

Introduction

CV or Resume?

Throughout this book we have used the word CV instead of the American word Resume (pronounced Resumé). Although recruiters in Europe recognize the word Resume, most recruiters in Europe use the word CV for Curriculum Vitae. However, if you apply for a job with an American company, it would be better to use the word Resume.

A BOOK TO HELP EUROPEAN JOB SEEKERS WRITE ENGLISH CVs (RESUMES)

The new European job seekers

We have written this book for **YOU**

- **European business students and graduates** who are applying for summer jobs, professional internships, or your first, post-graduation employment.
- **Professionals** who are making a *career change* into a new industry after experience in a different one.

This book specifically targets your needs for writing CVs (*Resumes*) and letters that get you interviews and job opportunities.

You think 'international' !

You are people who are looking for jobs internationally or with companies that are international or that will go international!

The meltdown of borders in Europe in the last ten years has been accompanied by a great number of young professionals seeking jobs in countries *that used to be considered* "abroad". No country in Europe is 'abroad' any longer for a European. Once national companies have taken *European* positions, seriously expanding their operations across borders, and multinationals have increased their presence in all markets. These developments call for *European* candidates and *European* job applications with companies that are international, although their headquarters may be based in France, Germany, UK, etc. Your chance of making a career outside your country has increased greatly, just as your chances of working closely with other Europeans—even if you are based in your home country!

For all these jobs you will write your CV in *English*! An English CV and letter is now a must! Even if you are applying in your home country in your native language, **an English CV and letter should accompany your native language application.** They are the best testimony to your capability of thinking like an international professional in the early stages of your job-seeking. They show you are ready to be operational internationally.

A Book for Career Starters and Career Changers

Often career *starters* and career *changers* face the same problems when trying to communicate their abilities to a potential employer. They may have very little or even no experience in the field they are applying for! If this is your case, you should know that **recruiters will expect you to prove that you can do the job! This book is written to teach you how to prove your capability.** It aims at helping you ‘relive’ your own experience, in English, in a way that shows how you can be useful for the employer and demonstrate your potential for growth as a future manager!

THINKING AND WRITING IN ENGLISH!

This book had to be written in English for three main reasons:

1. **It is addressed to all job seekers in Europe**
2. **It aims at developing your ability to read in English and to operate in English**
3. **It aims at developing your ability to talk in English about yourself and what you can do.**

This book focuses on building your capability to analyze what you have done and then express it in a way that managers and recruiters – all over the world – will understand. **The stress is on self-discovery and expression, in international language**, of what you find during that self-discovery. Both self-knowledge and communication will have a great deal to do with your success in job-seeking and the management career that follows. Although the authors have run seminars on job-seeking with multinational groups for years, we have long felt that a self-learning method was needed to help graduate job seekers and professionals to work their way step-by-step through their experience and its communication. **This book is the outcome of that long-felt need for a self-learning method.**

We encourage you to go through the book page by page even if you feel you already know much of what is said in some of the chapters: throughout the book, you will be going through a thinking process about yourself, **‘reliving’ your past in English, not translating it.** Translating a native language CV into English is possibly one of the worst possible ways of expressing your accomplishments and skills.

You must write your CV directly in English. The lessons of this 'reliving' will become extremely important when you reach the writing stage, and **you will be picking up the English vocabulary at the same time!** Two traveling companions will accompany you on your trip:

- **summaries of the key points** at the ends of the chapters to make sure you understand the essential message.
- and a **native language translation of these key points** following you **as you work in English.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAGEMENT THINKING

You will learn to write your CV in a way a manager understands. Through the many interviews in this book, **you will understand how recruiters expect you to talk to them.** You will learn to process your experience and learning from a management point of view. Management analysis techniques are referred to throughout the book. Using these techniques will improve your ability to analyze and structure problems as well as communicate objectives during your career. There is a strong link between your skill in CV-writing and your understanding of management!

We know that it is often difficult to make others understand how you have contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the different organizations you have worked with over the years. Communicating your contributions well is essential to your success! In our seminars, over the years, participants from all over the world have spent most of their time learning to analyze their own – and others' – accomplishments, exchanging ideas on the value of their actions, as if they were writing **managerial** job descriptions and assessments.

These seminars have pointed out the strong connection between the management analysis and English language skills. Content is as important as language. Both native English speakers and non-natives have benefited from the double management/language focus. The English native participants have often pointed out that, although they knew how to act, they did not always think, and thus write, well about it! This is why we feel that the double content of this book is an important asset.

THE AUTHORS

The two authors have both different and yet converging backgrounds. One works particularly in **Strategic Management and Management Skills Training**, and the other in **Inter-cultural Management and Language Training**. Working as a team in CV-writing and Job Search seminars, a happy marriage of the two skills sets occurred. In these seminars, we came to realize that understanding management was essential to CV-writing. We discovered that understanding one's skills and offering services to companies went hand-in-hand with management thinking and learning. This book is the outcome of some 20 years of teaching both CV-writing and Management.



INTERVIEW # 1: AT XEROX WE RECRUIT ON A PAN-EUROPEAN BASIS

Interview with Stephen Cronin, Executive Director, Group Resources, Xerox Europe, Marlow, UK.

► **Has recruiting changed at all in the last few years at Xerox?**

Greatly. In the last two or three years Xerox, Europe has made major changes in its recruiting approach. It might be better to describe it as a pan-European 'resourcing strategy.' Pan-European means that we now tend to draw on an 18-country pool whereas we used to recruit locally. There is a very conscious effort to reach 'Euro-diversity.' Other changes have occurred within the framework of this pan-Europeanism: a stress on industry skills recruiting, the use of partnering in recruitment, and volume sorting.

- As our customers have become more transnational and the services they require more global, there has been a growing need for personnel with industry specific skills. Whereas we used to look for somebody with good 'generic' sales experience, regardless of the industry, we now seek out those with experience in handling specific industrial accounts. Generic skills as recruitment criteria have given way to area skills, coupled with industry knowledge. Successful applicants will bring in at least two skills sets, often two to three languages.
- Partnering has taken a key role in our management of the recruitment process. Xerox depends on multi-country search agents to ensure that recruitment secures the same profiles throughout Europe. Our role is to work out these profiles for the search agents. Xerox

Human Resource Management often works by projects. For example, right now we are seeking up to 100 Systems Integration specialists. In the profile we develop, we will not only include Systems Integration literacy, but also aim at 70% university graduates.

- The volume of applications to process has reached astonishing proportions. Third party agents may receive over 10,000 responses. Therefore, the criteria for sorting these responses needs to be very carefully worked out.

Accompanying this move to 'Euro-diversity' has been a conscious effort to increase the number of women and of university graduates in the company. Grads now make up 60% of our sales force. The percentage of women sales executives has grown from 5% a few years ago up to 25% today. The progression of women to positions in management committees has been similar.

► **How have these changes affected the recruitment market?**

It has become much more competitive. Despite the high volume of applications, there is a constant fight to find – and then keep – the right people. We no longer use a 'shotgun' approach, aiming at a broad population of candidates. Our highly focused skills search approach means we target people from the top 25 companies that we have benchmarked as excellent in the skills we are seeking.

► **In light of these changes, for Xerox, what will make a successful CV?**

In our business, the hard copy CV has declined seriously. Our headhunters tell us that 60 to 65% of applications will come over the Web. When we do receive a hard copy CV we write back to the candidate to apply through our search agents. In those CVs, three things will be looked for:

- Applicants' knowledge of an industry: if he or she has good skills in finance services or retailing, for example. Once with Xerox, they may make a lateral move into other industries, but they will be brought in for specific industry skills.
- The company they work for now: is it in the top 25 companies benchmarked as excellent in that industry?
- Their personal skills set.

This means that the chronologically organized CV is not very useful. We do not want to see a detailed 'list' of responsibilities, nor the number of people you had reporting to you. After information that shows applicants' industry knowledge and education, we will want to be able to identify what skills they bring to the business. Their accomplishments and contributions should be 'up front'. They should show what they have 'achieved,' not simply 'done'. They should show how they have used their skills. This is the "meat on the bones", so to speak. The cover letter in this process has become very unimportant.



Key points in introduction

- Write as CV in English for every job anywhere.
- You must learn to think in English and not translate.
- Think like a manager and you will write a good CV.
- Faites un CV en anglais quel que soit l'endroit où vous postulez en Europe.
- Apprenez à réfléchir directement en anglais et à ne pas traduire.
- Mettez-vous dans la peau d'un manager quand vous écrivez votre CV.