

Applying for University Postdoc Positions



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What is the employer looking for in a postdoc?

1. Skills/knowledge needed for the work
 - For example, GEANT, experience with hardware
2. Qualities of character/personality: Initiative and hard work (very difficult to assess from application materials)
3. Leadership potential or experience
4. Enthusiasm, interest
5. Other useful experience: writing and presentation skills, working with younger students; particular, detailed skills



Cover Letter

- **Relevant research experience**
- Interest in position; explain why you are a good fit
- Key details: advisor's name, expected graduation (or when available), topic of your dissertation
- Alter cover letter as necessary for each position you apply to
- This is a letter!
 - Salutation, date, address of recipient, your contact info
 - Closing
- Pay attention to grammar, typos, formatting



CV vs resume

- We usually talk about CVs for academic positions. A CV has everything in it, including a full list of publications, presentations, etc.
- Resume is shorter, more focused (more relevant for industry).
- As a new Ph.D. graduate the difference may not be that large
- For an academic job you need to have every relevant detail on the CV



CV

- Contact Information
- Education credentials
 - B.S., M.S.
 - Ph.D. expected when? Advisor. Title of dissertation.
- Research Experience
 - For each project or job list some details of what you did (Data analysis for E1 run group is not specific enough)
 - Separate section for undergraduate research or earlier projects, including other fields
- Teaching Experience
- Skills, Languages
- Presentations
 - For each one, is it a talk or poster? Contributed or invited? Seminar, colloquium, conference, etc. Include title, date, location
- Publications
 - Separate papers you have really worked on from the rest of your collaboration papers
- May list references



Other advice

- Follow directions in applying – online application system
- Should you have letters sent or will they be requested? Where should they be sent?
- Get someone with experience to carefully review your application materials
- Email etiquette - salutation, grammar, etc.
- Don't be too informal in any communication or in person
- **Letters of recommendation are crucial**
- What if you do not get along well with your advisor?
- Give an explanation if something in your record does not look good – have one of your letter writers address it.
- You may have to explain an honor or degree that may not be obvious to a US reviewer. Can be done on CV, or even in cover letter if it is very important.