

[Morse code beeps]

[Woosh]

[Helicopter rotor]

Hi.

My name is Annika Thomas, and I'm a fellow with the Aero Astro Communication Lab, and today we're going to be talking about resumes and CVs.

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to understand what makes a resume successful.

It needs to be convincing, concise, organized, concrete and error free.

You should also learn

how to tailor your document

and quantify impact

to make your qualifications stand out.

By the end of the lesson you'll

also be able to grasp best practices for formatting, proofreading, and audience focused writing.

So some criteria for success

for your resume or CV is

it should be convincing.

It should take someone who's reading it

less than 60 seconds to confirm

whether you're a fit for the role.

It should be concise, having clear and succinct communication.

It should be organized,

having an intuitive

layout that guides the reader

through the document.

It should be concrete,

with specific actions

and outcomes

that result in tangible impact.

And it should be error free, having zero typos and consistent formatting.

Now the

purpose and types of documents

we're talking about today

include resumes and CV's,

or curriculum vitae.

A resume is a quick

snapshot of your abilities.

It should be about 1 to 2 pages

or one sheet of paper in limit.

You never want to be stapling

multiple pieces together for a resume,

and some typical sections can include
your name, professional website
and portfolio, contact
information, education, work experience,
skills, leadership and service, and honors
and awards.

A CV, on the other hand,
is a bit longer of a document.
It's a comprehensive record of your
academic and professional accomplishments.

As a graduate student,
usually a CV is about 2 to 3 pages,
but throughout the course of your career
it gets longer and longer.

A CV is going to include
a lot of the same sections as a resume,
but it should also include
some additional components as well, such
as your research experience, teaching
experience, and outreach, to name a few.

Now, your resume or CV
should be tailored to the audience
that you are presenting it to.
So you actually want to customize
this document every time you share it.
So you should understand
who reads your resume.

Nowadays, when you're applying for a job
that can look like
an HR scanner or a technical reviewer,
and you want to tailor your document,
highlighting keywords, reorder sections,
and pruning
irrelevant content
that doesn't fit to whatever role
or circumstance

that you are sharing that document in.
And something that you can do,
which I recommend, is to create
a comprehensive long resume or CV.

This is an ongoing, detailed document
with every single role,
project, and bullet point
that you've done or written
for something that you've applied for.

And when you're applying,
you can copy the relevant parts
into a tailored version for that role.
So some best practices for
your resume or CVS

in the process of demonstrating impact
is to use what's called the PAR framework,
which is project, action, and result.
In the PAR framework, we traditionally
start with an action verb.
In this process,
you want to think of industry specific
skills and competencies and combine
that with a relevant task.
So here you're going to discuss
your experience using key
words and jargon
about the role that you're applying for.
And now these result in an outcome,
a result of the task,
and or an accomplishment.
So think what is something important
or noteworthy that came from your actions.
And in the process of using the PAR
framework, we want to use
strong action
verbs like designed, led, or developed
as opposed to weak passive ones
like participated or researched.
Now we're going to
go ahead and do an activity
using the PAR framework.
So you can find the file that's called
activity PAR Framework Transformation.
This should take about 20 minutes
to complete.
And on the activity sheet
you'll find a set of vague experiences,
including a problem or project
and the corresponding
strong quantified PAR bullets
using actions and results.
So for practice, go ahead and take about
20 minutes on this document to rewrite
the vague versions of these different
bullet points into the full PAR bullets.
[Alien spaceship
beeps]
Now, for some best
practices in readability and proofreading.
Your resume should have a scalable design.
So it should have headers
that allow people to look
at the different sections
and find them easily, balanced whitespace,

logical ordering,
and you should bold key phrases.
Some formatting tips include
that you want to have readable fonts,
usually you should have at least 11 point,
if not larger,
and clean layouts and clear headers.
For proofreading, some strategies
that you can use are to read your document
aloud, get a second pair of eyes
from a friend or coworker,
or if you're here at MIT, book
an appointment with
the Comm Lab and you can have a fellow
such as myself look at it with you.
Some final resources.
You can look at the AeroAstro
Communication Lab to see commkits,
which include sample resumes
and CVS with additional commentary.
These are open to everyone inside
and outside of the MIT community.
For tools,
there are some different templates
that you can use from the Comm Lab
that use resources like word and LaTeX.
You can also use ATS keyword tools
like Jobscan,
Zety, and TopResume, just to name a few.
So for some next steps,
you want to keep a long comprehensive
living resume or CV
so that tailoring is quick and systematic
when you want to share this document.
Start by drafting it
and then tailor using this comprehensive
or long version to the context
in which you're sharing the document.
And finally, peer review and finalize it.
So by now you should be able to diagnose
strengths
and weaknesses in resumes and CVs.
You should be able to customize
your document to different roles
and reviewers, and you should be able
to write clear and impact driven
PAR bullets that showcase your experience
and contributions.
[Morse code beeps]