

Writing the perfect CV

Dr Andy Williams, GUM/HIV Consultant Barts Health NHS Trust

As part of this informative presentation, which also included 'Making the most of your training' and 'Working as a GUM/HIV consultant with a specialist interest in education', Dr Williams also touched on a topic which I believe most of us feel we could do with a bit more direction: writing the perfect CV.

Ultimately it takes time and a good many hours of tweaking, improving and proof reading to achieve a 'perfect' CV but Dr Williams nonetheless provided us with some useful tips.

The lecture started by highlighting the fact that the key to a good CV is reading and understanding the job description, job plan, and person specification.

The job description and person specification are usually available to download with the online job application – make sure you take time to get to grips with them and fully grasp what is needed from the job. You can then make the most of showcasing any skills and attributes that may be relevant to that particular post.

The job plan will be available too – understanding this will mean that you know what duties you will be expected to perform in a post (and that you won't get any unpleasant surprises if you are ultimately successful at interview!).

One CV may not necessarily be appropriate for all job applications and may have to be modified accordingly. Remember to fully check that you are referring to the right job each time! Dr Williams suggested putting the job reference (available if the job is advertised on NHS jobs website) in the header of each page of the CV. Although most applications now are online based, much of the information will be taken directly from a CV, so it is worth investing time in this – and starting early, not waiting until ST6! You are also likely to need to take copies of your CV to any interview.

In order to fully understand what is required from a job it is also essential to visit a department, walk around and get a feel for what they are looking for. Get as much insider information as possible and this can then be reflected in your application form and CV and shows your interest in the post. For consultant posts you are expected to meet, or at least attempt to speak to, all the members of the panel in advance.

Application forms online often follow a standard format. All the usual areas are covered (personal information, qualifications etc) but make sure you have good examples for the supporting information - practical experience, teaching, management of change, research, publications, presentations, management and leadership experience, team working and, importantly, supporting information relevant to the person specification – make sure you have read and understand what they want.

In terms of structure, make sure there is a logical flow married to the job description. Applications will usually be dictated by an online format, but the following is suggested as a structure for a CV:

- Cover page
- Personal details, education, prizes
- Medical employment
- Clinical skills – detail, detail, detail; specifics to HIV/GUM others depending on the job description
- Publications, posters, orals
- Research
- Clinical Governance – audit, guideline development, quality improvement projects etc
- Management
- Teaching – undergraduate, postgraduate and multidisciplinary
- Computer skills – find out the local IT system
- Courses/meetings attended (keep it relevant)
- Conferences attended
- Personal statement
- Referees – usually 2 medical (to include your educational supervisor) and 1 non-medical

Some final words of advice were regarding formatting 'check, check and check again' and the presentation concluded with

2 Golden rules:

- Sell yourself, no one else will
- Avoid "I am involved in"

It is also worth mentioning that it is never too early to start writing your CV – you can keep adding to it throughout training so ST3/4s don't ignore this advice!

I think all that remains to say is best of luck and happy CV writing!

Rebecca Gilson

Appointments

Name	Hospital	S'ty	Date
Dr A Bennett MRCP (UK)	Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	GUM	4/02/2015
Dr T W Corrah MRCP (UK) MRCP (London)	London North West Healthcare NHS Trust	ID	16/01/2015
Dr S Y Chan MRCP(UK) MRCP (London)	Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	GUM	4/02/2015
Dr H Hettiarachchi MRCP (UK)	Buryfields Sexual Health Clinic	GUM	24/02/2015
Dr C M Theodore MRCP(UK) MRCP (London)	Barking, Havering & Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	GUM	27/02/2015

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