

■ CLASSIFIED POST CAREER FORUM ■

GIVING YOUR CV THAT LITTLE EXTRA

Career Forum attendees can benefit from expert advice so that their CVs stand out in the field at the vital recruitment stage, courtesy of recruitment specialists Peoplebank, writes **HELEN DALLEY**

A CV that's personalised to each application can help you land that dream job, says Helen Dalley

Recruitment company Peoplebank encounters hundreds of CVs every day and says the best ones are identified at first glance. "If the CV doesn't stand out to us in the first instance, it will usually not be shortlisted if the job has attracted a lot of candidates. However, if we do come across a strong CV with well-written content and the position is hard to fill, we'll go back to their profile to see if the candidate fits 40 to 50 per cent of the hiring requirements," explains general manager Annie Cheung.

There are now more resources than ever to help jobseekers prepare the perfect CV but many still don't understand the importance of tailoring this important document to each job applied for, says Cheung. Don't underestimate the value of a killer cover letter, either. "A CV is a snapshot of your working experience, but a cover letter enables you to include additional information that might not be suitable for a CV, such as why you are attracted to the job or company."

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are used by an estimated 64 per cent of firms today when recruiting staff. Cheung says candidates should recognise this by incorporating keywords of skills relevant to the job in their CV. "If the job you are applying to requires project management, customer service or certain technical skills & experience with a particular system, include these words as much as possible in your CV. A CV with the word 'project' in 10 times is going to appear more suitable than one that has only included it in once, even if the experience is the same."

Including extra-curricular activities is a great way to demonstrate transferable skills, especially for new graduates or those with only a few years' experience in the workplace. "Activities such as volunteering (selfless), sports (competitive) and self-study (willing to learn) are all good examples," she says.

Peoplebank advise that it's no longer necessary to include your full address on a CV but say it might be beneficial to include your home area. "The address is more for

checking whether the commute is feasible, or if a candidate is applying out of Hong Kong. With sensitive information such as your home address readily available online, this can potentially lead to identity theft, fraud and so on," she points out.

While addresses are no longer deemed necessary, a phone number certainly is (leave it off when uploading a CV online if you're concerned about security). "The first thing we'll do is call the candidate to pre-qualify them. If they are unavailable after several attempts to call, then we'll email them to schedule a time to speak. By not leaving a contact number, it puts you at a disadvantage, as other qualified candidates will have been contacted for interviews by the time you check your email," she says.

As for embracing recent CV trends, such as using hyperlinks to expand on a point, or making a video cover letter, Cheung says it depends on the industry. "Media and digital companies may find video applications attractive because they are looking for creative individuals. However, the traditional CV and cover letter is still the preferable

method as it is the most time efficient to screen." Hyperlinks can be useful to show a portfolio, but if used to expand on a point, then first consider re-writing it, adds Cheung.

While CVs remain an extremely useful tool in recruitment, the impact of social media such as

LinkedIn means the conventional way of finding talent is no longer limited to it, Cheung admits. "Recommendations, endorsements and post activity on LinkedIn is a great way for hiring managers to make a decision if the candidate is a right fit for their company."



Annie Cheung, General Manager of Peoplebank

HIGHLIGHTS FOR PAST SHADOWS

Since its inception in March 2014, the Shadow a CEO Programme has enabled Hong Kong's future leaders to see what life's really like at the top by providing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet renowned top executives in the city. The programme has partnered with firms from a diverse range of industries including retail, aviation, engineering, media, automobiles and IT.

Sunil Jethani, a business operations management student from City University of Hong Kong, was pleasantly surprised by how much time he got to spend with Gary Liu, CEO of the South China

Morning Post, last November as part of the programme. "On our first day, we had the opportunity to meet with Gary for 30 minutes before the town hall staff meeting in Tai Po and for another hour before the town hall at Causeway Bay. These one-on-one sessions with Gary were amazing since we were able to chat about his daily routine and life as a CEO." Jethani also learned that empathy and encouraging staff to work as a team are very important to Liu. "Gary values team work very highly and is empathetic towards colleagues. He always seems to know exactly what is going on in another person's mind, and this

emphasis on team work is very important in running a large business."

City University of Hong Kong business management student Charles Tse shadowed Albert Wong, CEO at Hong Kong Science Park in October 2017. "One of the key things that I learnt from Albert about running a large business is to build up a good corporate culture. I met with HKSTP staff from different teams and all of them were very clear about their role and mission in the company, and share the same vision: to help start ups at the park grow their business."

Chineye Egbuna, an accounting

and finance student at Hong Kong Baptist University, shadowed chief human resources officer at Schneider Electric Olivier Blum last November & December. One of the highlights of the programme was the meet and greet sessions with senior management, who shared his experiences about career, family and other general aspects of life with him and the other shadows. "I learned that a good leadership style should be open enough to encourage free flow of ideas and creativity from team members to ensure that everybody's opinion is valued to enhance synergy and trust and promote openness," he says.

Tushar Agarwal, a student in business management at the University of Hong Kong, shadowed Dr Wendy Lee, country sales manager for Hong Kong & Macau at Autodesk this January. He says the highlight of the programme was working on live challenges and presenting solutions to the CEO. "More importantly, we got to know her feedback right away and found out how she planned to incorporate our solutions in the company's strategy for the upcoming year. Through our interactions, we learned the values of resilience and innovation required in running such a large business," he adds.



Charles Tse



Chineye Egbuna



Tushar Agarwal



Sunil Jethani