

Best Practices when Developing your CV and Cover Letter (AKA How to sell yourself)

Pediatric ID Fellows' Day, ID Week

October 9, 2019

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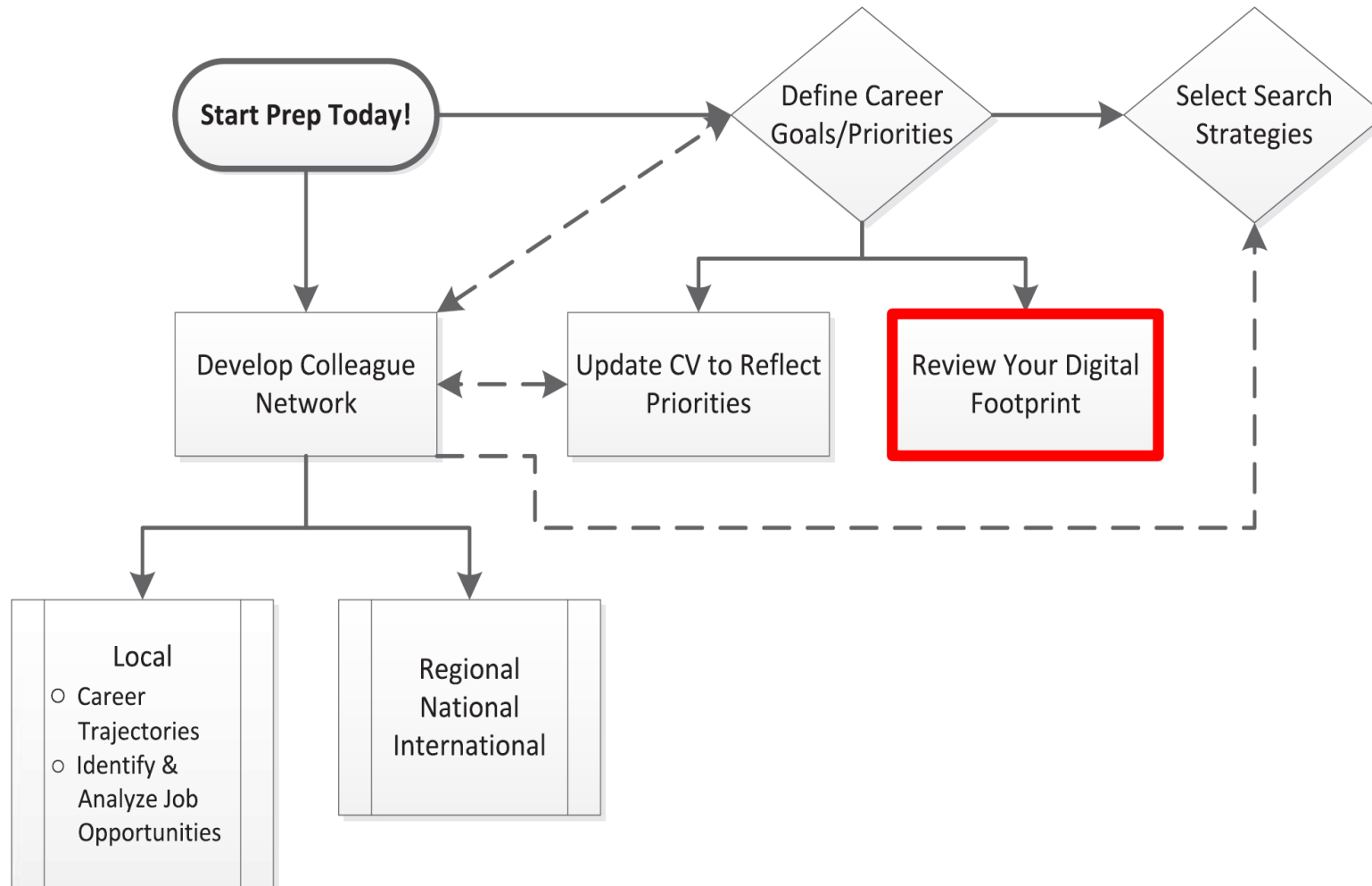
Department of Pediatrics

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Disclosures:

- ▶ Past Assistant Dean for Leadership Services, assisted Dean with Department Chair searches
- ▶ Acknowledge several Pediatric ID Division Chiefs for their input

Starting the Job Search



Cooper AZ, La Fratta T, Clardy P, Terhune K. How to Approach the First Physician Job Search JGME, April 2019, 231-32

Before writing the Cover Letter

- ▶ Start Job search early
- ▶ Assess your career goals and priorities
 - ▶ In 3 - 5 years, what want to be doing, for whom?
 - ▶ What activities energize you, make you feel fulfilled
 - ▶ Longer term are you interested in administrative or leadership roles
- ▶ What is your ideal job? Discuss with FPD, advisor, mentors, Division Chief
 - ▶ Define what you want to do, and what you are suited for
- ▶ Cultivate local, regional and national networks to connect you with job opportunities
- ▶ Learn as much as you can about position/job
 - ▶ What is their Vision, Mission, faculty expertise, needs
 - ▶ Example - IPEC
 - ▶ Through phone calls to others in division, your faculty
 - ▶ Find out what they are looking for in an applicant
 - ▶ Be curious, inquisitive
 - ▶ Learn about potential boss and position
 - ▶ List your strengths
 - ▶ How would this employer benefit from hiring you

Cover Letter

- ▶ Vehicle for sharing personal and professional information not necessarily in your CV that might be important to prospective employers
- ▶ Brief, well written, professional and positive in tone, and absolutely error-free
- ▶ Consider this your elevator pitch
 - ▶ who you are and what qualities make you right for their job
- ▶ How can you differentiate yourself from other applicants?
- ▶ Strong cover letter can gain you an interview
- ▶ Lack of a cover letter can imply laziness or lack of interest
 - ▶ 8 of 10 physicians who express interest in a position don't write a letter
- ▶ Caution: a sloppy, poorly written letter can lose you the interview



The 'Perfect' Cover Letter (Letter of Interest, Letter of Intent)

- ▶ Demonstrate you researched the job, the Division, the Department
- ▶ Highlight your education, skills, experiences, additional training, qualifications and competencies that match their needs
 - ▶ How can you contribute to their Division, Company?
- ▶ Describe relevant skills, training, experience you bring to the role
 - ▶ Additional degrees or courses (MPH, MEd, PhD, MBA, etc)
 - ▶ Additional training:
 - ▶ Infection Control & Prevention, Antimicrobial stewardship, Transplant ID, etc
 - ▶ Quality improvement project - outcomes
 - ▶ Population Health, Big Data
 - ▶ Public Health experience
 - ▶ Educational training - Residents as Teachers; Certificate in Education
 - ▶ Leadership, Mentoring, Advising - less likely at this stage
- ▶ Patient populations of interest to you; languages spoken
- ▶ Don't rehash your CV
 - ▶ Do expand on prior positions, experiences of relevance - *during my residency and fellowship, I was a member of the patient safety team and put into place Safety event analysis; Infection control efforts; etc*
 - ▶ Highlight aspects that make you good for this position
- ▶ Emphasize your value and your qualifications for their job



The 'Perfect' Cover Letter (Letter of Interest, Letter of Intent)

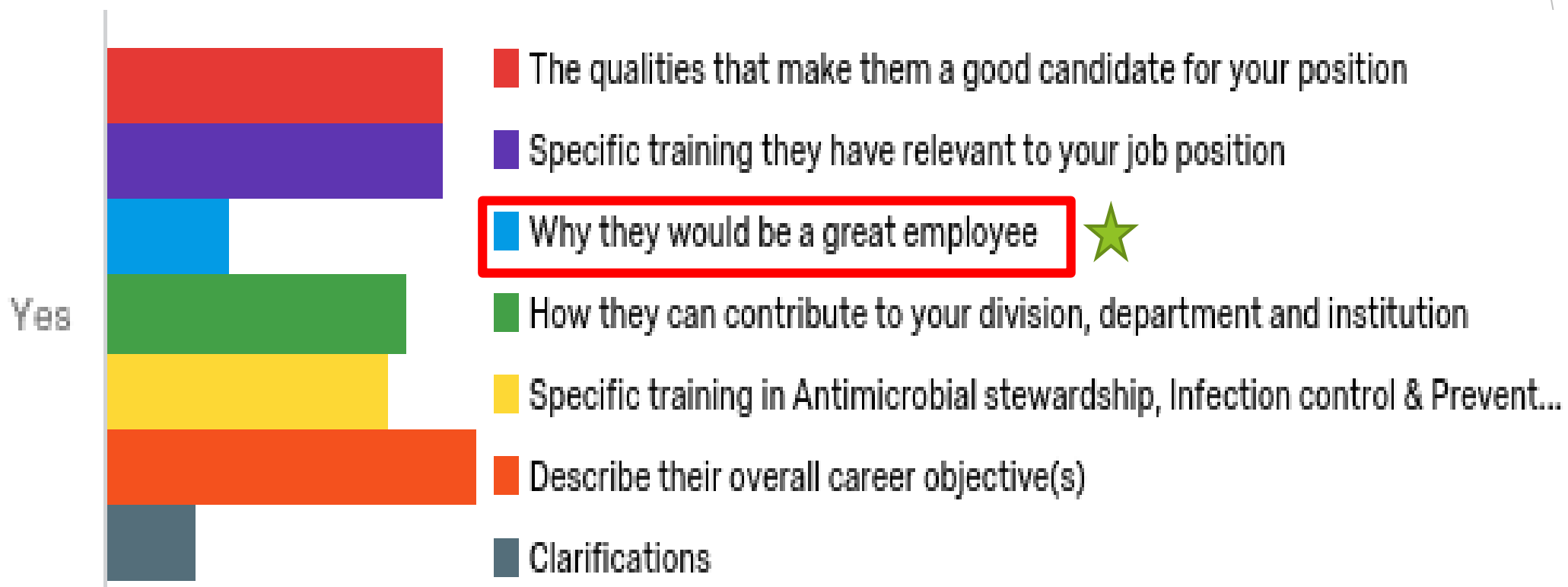
- ▶ Professional, warm, genuine
- ▶ Succinct but substantive
- ▶ Explain why seeking their specific position, what you would offer the organization
- ▶ Encourage reader to want to learn more about you
- ▶ Increases likelihood of an interview
- ▶ Strong opening sentence
 - ▶ Open strong - why job is exciting to you and why you are right for the job
 - ▶ *"I'm an environmental fundraising professional with more than 15 yrs experience and I'd love to bring my expertise and enthusiasm to your growing development team"*
 - ▶ Examples??
- ▶ Mention personal connection within division or someone who referred you, if relevant
- ▶ Relays your enthusiasm about job
- ▶ Some conflicting advice around other aspects of the Cover Letter
 - ▶ ***So...we asked the experts!!***

Pediatric ID Division Chief Survey

Pediatric ID Division Chiefs' input on the Cover Letter?

- ▶ Do you want to receive a Cover Letter from Applicants?
 - ▶ 20/21 Yes (95%); 1 - don't feel strongly
- ▶ Preferred length
 - ▶ 13/21 (62%) - One page letter
 - ▶ 4/21 (19%) - Two page letter
 - ▶ 4/21 depends on career stage or if research-oriented then want to see more detail about research (then extend to 2 pages)
 - ▶ *if can't state overarching goal and dream, then more pages won't help*
- ▶ Summarize their training in cover letter? Majority: yes, but briefly
 - ▶ Describe special training relevant to job they are seeking
 - ▶ Highlight experiences beyond traditional undergraduate, medical school, residency & fellowship training
- ▶ Should gaps in training be addressed in Cover Letter?
 - ▶ 19/21 (90%) Yes
 - ▶ Only if relevant for credentialing or privileges
 - ▶ Some gaps -wait to discuss in person

Division Chiefs on the Cover Letter: Should the following be included in a faculty applicant's Cover Letter?



★ 7 yes, 5 no, 8 maybe

Division Chiefs on Cover letter: Should applicant list prior professional development activities in which they have participated (eg, leadership courses, educator sessions, grant writing, any additional ID-related training, etc)?

- ▶ Yes - 5/21 (24%)
- ▶ No, too much detail - 12/21 (57%)
- ▶ Comments:
 - ▶ *if succinct with concrete examples; not item by item*
 - ▶ *if can specifically link activities to the job description*
 - ▶ Some job descriptions are very general so hard to do; others more specific
- ▶ Different advice than other sources

Division Chiefs on the Cover Letter:

What should candidates reiterate from their CV?

Should they describe their research in more detail in Cover Letter?

- ▶ For research-oriented or physician scientist position, describe research
- ▶ If research-intensive hire, they will be asked to submit a separate research summary
- ▶ Emphasize aspects of their background that fit with the specific job. For instance, if I am looking for a physician-scientist on a K track, they need to discuss their passion for research and research experience. If it is an ASP position, emphasize that as a passion and training they have had. I don't have any "blank slate" positions- they are always for a specific purpose
- ▶ Some detail about prior research experience & future goals/directions/interests (may not be clear in CV)
- ▶ I want the letter to tell me what they WANT to do and how they are going to accomplish it
- ▶ Specific skills/training and accomplishments outside their clinical practice training/experience, incl research
- ▶ More description of their key skills, experiences and accomplishments that fit best with what we are looking for, and what they envision they will accomplish or contribute
- ▶ Highlight qualifications that make them unique and strong or stand out
- ▶ Details most relevant to the position
- ▶ Briefly, with attention to skills obtained and future directions
- ▶ Don't rehash CV
- ▶ Mainly indicate why they are interested in the position and how can be reached for questions
- ▶ Main component is what they want to do and their career vision

Division Chiefs on the Cover Letter:

Should applicants mention their 'soft skills' (e.g., teamwork, joy of teaching, advocacy, contributions to a specific community, altruistic activities, etc)? If so, which skills do you want to hear about?

- ▶ Only how it relates to their career goals
- ▶ Only if truly different or unique and relevant to the position

Division Chiefs on the Cover Letter: Additional information you like to see in faculty applicant's Cover Letter? How can she/he increase your interest in their application ('sell self')? Additional items/topics to include:

- ▶ Differentiate between future career in clinical research or bench research; trials or not; subspecialty of Transplant, Stewardship etc.
- ▶ Show they have researched the institution, and can clearly state how they "fit" the opportunity and how they hope to grow in the position
- ▶ I want to see that they are enthusiastic about my specific job and have done their homework on institution
- ▶ Describe why they believe they are a good fit for the position advertised
- ▶ The reason they want to join our faculty is important. A connection with the current faculty or with the city, region, etc is often helpful
- ▶ I see the cover letter as an "*elevator speech*" - one page opportunity to make me want to learn more about you and read your CV
- ▶ We don't get so many that they need to "distinguish" themselves. Most important to me is a clear statement of what they want: clinician-educator, physician-scientist, mainly clinician, ASP/Infection Prevention
- ▶ Main purpose - indicate why they are right for the job
- ▶ Intended career goals. Reason chose the division or department are applying to
- ▶ Their vision. What do they want to do?

Pediatric Infectious Diseases Division Chiefs

- ▶ *Brief summary of what they consider the high and defining points of their training and background - something that adds life to the CV.*
- ▶ *I am also looking for what they love and what they see themselves doing. I don't put too much stock on having a beautifully-planned career objective. So many of us change course as we go forwards, sometimes early and often. Instead I am looking for things that reflect curiosity and love of discovery, passion for ID and our patients, adaptability and drive.*
- ▶ *It is really nice when the letter reflects some real interest in our program. You can tell if someone has done a pubmed or google search and actually has some idea of why we might fit well together*
- ▶ *Make sure someone else reads and edits it for you!!!! I have seen so many with typos*

Cover Letter: Typical Format

Single-page letter in a professional and warm tone that provides compelling information not in your CV

First Paragraph:

- ▶ Introduce yourself, state specific position you are seeking, and describe your interest in joining the Division/Department/Organization/Institution
- ▶ Note any professional connections to the organization

Next Paragraph or two:

- ▶ Connect your values and experiences to the position requirements
- ▶ May highlight geographic preference (organizations recruit for retention)
- ▶ Explain gaps in your CV - briefly
- ▶ Describe your area(s) of research focus, quality improvement
 - ▶ If primarily a research position - create a separate Research statement
 - ▶ Some include a Teaching statement
- ▶ List your Skills (eg, communication, teamwork, leadership, problem solving)
 - ▶ PID Division Chiefs less interested in these

Close:

- ▶ Thank him/her for considering your application
- ▶ End with an actionable statement
 - ▶ “I am available to discuss this opportunity with you further and look forward to hearing from you”)

Jericho BG, Ilgen JS, Gottlieb-Smith R, et al. How to Write Your Curriculum Vitae. JGME. June 2019, 333-34

Consider Submitting Additional Statements

Highlighting your Expertise

Some searches ask for a Teaching and/or Diversity Statement:

- ▶ Teaching statement - describe teaching experiences (talks given, other teaching formats, specific certificates, concentrations or professional development around teaching)
- ▶ Diversity statement
 - ▶ Recognition that we are strengthened by inclusion of a diverse workforce and individuals who bring a variety of perspectives to our teams
 - ▶ Include activities aimed at increasing diversity in medicine, eg, K-12 TEM or pipeline programs, other
 - ▶ Mentoring those who are Underrepresented in Medicine (URiM)
 - ▶ Other activities
- ▶ If you have strengths in either or both of these areas, consider submitting these statements even if not requested

Physician Cover Letters: Do's and Don'ts

Do:

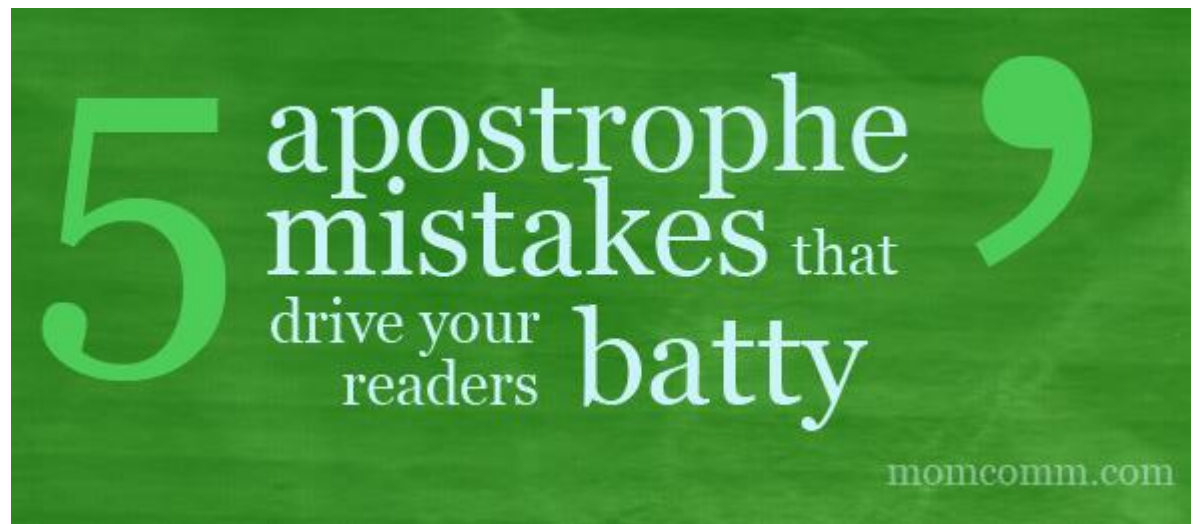
- ▶ Proofread; have colleagues proofread
- ▶ Demonstrate your writing and communications skills
- ▶ Address cover letter to an individual (Division chief or other); not “to whom it may concern” or “Dear Sir”
- ▶ Ensure letter's tone reflects your excitement about medicine
- ▶ What kind of employee is the organization seeking? How do your qualifications meet or exceed these expectations? Consider the employer's point of view

Don't

- ▶ Use informal language, abbreviations or acronyms
- ▶ Overembellish your qualifications
- ▶ Sound desperate
- ▶ Make untrue claims re: your credentials
- ▶ Disparage individuals, programs or institutions
- ▶ List negotiation terms (salary, amount of call, contract)

-Darves B. *Physician Cover Letters: Why Writing a Good One Is As Important As Ever.* 5/29/2014. NEJMCareerCenter.org

-Smith LS. *Writing a perfect cover letter.* www.Nursing2016.com(M



- ▶ Excited to be a member of you're Division
- ▶ Their - they're
- ▶ Our, hour, are, ...
- ▶ Dear Martian:
- ▶ Additional clarifications for Applicants:
 - ▶ Department vs Division
 - ▶ For most US institutions: **Department** of Pediatrics versus **Division** of Infectious Diseases
 - ▶ Academic Ranks: Instructor, then Assistant to Associate to Full Professor

Curriculum vitae

- ▶ Highlights your education, skills, experiences, and achievements (academic, scientific, teaching and clinical)
- ▶ Comprehensive, dynamic document
 - ▶ Keep it up to date
- ▶ Describes your training and experience in career to date
 - ▶ with gaps, if applicable
- ▶ Anything you include in CV is fair game during an interview
- ▶ CV vs Resume
 - ▶ Resume highlights your experience and skills in 1 to 2 pages
- ▶ Prepare an NIH BioSketch also

Curriculum Vitae Tips and Strategies

- ▶ **Font:** sizes - 12-18 point font for name (the largest font size you use); 12-14 point font for headings; 10-12 point font for text; sans-serif fonts read most easily (those lacking flourishes on the letters); pick one font and use throughout
- ▶ **Format:** be consistent and concise; include a page number and name header
- ▶ **Be honest**
- ▶ Living document, keep it up to date
 - ▶ add accomplishments in realtime, so don't forget key roles, committees, publications
 - ▶ **Use folders** (electronic or paper-based) for each section - publications as submitted, in press, and published (keep the same system for your teaching portfolio)
- ▶ **Don'ts:** include SSN, age, gender, race, religion, political affiliation, marital/parental status, disability or national origin, DEA numbers; explain why you're leaving your present job; include salary history
- ▶ **Do not include social media handles, hobbies. Only include work related items**
- ▶ *CV important to document teaching and mentoring, as that is otherwise hard to capture. For fellows, I often look at the number and variety of talks they have given as that is often a reflection of their love of teaching, and of how often they are asked back to teach. For more experienced faculty members, I look to see if there is already evidence of mentoring (Division Chief)*

First Name Last Name, M.D., Ph.D.

Professional Street Address

City, State zip code

(Area code) phone number

(Area code) fax number

email@address.com

[Right click and scroll down to "Edit Hyperlink" to include your email address]

You may want to include both your professional address and personal contact information. If you include personal contact information, you should create a heading (Personal contact information) and include your address, telephone number and email address. If you are using a cover letter, you should specify your preferred contact address e.g.

worksite or personal.

*If you prefer not to include your professional address,
you may include your personal email address & phone number.*

Last updated: *include today's date*

Current Position(s)

Academic Rank, department

Director, Center for Whatever

Your medical school or university

City, State

Education *[Note: in reverse chronological order]*

Fellowship, Your University, City, State

Years

Residency, Your University, City, State

Years

M.D., Your University, City, State

Years

B.S. in Discipline (magna cum laude), Your University, City, State

Years

Academic Appointments *[Note: in reverse chronological order]*

Associate Professor

Year - Present

Department of

Name of University

City, State

Assistant Professor

Years

Department of

Name of University

City, State

Professional Positions and Experience *[Note: List non-academic employment and experience in reverse chronological order]*

Director, Center for Whatever

Name of Medical School or University

City, State

Chief Resident

Department of

Name of University

City, State

[Note: include only if it is an appointed position requiring an extension of the residency]

Other Positions and Employment

*List non-academic employment history in reverse chronological order,
noting position held, employer, location.*

Years

Certification and Licensure

Diplomate, Your ABMS Board
Subspecialty Certification, Your Subspecialty Board
State Medical License (active and inactive, without numbers)
Interpretation Certification

Years

Professional Development *[Note: List in reverse chronological order, include year]*

Professional Memberships and Activities

[List these, in groupings by professional organization, in reverse chronological order, noting leadership positions and other positions held]

Years

Honors and Awards

[Receipt of competitive scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships; names of scholastic honors, and teaching or research awards. Note: you may also list selective fellowship programs, those to which you were accepted as a competitive, as opposed to first-come, first-serve, application process.]

Years

Committee Assignments and Administrative Services

[List in reverse chronological order, noting leadership positions held. Include university and non-university activities (e.g., work with NIH study groups).]

Years

Clinical / Quality Improvement Activities

(List clinical responsibilities and other clinical activities that include number of weeks, and percentage/time effort)

Editorial Board Appointments

[List in reverse chronological order]

Include relevant dates

Educational Activities *[Note: Reflect the years you undertake each activity]*

- ☒ Identify your teaching activities here or write "See attached Teaching Portfolio."
- ☒ List in reverse chronological order, noting your role (course developer, course director, lecturer)
- ☒ Categorize educational activities as follows: Educational Administration (Director, Dean, etc.), Training Program Committees, Course and Curriculum Development, Courses Directed, Didactic Sessions, Clinical Teaching, Laboratory Teaching, Small Group Teaching, Graduate Student Committees
- ☒ Include graduate student teaching
- ☒ Identify teaching residents in a clinical setting

Consider using a table, as it provides a concise, visual way to identify role, number of students, number of sessions, and evaluation data.

Mentoring and Advising

- ☒ Include advising and mentoring responsibilities (only list those with a significant time investment that are outside of "normal" teaching duties, list project mentored and result)
 - ☐ Include mentee name, institution, mentee level/ rank, role, project mentored, mentee's next position/accomplishment
- ☒ Include supervision of graduate students and thesis supervision in a research setting

Grants and Contract Awards *[Note: Include the years of each award]*

- ☒ List under sections of pending, current, and past in reverse chronological order using NIH format, even for non-NIH grants.
- ☒ Include the title of grant
- ☒ Identify the granting agency and grant number
- ☒ Note award total, demarcating total direct and indirect costs
- ☒ Include the title of grant, the granting agency, grant number, award total, demarcating total direct and indirect costs
- ☒ State your role, also identifying the PI (principal investigator) if you are not the PI, and percent of effort
- ☒ If you include contracts use two subheadings, separating contracts from grant awards
- ☒ If voluminous, truncate this listing to the most recent decade (or past five years) and note the limitation in the heading.

Consider using a table, as it provides a concise, visual depiction of this material.

Publications

Include relevant Dates

- ☒ List your publications in chronological order for easy updating
- ☒ Number these and highlight your name in bold
- ☒ Follow this order with appropriate subheadings- peer-reviewed, non-peer-reviewed publications, articles accepted for publication, books and monographs, evidence of works in progress (complete articles published in conference proceedings, book chapters, review articles, editorials as indicated), development and/or publication of educational materials, development of major curricular offerings or innovative educational programs, non-print materials

[Note: if you are not listed as first author on publications for which your mentored student is listed, note that role with an asterisk or other indicator]

Published Abstracts and Presentations

[List these in reverse chronological order, use an asterisk or other explained notation to demarcate invited talks and meetings that you helped to organize.]

Oral Presentations [Note: this section is for presentations given where you are an author]

| | |
|--|------|
| Invited Presentations | Date |
| National/International Meetings (designate if invited) | Date |
| Local/Regional Meetings | Date |
| Peer-reviewed Presentations (including Workshops) | Date |
| Grand Rounds Presentations | Date |

Poster Presentations

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| National/International Meetings | Date |
| Local/Regional Meetings | Date |

Social Media

(List professional activities utilizing social media)

Other Creative Products

[List CDs, interviews, simulations, films, websites, webinars, case vignettes you authored and are in use, and any other creative work products. Indicate your role in the creation of the product – creator, author, co-author, webmaster, etc.]

Date

Other Scholarly Products

(Include activities in which you have participated but did not result in authorship e.g. member of a practice network, participated in an expert panel, etc.)

Date

Patents and Technology Transfer

[List in chronological order to permit easy updating. Include patent pending or patent applications, with dates of filing. List any technologies licensed to industry or others (military, etc) with dates of licensure or filing]

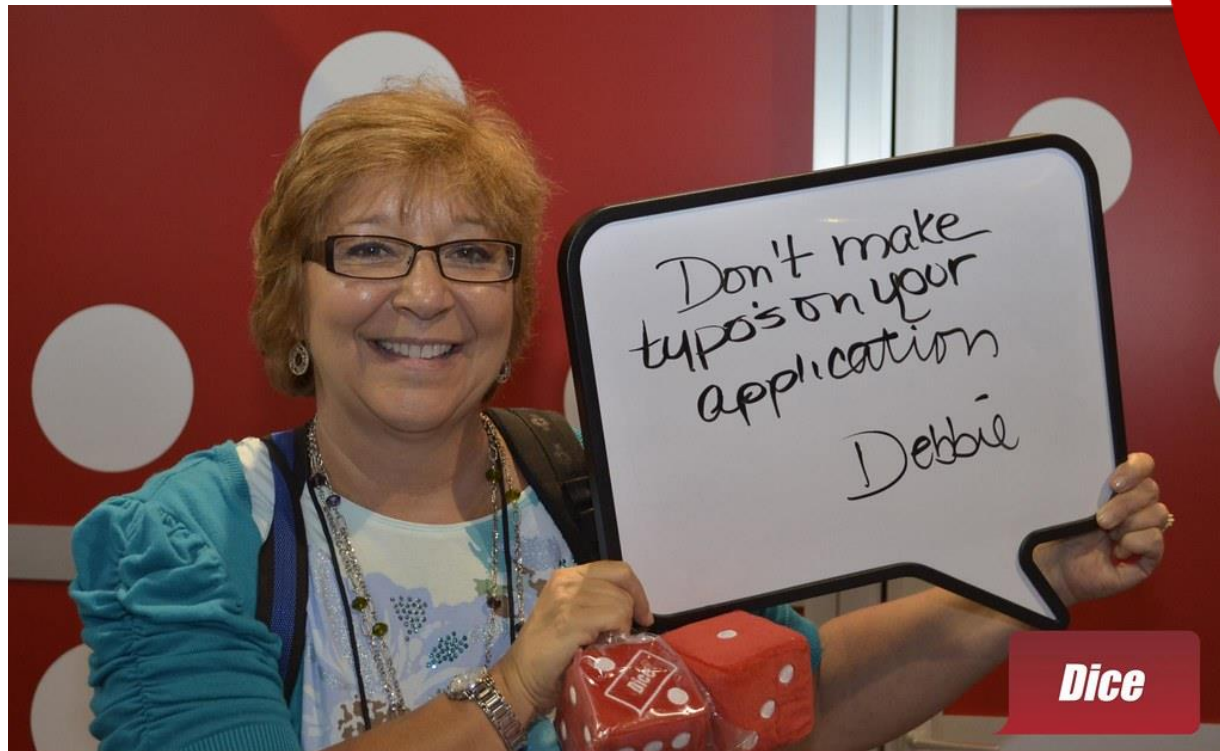
Date

Professional Community Activities

(Service to the community, outreach presentations, etc.)

Date

AVOID Typos (makes them wonder where you went to shcool)



Dice

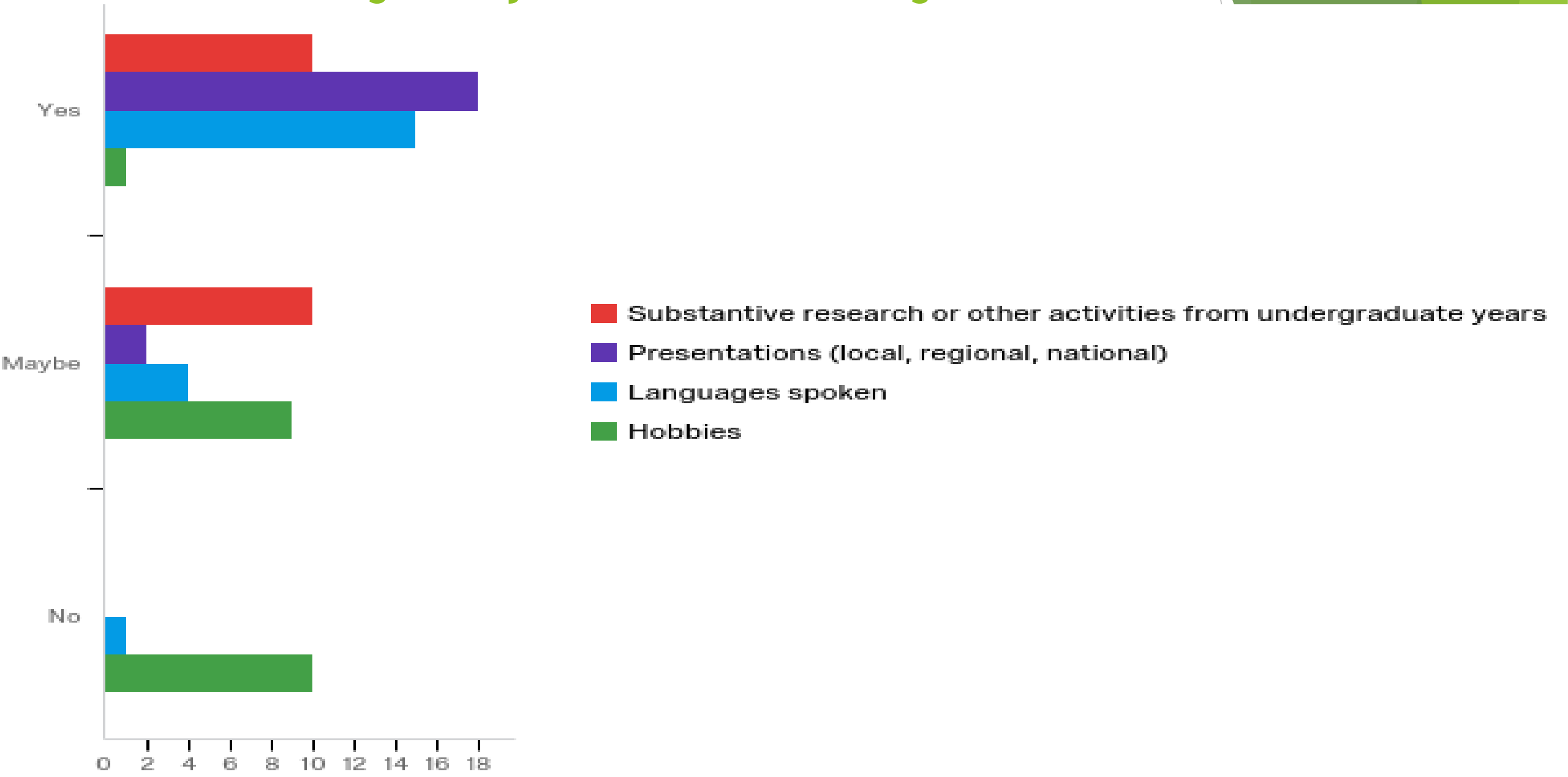
#SHRM12 #DiceTip

resources.dice.com





Division Chiefs re: CV:
Should fellows looking for 1st job include the following in CV?



Division Chiefs re: CV:

Should fellows include only accepted manuscripts (MS), or also include those in preparation or submitted in their CV?

- ▶ 15/21 (71%) - include MS preparation, but must list separately as in preparation
- ▶ 18/21 (86%) - include MS that have been submitted
- ▶ 1/21 (4.8%)- only include accepted MS

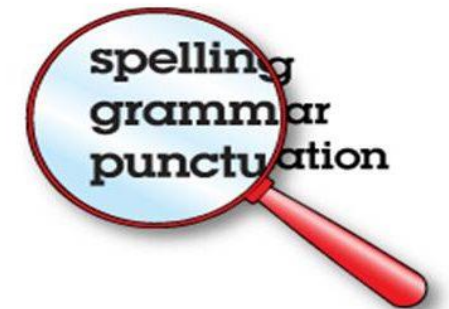
Division Chiefs re: CV:

Should fellows looking for 1st job include Grants submitted but not funded in CV (or in Cover letter)?

- ▶ Yes in CV - 10/20
- ▶ Yes in Cover letter if physician-scientist applicant - 1/20
- ▶ No, do not include - 7/20
- ▶ Depends
 - ▶ If K submitted, would list even if not funded
 - ▶ Would list if score very close to payline
 - ▶ Only list if re-submission planned
 - ▶ Might hurt to list several small unfunded grants

Division Chiefs' Additional Suggestions re: CV and Cover Letter for Fellows beginning their Job search:

- ▶ Recently received a cover letter with five (!) typos and grammatical errors. I chose not to invite candidate
- ▶ Should be neat- consistent font, font size, margins and no typos. If it looks sloppy, gives the impression you don't care
- ▶ I look for distinguishing achievements: publications, grants, special training
 - ▶ It is expected everyone will have high marks for clinical care & teamwork, so reading these things doesn't resonate.
 - ▶ We look for those who have chosen a clear career path that includes fundable elements &/or a service element (infection prevention, ASP, transplant) or research career path usually, with achievements validating their chosen path
- ▶ Avoid filling the CV with fluff; fellows should focus on quality
 - ▶ OK to leave sections blank, rather than adding activities that don't belong
- ▶ Never hurts to send your materials to programs you are interested in, even if no position posted



*Now you are ready to Network
during IDWeek!!*



References:

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