

Finding a thesis commission – Basics of how to communicate your thesis idea & approach companies

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Currently:

RDI Specialist @Xamk Creative Industries Research Unit

Previously:

Research & Recruitment Consultant

Project Coordinator/ Insight Specialist

Co-Curricular Activities Coordinator

Team Leader

Travel Service Specialist

Travel Industry Business Developer

Worked in Finland, Austria, UK



Agenda

- Intro to Finnish work & communication culture
- Finding a thesis commission
 - Simplifying
 - Targeting
 - Contacting
- Sample emails
- CV essentials



A warm, dimly lit desk scene. On the left, a brass desk lamp with a glowing yellow light hangs over an open, lined notebook. To the right of the notebook is a tall, clear glass filled with water. In the foreground, three pens (black, silver, and brown) are laid out. In the background, a small brass tray holds several small, light-colored objects. The overall atmosphere is cozy and focused.

Finnish work & communication culture

Communication culture in Finland

- Communication is information-centric– we want to know why you are messaging or talking to us. Not too much small talk, just a little 😊
- Excessive pleasantries, emotions, fancy or indirect language are not used or understood
- Messaging is direct and factual - not rhetorical or metaphorical. Words contain meaning and information clearly, there are no hidden meanings or hints between the lines.
- Messages are usually short and focusing on the key information that needs to be said. This can feel short, blunt or cold, but is not meant that way.
- Time is concrete, not flexible – punctuality and being on time in meetings and calls is crucial. Deadlines matter.
- Low hierarchy: you can have conversations with managers and directors, you can ask questions and clarifications, and tell if you have a different idea or view point.
- Silence is normal, it often means the other person is listening, or thinking, or doesn't have anything relevant to add to the discussion.
- Transparency and honesty builds trust. Don't promise anything you cannot keep. Always ask if you need clarifications or you are not sure.



Finding a thesis commission

A modern office desk with two computer monitors, a chair, and a window with a view of greenery. The desk is light-colored wood and has two monitors, a keyboard, a mouse, a notebook, and a pen. A black office chair is positioned in front of the desk. The background is a brick wall with large arched windows showing green trees outside. A white pendant lamp hangs above the desk.

Three stages

1. Simplifying the idea
2. Targeting the potential companies
3. Contacting companies



Stage I – Simplify



- You are an expert of your topic –the person you approach about the thesis commission might not be
 - It could be a team lead, a HR person, CEO... Someone, who knows the business, but is not a deep technical expert / specialist
- Learning to explain your thesis topic in a way that a non-expert understands is CRUCIAL
- This applies to all research and innovation work, applying for funding etc.
- A key skill is to talk about your work in **two languages**:
 - 1) The specialist language, when you talk to other specialist in your field
 - 2) The clear, everyday language. This means the ability to tell about your work to a "regular" person in a way that they understand...
 - what you do
 - why you do that, what is the impact/benefit?

Task I – simplify

1. Individually answer questions A–C

A.

Imagine you are emailing or talking to a **specialist** in your field. Another student, someone you meet at a conference, some expert in your field.

How can you in 2-3 sentences tell to that person, what your thesis topic is?

→ Write down!

B.

Imagine you are emailing or talking to a **non-technical** person about your thesis topic. This person is important in the company (HR, business manager, owner...), but they are **not a technical specialist at all**.

How can you in 2-3 sentences tell to that person, what your thesis topic is?

→ Write down!

C.

Imagine you have to explain to a decision-maker in a company, or a potential funder, why your thesis topic matters.

Write down:

- Why is it important?
- What is the impact/benefit?
- Who does it help or benefit?

Task I – simplify

2. Discuss in pairs your answers to questions A–C

A.

Imagine you are emailing or talking to a **specialist** in your field. Another student, someone you meet at a conference, some expert in your field.

How can you in 2-3 sentences tell to that person, what your thesis topic is?

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B.

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Imagine you have to explain to a decision-maker in a company, or a potential funder, why your thesis topic matters.

Write down:

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- Who does it help or benefit?

Task I – simplify

3. Share with class

A.

Imagine you are emailing or talking to a **specialist** in your field. Another student, someone you meet at a conference, some expert in your field.

How can you in 2-3 sentences tell to that person, what your thesis topic is?

→ Write down!

B.

Imagine you are emailing or talking to a **non-technical** person about your thesis topic. This person is important in the company (HR, business manager, owner...), but they are **not a technical specialist at all**.

How can you in 2-3 sentences tell to that person, what your thesis topic is?

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C.

Imagine you have to explain to a decision-maker in a company, or a potential funder, why your thesis topic matters.

Write down:

- Why is it important?
- What is the impact/benefit?
- Who does it help or benefit?

Stage II - target



- You now have a way of explaining your thesis topic to specialists and non-specialists. Next step is to identify potential companies.
- Different companies have different resources at their disposal and different focus in their operations.
- Think, can your thesis topic work only in companies...
 - ...of a certain size (big /small)
 - ... that have a certain kind of technology or process in use
 - ... that operate in a certain industry
 - ... that have a certain service/product
 - ... that already have a certain knowledge / competence level?
- In other words: Think, what kind of a company could realistically benefit from your thesis.
- Think also, is your topic flexible or can it be adjusted to different contexts?

→ Start doing research (online, and/or ask networks) and compiling a list of potential "target" companies

Task II – target

1. Individually answer questions A–C

A.

Think about your thesis topic.

What requirements does it set for the commissioning company? What does the company need to have or do already, so that your thesis topic makes sense or can be helpful?

→ Write down!

B.

Now think flexibly.

What different industries or different kinds of companies could your thesis topic be adjusted to?

→ Write down at least 5 different industries or types of companies.

C.

Now think idealistically.

What kind of company is the dream company for doing your thesis?

- What industry?
- What do they do / provide /manufacture?
- How big is the company?
- What key processes of technologies do they already have?

→ Write down!

Task II – target

2. Discuss in pairs your answers to questions A–C

A.

Think about your thesis topic.

What requirements does it set for the commissioning company? What does the company need to have or do already, so that your thesis topic makes sense or can be helpful?

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→ Write down!

Stage III - contact



- Pick a company that interests you
- Do a quick research round – what do they do, does your thesis idea potentially fit with their business / operations
- Look up a contact person (from website / linkedin)
- Draft a tailored message:
 - Be clear
 - Be professional
 - Be concrete
 - No emotional content or comments

Applying without an advertised position (internships, thesis commissions)

1

Identify areas and themes that interest you

- Think what classes and projects have been interesting, what kind of jobs interest you in the future

2

Identify concrete projects or tasks you could do as an internship/thesis

- These should be clearly definable and practical “packages” that are doable within a few months
- Get ideas from classes and course work projects, e.g. reports, plans, research projects, earlier theses..

3

Identify interesting companies and do some research on them

- What does the company do, what service or product does it offer, who are the target groups, whats their direction for future...
- Think how your skills and projects could be useful to the company of interest

4

Find a contact person in the company

- Some companies have their own recruitment portal or application channels and do not accept emails
- In smaller companies a HR person, a recruitment person, a department leader, team manager or even the CEO or owner could be a good starting point

5

Tailor a short, to the point inquiry message

- Make sure your message is tailored to each contacted company, mass spamming the same message is rarely useful
- Be professional and polite; “please give me a job” or “I really need this job” is a 200% no-no!!

6

Send the message and your CV and wait for a response

- Follow up with a short message after a week or so if no reply

7

Finding a company that can take you on might take a while, but keep trying! 😊



Applying without an advertised position (internships, thesis commissions)

1 Identify areas and themes that interest you

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- In smaller companies a HR person, a recruitment person, a department leader, team manager or even the CEO
- or owner could be a good starting point. You can look them up online or in linkedin.



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Finding a company that can take you on might take a while, but keep trying! ☺





**Sample
emails**

Sample I

- If you are making a "cold contact", some things to keep in mind when drafting your message:
 - Keep it short - a few paragraphs max!
 - Be clear and to-the-point,
 - Who you are
 - Why are you messaging
 - What can you offer them - concrete examples
 - Suggest a next step (call, meeting)
- **ALWAYS TAILOR THE MESSAGE!**
No mass spamming tens of companies with the same message!

Subject: Master's Thesis Collaboration Inquiry

Dear Ms. Virtanen,

My name is Ellie Example, I am a Master's student in Business Studies at the Xamk University of Applied Sciences in Kotka. I am currently seeking a partner organisation for my thesis, which focuses on using AI to support business decision making.

I am particularly interested in developing a project related to advanced competitor analyses using open-source data and AI. I'm thinking this could be a potentially useful topic for your organization.

Would you be available for a short teams meeting to discuss a possible thesis project collaboration?

Thank you in advance for your time.

I enclose my CV and a short thesis idea description for background.

Kind regards,
Ellie Example

Sample II

- If you are making a "cold contact", some things to keep in mind when drafting your message:
 - Keep it short - a few paragraphs max!
 - Be clear and to-the-point,
 - Who you are
 - Why are you messaging
 - (Why their company)
 - What can you offer them - concrete examples
 - Suggest a next step (call, meeting)
- **ALWAYS TAILOR THE MESSAGE!**
No mass spamming tens of companies with the same message!

Subject: Master's Thesis Collaboration

Dear Mr Jones,

My name is Tommy Template, I am a Business Studies student at Xamk, Kotka. I am currently looking for a company partner for my master's thesis, which I plan to complete during autumn 2026.

I find your company's online marketing activities interesting. My studies focus on business analytics and digital strategy, and I would be very interested in exploring thesis topics that could benefit your company.

This could be, for example, a competitor benchmarking analysis, a development plan based on a review of current industry trends, or a customer engagement strategy based on data analysis.

Would there be a possibility to discuss a potential thesis collaboration?
Perhaps we could schedule a teams meeting or a phone call in the near future?

I enclose my CV and a link to my LinkedIn profile for more background information.

Best regards,
Tommy Template
Tel. xxx xxx xxxx

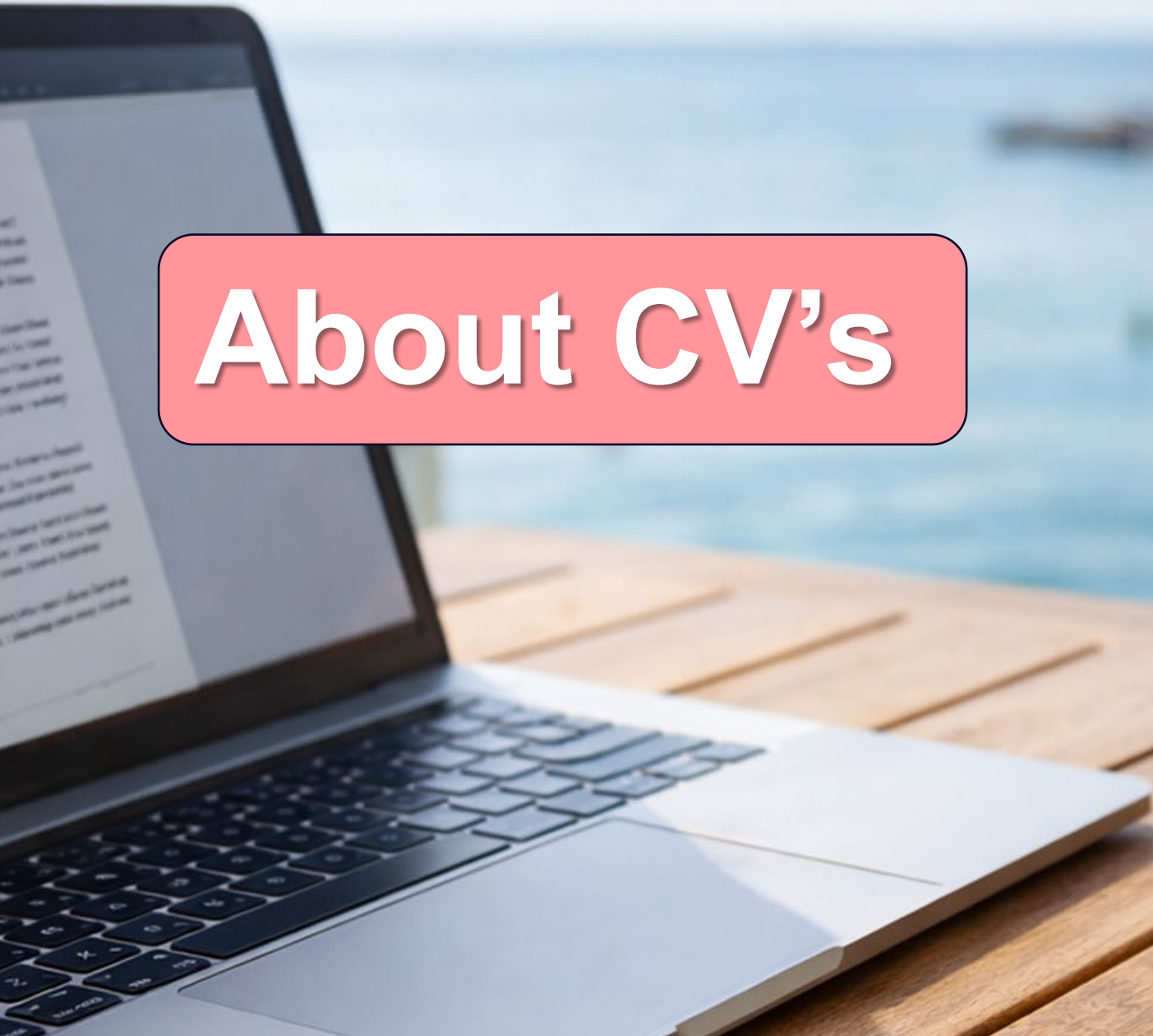
Summa summarum

Key points to take with you:

- Make your proposal understandable to a non-expert
- Map out and identify right companies and people
- Communicate in a clear, professional way
- (Include your CV)



About CV's



Essential CV Sections

Personal Information

- Name
- Contact Details (phone number, email)
- LinkedIn Profile (optional)
- Optional: Professional Photo

Profile or Summary Statement

- A brief 2–3 sentence overview of who you are, your key competence, and what you bring to the table

Work Experience

- Relevant jobs, internships, or volunteer work, listed in reverse chronological order (newest first)
- Include **job title, organization, dates, and a brief description of responsibilities and achievements**

Education

- Current and past educational institutions, including degree programs and dates

Skills

- Key technical and practical skills, software knowledge, etc
- Soft skills can also be included if relevant.

Languages

- Indicate the languages you speak and the level of fluency

References (optional)

- Can include actual references or simply write "Available upon request."



RICHARD SANCHEZ

MARKETING MANAGER

CONTACT

+123-456-7890

hello@reallygreatsite.com

123 Anywhere St., Any City

www.reallygreatsite.com

SKILLS

- Project Management
- Public Relations
- Teamwork
- Time Management
- Leadership
- Effective Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Digital Marketing

LANGUAGES

- English (Fluent)
- French (Fluent)
- German (Basic)
- Spanish (Intermediate)

REFERENCE

Estelle Darcy

Wardiere Inc. / CTO

Phone: 123-456-7890

Email: hello@reallygreatsite.com



PROFILE

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam quis nostrud exercitation. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam quis nostrud exercitation.



WORK EXPERIENCE

Borcelle Studio 2030 - PRESENT
Marketing Manager & Specialist

- Develop and execute comprehensive marketing strategies and campaigns that align with the company's goals and objectives.
- Lead, mentor, and manage a high-performing marketing team, fostering a collaborative and results-driven work environment.
- Monitor brand consistency across marketing channels and materials.

Fauget Studio 2025 - 2029
Marketing Manager & Specialist

- Create and manage the marketing budget, ensuring efficient allocation of resources and optimizing ROI.
- Oversee market research to identify emerging trends, customer needs, and competitor strategies.

Studio Shodwe 2024 - 2025
Marketing Manager & Specialist

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with partners, agencies, and vendors to support marketing initiatives.
- Monitor and maintain brand consistency across all marketing channels and materials.



EDUCATION

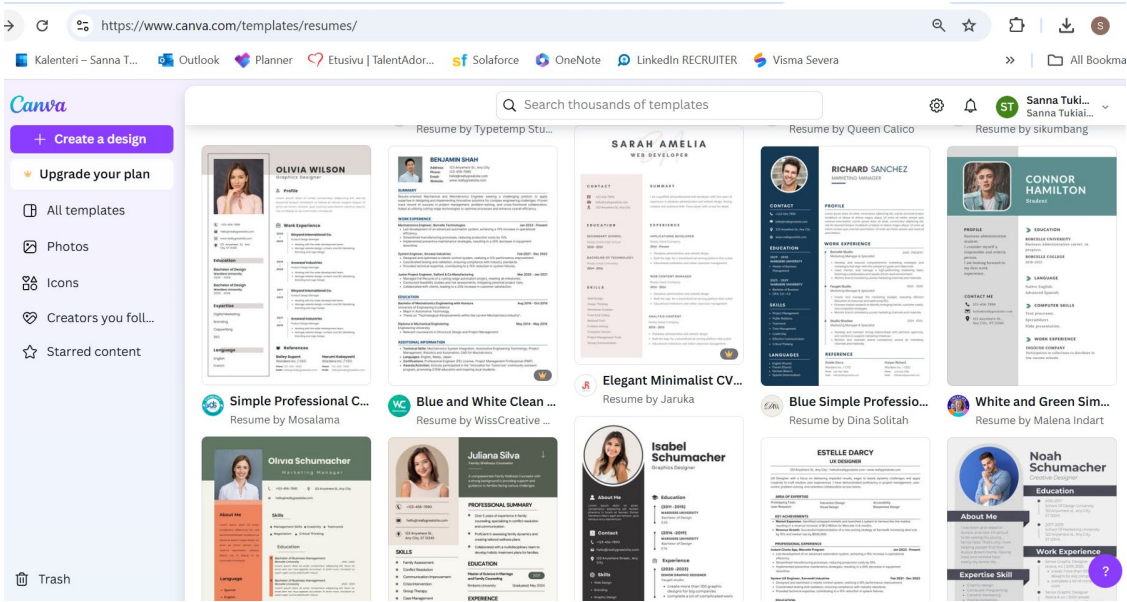
Master of Business Management 2029 - 2031
School of business | Wardiere University
GPA: 3.8 / 4.0

Bachelor of Business Management 2025 - 2029
School of business | Wardiere University
GPA: 3.8 / 4.0

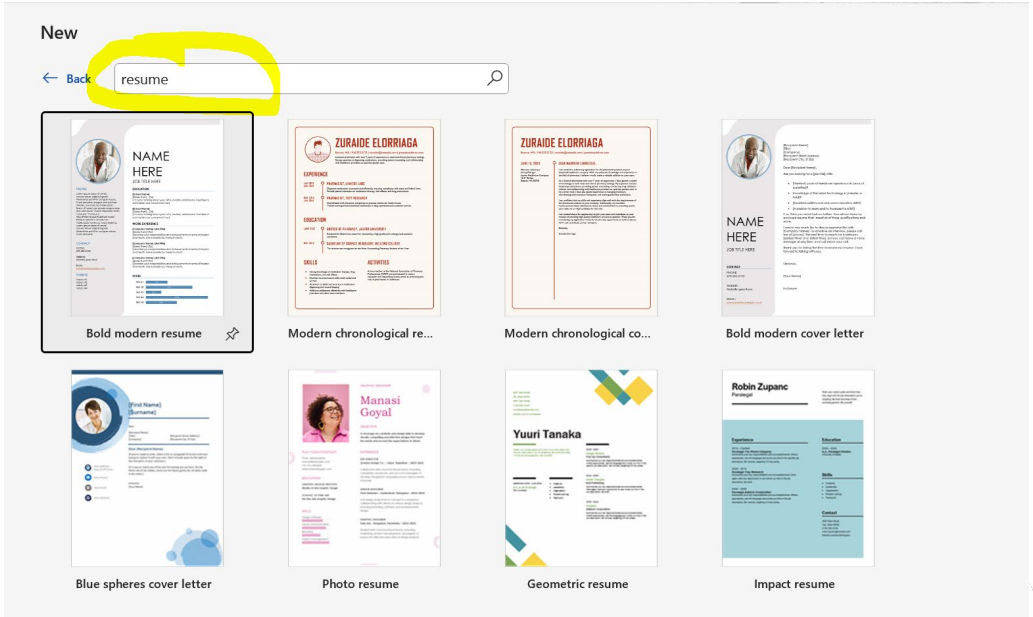
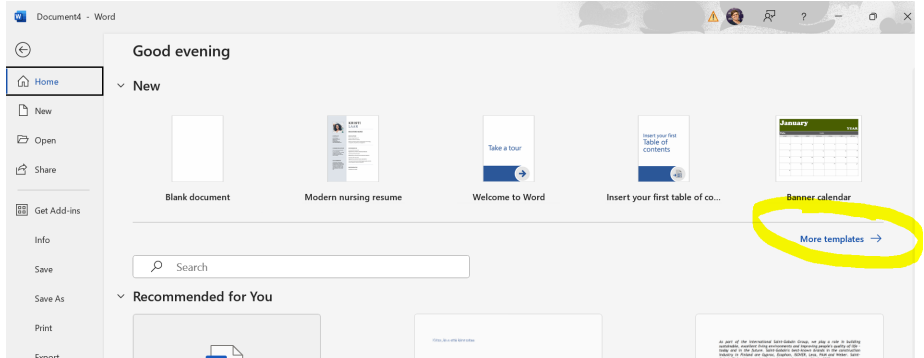
Making a CV – use free templates

There are lots of handy and free-to-use services for creating good looking CV's online, e.g.

Canva is awesome! Lots of free presentations & document templates
See e.g. <https://www.canva.com/templates/resumes/>



MS Word has a whole range of CV templates!



CV - some basic notes

- A CV is supposed to tell the reader (recruiter) briefly and clearly what your professional and educational background is
- A good CV is:
 - Clear and organised– easy to look at, easy to quickly find the key info
 - Concise and to-the-point BUT
 - Has sufficient level of information about the education/positions/projects to give the reader a basic idea of what you've been up to
 - i.e. not just general headings like "engineer" or "project worker" → recruiter can't know what is behind those titles
 - Has your contact details - makes it easier to reach you ;)
 - A picture is usually a good idea – but use a professional-looking, clear picture, where you can be recognised (i.e. no party photos, no pictures of you standing on a mountain top in a distance, or at a cousin's wedding...)
 - Tailored to the position! This becomes more and more important as you acquire more experience – emphasise the aspects relevant to the position you are applying.
 - You would not apply for a job as a researcher or a sales person with the same application as a job in customer service or HR assistant.



**You've
got this!! 😊**



This material was produced as an event presentation for Kareva –Enhancing International Recruitment Readiness –project.

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Materiaali on tuotettu puheenvuorona Kareva–kansainvälisen rekrytoinnin valmiudet hankkeen tapahtumaa varten.

Materiaalia saa hyödyntää henkilökohtaisiin ja koulutuksellisiin tarkoituksiin. Hankkeessa julkaistua materiaalia ei saa hyödyntää kaupallisiin tarkoituksiin. Lähde mainittava.

Kareva–Kansainvälisen rekrytoinnin valmiudet hanke on Euroopan unionin osarahoittama ja sen toiminta-alueena on Kymenlaakso.
Hankeaika 2025-2027.

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