

PHY1600S - Effective Communication for Scientists

Assignment #9 – 7 March 2017

A Job Application

Apply for one of the two following positions:

A. An Administrative or Technical Position in the University

You can find these listed in the Jobs Postings on the web at <http://www.brandequity.utoronto.ca/careers.htm>

B. An academic position

Look in the scientific journals (such as *Physics in Canada*, the *CAUT Bulletin* or *Physics Today*), on the Web (e.g. <http://www.cap.ca/>, <http://www.academiccareers.com/Applicants.htm> or http://www.AcademicKeys.com/all/eflier_prefs.php).

Your assignment is to prepare:

- an up-to-date **résumé** (for the non-academic position) OR a **curriculum vitae** (CV) for the academic position),
- a **covering letter** of application on headed paper (if you are a Physics student, you can use the departmental letter template), and
- a **copy of the job listing**.

To provide examples for discussion, we will conduct a number of mock interviews, based on your applications. If you do **not** want to be in the pool of those who might be chosen to be publicly interviewed, **please so indicate** on your assignment. Of course, I hope all of you will declare yourself willing; participation in the interview is not part of the requirements for pass/fail status in the course *or* on your future employment!

Notes:

I suggest that you prepare both a curriculum vitae and a résumé (links to information and templates to both appear on the course web site). These are different documents that are not interchangeable. Since the former is the longer, I suggest that you prepare it first. The abstraction of material for the résumé, tailored to specific job applications, is easier. Everyone should have both on file at all times.

A **curriculum vitae** is a formal listing of a person's academic record. While some variations in format are allowed, the CV should be treated as a formal document that follows a standard form; it should be kept up-to-date but its format is static.

A **résumé**, often used for non-academic positions, is less rigid or formal than a CV, providing an opportunity to present your qualifications in the best possible light. A résumé should not exceed one or two pages. Hiring officials won't read more! The résumé should be tailored to the particular job you are applying for, emphasizing the experience and qualifications that are most relevant to the position. The résumé can take almost any format that places your strengths top and centre. For example, at this stage of your career, you might highlight your education, early-career positions and community involvement that you believe

are most relevant to the specific position. Later in your career, you should focus on those skills and experience that are most relevant to the position, with academic details of lower priority and scholarships perhaps dropped completely. Brevity and aesthetics are essential.

For academic positions, particularly those that place prime importance on teaching, a request for a Teaching Dossier is common. This document is separate from the CV, focusing on teaching philosophy, competence and experience. There is considerable variety of form. As usual, good aesthetics helps your application to stand out from the pile.

An essential document is your **covering letter** of application, which is a formal letter giving a brief description of the position you are seeking, with a couple of paragraphs that summarize your current position, achievements, suitability and interest. Its purpose is to get the attention of the reader, and to orient him or her to the fuller description contained in your résumé or CV. Make sure that you tailor this letter to the job you are applying for. Aesthetic appeal is vital.

All documents should be visually pleasing, with emphasis on your strong points. For hard copies, good quality paper with high-quality printing is advised. Print size, unless otherwise indicated, should not be less than 12 pt, except, perhaps, for appendices or footnotes. Photographs are optional.

Models or templates for all of these documents are available on many web sites. Check out my CV on my home page for ideas.

Miscellaneous Suggestions for Preparing the Documents

- Remember Set - Body – Closure. Spell check and proofread many times!
- Make your Reading Partner work!
- Use correct written English, no colloquialisms or jargon.
- Aesthetics are important – make the documents look attractive and consistent with the image you want to convey.
- Don't use abbreviations unless previously defined - e.g. OAC, Lab, PRO, etc.
- Be consistent in organization! E.g. Date, University, Position Held, Duties.
- Tailor the letter to the job; show that you have read the ad and done research on the organization that is hiring! Don't be shy!
- Don't draw attention to shortcomings! (e.g. AWARDS – None)!
- In both CVs and résumés, tables and point form are good organizers of data.
- Always mention your TA experience in your CV or résumé, even if teaching is not a central part of the job you are applying for. Note: "Demonstrator" is ambiguous, and used differently in different institutions. Use "Teaching Assistant," with a sentence or two detailing the specific duties.
- References: Usually put names and coordinates, once permission has been granted; for this assignment the statement "References available on request" is sufficient.