

Curriculum Vitae

Introduction to CV Preparation

Curriculum Vitae - Latin, course of (one's) life : a short account of one's career and qualifications prepared typically by an applicant for a position (Merriam–Webster Dictionary OnLine).

As we can see above, a curriculum vitae (CV) is made to highlight a person's experience as applicable to a particular job but a current and well-thought out CV is also a crucial part of every PHS officer's Official Personnel Folder (OPF). When applying for a position, it may emphasize current professional duties and address specific criteria or selective factors required to perform the job. When prepared for an officer's OPF, it should emphasize a career history of increasing professional responsibility and accomplishments that result in significant impact upon program goals. Think of it as a melding of the usual "scientist" CV with a promotional résumé. The general purpose of a résumé is to portray a person in a clear, favorable, but factually reliable manner, using dynamic language.

Officers are encouraged to maintain a current CV in their OPF which reflects present position, experience, and accomplishment. The CV may be used to apply for Scientist positions with the Commissioned Corps and for documentation in your personnel folder. Some officers have found it helpful to update the CV and submit it to their OPF on a schedule that coincides with the annual COER. When applying for a position, officers are often encouraged to develop a specific CV that addresses the professional duties and specific criteria or selective factors required by the position. **Your OPF curriculum vitae, however, should either directly or indirectly reflect your career using the promotion precepts of "Performance Accomplishments," "Education, Training and Professional Development," "Career Progression and Potential," "Characteristics of Career Officer and Service to the PHS Commissioned Corps," and "Readiness."**

The Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) has developed a model CV and continuing education form that are included in this chapter. These model documents provide a common format for reporting crucial data reviewed in the promotion process. The standardization allows the various boards to quickly locate and review critical elements in an officer's CV, making it easier to manage the large number of files often under review. Standardization also allows the boards to directly compare specific items, making the process less subjective. **You are strongly encouraged** to use these tools, carefully compiled by the members of SciPAC, because they will result in a long-term benefit to individual officers as well as the Corps in general. Some general considerations on the content of your CV are described below. Directly following is a Model CV, and we also offer detailed language suggested for use in describing your job and describe what could be included in each of the five precepts.

CV Preparation

Ideally, you should begin preparing your Corps CV at least six months before any due date. This period will allow for reflection, revisions and feedback. Distribute your CV to Scientist Officers (Officers in other categories will have other guidelines and criteria, thus we suggest that you limit your feedback exercises to officers from the Scientist Category) for their comments, regarding clarity of message, etc. Don't be dissuaded, however, by those who counsel that it is too immodest. Be wary if no one says that it is too immodest, for you may have failed to observe the guidelines presented above and below. But, always be factual and diligent in accuracy.

The CV is Your Proponent

When preparing a CV for your OPF, think of yourself as an individual on stage-alone, presenting yourself to an audience. This is probably the only document that you will prepare for your OPF. This is, therefore, your best opportunity to present yourself not only through the content of the document but also through the appearance of the CV. Style, clarity, print, paper, cleanliness, and attention to details such as grammar and spelling are all important when preparing your CV.

Those who review your CV will gain some indication of your judgment by what you document or by what you forget or fail to disclose. A poorly prepared, inadequate, outdated CV speaks poorly for and about you. An absent one conveys nothing but speaks volumes. As your proponent, the CV may be as important as was your dissertation defense.

When you present yourself via your CV, think of the words you would use with your mother. How would you tell her about your job? Would you use plain language, avoiding bureaucratic jargon? Do the same for the board. Think about the kind of document you would appreciate if you were in a reviewing position.

Most importantly, do something that may be difficult for otherwise reserved, modest scientists. Champion yourself! It is up to you to emphasize your strengths and talents. You have many or you would not be a PHS Officer! This psychology and style of writing may be foreign to you but no one else will be there to speak up for how great you are. If you are struggling, try an exercise in imagery. Envision being before the Board. What would you like to say to them in a few critical minutes? What would you wish them learn about you? From you? Translate those thoughts onto paper. This takes work. It may take several months to prepare an effective Corps CV.

The Audience

A wide variety of people will have the authority to review your OPF. These individuals will include, but not be limited to:

1. Promotion and Assimilation Boards;
2. Those writing award nominations; and
3. Those involved in agency personnel actions, e.g., filling vacancies, billet descriptions, and special assignments.

Make sure that your CV is complete and that it contains information relevant to those who are authorized to review your OPF in an official capacity.

The Process

Every commissioned officer that is eligible for promotion should have an updated CV in his or her OPF before the published deadline of the promotion year, generally December 31. Each spring, the Scientist Promotion Board, comprised of five senior (O-6) Scientist Officers, meets to review and rank all Scientist Officers who are eligible for temporary or permanent promotion during that promotion year. The review of files is a tough and demanding task. Board members examine computer-generated summaries and OPFs for each candidate while looking for information pertinent to each promotion precept. Board members need to know quickly, clearly, and concisely who you are, what your job is, and your accomplishments. ***The information in your CV should be in a concise, easy-to-read, easy-to-find format.*** A cover page should highlight the most important aspects. This will make the job of the reviewing officers easier and lessen the likelihood that they will miss some important, perhaps even pivotal, facts about you.

Overarching Factors - Getting Started

As you put together (or rework) your CV, there are several *very, very* important factors that you need to keep in the back (really the *front*) of your mind at all times. Failure to observe these concepts could mean the difference between making the promotion cutoff and not. All are important but probably the first is of the greatest importance.

1. Be concise – We can't stress this enough. The Promotion Boards have very little time per candidate (usually only a few minutes) and need to be able to glance over your materials and discern the important details quickly. Learn to cut down verbiage to the minimum to get your point across effectively; don't go into excessive detail about every position, degree, and skill you have. For example, you may wish to indicate that you were an Eagle Scout; however, listing all of your merit badges would be excessive. More will be presented about appropriate documentation for each section later in this document.

2. Consider the overall visual appearance of your CV – Is it easy to read, do important parts (e.g., headings, precept sections) stand out, is it way too busy or way too empty looking, is the font too small or varies widely on different pages/sections/sentences, etc.?

3. Concentrate on consistency throughout the document – Do not change the way you present information mid-stream as this will make it difficult for board members to find things in different parts effectively. For example, *always* put dates to the left or right, rather than on the right for awards, on the left for position descriptions and within the text on other items. Another example is to use the same format to present job descriptions throughout (i.e., duties, accomplishments – see below).

4. Use action verbs rather than passive verbs at every opportunity – Whenever you are describing your duties, accomplishments and impacts or other characterizations of yourself in the CV, try to use action verbs as these convey an active rather than passive officer. For example,

instead of writing, “Was involved in chronic heart disease study,” write, “Investigated risk of factor X leading to chronic heart disease.”

5. Focus on *Impacts in job descriptions* – Very important again. The board wants to see how your activities and accomplishments changed the world for the better. Did you have any definite, quantifiable, positive outcomes to your work? Were people’s lives or health affected in some way? In other words, did you help save lives, prevent sickness, help change policies that saved time, money, or alleviated stress, did you advance the goals of your agency somehow, etc.? If there is nothing immediate or quantifiable, are there *potential* positive effects one could reasonably expect from your work?

6. Format the CV correctly – There are two crucial areas that you must attend to if you want to avoid unintentional problems with submitting the CV. Always, always, always put your name, PHS number and category in the upper right-hand corner of every page of your CV, including the summary sheet, and always, always, always number your pages with the “1 of 11”, “2 of 11”, “3 of 11”, etc., format. Both of these exercises help insure that the board will have your full CV to review.

CV Content

The CV should summarize items found elsewhere in the OPF and highlight information such as civic and community activities and publications that are not included in other parts of the OPF. **All CVs must be typed and dated, each page containing your name, your PHS number and your category (Scientist) in the upper right hand corner.**

The CV Summary Sheet

The CV should begin with a one to two-page cover sheet addressing each of the five Promotion Board scored precepts. This gives the individuals reviewing your CV an overview of your accomplishments as they relate to the precepts. *Remember that this is a very shortsummary so you must be brief.* The detailed information should be contained in the body of your CV.

Include the following information in the Summary Sheet:

- Name, Rank, PHS Serial Number, and Date
- Performance Accomplishments: List major accomplishments and impacts – be brief, one line each. Any leadership roles and noteworthy awards can be included here.
- Education, Training and Professional Development: List your degrees, certifications, licensure (if applicable), continuing education synopsis (one line), and any additional training or public health experience that might be of benefit to the Corps.
- Career Progression and Potential: List billets and assignments in reverse chronology. Include dates; list increased levels of responsibility. List assimilation date (or note application date if not yet approved), mobility, and any special skills.
- Characteristics of Career Officer and Service to the PHS Commissioned Corps: List membership in professional or Corps associations, work done for the Corps outside of

regular job including recruiting activities, CCRF deployments, agency deployments, Honor Guard, PHS Ensemble, etc.

- Readiness: State your level of readiness based on the current deployment readiness standards.

Your CV body should contain (at a minimum):

The current date of the CV and contact information including CIO and the following sections:

- Response Readiness
- Education - College degrees and dates awarded
- Licensure, certifications, professional credentials
- Professional experience
- Special assignments
- Temporary Duty Assignments (TDY) - Travel Orders are not filed in the OPF
- Participation in professional organizations
- Outside activities or appointments
- PHS awards and honors
- PHS support activities
- Special skills
- Non-PHS awards, honors, letters of recognition, etc.
- Civic and community activities
- Continuing education summary – CE is documented separately in your OPF
- Publications, presentations, patents, etc.

Description of Sections in Body of CV

Response Readiness

List your current level of readiness (Basic/Intermediate/Advanced), the date you achieved this, and any CCRF/OFRD deployments with a brief description of each deployment (role, length of time, etc.)

Education

Include all college degrees that you hold, the name of the college or university, and the dates the degrees were awarded. You may also include any extensive training that has allowed you to claim an expertise in certain areas, even though you may not have a degree in those areas.

Professional Registration/Certification

List only **current** professional registrations and certifications and limit the listing to those that allow you to practice or recognize your standing in your field or specialization, e.g., licensed dental hygienist, registered/certified medical technologist, or licensed optometrist.

Experience

Posted 2006 (Current for 2008)

List all of the positions you have held as a commissioned officer and all other appropriate professional experience. This list should include actual permanent assignments and any assignment in an acting capacity. Describe short-term special projects or assignments under the position in which they occurred. Include temporary duty assignments (TDY) and the amount of travel you have done in conjunction with your assignment. Travel Orders are not filed in your OPF; if you wish that information to be known, you must include it on your CV.

List positions in reverse chronological order starting with your current position. Include dates, position title, billet rating, Agency, and location.

Describe duties, responsibilities, and accomplishments for each position using a bullet format. **Make sure that level of responsibility is clearly indicated for each position.**

Remember: Billet descriptions **are not included** in an officer's OPF. The CV is often the only document in the OPF that describes an officer's level of responsibility.

Professional Organizations/Affiliations Outside Activities or Appointments

Under appropriate headings, list your current professional organization memberships, your status within the organization, e.g., member, associate, chairman, or fellow, and any current or past positions or assignments. Note any profession-related outside activities such as editorial board membership, peer-reviewer, adjunct faculty appointments, etc.

Awards and Honors

List the names and dates of all PHS awards and honors, including Exceptional Capability Promotions (ECP) you have received. The complete narrative should be available elsewhere in your OPF. All non-PHS awards and honors should include the name of the award/honor, the organization, the date, and a very brief description of the purpose of the award/honor. **Make sure that a copy of the non-PHS award/honor is in your OPF.**

Include copies of letters of recognition in your OPF.

PHS Support Activities

List any official PHS support activities in which you were a direct participant, e.g., Promotion Board Recorder, appointment board, revitalization committee, SciPAC, or Surgeon General's Ad Hoc Committee. Include dates of participation and any office you held.

Special Skills

List special skills with a public health value, such as amateur radio license, first aid training, CPR, DMAT, certified SCUBA diver, pilot license, proficiency in other languages, expert in desktop publishing, etc.

Civic and Community Activities

List all current community and civic activities, e.g., Boy or Girl Scout Troop Leader, chairman of a school or church committee, or president of the local chapter of the Sierra Club.

Publications Presentations and Papers

List publications in reverse chronological order noting the author(s), title, journal, volume number, page, and date published. Highlighting your name in bold helps reviewers know your degree of involvement. For presentations, list the title, the occasion, e.g., conference, city, and date. For patents, list the inventor(s), name of invention, patent number, and date.

Personal Information

This information is optional and is usually not pertinent to your career as a professional. Many advise omitting birth date, marital status, number of children, or hobbies. These aspects should not be the basis on which one is rated. Although you may expand this information in CVs that are circulated for new jobs, for purposes of the OPF, keep this section very brief if present.

Do not include the following types of information in your CV:

- Summaries of performance appraisals (COERs)
- Conferences attended
- Medical information (except for noting medical waiver for physical fitness requirements)

Summary

In the end, it is each officer's responsibility to ensure that their OPF contains the documents that best reflect their value to the PHS. Reviewers of your OPF have no prior knowledge of you, and their basis of assessing you will be through the documents you maintain in your OPF.

Following is a Model CV with summaries of what should be listed in each section.

The Model Curriculum Vitae (with Examples)

Rank and Name
PHS Serial Number
Scientist
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CV SUMMARY SHEET Rank and Name Date CV Completed (or Updated)

Performance (COERS and Evaluations: see OPF)

(List major accomplishments and impacts – bulleted, one line each)

- Discovered cause of Disease X: subsequent prevention efforts have reduced mortality by 59% in U.S.
- Linked two federal agencies in Disease X prevention efforts allowing thousands at risk to be educated.
- Spurred FDA to remove diet supplement “LoozFat” from approved list due to unexpected risk of heart disease.
- Awarded Meritorious Service Medal for single-handedly surviving the Transformation – December, 2003.
- Awarded SG Exemplary Service Medal for creating workable prescription drug program for U.S. – June, 2002.

Education, Training, & Professional Development

(Degrees, certifications, licensure, continuing ed. synopsis, any additional training or public health experience)

Ph.D. 1989 Notre Dame University, Visual Biologic Sciences, Dissertation Title: Looking through a microscope:
How much can we really see?

M.S. 1982 East Kansas State University, Binocularology.

B.A. 1980 East Kansas State University, Pastoral Shepherding.

- Licensed Laboratory Technician, Minnesota, 1987 - present
- Continuing Education: 40+ hours public health and preparedness learning activities per year since 2001.
- Trained and certified in rappelling, search and rescue, and HAZMAT.

Career Progression & Potential

(Billets & assignments in reverse chronology with dates, assimilation status, mobility, any special skills)

Assimilation into PHS Commissioned Corps: Nominated for Assimilation - January, 2002

Senior Research Support Scientist Officer, CDC, National Center for Infectious Disease, Division of Viral and Rickettsial Diseases, Atlanta, GA July, 1999 to *present*
0-6 Billet

Research Scientist Officer, IHS Epidemiology Program, Albuquerque, NM July, 1998 to June, 1999
0-5 Billet

Research Scientist Officer, Epidemic Intelligence Service, CDC, Assignee to Bureau of Prisons, Oklahoma City, OK July, 1996 to June, 1998
0-3 Billet

- **Skilled in large and small data set epidemiologic analysis, geographic information systems, writing and administration of grants, lab benchwork, filling in government forms.**

Characteristics of Career Officer & Service to the PHS

(Professional/Corps assoc's, work outside of regular job, e.g. recruiting, CCRF/agency deployments, Honor Guard)

- CCRF Deployments: Azerbaijan, 1999; Ft. Dix, 2001; Iraq, 2003 (CCRF Member since 1998)
- Associate Recruiter – 1998 to present
- Member, American Public Health Association – 1996 – 2001
- Member, COA – 1996 to present

Response Readiness

(List Deployment Readiness level – Basic, Intermediate or Advanced)

Attained Basic Level of Readiness, December, 2003

Posted 2006 (Current for 2008)

**Rank and Name
PHS Serial Number
Contact Information
Date CV Completed (or Updated)**

CURRENT GRADE & ASSIMILATION STATUS: (Temp., Perm., Regular/Reserve)

PROMOTION HISTORY: (Reverse chronological order. Note assimilation to Regular Corps or date of application)

RESPONSE READINESS: (Level, deployment role, number and brief description of deployments)

EDUCATION

Most recent degree, major, year, & institution

Earlier degree, major, year, & institution

Dissertation title or topic

PROFESSIONAL LICENSE/CERTIFICATION(s)

(If certification is not required, enter "N/A", if certification is required but not obtained, enter "Not Certified")

Title, certifying organization, expiration date

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS AND GOALS: (Short description, 1 – 2 sentences)

(The following are in table format for illustrative purposes only – format as you see fit making sure each part of the description is easy to pick out)

CURRENT PHS ASSIGNMENT

Job title, billet rating

Organization

Location

Date

Duties and responsibilities

Major accomplishments

PHS ASSIGNMENT HISTORY

(Reverse chronological order)

Job title, billet rating

Organization

Location

Dates

Duties and responsibilities

Major accomplishments

(See additional suggestions on job descriptions at the end of the model CV)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS:

(Utilized in career PHS assignments or that are potentially useful to the PHS)

SPECIAL CAREER ASSIGNMENTS

(Reverse chronological order. Same format as for work experience. Include special/temporary assignments, details, etc.)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

(List only once under most appropriate category and note status; e.g., member, advisor, secretary, etc.)

Commissioned Corps

Faculty Appointments

Professional Societies

Committees and Working
Groups

Editorial Boards, Reviews

HONORS AND AWARDS

(For each, list date, award title, organization)

Individual Honor and Unit
Awards

Other USPHS Awards

Non-PHS Awards

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

(List only once under most appropriate category. Do not list categories for which there is no entry. For each include full citation.)

Peer Reviewed Publications:

Journal Articles

Book Chapters/Books

Government Publications if peer
reviewed

Position Papers

Abstracts

Other Publications:

Journal Articles

Book Chapters/Books

Government Publications

Position Papers

Abstracts

Posters

Dissertation, and/or masters theses (if not published)

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

(For each, list date, title, meeting/organization. Indicate if outside U.S.A. and the degree of honor associated with the invitation)

CIVIC, COMMUNITY and VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

(List status as in professional activities)

PRE PHS EMPLOYMENT and PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

(Depending on the length of your PHS career, these may be listed with the PHS assignment history)

PROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

You should submit a yearly list of continuing education activities with contact hours for each activity to your OPF separately from your CV. In the CV you should direct the reader to the OPF for this information but may wish to list your yearly contact hours and general description (no more than one line per year) of the types of activities you engaged in. If you have more than 4 or 5 years in the Corps we advise a short aggregate summary only of continuing education activities rather than listing yearly totals. Use the Continuing Education Form outlined later on in this chapter to submit CE activities to your OPF. It may be useful to list whether the training was funded by yourself or your Agency.

END OF MODEL CV

Additional Suggested Language for Job Descriptions, Career Progression and Potential

Current Job Description

When describing your current job there are some basic do's and don'ts. Use active, not passive voice. Use "I" language rather than "Officer has the task of" Say "It is my job to" Let the reader know the scope of your job and how it is assessed. Describe the job's assessment guidelines. Present the Board with the criteria your supervisor(s) uses to evaluate your job. For example, you may wish to use language such as, "My leader assesses my job on the basis of 1, 2, and 3" or "My job is assessed on the basis of 1, 2, 3" This is an item on which the Board should not speculate.

You also may wish to let the Board know what your job is not, including prohibited or discouraged activities. If your job is research and the production of articles for peer-reviewed journals, then the Board is properly directed to examine your publication list. If, however, publication is prohibited or is not a job requirement, then note this. Use your judgment here. We can all write volumes on what our jobs are not. Readers need to know quickly what your job is, what it is not, how it is assessed, its special duties, responsibilities, and challenges.

Past Job Descriptions

For past positions try to introduce elements of career and geographic mobility, levels of responsibility, as well as career progression and potential into each description. List positions in reverse chronological order. Include dates, position, title, agency and location. Organize information in a consistent fashion so that the reader has a pattern to follow. Describe duties and responsibilities in clear, easy language. A bullet format allows readers to follow progression easily. If your training and expertise is location specific, that is, you are not likely to or reasonably expected to experience geographic relocation, then emphasize advancement and progression mobility.

Career Progression and Potential

In the preparation of your job description(s) try to use language that conveys career progression as well as potential, attainments, and achievements. For example, what has been the progressive impact of your accomplishments, your career, and your work in the public health arena, on people, programs, or research? How has your level of responsibility changed and matured from assignment to assignment? Career potential is not easy to address. How does someone assess another person's potential? The dictionary defines potential as "possible as opposed to actual or capable of being or becoming." You may wish to express your aspirations, goals and the impact you wish to make if given the opportunity. Your Corps CV may reflect a certain spirit, enabling the Board to perceive and assess your potential. Are you interested in serving on SciPAC, in pursuing short or long term training, or other continuing education with the aim of assuming more responsibility and duties? List Corps activities such as associate recruiter, SciPAC committees, SciPAC membership, COA committees, etc.

[Sample Continuing Education Documentation Form]

Rank and Name
PHS Serial Number
Category (Scientist)
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Continuing Education and Training
Rank and Name
PHS Serial Number
Dates covered (e.g., January – December, 2006)

| Title of Training Location | Month, Year Contact Hours |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Bioterrorism and Ethics Atlanta, GA | January, 2006 1.5 Contact hours |
| Building a Privvy After a Disaster – Avoiding the Pitfalls Boston, MA | February, 2006 5 Contact hours |
| Epi in Outer Space: Should we Drink Tang like the Astronauts? Houston, TX | February, 2006 1 Contact hour |
| Go Natural or Man-Made Fiasco – What’s Up in Your Next Deployment? Rockville, MD | March, 2006 1 Contact hour |
| Sitting on the Bench – Strategies for Pinch-Hitting in the Lab Cincinnati, OH | July, 2006 10 Contact hours |
| Freud or Rogers? Determine Your Inner Counselor Bethesda, MD | June, 2006 2.6 Contact hours |
| Forensic Follies: Mixing Public Health with Police Officers Quantico, VA | July, 2006 20 Contact hours |
| 2006 Total | 41.1 Contact hours |