Understanding CVs

**Session objectives**

* Postdocs gain a better understanding of the differences between academic and non-academic CVs
* Postdocs are able to use an appropriate design and structure in their academic and non-academic CVs
* Postdocs gain an understanding of how to use their skills inventory when writing a CV
* Postdocs feel able to employ storytelling techniques in their CVs to showcase their skills and experience
* Postdocs able to identify keywords in job ads

**Sessions this links to/is preparation for**

This session builds on the reflection and self-analysis postdocs have been doing, particularly linking to the session ‘Building your skills inventory’ <https://prosper.liverpool.ac.uk/learning-development-clusters/skills-identification/>. The session sits alongside the ‘how to be headhunted on LinkedIn’ session as a way of postdocs showcasing their skills and abilities.

The session acts as a first step towards the advanced CV writing session (How to write the perfect CV) in which a worked example of tailoring a CV to meet the job requirements is detailed.

The session also touches upon storytelling techniques which feature in more detail in the session ‘The secrets of storytelling’ and are further built upon in the ‘Commercial communication’ session <https://prosper.liverpool.ac.uk/learning-development-clusters/communication-skills/>.

**Session format/s (inc. virtual/face-to-face/live or on-demand)**

* Live virtual session with a mix of slides, discussion, short videos and a poll. Alternatively, the live format could be delivered as a face-to-face presentation.
* A recorded on-demand video presentation.

**Session running time**

* Live virtual session ~45 minutes
* On-demand running time – recording is ~40 minutes

**Session overview**

The session covers the essential differences between academic and non-academic CVs using a mixture of slides, discussion, short videos and a poll. The session introduces both CV types, covers their structure and content and then considers three key aspects for researchers to consider when writing a non-academic CV for the first time: incorporating their skills into their CV, translating their academic outputs for their audience and using storytelling techniques to demonstrate their achievements. Two short videos by Tina Persson are incorporated into the session, on CV design and introducing the PAR and STAR storytelling techniques. The session also covers the rise of academic narrative CVs, providing the Royal Society’s Resume for Researchers as an example.

**Additional session tools/resources/links**

### CVs Beyond Academia

Robert Dolan, 2017, ‘When targeting non-academic jobs, does your resume communicate the right message?’ <https://doi.org/10.1093/femsle/fnx063>

Robert Dolan, 2018, ‘Convert academic CV to 2 page document’ <https://doi.org/10.1093/femsle/fny072>

Indeed – Storytelling in CVs and Cover letters <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/star-method-resume>

The Ladders’ recruiter eye-tracking study <https://www.theladders.com/static/images/basicSite/pdfs/TheLadders-EyeTracking-StudyC2.pdf>

### Academic CVs

Elsevier – ‘Writing an effective academic CV’ <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/writing-an-effective-academic-cv>

Prospects – ‘Academic CV Example’ <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/example-cvs/academic-cv-example>

Vitae – ‘Creating an effective academic CV’ <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/pursuing-an-academic-career/how-to-write-an-academic-cv>

Royal Society Resume for Researchers <https://royalsociety.org/-/media/policy/projects/research-culture-images/2019-10-research-culture-resume-for-researchers-template.pdf>

### CV Building Programs

R-based CV creation <https://livefreeordichotomize.com/2019/09/04/building_a_data_driven_cv_with_r/>

EUROPass CV creation <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>

**Detailed session running plan**

See appendix for full script.

* Go through session outcomes.
* Conduct a poll asking the researchers the length of their CVs in pages.
* Introduce the basics of academic CVs, along with an example from the Vitae website.
* Compare academic CVs with non-academic CVs.
* Explore the purpose of a non-academic CV and how it might be treated by employers, recruiters and computer software.
* Discuss the process of creating your first non-academic CV.
* Cover how researchers might use a skills inventory to shape their CV, including places in the CV skills can be particularly effective (briefly introducing the concept of skills inventories for those who aren’t aware).
* Introduce the concept of translating research outputs to make them relevant for the target audience using the example of publications.
* Discussion: Ask the researcher about how their publications make them feel (should get a mix of things ranging from proud, accomplished and validated to inadequate or unsuccessful). Mid-way through the discussion, prompt them by asking how they’d feel about removing all their publications from their CV. End the discussion by showing them the wordcloud of other postdoc’s responses to the same question.
* Introduce why its ok to remove publications from a CV and how this makes other people feel, using examples from Twitter and other sources.
* Suggest ways in which publications and other academic outputs can be reframed/summarised in a single bullet point.
* Video: Show a video from Tina Persson introducing the PAR and STAR storytelling techniques.
* Show examples of these techniques in action in a CV.
* Introduce the growing movement around narrative CVs in academic.
* Introduce the concept of using key words from the job description and advert to focus a CV.
* Discuss CV design and formatting.
* Video: Show a video from Tina Persson introducing some design tips and tricks, and summarise the video and some of her other thoughts once the video has ended.
* Introduce the idea of automatic CV generation.
* End the session by summarising what has been covered and suggesting next steps, including exercises that the researchers could have a go at (using storytelling techniques, creating a 2 page non-academic CV).

**What does running the session ‘live’ add?**

Ability for postdocs to hear other postdocs feeling on removing publications from CVs.

Ability for postdocs to see a range of CV lengths from other postdocs.

Ability for facilitator to address any issues or concerns.

**Example copy to use to advertise the session on Eventbrite**

Event title (max. 75 characters) – Understanding CVs

Details>Description>

Summary (max 140 characters) – CVs are the currency of job applications. Whatever the job, ensure that you understand the type of CV required and how to write it.

Description - CVs are the currency of job applications. Whether you’re looking within or beyond academia, to get a job you’ll need to ensure that your CV will help secure you an interview.

In this session you’ll gain an understanding of different types of CVs and use your skills inventory to start crafting your CV. The session will also cover CV design and structure, translating academic achievements for non-academic CVs and how you can use storytelling techniques to showcase your skills.

**Frequently asked questions/pain points for this session**

No frequently asked questions, participants are able to reflect on their own CV practice and may have queries around specific areas of CVs (for example, whether non-academic CVs should include references – typically the answer is no).

**Time and resource input level**

1. **Basic/Minimum/Lightest** – Signpost postdocs to the video.
2. **Intermediate** – (all of basic plus some of the following) Hold a watch-party of the video. Engage the postdocs after the video to discuss how they feel about creating a non-academic CV – have many of them written a non-academic CV before, how did they find the process? Could get the postdocs to choose a skill they have and construct a PAR or STAR story evidencing their use of that skill. They could share their stories and provide each other with feedback.
3. **Premium/Most intensive** (all of basic and intermediate plus any of the following…) Tailor the resource to your institution. Commission an external professional supplier to deliver a tailored session – could hold a Q&A with the supplier. Organise a CV speed reading session. Set up a buddy scheme for peer reviewing CVs. Organise one-to-one CV ‘clinics’ with a career advisor.

**Appendix 1. Live Script for session**

**[Please note that the job roles of people mentioned in examples was correct at the time of writing 2021/2].**

**SLIDE 2 – Title**

Hi. I’m [introduce self and role/institution] and I’d like to welcome you to this Understanding CVs session.

**SLIDE 3 – Session outcomes**

During this session you’ll:

* Gain a better understanding of the differences between academia and non-academic CVs
* Put your skills inventory to use
* Employ storytelling techniques to showcase your skills and experience
* Use an appropriate design and structure in your CVs

**SLIDE 4 – Poll – How long is your CV?**

OK, to get things started I’d like to ask you a quick question – how long is your CV? How long is the CV you used to apply for your current role? By CV here I mean the document you’ll have probably attached or uploaded as part of your application and labelled it something like ‘your name\_CV’.

I’m going to launch a poll and you’ll see that the possible answers are 1 page, 2 pages, 3 pages, 4 pages, 5 pages or 6 pages or more.

[RUN POLL]

[DISCUSS RESULTS]

IF A MIX – Part of the point of the poll was to demonstrate that we can mean a lot of different things when we talk about CVs, depending on our own experience and training and the context of the CV. There are 1-page CVs and there are CVs more than 20 pages long and everything in between. Even between disciplines there will be slight differences in expectations for the academic CV.

**SLIDE 5 – 1. Academic vs non-academic CVs**

There’s no getting away from it – the difference between academic CVs and CVs for roles beyond academia is huge, they’re in worlds of their own.

**SLIDE 6 – The Academic CV**

[COULD REFLECT ON SURVEY RESULTS IF LOTS OF ANSWERS BEYOND 2 PAGES]

Academic CVs tend to be much more exhaustive and detailed than a CV you would use beyond academia. This is why we’re characterising the academic CV as somewhat like a library or inventory – and the result is that an academic CV can be as long as needed (although a maximum of 6 pages tends to be a good target to aim for as an early career researcher).

Your academic CV may contain many, all or potentially more of the sub-sections on the right here. The most important will be education, research employment, publications and funding. References are almost always included in an academic CV (but never in a non-academic CV).

**SLIDE 7 – example academic CV pt1**

So here’s an example of a postdoc’s academic CV from the Vitae website and you’ll see that everything is organised in the sections from the previous slide and expanded upon in detail. That’s a side and a third given over just to publications and conference presentations alone.

**SLIDE 8 – example academic CV pt2**

It continues onto pages 3 and 4 with teaching experience, outreach and other training, with the references going onto the fifth page.

If you’re applying for academic jobs then you’ll want your CV to be as exhaustive as this, listing your many achievements and outputs.

The Vitae website has a number of example academic CVs, all slightly different but all four pages or more. Hopefully you’re all relatively comfortable with the academic CV – we’ll check back in with them later in the session but let’s now look at CVs beyond academia as things are very different.

**SLIDE 9 –** **Quick comparison pt1**

If the academic CV is a library holding ALL your achievements, a non-academic CV is a curated window display of your RELEVANT achievements. You want to be piquing your potential employer’s interest enough that they’ll call you for interview. The CV beyond academia is your ticket to the interview.

It might be referred to as a CV or as a resume, it may depend on the country you’re applying in, the sector or even the specific preferences of the employer. The term ‘CV’ tends to cover all these types of document, whereas resume is generally only used for the 1- or 2-page variants. We’ll use the two terms interchangeably in this session.

**SLIDE 10 – Quick comparison pt2**

Ruth Winden is a Careers with Research Consultant at the University of Leeds and founder and CEO of Careers Enhanced limited. Her tweet gets to the core of the CV’s role:

“As a hiring manager, I have a problem. Show me that YOU are the solution to my problem. Your wish to have job security is understandable, but its not my priority, it’s yours. Lead with what you OFFER. Always.”

**SLIDE 11 – Academic CV vs non-academic CV**

Assistant Professor Tina Persson is the CEO of Passage2Pro, a careers coaching company for people with PhDs, as well as the author of ‘The PhD Career Coaching Guide’ and host of ‘The PhD Career Coaching Podcast’ and the ‘PhD Career Stories’ podcast.

Prof Persson has shared her expertise with Prosper a fair amount when it comes to CVs and we’ll be hearing from her a few more times during the session.

Here she’s describing the non-academic CV as a branding or marketing document that shows your professional achievements and what you want. You want to help employers get an idea of the value that you could bring to their organisation, and you aren’t going to do that with an exhaustive and specialist academic CV.

**SLIDE 12 – time**

Robert Dolan, assistant Director of Career Services at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has published a few papers on converting an academic CV to one suitable for beyond academia.

In his 2017 paper he points out that CVs serve three purposes – as a marketing tool to get you an interview, as a way to strategically direct an interview by showing how you map against the job description, and as a reminder to the employer after the interview during the decision-making process.

He also points out that your CV should convey enough information clearly enough to impress following a 10 second scan. Recruitment takes many forms and this won’t be the case in all roles across all sectors but recruiters dealing with hundreds of applications for a job will be doing initial screening very quickly.

Professional careers company Ladders conducted a study in 2018 with recruiters using eye-tracking software. They found that the average initial screen of a CV clocked in at just 7.4 seconds.

To make things worse, your CV might initially be scanned by a computer – resumes are often scanned through an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) first by software if uploaded online. The software is looking for key words (including the number of uses of those words) identified by the hiring manager as critical to candidate selection.

Whilst all this might sound disheartening, please don’t be put off. Knowing how your CV might be treated can allow you to design it appropriately to meet the harshness of some recruitment processes (and will be just as beneficial for those roles where CVs are given more time to shine).

**SLIDE 13 – Taking your CV beyond academia – key considerations pt1**

All CVs value presentation, but it’s fair to say that academic CVs have a focus on content over style, whereas CVs beyond academia value both content and style.

As we’ve mentioned, to create a CV for beyond academia you’ll need to reduce your CV length down to a maximum of 2 pages (and work in whole pages – only having part of a page suggests that you’ve run out of things to say).

With such a relatively brief CV structure you’ll want to ensure that your strongest selling points are clear to the reader. Robert Dolan’s 2017 paper from the previous slide asks ‘what 4-5 things do you want employers to know about you?’ – make these 4-5 things easy to spot.

You may also want to consider using a headline and a summary in your CV. The headline (sometimes referred to as a CV title or CV header) is a short, snappy sentence at the top to show your experience and skills. Indeed defines it as ‘a concise sentence that showcases your profile to a potential employer. The header can include your primary strengths, experiences and skills.’ Examples could be:

‘System Engineer With More Than 3 Years Experience with cloud-based technologies.’

OR

‘Back End Developer Familiar with PHP, JAVA, Python, Ruby and Rust.’

Indeed defines a CV summary as ‘an abstract of a candidate's professional background at the top of their CV. A CV summary is a statement at the top of a CV that outlines a job candidate's professional experience, skills and background. It's typically a short and concise paragraph, around four to five sentences long, and it contains a candidate's most impressive, relevant qualifications. You can use a CV summary to introduce yourself to potential employers effectively.’

**SLIDE 14 – Taking your CV beyond academia – key considerations pt2**

Already we’re seeing that converting an academic CV to one suitable for beyond academia isn’t necessarily an easy or quick process. Leave yourself plenty of time. Tina Persson recommends leaving up to 4 weeks to create a new CV, the time being used to fully examine the job advert, learn about the employer, matching yourself against their requirements and then building your CV.

It’s sometimes a lot easier to start from a blank document rather than modifying your existing academic CV. There are plenty of templates online you can download or copy so make use of them for inspiration if nothing else.

You’ll also need to translate your academic achievements and outputs so that someone outside of academia can recognise their value, and tailor your CV to the job itself – remembering to highlight the skills that are most relevant and show the employer the value you would bring to the role.

Don’t worry, these are all things we’re going to discuss further but I wanted to make it clear that there’s a lot to consider and your CV can make or break an application so make sure it’s not something you rush at the last minute.

**SLIDE 15 – Building a portfolio of CVs**

Even if they’re presenting the same person, no two CVs should look alike if they’re for different jobs. A CV is always working with the same raw material, but it shapeshifts to suit the needs of the role.

Tina Persson recommends building a portfolio of CVs that you can tailor as required. She suggests having a 1-page CV, a general 2-page CV that you can tailor for specific job adverts, your full academic CV (or a ‘master CV’ that contains all your experience that you can draw examples from), and then depending on your sector and needs you may also have a portfolio, a webpage or a business card.

By having a selection of different formats you’re building a suite of tools to market yourself. Even if you don’t ever need to use one, creating a 1-page CV is a useful exercise: as the amount of content decreases, it helps you really identify your absolute strongest features, the ones you want employers to know about over all others.

**SLIDE 16 – 2. Using your skills inventory**

Being aware of your skills is hugely important and an up to date skills inventory is an essential tool for building your CV.

**SLIDE 17 – What is a skills inventory?**

A skills inventory or a personal skills audit is:

“A comprehensive document (or list) containing all of your educational qualifications and professional skills. This should also capture your professional abilities and attributes.”

It’s essentially a list of ingredients from which you can select from for job applications. It doesn’t need to be polished, it just needs to be practical for you to easily keep updated and use.

**SLIDE 18 – Where can you use your skills inventory in your CV?**

The short answer is everywhere. All the content of your CV should be informed by your skills inventory. Map your skills and attributes against the job requirements and then clearly demonstrate this alignment in your CV.

You can put your skills in your headline, you should definitely put them in your summary. As we’ll see in a moment, some CVs have dedicated skills sections that clearly list relevant skills. And you should be thinking about how your skills can be highlighted in your descriptive text and bullet points throughout.

**SLIDE 19 – Map your skills and attributes against the job requirements**

These are two examples from Tina Persson that we’ll see a bit later on in the session – you’ll see that they’ve both got a bullet point skills section (circled) and for each of those skills listed they should already have examples and evidence from their skills inventory to back up their claims in an interview setting.

What’s more, in their experience sections they’re also highlighting their skills. In the example on the left the applicant is clearly highlighting phrases like ‘market research’ and ‘project management’, whilst on the right they’ve got phrases including ‘deal structuring’ and ‘value creation’.

**SLIDE 20 – 3. Translating your research outputs**

A CV for beyond academia is a document to present yourself appropriately to employers – to allay their fears, to reassure them that you’re a good fit for this role and so on. But whilst you know just how impressive your experience, outputs and achievements are, for someone who’s never been in academia they can be a bit meaningless – they’ll recognise that you’ve done lots of stuff but not appreciate how it relates to the role they’re advertising.

You’ll need to translate your outputs for them.

As an example we’re going to discuss publications. The number of publications you have will vary with experience and discipline but you’ll all likely have one or more publications. As we saw earlier, you could take pages just listing them – an academic would be impressed but a page of publications won’t necessarily speak to employers beyond academia.

**SLIDE 21 – Discussion**

I want to open this up now and find out from you how your publications make you feel? Take a moment to think about your publication list and every item on it. If you don’t have a single publication yet, that’s ok – think about your presentation list instead.

Ok, now that you’ve got your publications in mind, take a moment to think about how they make you feel. Put your answers into the chat or if typing is too slow then raise your hand and unmute yourself.

[DISCUSSION – ALLOW 3-5 MINUTES – give them a decent stretch of time to answer this tricky question, then have a discussion over the answers. I’d expect ‘proud’ to come out, but you might get things like ‘exhausted’ or even ‘fed up’.

After a few minutes ask them how they’d feel to take all their publications off their CV.]

**SLIDE 22 – How do your publications make you feel?**

We’ve asked this question to postdocs before and we got a range of answers, RELATE TO PREVIOUS DISCUSS (e.g. some similar to your answers, point out any answers that weren’t mentioned before).

**SLIDE 23 – The library is still complete…**

Continuing the library analogy from earlier “the library is still complete even when you can’t see all the books in it at once. You can never see all the books at a glance in a good library”

[CLICK THOUGH TO NEXT PART OF SLIDE]

Publications are hard evidence of all your hard work and undoubted talent. Your feelings about them may not all be positive but you should absolutely be proud of your publications. It can feel unsettling to realise that a publication list may do absolutely nothing for your CV beyond academia, may in fact harm it by taking up valuable space.

Your non-academic CV may have only a small sub-section of your publications or even none at all. Taking that step to removing them from your CV can be tough.

**SLIDE 24 – Dr Shona Jones**

Dr Shona Jones is an IP Commercialisation Manager and former postdoc. She points out that your CV will look different depending on what you’re applying for – “a list of academic publications was not necessary for a job in technology transfer, but experience in drafting patents and working with patent agents was key to include”.

So out went the publications.

**SLIDE 25 – Out tweet: 26/01/2021**

At the start of 2021 we asked academic twitter: “How did you find taking your academic publications off your CV? Did you use any strategies to make the process easier?”

**SLIDE 26 – Dan Holden**

Dan Holden is a former Chemistry postdoc and now a Leadership Development Manager at Key Group (a retirement finance company). Dan replied to say that for a long time he didn’t take his publications off his CV because he was proud of them. But then he realised that “the whole point of a CV is to act as a tool to highlight how well I could do the job I’m applying for – endless pages of citations just muddied this.”

**SLIDE 27 – Alison Moulds pt1**

Dr Alison Moulds was a postdoc on the ‘Diseases of Modern Life’ project and is now a Workforce Policy Manager for the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

She talks about repurposing rather than completely removing academic achievements, distilling them to the skills rather than the specific content. A long list of publications becomes a bullet point mentioning being published in a range of academic and other journals.

**SLIDE 28 – Alison Moulds pt2**

Alison continues to say how a publication list can be misleading of your achievements even in academia due to the different timelines of publishing compared to looking for jobs, and that reducing her 6-page academic CV to a 2-page one made her want to cry but that it’s also quite liberating, and easier to maintain and proofread.

**SLIDE 29 – Dr Chris Jeffs**

Dr Chris Jeffs was a postdoc in Ecology and is now an engagement and outreach manager at the British Ecological Society.

He talks about how it’s a big shift to switch from celebrating academic achievements on a CV to reframing them for his CV for beyond academia. He condensed his publication list to being “published in four scientific journals with X number of papers, see Google Scholar.”

**SLIDE 30 – Dr Georgina Key**

Dr Georgina Key is another former Ecology postdoc and now an environmental scientist and research manager at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.

She says: “you’d be surprised how few people care about how many publications you’ve got. It’s very much an academic thing and shouldn’t be the main thing that makes up your CV.”

**SLIDE 31 – A few golden phrases**

Whilst it may feel difficult at first you could consider translating your publication list into a phrase like this:

‘Author of X number of peer-reviewed articles in journals of international significance.’

You could do something similar with your publications list, or even identify a highlight from it as:

‘Invited speaker at [name of conference or meeting that will translate beyond academia]’

**SLIDE 32 – Examples provided by Natalie Ludsteen**

Natalie Lundsteen, assistant Dean for Career and Professional Development at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre has provided us with some other examples of phrases you could use, either alongside a shortened publication list or instead of one.

I particularly like one former postdoc’s phrase:

“Thirteen submitted publications including 9 peer-reviewed (3 first or co-first author) and 4 review articles.”

How much detail you provide about your publications (and other academic outputs) will depend on the role you’re applying for. A little more detail might be suitable for jobs that are academic or research adjacent, which value the fact that publications and presentations are part of the output of research. With other roles you may feel that a phrase like ‘Relevant professional publications’ would be sufficient.

**SLIDE 33 – Storytelling techniques**

Using storytelling techniques can be a very effective method of conveying your value in your CV.

**SLIDE 34 – Video**

We’re going to hear from Tina Persson about some useful storytelling techniques and how they can be used when writing your CV.

[PLAY VIDEO, MAKE SURE COMPUER SOUND SHARED (3min 30s)]

**SLIDE 35 – Everyone remembers a good story**

These techniques allow you to craft bite-sized stories and they’re great for allowing you to pinpoint the key information you want to get across. They can be useful in CV summaries and when you’re providing details of your experience. You can include them a headline, although normally headlines are too brief to make them truly effective, unless there’s something very specific which perfectly aligns with the job you’re applying for.

The two techniques Tina discussed were the PAR technique (Problem, Action, Result) and the STAR technique (Situation, Task, Action, Result).

When writing your mini-stories it’s important to use action verbs to make the story and your actions appear more engaging and dynamic.

**SLIDE 36 – PAR/STAR Examples- single bullet points**

When it comes to writing your CV you don’t necessarily need to keep to the order prescribed by the PAR or STAR techniques – frequently you might find leading with what you did works better.

For example, you could write it as Action-Result with the Problem left as implicit: ‘Coordinated international conservation project resulting in the recovery of the UK fen raft spider population.’

Or even Result-Action-Problem as in: ‘Successfully applied for £3.5 million to tackle the UK’s postdoc careers crisis’.

**SLIDE 37 – PAR/STAR Examples – across several bullet points**

Alternatively, you can use these techniques across several bullet points. This is an example from Indeed:

-Used my role as a home insurance agent to identify customer turnover *(*Situation and Task are combined here)

-Developed a digital survey to collect data from exiting customers *(*Action)

-Worked with agency president to lead a new customer service initiative (Results*)*

**SLIDE 38 – PAR/STAR Examples – small paragraph**

You can also tell stories in more detail, perhaps summing up a job you had in a brief paragraph. This is an example from Indeed about a teaching job and you’ll see that the extra space lets you be a bit more personal and makes the story and impact a little more engaging – but at the cost of a block of text and space. As with everything to do with CVs, its about finding that balance.

“When I started teaching at Golden Apple, the room was disorganized, the resources were hard to find and only two of the students were performing on grade level with mathematics, and less than half were able to read. I established a set of classroom goals and routines that the students could manage, and by the end of the year 80% of my students showed proficiency in reading comprehension and 70% were proficient in math. By the end of my time at Golden Apple, my students enjoyed coming to class and their parents were grateful for the guidance and structure I provided them.”

[OPTIONAL – if 25 minutes left in session then ask the attendees to take 5 minutes and come up with a skill and then tell a story of how you used that skill using the PAR technique – write out the different steps – Problem, Action, Result and then transform that into a single sentence, then 3-4 bullet points, then a small paragraph. If you’d like some inspiration then skills you could use are creativity, time management, communication skills, negotiation, or horizon scanning. Pick one and have a go!]

**SLIDE 39 – The future of academic CVs?**

Storytelling techniques aren’t just useful for CVs beyond academia, and in fact there are movements to make academic CVs less exclusively focused on publications and funding, broadening them to include other ways in which academics contribute research.

This started in October 2019 with the Royal Society launching it’s Resume for Researchers which is “intended to be a flexible tool that can be adapted to a range of different processes that require a summative evaluation of a researcher, recognising that their relative importance will be context-specific.”

A couple of years later UKRI started following the Royal Society’s example, announcing UKRI’s Resume for Research and Innovation, “a content-rich alternative to the traditional CV which supports applicants to show how they have made a different, which will allow people working across the research and innovation sector to evidence a wider range of activities and contributions.”

Whilst we’re yet to see how widely implemented this will be, UKRI have already trialled it out with a few funding calls and have plans for more.

**SLIDE 40 – Resume for Researchers**

As a quick illustration of what the Resume for Researchers is all about, here’s the current breakdown of the Resume, with space for blocks of text in answer to each section. In addition to providing traditional CV details such as education and experience in the personal details section, applicants can demonstrate how they’ve contributed to: the generation of knowledge, the development of individuals, the wider research community, and to broader society. Applicants are also expected to provide a personal statement reflecting their personal work goals and motivations, and are able to document things that may have affected their career progression such as career breaks, secondments, volunteering, part-time work and other relevant experience.

Being able to use storytelling techniques will allow you to provide engaging and impactful answers to these new sections should you encounter these new types of academic resume in the future.

**SLIDE 41 – 5. Keywords**

We’re just going to very quickly touch on identifying keywords and using them in your CV as this can be a very affective technique for getting your CV noticed – remember the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) software that scans for terms and words specified by the employer. You can, and should, strategically pull out important words or phrases from the job advert and include them in your CV in some way. Just make sure you don’t overuse this practice and also ensure that any keywords are placed within a proper context as employers will spot when you’re putting them in to trick the system as opposed to it actually being relevant.

**SLIDE 42 – Understanding the job advert**

Tina Persson recommends highlighting words and phrases in the job application to help you to realise what you need to focus on in your CV and to ensure that you’re using commonly used words and phrases in your CV.

Different colours can be used to highlight different aspects of the advert. For instance, in this example greens are skills or experience that are easy for you to evidence; blues are about working style and unusual skills that you have and may help you stand out; yellows are transferable skills and values; whilst reds are essential requirements that you might not meet exactly but could have indirect experience of. Once you’ve highlighted these you can then ensure that your CV showcases them in the right way.

**SLIDE 43 – 6. CV Design and Structure**

We’ve talked a lot about content but let’s finish by looking at style, design and structure.

**SLIDE 44 – There is no single perfect CV design**

I wish I could show you exactly what you need to do but there’s no set CV format or style. Do you use a photo of yourself? Do you use colour of keep your CV black and white? How much text do you have – is everything bullet points or are there paragraphs of text?

It’s all a combination of personal preference and knowing what the local and industry expectations are – length, amount of personal details and format can all differ between countries and sectors. Look up CVs online and find out what’s typical for the type of job you’re applying for and where it is.

**SLIDE 45 - Video**

We’re going to hear from Tina Persson again as she discusses various CV designs and structures, and how they can be effective in communicating your value.

[PLAY VIDEO, MAKE SURE COMPUER SOUND SHARED (7min 40s)]

**SLIDE 46 – General CV design tips**

Tina’s provided some general CV design tips.

Make sure you let your CV breathe – you want it to be easy to navigate and cramming 2 pages with text isn’t going to do that. Make your CV easy to read. Draw attention to important sections, include relevant sections, headings and subheadings (without going overboard).

Where possible use numbers to demonstrate your achievements and experience – if your research involved coordinating with stakeholder groups then how many groups were there? If you refined a research method then by what percentage did you increase its effectiveness?

Use your online presence to your advantage. You don’t want to cram your CV with links but you could include one or perhaps even two that lead to your personal webpage or LinkedIn profile where further information can be found. If you really don’t want those publications to disappear entirely, have a page on your own site or use a Google scholar link.

The most important thing is that your CV communicates your value – it demonstrates that you are the solution to the employer’s problem.

**SLIDE 47 – Generating CVs automatically**

Rather than creating something from scratch, you might prefer putting your information into a database and using that the generate a CV automatically. Europass is an online way of doing this with a standardised CV format for use across the EU, or there’s also a way of generating a CV using R, if you’re comfortable enough with that software.

**SLIDE 48 – What next?**

So, what next? Well, if you’ve not get viewed the Building Your Skills Inventory session and haven’t started creating your own skills inventory then I’d recommend starting with that as everything will then feed into your CV and you’ll have an exhaustive repository of examples of all your many skills <https://prosper.liverpool.ac.uk/learning-development-clusters/skills-identification/>.

Try out the PAR and STAR techniques for yourself – write a CV headline and summary, either for your current role or for any role beyond academia that’s taken your interest. You should also try applying storytelling techniques to demonstrate skills and experience within the main body of your CV – try to write the same story as a single bullet point, across several bullet points and as a small paragraph.

You should also have a go at making 1- and 2-page CVs – force yourself to condense your academic CV into the shorter format, translate your academic achievements and outputs into experience and skills that are relevant to employers beyond academia. You can also then share your CVs within your buddy groups or with friends, colleagues or even your PI – ask for feedback or ask them to identify the 4-5 take home messages you were trying to get across – do they pick up on the same things you were aiming for?

**SLIDE 49 – Thank you for your time!**

Thank you so much for your time and participation in today’s session. We’ve got a little time for questions if you have any.