

The Curriculum Vitae

Your life's Report Card: keeping it up to date and using it to document and guide your career growth

A review of the contents of this handbook

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Justification

All your life you have been used to grades and moving to the "next level." You now find yourself at the end of residency or at the beginning of an academic career. You may wonder, "what is next?" You may or may not know the answer to this question depending on the level of experience that you have in academics, but regardless, if you are like most academic emergency physicians, you choose this line of work to find something more than the pure day to day function of seeing patients.

What is "Academic"?

Many physicians think about academics in a very polar fashion. When I was a resident, I thought that academic jobs were those with EM residents and non-academic jobs were those without. The reality is that there are several shades of grey between these examples. Many physicians work in programs where non-EM residents get instruction. Many ED physicians are highly engaged in the teaching and leadership of EMS or mid-level providers. Many ED physicians work in emerging programs with early or yet to be created residency programs. Regardless of how you view this definition, the point of this workbook is for you to get credit for what you do. Also it is the goal of this workbook to stimulate you to think about your CV as a

growing document that can be useful not just to chart where you have been, but also to map where you are going.

Your Adult Report Card.

In the past the way that you were measured academically was pretty straightforward, you got grades board scores, interviews. Now *snap*- you are DONE. No longer do you have these external measurements of success. However, you really are not done, but rather are just beginning. The CV should be thought of as your "life's report card" A way for you to report your growth in the "real world" The challenge of course is that whereas the report cards and board scores were placed upon you and standardized, the CV is not. It is up to you to initiate, keep up to date, and craft in a way that will help you get jobs, promotion, invited lectures, grants, research collaborations, incentive compensation, hospital leadership positions, who knows.

Goals

Whether or not you are just starting an academic career or in the early to middle stages of one, you will find something in this handbook that will help you. The sections are divided by general topics so skip around, look at the checklists and web-links, and think how this applies to you. Thinking about your CV can be a pretty unappealing process. However, some simple direction may help you to make this a less painful, more directed and efficient activity with future dividends of success. Specific goals:

- 1) Have an understanding for why you should keep an updated CV on your computer desktop and what situations it may be used for
- 2) Think about what theme or focus is demonstrated on your CV.
- 3) Think beyond pure research as to what is important and needs to be on a CV
- 4) Know how to follow the CV format of your institution and who the contact person is for following your CV and career development.

Starting your Career

Collaboration

One of the best ways to start your career is to partner with other established investigators who are doing work in an area that you are interested in. This may be work within your institution or with other investigators at other sites. One of the first things that can be helpful is to have an updated CV to describe yourself.

What about a "Biosketch"?

Almost any grant application requires a "Biosketch." This is NOT THE SAME THING as a CV. The CV is a comprehensive listing of all of your professional activities that should follow your specific institution's format. In contrast, the Biosketch is a limited description of your educational background, honors and achievements, publications, and financial research support that follows the NIH format. There are very specific guidelines as to how a Biosketch is to be filled out which are described at the NIH website. You should refer to the examples and web-links at the end of this handbook for more information. The good news is that an up to date CV will allow the Biosketch to be created or updated with minimal effort.

Developing a track record

Sitting down with your chairperson with your CV is an excellent way to start the process of finding a research 'niche' and receiving feedback on what activities are optimal for career development. Most senior investigators would point out that a track record in a focused area is the best way to find research success as opposed to lots of small projects in varied areas of interest. While emergency medicine physicians are often 'jack of all trades' clinicians, successful researchers more and more are required to find focus and mentorship within this focus. A glance at your CV will tell you if you are headed for focus and if so in what area or general topics.

Basic Sciences

Unique Considerations

The performance of basic science research may allow some things to be included on the CV that are unique. Serving on an institutional animal use committee is one thing that demonstrates knowledge of the ethical issues associated with basic science and should be listed if done.

Specific training or seminars taken that are unique to basic science research should be listed. Also non-clinical meetings and non-EM society proceedings are important.

Areas of potential translational research are currently well regarded by institutions and a priority of funding agencies. A CV that demonstrates some acknowledgment of this may be advantageous to have.

Good CVs in basic science tell a story of stepwise incremental progress toward a general long term goal. It should be clear what preliminary steps were taken and how these led to current and future work.

The basic science CV probably should include a listing of persons mentored in the lab and results of this mentorship process.

Clinical Science

General comments

The most difficult aspect to composing your CV is to try to do it all at one time right after someone asks you for it. This is commonplace. In clinical science too much emphasis is placed on the Biosketch and not enough on the CV. It is a difficult task to take a Biosketch and try to add material from memory and turn it into a well written CV. The key to preventing this is to write the CV as your career develops, not when someone asks you for it.

Strategy and tips

Many of the same comments for the basic sciences section apply. The CV should tell a story of gradual incremental progress in a focused area of research. Ideally it should include things that are done to improve your ability to teach and perform clinical research. This may be:

- Courses you have taken (include SAEM workshops/lectures, formal coursework)
- Some ethical certification in human subjects research
- Research lectures or didactics that you have given to residents
- Journal club or literature critique leadership
- Clinical textbook chapters in an area related to your research interest
- Every time you do a lecture, go to a meeting, teach a class, write an abstract, ask yourself.....is there a place on my CV for this? Does this fit with my long term goals?

Getting Started

Get the blank template from your institution when you arrive at your job or early in your career and see the categories that are expected to be filled out. You do not want to be surprised when you sit down to try to "do your CV" for promotion in 5-6 years and find that you have no service, no national committee experience, no peer review experience etc. The best defense against this is to plan ahead and fill in as you go.

Get credit for educational and administrative work that improves teaching and performance of emergency medicine

While often not thought of as traditional research, the performance of work aimed at clinical provider education and improving patient care is critical to our specialty.

SAEM lists its mission statement as the improvement of patient care by advancing research and education in emergency medicine. This clearly states the importance of education and patient care in an academic career.

The best way to have your CV reflect a well coordinated career is to have a well coordinated career in the first place. Ideally this would reflect a gradual stepwise series of successes. This can be done by being engaged in didactic, leadership, and educational activities. More important is to be engaged in the measurement and definition of the educational and administration issues of the day.

For both of these non-traditional means of academic activity, the same recommendations exist:

- the importance of finding mentorship
- the importance of being able to measure an effect
- the importance of peer review or some public dissemination of findings to the community

Educational academic opportunity

The following are taken from various sources documenting high priority areas for the educational academic agenda. Concentrating early CV and Career efforts in these areas may be a coherent strategy.

ACGME: Emergency medicine's unique environment requires innovative well thought out strategies to address these initiatives.

Clinical medical student education: increasingly schools are requiring rotations in the ED for all graduating medical students. This presents unique challenges and opportunity to define optimal evaluation and education of curricula for both the general as well as the ED focused medical student.

Early medical student education: What unique role does EM faculty play in early medical student education? Our ability to see simultaneous pathophysiology, pharmacology and therapeutics is unique and increasingly EM educators are participating in education at this level.

Learner outcomes based educational research: what is the optimal way to measure the effects of an educational intervention or curricula. What are the validated educational methodologies that should be applied to adult learning in the context of EM? The ED is a challenging area to provide appropriate feedback to learners and to assess their progress.

[See the listing of these priorities on the SAEM website 5-year plan.](#)

Consider your participation in the educational activities at your institution within the framework of these or other focused goals. Whatever goals you set, if you are teaching a course or contributing to medical education, you should have these activities on your CV.

The only way to ensure that you do not forget about these countless hours is to list the activity on your CV right away.

Administrative and operational academic opportunity

How do we optimally deal with issues like surge, diversion, throughput, benchmarking and other global care issues?

The last several years have seen several major issues with emergency medicine at the forefront. The most recent IOM report listed several areas that will receive the attention of administrators in EDs EMS systems, hospitals, and policy makers. Several points of the report suggest areas where improved measurement of how we deliver care would be welcome.

As the center for Medicare and Medicaid moves toward publishing performance parameters for specific situations (time to antibiotics for pneumonia, time to ECG etc.) increased quantitative work describing these effects and issues will be needed.

The problem of overcrowding will likely continue to plague every hospital both academic and community for years to come. Ways to deal with this that ensure the highest quality of care will continue to be lead by and published by EM investigators.

You may not see yourself as a 'researcher' but you may have insight and leadership in these areas. whatever effort you are making to help to understand and improve care in these and other administrative areas is worth doing in the most effective and quantified manner. In this was you may share these findings with others through peer review, lectures and leadership. All of this optimally belongs on a CV.

The only way to ensure that you do not forget about these countless hours is to list the activity on your CV right away.

The CV as senior resident on the job search

Though it is impossible to know as a senior resident exactly what your long term goals are, you should begin to ask these questions of yourself and plan for what your non-clinical efforts are likely to be. The CV should reflect your achievements and experience.

Common Questions:

Should I put my objectives and goals on my CV?

-No. Generally speaking, the cover letter that accompanies the CV should list why you think that you are qualified, what you will bring to a group, and what your objectives are. In the business world “resumes” typically start off with some “goal” this is not commonly seen on well-assembled CVs.

Should I put any special skills?

-Yes you may. Especially early in your career you may find that listing technical skills, language proficiency, may be advantageous.

Should I list something as ‘in press’?

-Only if it is truly unconditionally accepted. As your career progresses the necessity of this will be lessened and this may be uncommon or not done at all other than for a specific unique purpose.

Should I list my “moonlighting”

-Often a separate listing (after your primary current Employment) can be “Practice Experience” and can list these experiences.

What order do I put this in?

-unless instructed otherwise, the convention is to list in reverse chronologic order (most recent things at the top of the list)

Do I put my social security number or medical license number?

-No

Do I list my family?

-No right answer. Is OK either way, many do.

New faculty

So your now have your first job and you want to get organized for success:

The first order of business is to review what appointment track you have been hired into. Ideally this would have been decided upon between you and your Chairperson at or before being hired. Each institution has different classifications and expectations. Typical divisions are clinician, researcher, and sometimes, there is ‘educator’ also added to the clinician descriptor. You need to review with your Chairperson what the expectations are for your track and be referred to a faculty development coordinator or website within your institution for specific details. This is also the source of information about promotion and the standardized CV format for your institution.

You want to get a copy of the standardized CV format for your institution. You may also at some point want to get a CV from an experienced faculty member in your department.

As you begin to accept committee tasks, teaching duties, and early academic activities, ask yourself if they are aimed toward a goal or development of a career focus.

Begin to fill out your CV right away. Do not worry if most of it is blank. The same is true for all the other new faculty members each year. You are brand new. Your CV is like your first year EM in-service exam scores... there is only room for improvement!

Begin to find mentorship among senior academicians in your general area. Whether or not this is education, administrative operational, basic science, or clinical research, the importance of mentorship can not be understated.

Consider career development workshops, classes and meetings. After going, put them on your CV!

Checklist

The following is a review list of items needed to obtain or do as you begin to construct your CV:

- Get a copy of your old CV, Biosketch, or resume
- Get a list of your publications or abstracts from Pubmed or old records you have
- Get a copy of the standard CV format for your school or institution and add things from your old documents.
- Know what your academic appointment is and the expectations for that level
- Discuss with your chairperson what your short and intermediate goals and objectives are
- Consider committee involvement and volunteering for ACEP SAEM committees and interest groups
- Consider some form of community service that is meaningful to you
- Explore the option of courses, workshops and lectures you can attend to increase your skills in a particular area.
- Keep your CV on your desktop of your computer where you see it every day and are reminded to update it with things as you accomplish them.
- Whenever you are at work doing something but not seeing patients, ask yourself, “why am I doing this?...how does it advance my career goals?...is this something that should be on my CV?”

PROMOTION PLANNING

The promotion from one academic rank to the next is not the product of simply putting enough time in, or publishing an acceptable quantity of manuscripts. It is the result of a planned stepwise series of accomplishments that ideally demonstrate increasing regional and national recognition in some areas(s) of expertise.

This process can be as efficient as you make it or it can be a painful, time-consuming, and discouraging process if entered into without planning and guidance.

The need to include publications, presentations, and any financial support is self-evident and already commented on previously in this text. Here the focus is on the often overlooked aspects of the CV as it relates to promotion.

The following are some observations from successful applicants who have made the progression to associate professor:

Planning

The place to start your path is with your institutional person administratively in charge of the promotion process. This may be someone associated with the Medical School Dean's office or some other faculty department for your institution. If in doubt, of whom this is, your chairperson or division chief will point you in the right direction. Make an appointment with them to find out the following:

- 1) What career track are you currently on?
- 2) What are the academic expectations of this track?
- 3) What accomplishments should a candidate demonstrate prior to being submitted as a candidate for promotion?
- 4) What is the institutional CV format?

These issues are important to know well in advance because you need to have them demonstrated in your CV. IT IS NOT EVER TOO EARLY TO CONSIDER THIS PROCESS AND BEGIN TO PLAN FOR IT.

Develop a theme

It is often a good idea to think about your career growth as following the trajectory of an arrow rather than the dispersed blast of a shotgun. If you are developing a theme of wound care for example, think about ensuring that the activities you participate in maximize this. Be a leader of lectures, journal club, medical student teaching, resident teaching, textbooks, that relate to this topic. Seek out these opportunities. Develop expert lectures and actively seek grand rounds speaking opportunities first locally then regionally and beyond.

Don't forget about service

Often successful promotion requires some documentation on your CV of committee service to the hospital or medical school community. Don't forget this or attempt to cram this all in during the months or year before you go up for promotion. Again, looking at your standardized CV format and talking with your chairperson/chief and the faculty development/promotion liaison will avoid this.

Options to consider include interdisciplinary QA committees (i.e. cardiology or neurology) IRB, medical student application, and the all important blood utilization committee.

Describe your clinical Service

Most non-ED people do not have a greatly accurate picture of what being an academic ED physician is like. It is up to you in the CV to describe your clinical

activities. Indicate how many hours or shifts you typically work and how many people you direct. Include the nurses and techs. Indicate what number and types of residents you direct. Include the number of beds in your ED and the amount of patients seen annually and daily in your ED. You want to paint the accurate picture of the amount of real time leadership you provide to medical care and medical education in the ED. You may want to describe your role in teaching medical decision making in real time with the residents in the form of conversations about patient management.

Think about what you are leaving behind

Other than your publications, what teaching manuals, online presentations, or web content have you created that provides evidence of your lasting contribution to the teaching, administration, and research of emergency care. This is often easy to do with most hospitals and EM programs having a website that they are all too eager to get content for. If a non clinical activity is worth doing, it probably is worth posting internally or externally for public sharing.

How have you helped mentor others?

Keep a listing of pre-medical and medical students as well as residents whom you have aided in career decision making. If this has been a significantly engaged activity list and describe the projects you provided mentorship as well as your role and the outcome of this experience.

How have you improved yourself?

Provide a list or in some case a summary of the course and experiences that you have partaken in to improve your ability to be an educator researcher or leader. These may be small activities such as specific computer application courses, may be specific lectures or didactics at SAEM, or may be more comprehensive formal courses. They demonstrate your commitment to continued learning and skill acquisition.

Weblinks

The following are web links that you may find helpful:

[SAEM mission statement and 5-year plan](#)

Understanding the goals of our specialty is important to know how your career growth fits with that of our specialty.

www.saem.org/saemdnn/AboutSAEM/Governance/5YearPlan/tabid/166/Default.aspx

[SAEM/AACEM Faculty Development Handbook](#)

Detailed information on all aspects of faculty development written by EM leaders. An outstanding source of specific information by topic. Intended as a supplement and sequel to the 2000 Emergency Medicine *Academic Career Guide* it includes information of value from residents to full professors.

www.saem.org/saemdnn/Home/Communities/Faculty/FacultyDevelopmentHandbook/tabid/208/Default.aspx

[Configuring a CV for an academic career](#)

Part of the SAEM Faculty Development Handbook that contains information complimentary to that presented here. (scroll down to II.1)

<http://www.saem.org/saemdnn/Home/Communities/Faculty/FacultyDevelopmentHandbook/tabid/208/Default.aspx>

[Emergency Medicine, an Academic Career Guide](#)

This is an expanded second edition of *The EMRA-SAEM Guide to Pursuing Academic Careers in Emergency Medicine*, first published in 1992. Some of the information here is specific to education, teaching, scientific writing, grantsmanship, and overall career development. Originally aimed toward senior residents and junior faculty, it has been expanded to have useful content for all levels.

www.saem.org/saemdnn/Home/Communities/Faculty/FacultyDevelopment/AcademicCareerGuide/tabid/147/Default.aspx

[NIH Biosketch example](#)

Click here to find a blank Biosketch with instructions followed by an example Biosketch. Check the NIH website to ensure you are using the most recent version.

www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=nih+biosketch+example&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8

[AAMC: Association of American Medical Colleges](#)

This site offers a template that can be used for creating a CV and includes tips and strategies to optimize efforts. Describes each section of a CV in detail and states what each section should include and how to order and list items. One of the best aspects of this site is a section discussing how to create a "teaching portfolio" with examples and how to document these efforts. However, it should not be used in place of your institutional required format for a CV if such a thing exists at your institution.

www.aamc.org/members/facultydev/facultyvitae/fall05/cv.htm

[Chronicle of Higher Education: CV Doctor](#)

Critiques of example CV's of various academicians and advice on how to improve them. It also offers a sample CV and instructions on how to get started and what to include in a CV. There are links for past articles that critiqued other CVs. At present, there are no examples of physician CVs. However, there are some good general tips on what to consider when creating your first CV.

[Other general information on the Chronicle of Higher Education](#) website includes general tips on applying for a position and the difference between a Resume and a CV.

<http://chronicle.com/jobs/tools/cvdoctor/2006/>

Conclusion:

Take charge of your CV and plan it as a growing, record of your achievements. As with all things in academics, never understand the importance of planning and mentorship. Make sure you know what is required at your institution. Do not hesitate to ask friendly colleagues who have made successful career advancement steps for copies of their CV to review.

Thank you for reviewing any of this content. If you have any suggestions as to how to improve it, please forward it to:

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