitae or when your curriculum is rather general. Writing an objective highlights your interest for a specific job or for a concrete department.



Apart from the information you include in your curriculum, presentation of this is crucial. The Human Resources Manager has to look through many curriculums for each job vacancy. It takes them just five seconds to reject the ones which do not have an “attractive” appearance and less than a minute to reject those whose contents are not well organized. They will not spend much time if the curriculum does not catch their attention.



Self assessment In the curriculum

- You don't have to include all the languages you speak.
- You don't have to include all your work experience
- You don't have to include your computer skills
- You have to include a professional objective

4.2 Type of Curriculums

In Europe, the Middle East, Africa, or Asia, employers may expect to receive a curriculum vitae. In the United States, this document is called resume and it contains all the information included in the previous section.

In United States the curriculum vitae is used primarily when applying for academic, education, scientific or research positions or when applying for fellowships or grants. Curriculums are longer than resumes and they include teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honours, affiliations and other details too.



There is not a single model of curriculum. In fact, you can change the order of the sections to write a more effective curriculum. For example, you can place work experience before education and training if you think that your experience will be more relevant to get a specific job than your qualifications.

The most important (and the most frequently used) kinds of curriculums are:

- Chronological curriculum in ascending order: it lists job experience starting with the first job and ending with the most recent position. This will be very useful if the working experience is limited. This kind of curriculum highlights positive progress.
- Reverse chronological order curriculum: it presents the most recent jobs first. This kind of curriculum should be used to emphasize past career growth and development and steady employment record.
- Functional curriculum: it focuses, not on your career history, but on your skills, abilities and expertise. In this format, information is organized by functions or skills, advertising the specific qualifications needed for the occupation.
- Combination curriculum: the advantages of previous types may be combined in a single document, for example, functional and reverse chronological order.
- Europass: it is devised to seek a job in the European Community. This kind of curriculum will be dealt with later.



You should choose the curriculum which best fits your training and professional career and the job you are applying for. You should use the chronological curriculum vitae if you lack experience and the reverse chronological order curriculum if your working experience is broad. You can place either your academic training or your working experience first according to the job opening you want to apply for.



For further information

How to write a curriculum vitae / resume (USA)

- video 1
- video 2

Samples of curriculum vitae

- website 1
- Website 2
- Website3



Self assessment

The combination curriculum is a mixture of functional curriculum and reverse chronological order curriculum?

Verdadero Falso

The main advantage of a chronological curriculum is that it focuses on skills, not on history

Verdadero Falso

4.3 Types of curriculum comparison chart

	Chronological	Functional
Characteristics	Presents information in reverse order, most recent experience listed first. Offers concise picture of you as a potential employee.	Focuses on specific strengths and skills important to employers.
Advantage	Easy to write. Emphasizes steady employment record. Format is familiar.	Brief and well-structured. Focus on skills, not history. De-emphasizes a spotty work history.
Disadvantage	Calls attention to employment gaps. Skills are difficult to spot unless they're listed in the most recent job.	No detailed work history. Content may appear to lack depth.
Use	To emphasize past career growth and development. When continuing in the same career. When the name of former employer may be significant to prospective employer.	When entering the job market or when reentering after a long absence. When work experience has been varied or unrelated. When changing careers. When primarily consulting or doing freelance work.
Don't Use If	There are gaps in your work history. Calling attention to your age could be a problem. You've changed jobs often. You're entering job market for first time or after a long absence.	You want to emphasize growth or development. Responsibilities and functions in recent jobs were limited.

4.4 Curriculum Do's and Don'ts

The main problem you will face when writing your curriculum is space. It is usually limited to one or two pages. Therefore, do not use two words for something which can be expressed by one. For example, DON'T WRITE "My responsibilities as janitor were..." but "Janitor. Responsibilities..." DON'T WRITE ABBREVIATIONS like "Jan. Resp: ..."

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead with your strongest statements that are related to the job or goal. ■ Emphasize your skills. ■ Keep it brief (1-2 pages). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don't use personal pronouns such as "I" to refer to yourself. ■ Don't mention salary expectations or wage history.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use A4 paper. ■ Correct all typographical, grammatical and spelling errors. ■ Include your employment-related accomplishments. ■ Target your qualifications. ■ Clearly communicate your purpose and value to employers. ■ Maintain eye-appealing visual appearance. ■ Use the best format to showcase your skills. ■ Appear neat, well-organized and professional. ■ Be creative and make your CV relevant to the job. ■ Always include a cover letter when mailing your CV. ■ To enhance your qualifications, use measurable outcomes, values and percentages. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don't print on a dot matrix printer. ■ Don't use fancy typeset, binders or exotic paper. ■ Don't send a photograph of yourself. ■ Don't make statements that you cannot prove. ■ Don't include personal information (age, height, weight, family status, picture, religious or political affiliation) unless you're applying for a job with one of these organizations. ■ Don't change the tense of verbs or use the passive voice. ■ Don't use the title "curriculum vitae." ■ Don't include references on the resume. (Make a separate reference sheet.) ■ Don't include hobbies or social interests unless they contribute to your objective. ■ Don't staple or fold your resume. ■ Don't use repetitious statements. |
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4.5 Video curriculum and curriculum web

The personnel selection process has become more and more electronic and Internet based. Nowadays, all companies ask their candidates to have some knowledge of the new information and communication technologies. In the last years, a new type of curriculum has appeared:

- The video curriculum is a video presentation in which the candidate introduces himself and talks about his talents and skills, his achievements and his goals in life. It is in fact the candidate's "promotion video".
Nowadays, there are several companies specialized in preparing video curriculums. These curriculums are uploaded to the Internet so that the personnel recruiters can have a look at them when they receive the cover letter and the curriculum vitae. Some of these companies are YouTube and Google Video.
Although these companies offer a really good outcome, anyone can record their own video curriculum at home if he/she has a video camera and a computer connected to the Internet. It is very easy: record your talents and skills for a job and send it to the companies you are interested in working for.
- Another option is the Curriculum Web (or blog). It is becoming more and more popular when seeking a job. A Curriculum Web is a website which is designed in a curriculum style. This kind of curriculum enables you to create an individual and professional introduction that enhances your skills and personality and allows you to stand out from the crowd so that any employer, wherever he or she is, can have a look at it.
The main advantage of this curriculum is that it makes the most of digital media: multimedia support, periodical updates, lack of frontiers ...
Multimedia support will enable you to include photos, attach documents and voice files and even link your blog with your video curriculum. What's more, it can be updated at any time to include the courses you have recently done, broaden your work experience or re-organize it according to your interests.



The features of Internet (mainly the lack of frontiers) will allow you to present your curriculum to any company,



regardless where it is.

However, the main drawback of this type of curriculum is that many companies are not used to using them. Many companies still prefer the traditional printed curriculum. Therefore, curriculum webs and video curriculums should only be used as a complement of the traditional one. If you have a curriculum web or a video curriculum, write the web address in your printed version, so that the employer knows that he will find more information about you on the Internet.



Samples

- ▣ Video curriculum 1
- ▣ Video curriculum 2
- ▣ Video curriculum 3



Self assessment

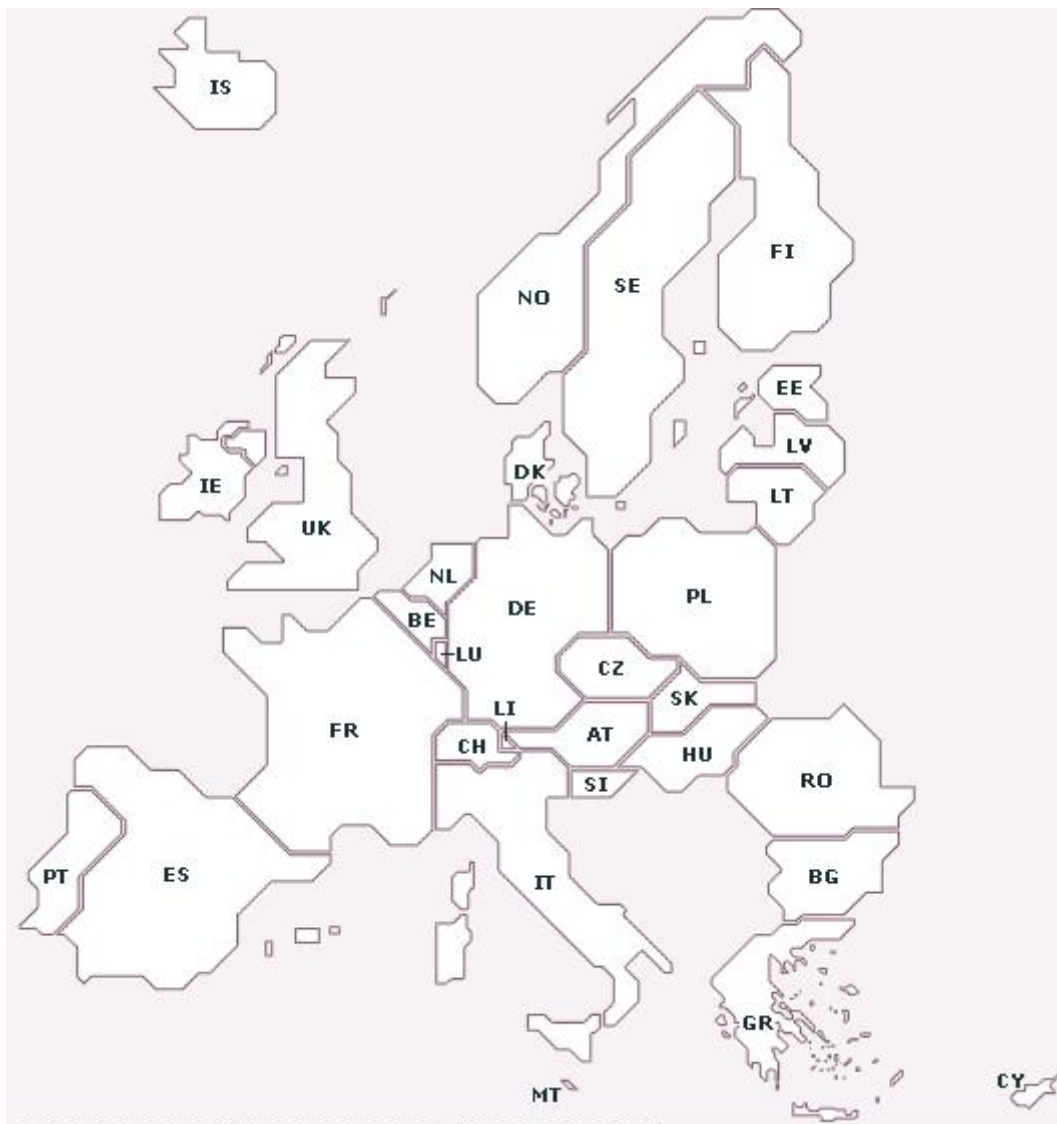
The video curriculum can be used as an alternative to paper curriculum.

Verdadero Falso

5 Europass



Javier is planning to travel to a European country to seek for a job. This will make it easier to find a job and at the same time he will improve his knowledge of foreign languages. Oscar tells him: "If you finally decide to work abroad or to go on studying in a European country, you should first do several things: first of all, you'd better visit the Professional Mobility website (EUROpean Employment Service, or simply EURES); then you will have to write your curriculum following the format and the contents established in the Europass website.



Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?acro=lw&lang=en&catId=490&parentId=0>

5.1 The EURES Net

Set up in 1993, EURES is a co-operation network between the European Commission and the Public Employment Services of the EEA Member States (The EU countries plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) and other partner organisations. Switzerland also takes part in EURES co-operation. The joint resources of the EURES member and partner organisations provide a solid basis for the EURES network to offer high quality services for both workers and employers.



The purpose of EURES is to provide information, advice and recruitment/placement (job-matching) services for the benefit of workers and employers as well as any citizen wishing to benefit from the principle of the free movement of persons. Apart from that, it provides information about the employment situation and living and working conditions in another EEA country.

Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/>



For further information

 **EURES portal**

- ▣ Living and working in the United Kingdom
- ▣ EURES advisers in Castilla La Mancha
- ▣ EURES websites in different EU languages.



Self assessment

The EURES net provides employment information and advice to European citizens

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The EURES net provides information about the employment situation in any European country.

Verdadero Falso

The EURES net provides information about living conditions in any European country.

Verdadero Falso

The EURES net provides mobility services between European countries.

Verdadero Falso

5.2 The Europass



Oscar tells Javier: "Whether you are planning to enrol in an education or training programme, looking for a job, or getting experience abroad, it is important to be able to make your skills and competences clearly understood."

Europass is a set of documents which is aimed to help European citizens (European Union, EFTA/EEA and candidate countries) to make their learning achievements, official qualifications, work results, skills and competencies, clearly and easily understood in Europe. These skills and qualifications may have been acquired either in different countries or in different sectors. Its main objective is to facilitate students' and workers' mobility among European

countries (including the European Free Trade Association, the European Economic Area and the candidate countries) in order to seek a job or to enrol in an education or training programme.

It makes their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood in Europe (European Union, EFTA/EEA and candidate countries)

These documents can be filled out in different languages. However, you must take into account that you have to use the official language of the country where you want to work.



Source: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>



Europass consists of five documents: two documents 'Europass curriculum vitae (CV)' and 'Europass Language Passport' you can fill in yourself; and three other documents 'Europass Certificate Supplement', 'Europass Diploma Supplement' and 'Europass Mobility' filled in and issued by competent organisations. The Curriculum Vitae is the most important element. The other four documents can complement and widen its information depending on each person's background.

5.3 The Europass CV

The Europass Curriculum Vitae provides European citizens with a standardized model to present their skills and competences, achievements and qualifications in a systematic but flexible way. This model includes specific instructions to fill out each field, as well as instructions and sample curriculums.



- Instructions for using the Europass curriculum vitae
- An example of a completed Europass CV



For further information

- If you want to practice writing your own Europass CV you can download the template (Remember: fill it out in the official language of the country where you want to work)

- You can create your Europass CV online or download the documents or update it.

5.4 The Europass Language Portfolio

The Europass Language Passport allows you to describe your language skills (skills that are vital for learning and working in Europe) regardless of whether that proficiency was attained formally or informally. It is not an "official supporting document", because only the official organizations in each country can accredit linguistic knowledge through tests or official exams.

The Europass Language Passport is a self-assessment document which helps students to reflect on their learning aims, to plan their learning process and to promote autonomous learning. It complements the Europass Curriculum Vitae and can be attached to it.

The Europass Language Passport was developed by the Council of Europe as part of the European Language Portfolio which consists of three documents: the Language Passport, the Language Biography and the Dossier.



For further information

- Europass language passport as part of the Europass CV
- Language passport as part of the Language Portfolio.



Self assessment

The the European Language Portfolio is part of the Europass Language Passport.

Verdadero Falso

The Europass Language Passport has been designed to help students reflect on their learning aims

Verdadero Falso

5.5 Other Europass documents

■ The Europass Mobility

This is a record of any organised period of time (called Europass Mobility experience) that a person spends in another European country for the purpose of learning or training.

This includes for example: a work placement in a company; an academic term as part of an exchange programme; a voluntary placement in an NGO.

The mobility experience is monitored by two partner organisations, the first in the country of origin and the second in the host country. Both partners agree on the purpose, content and duration of the experience; a mentor is identified in the host country. The partners may be universities, schools, training centres, companies, NGOs, etc.

■ The Europass Certificate Supplement

It is delivered to people who hold a vocational education and training certificate; it adds information to that which is already included in the official certificate, making it more easily understood, especially by employers or institutions outside the issuing country. The information in the Europass Certificate Supplement is provided by the relevant certifying authorities.

■ The Europass Diploma Supplement

This is issued to graduates of higher education institutions along with their degree or diploma. It helps to ensure that higher education qualifications are more easily understood, especially outside the country where they were awarded. The Europass Diploma Supplement was developed jointly with Unesco and the Council of Europe.



For further information

- The Europass mobility
- Sample document of Europass mobility (EN: English, ES: Spanish)
- The Europass certificate supplement
- Sample document
- The Europass Diploma Supplement
- Sample document
- The Net of Recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications,



Self assessment

A record of any organised period of time that a person spends in another European country for the purpose of learning or training is specified in the

Europass certificate supplement
Europass diploma supplement
Europass mobility
Europass CV

6 Pre-employment selection tests



Oscar tells Javier: "Selection procedures are more than handing in a curriculum and having an interview. You will usually have to undergo some tests, especially if you want to work as a civil servant. Some private companies also require candidates to undergo pre-employment tests, so it is very important to find out whether the selection process in which you are going to take part will have this kind of tests or not. You have to prepare tests carefully and not trust them to chance."

The set of tests that candidates have to take during the selection can take from one to five hours. They usually include: skills test, aptitude tests and personality tests. The recruiter or a recruitment panel arranges conduct and evaluate the tests to assess the candidates.



Source: http://blog-blond.blogspot.com/2008_06_01_archive.html



Self assessment

When you take a pre-employment test you should be as natural as possible and improvise.

Verdadero Falso

Pre-employment tests usually take from one to five hours.

Verdadero Falso

6.1 Skills tests

These tests are designed to assess if the candidate has the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out a concrete job or activity. The skills the candidate is tested on are the same skills that he or she will use on the job. They can take different forms: tests, technical questionnaires, simulations, writing a report, a project or a research, repairing or assembling machinery, facing a problem-solving situation, etc.



Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/efremigio/905416788/>

The purpose of these tests is to assess and measure if the candidate has the experience and skills necessary for success in the company.



- Adopt a relaxed attitude and have a good night's sleep beforehand. You should be alert but not too anxious.
- Make sure you have understood what you have to do before you begin to complete the test.
- Schedule your time depending on the tasks you have to carry out. It is very useful to write an outline. The contents of the test will be better organized and it will be easier to mark.

6.2 Cognitive tests

These tests measure the candidate's reasoning, memory, perceptual speed and accuracy, and skills in arithmetic and reading comprehension, as well as knowledge of a particular function or job. Aptitude tests consist of a set of close ended questions. Candidates have to answer as many questions as possible in a previously established period of time. The level of difficulty of the test and the kind of test that candidates undergo depends on the position you are applying for and the recruitment panel.

Cognitive tests include: abstract reasoning, verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, spatial aptitude, attention-concentration, manual speed, etc.



Source: <http://www.changeforge.com/tag/troubleshooting/>



- Read carefully the instructions and make sure you understand them. Do not hesitate to ask for

clarification of anything you don't understand.

- Try to be as concentrated as possible from beginning to end. Being alert will improve your performance and, as the test develops, you will get more and more confident. Concentrate on what you are doing and forget the rest of the world.
- Read the wording of the questions carefully as well as and the different choices. Look for key words.
- Your objective is to get to the end of the test, but not at any price. Take some time to decide the correct answer but try not to waste time. Save the difficult questions for the end, especially if the test is timed. Do exactly what you are asked to do.
- There are usually some obvious answers. Use common sense. The easiest answers are often the right ones.
- Beware of your behaviour. You have to make recruiter notice that you are helpful, hard-working and responsible. These are very important qualities. You must bear in mind that you are in a "simulated" working situation.



Self assessment

In a cognitive test you have to answer all the questions.

Verdadero Falso

6.3 Personality tests

They are a selection procedure which measures the personality characteristics of applicants that are related to future job performance. Nevertheless, regardless the job which is offered, there are some general personal traits that any recruiter values, such as extroversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience.

The most frequently used personality tests are:

■ Personality questionnaires

These questionnaires consist of a list of close ended or multiple-choice questions (with just two or three choices). The results provide a personal profile. Once the recruiters have the results, they can uncover information about different facets of behaviour: emotional stability, independence, whether the candidate is authoritarian or not, whether the candidate is extroverted or introverted, etc.

Some useful advices: follow the instructions; be honest and do not exaggerate your answers; work quickly but try not to leave any blank answers at the end of the test.

■ Projective tests

A projective test is a personality test designed to let a candidate respond to ambiguous stimuli, presumably revealing hidden emotions and internal conflicts. The candidate's answers are supposed to reveal his or her own personality.

A piece of advice: uncommon or exaggerated answers may reveal an eccentric or maladjusted behaviour.

■ Graphological tests

This is the most widely used projective test. It is based on the analysis of hand writing. The candidate is asked to write an introduction letter or any other document he/she has presented during the selection process, and then his or her writing is carefully analysed.

Some useful advices: a good document layout organization is essential; use proportional margins (10% of the sheet); lines should be a bit upward orientated; the text has to be readable; sign the document.



For further information

- In this website you can read about different kinds of personality tests and take an on-line personality test.



Self assessment

In a projective test, it is advisable to provide uncommon answers because it means you are a creative person.

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7 Interview

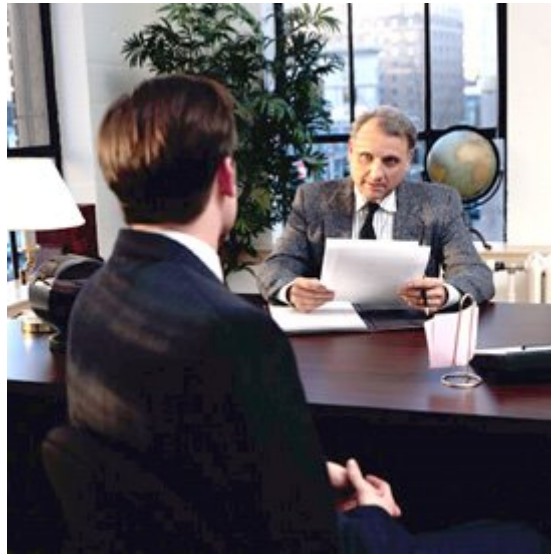


Oscar tells Javier: "Last month, my cousin, Luis, went to a bank to apply for a job. As you know, when you apply for a job, you must be ready to answer a lot of questions. Some of the questions that an interviewer may ask you include: educational background, previous jobs, and salaries you earned. The problem with Luis was that he was not prepared for the questions. The interviewer asked Luis a lot of things that he could not answer. As Luis was not prepared for the interview, he did not get the job."

As you can see, it is necessary to be well prepared for the job interview. Having the answers ready, being properly dressed, and being on time can all help to make a good impression on the interviewer.

The interview is the most important moment in the selection process. Only the most suitable candidates are

interviewed.



Source: <http://language123.blogspot.com/2008/04/for-good-impression-at-job-interview.html>

7.1 Objective and structure



- To complete the information the company has about the candidate and to deal with some concrete aspects of the curriculum in depth.
- To evaluate if the candidate actually fits the job he or she is applying for. Therefore, the candidate's attitude, motivation, personality, skills and experience are all taken into account.
- To check the candidate's ability to adapt to the job he will be doing and to his future fellow team. That is, the employer will determine whether or not the applicant is suitable for the job.
- To provide the candidate with information about the company, the job, wages, etc. so that he can assess if he wants to work for that company or not.

Interviews are usually divided into four stages:

- The opening: This stage usually includes a greeting and a handshake.
- Introduction: There is some small talk. The interviewer's purpose is to set you at ease and to avoid the awkwardness of launching right into probing questions.
- The core of the interview: The interviewer will ask you about the training and the work experience you have included in your curriculum, so that you can explain everything in depth. In this stage the interviewer will give you information about the features and duties of the job and will also ask you about your projects, professional interests and goals, hobbies, etc.
- The close: This is the stage where you can ask for clarification of anything you have not understood. You should ask what happens next in the hiring process to establish the time

frame for a hiring decision to be made and who you should get in touch with to follow up the status of your application.



Self assessment

Interviews enable the recruiter to evaluate if the candidate actually fits the job he or she is applying for and the candidate's ability to adapt to the job he will be doing.

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7.2 Types of interviews



All job interviews have the same objective, but employers use interviewing styles that assist in revealing those attributes of the candidate that are most essential for the job and most beneficial to the organization. Interviews can be conducted one on one, in a panel, or as a group. Interviews can be informal or formal, relaxed or stressful, directed or undirected.

The most common types of interview include:

- The screening interview: Interviewers often have specific skills to determine whether there is anything that might disqualify you.
- The exploratory or informational interview. Employers that like to stay apprised of available talent even when they do not have current job openings, are often open to informational interviews.
- The directed interview or directive style: This rigid format is used to ensure parity between interviews; when interviewers ask each candidate the same series of questions, they can more readily compare the results.
- The undirected interview or meandering style. It is unstructured and allows candidates to discuss their qualifications openly.
- The stress interview. The interviewer may have an abrupt attitude or may watch in silence, and spend time taking notes with the purpose to test the candidate's ability to be assertive and handle difficult situations.
- The behavioural interview. Method to mine information relevant to your competency in a particular area (your past behaviour indicates your future performance)
- The audition: Companies want to see you in action before making its decision through a simulation or brief exercise in order to assess your skills.
- The group interview: Interviewing simultaneously with other candidates, gives the company an idea of your leadership potential and style.
- The Tag-Team Interview: Multiple people will interview you simultaneously
- The Mealtime Interview: Particularly when your job requires interpersonal acuity, companies want to know what you are like in a social setting.
- The sequential or follow-up interview: Bring candidates back for second and sometimes third or fourth interviews.



Knowing the interview type is like knowing the rules of the game.

Don't forget, an interview is nothing more than a tournament. The winner gets the job.



For further information

- ▣ Most common types of interview
- ▣ Monty Python's parody about stress-interviews.

7.3 How to prepare the job interview I

You should prepare the interview beforehand. During the interview, you should try to remain as calm as possible. The best way to do it is to keep the situation under control and over-prepare the meeting.

- ▣ Gather as much background information on the company as possible.
- ▣ Review your qualifications, aptitudes and skills for the job. Be clear about your strengths and make the most of them (STAR method).
- ▣ Take a curriculum to the interview and learn it by heart because the interviewer will ask you about it.
- ▣ Write down a list of all your weaknesses and prepare some arguments to explain how you will overcome them.
- ▣ Prepare carefully the answers to personal questions because it will be very difficult to improvise an answer: motivations, interests, aptitudes, etc. Be ready to briefly describe your experience, showing how it relates to the job.
- ▣ Use the phone to confirm a scheduled interview.
- ▣ Your external appearance is of utmost importance: be well groomed and shaved; dress appropriately; do not chew gum or smoke.
- ▣ Go alone to the interview.
- ▣ It is very important to be on time for the interview. On time means ten to fifteen minutes early.
- ▣ Prepare the interview because the interviewer will do it as well.



Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mordac>



Try to facilitate the interviewer's task. Don't expect him to guess the reasons to hire you or what you can offer to the

company.

7.4 How to prepare the job interview II

Some advices about of what interviewers value in applicants:

- Their interest for the job.
- If they are cooperative and enthusiastic.
- If they speak clearly, firmly, and if they are assertive. That is, if they are good communicators.
- If they are self-confident.
- If candidates are mature people.
- If candidates can get involved in the job.
- If they are friendly and nice.
- Their capacity to tolerate stress.
- Their ability to organize and plan work.
- If they have initiative.
- Their ability to adapt to the company requirements.
- Their capacity for team work.



For further information

- [How to prepare an interview.](#)
- [The top ten interview questions](#)
- [More information about interview questions.](#)
- [Information about types of interview questions \(in Spanish\).](#)



Self assessment

Before going to an interview you have to identify your strengths and weaknesses.

Verdadero Falso

Showing you have initiative is negative when you are being interviewed.

Verdadero Falso

7.5 The STAR method

Your interview preparation should include identifying examples of situations from your experiences on your CV where you have demonstrated the behaviours a given company seeks. During the interview, your responses need to be specific and detailed. Tell them about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one. Briefly tell them about the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome. Your answer should contain these four steps (Situation, Task, Action, Result or "STAR") for optimum success.



- Situation: give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome.
- Task: describe the tasks involved in that situation.
- Action: talk about the various actions involved in the situation's task.
- Results: what results directly followed because of your actions.

Before the interview process, identify two or three of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points (with demonstrated STAR stories) during the interview.

It is helpful to frame your answer as a story that you can tell. Typically, the interviewer will pick apart the story to try to get at the specific behaviour(s) they seek. They refer to this as "digging a well." The interviewer will sometimes ask you open ended questions to allow you to choose which examples you wish to use. When a part of your story relates to a skill or experience the interviewer wishes to explore further, he/she will then ask you very specific follow-up questions regarding your behaviour. These can include "What were you thinking at that point?" or "Tell me more about your meeting with that person." or "Lead me through your decision process."



Whenever you can, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of authority and responsibility. For example: "I was a shift supervisor" could be "As Shift Supervisor, I trained and evaluated 4 employees."

Be prepared to provide examples of when results didn't turn out as you planned. What did you do then? What did you learn?



Self assessment

In the STAR method you must specify what results directly followed because of your actions

Verdadero Falso

In the STAR method, you have to quantify your results whenever you can.

Verdadero Falso

7.6 Examples of the STAR method



Example 1

Question:

- Tell me about a time when you worked as a team. What role did you play in that team?

Answer:

- Situation – During University we were given a task to prepare an energy saving proposal to the Head of the department, competing with other students
- Task – I offered to undertake research in energy saving technologies and provide appropriate solutions
- Action – I visited energy suppliers and discussed the latest advances in energy saving
- Result – We put together a proposal and won the task



Example 2

Question:

- Describe a project or creative solution you have done this last year

Answer:

- Situation: During my internship last summer, I was responsible for managing various events.
- Task: I noticed that attendance at these events had dropped by 30% over the past 3 years and wanted to do something to improve these numbers.
- Action: I designed a new promotional packet to go out to the local community businesses. I also included a rating sheet to collect feedback on our events and organized internal round table discussions to raise awareness of the issue with our employees.
- Result: We used some of the wonderful ideas we received from the community, made our internal systems more efficient and visible and raised attendance by 18% the first year.

7.7 During the interview



Now you must prove to the interviewer in a face-to-face meeting that you have the credentials, personality, experience, etc. You have to convince him or her that you are the best candidate for the job.

When you go to the interview feel confident and sure of yourself. You have been selected for a job interview. Therefore the interviewer thinks you may be suitable for the job and he wants to get to know you better.

Some tips that can help you to succeed:

- Begin with a firm handshake and steady eye contact.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and make sure you answer the question completely.
- Keep answers short and to the point. Bring up your "star" stories. Employers will remember you by your stories.
- Sell yourself without being immodest.
- Show a positive attitude.
- Take care over your facial expression and your posture (body language).
- Know the contents of your curriculum.
- Close the Interview in a positive manner.
- Evaluate the interview. What went well in the interview? How can you improve? And record your follow-up plans.
- Send thank you letters or notes within 24 hours to each person with whom you interviewed.



i take a look at these videos on how and how not to do an

- How not to interview
- Interview tips to answer one the most common questions "tell me about yourself".
 - Good answer
 - Bad answer



For further information

- ▣ Telephone interview
- ▣ Interviewing etiquette norms
- ▣ Interview simulator (in Spanish)
- ▣ Salary negotiation
- ▣ Types of contracts (in English)