

FORENSIC ACCOUNTING - CURRICULUM VITAE – Examples of Content and Formatting

Having recently been asked by several forensic accountants for CV advice, we decided to distil our 10 years of partner feedback on what they like to see in a forensic accounting CV, and present it in this document. It should be useful for forensic accountants, newly qualified accountants, managers and directors, as well as other client facing practitioners. It details the information expected of a CV that is used to apply for a forensic accounting position in an accountancy practice or boutique firm. Such a CV could be easily adapted to apply for similar positions in a law firm or corporate organisation.

There is no definitive 'last word' on how your CV should look. Everybody has an opinion and a preference on CV content, structure and style. To demonstrate one way the information can be presented, this CV's sections sometimes conflict with each other and do not together represent a single coherent candidate profile.

Basics: have a look at your CV:

- Is it factually accurate? Are the employment dates correct, with any gaps honestly explained?
- Do you possess the certificates for your stated qualifications?
- Are your professional memberships live and current?
- Could your stated achievements be corroborated via background checks?
- Does it comprehensively cover the skills and attributes you profess to possess?
- Does it include case studies demonstrating the size and scope of your technical expertise, your budget, your management responsibility and personal accountability?
- Does it express your features as benefits for a potential employer?
- Is it a sales pitch or a historical record?
- If it is a sales pitch, is it relevantly targeting a specific position?
- Do not include a photograph of yourself.
- Do not use too many colours or stylistic emphases.
- Do print it off and read it from the page before you press send. Some formats look good on screen but not on the page.
- UK CVs are expected to be 2 to 3 pages long but as long as the information a CV contains is relevant, clear and accurate, it will not be rejected. Repetition and 'deviation from relevance' are CV killers.

Specifics:

1. 21st century CVs must be 'searchable'. Imagine what somebody might type into a search engine if they were looking for a candidate with precisely your skills and expertise; then ensure that your CV contains this variety of industry specific terminology, i.e. use both longhand and shorthand versions of abbreviations such as AML / FCPA / KYC / CFE etc.
2. A forensic accountant is expected to be numerically and verbal gifted, highly articulate with an innate rigorous attention to detail. The quality of your CV will, in itself, indicate the quality of your work. Typos, numerical and grammatical errors, or obvious inaccuracies will fail your application.
3. Regardless of whether you are actively seeking a career move, we recommend that you update your CV every 6 months to take into account new projects and achievements whilst they are still fresh in your mind. The information you collect for your (bi) annual appraisal, such as emailed praise from colleagues and clients should also be included if appropriate and possible.
4. If you would like to compare your skills and experience to a current live Forensic Manager position, view one here: <http://www.charteredpartners.com/2013/08/07/forensic-accounting-manager-disputes/>
5. Although preparing a CV is not rocket science, we have helped rocket scientists with theirs and would be happy to help you. If you do not need a recruiter but do want to update and optimise your CV and your LinkedIn profile, we can still help – visit our <http://www.pin-capital.com/> site for additional assistance.

Use the Footer to include your contact details

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FORENSIC CV - Opening Headline:

...such as: "Forensic Accountant with 6 Years of Post Qualification Experience seeks Disputes Senior Manager position in London, United Kingdom - Big 4 trained - ACA First Time Passes – 3 months' notice."

NAME: Jack Smith FCA BA (Hons) (include qualification initials)

LOCATION: Town/suburb where you live – *not full address*

NATIONALITY: British – *optional but useful to include your nationality if you are applying to an overseas position, or seeking to return to the UK from an overseas role. Include other passports if you hold them and think they might be advantageous.*

CONTACT DETAILS

Location Town/Suburb (Not full address), Country

Mobile Telephone (Not home phone): +44 (0) 794... *include country code if applying to overseas jobs*

Email Address (Not work email): jacksmith@personalmailaddress.co.uk.

LinkedIn Profile link: http:// etc.

QUALIFICATIONS & CERTIFICATIONS

Technical: Optional: *this is for technology experts who have completed IT/technical training courses and have current certifications. Insert them here as with Professional/Academic. This is different to listing IT packages you have used, for which see 'Skills' section below.*

	<u>Qualification</u>	<u>Year Qualified</u>	<u>Subjects / Additional information</u>
Professional:	CFE	2008	Chartered Fraud Examiner
	ACA	2004	state First Time Passes or otherwise
Academic:	University of City	Year Qualified	Degree Subject & Class + merits etc.
	School/College	Year Graduated	Degree Subject A Level or IB grades & subjects Number of GCSEs

SKILLS & LANGUAGES

If you know a second language, specify whether your understanding is sufficient 'verbally' to interview somebody and 'written' to analyse accounts and reports as part of your forensic/investigation duties.

Languages:

Language	Verbal	Written
English	<i>Basic / Fluent / Business / Native-Forensic?</i>	<i>Basic / Fluent / Business / Native-forensic?</i>
e.g. Welsh	Native- Forensic	Native-Forensic

Skills:

IT Software	Years of experience	Level of capability	Certified
Ringtail	5	Advanced	Yes
Encase	2	Intermediate	No

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – PEN PORTRAIT

Use a narrative style to explain what you are and how you, your clients and your colleagues have benefited from your career experience. Express it in terms of your i) financial / technical aptitude (the nub of your expertise), ii) functional management experience (i.e. budgets, staff development) and iii) marketing/business development activity (initiatives and success in growing revenue and market share etc.)

Keywords:

If a sentence on your CV hasn't got one of these words or phrases in it, ask yourself whether it is necessary:

Financial statements	Laundering	Portfolio of clients or cases
Financial awareness	Interpret and challenge	Meeting deadlines
Practice	Technical accounting skills	Complex financial information
Limited companies	Court	Analysis
FCPA	Expert Witness	Dissemination
Fraud	Report – writing	Clarity
Dispute	Arbitration	Diligence
Investigation	Lawyers	Detail
Audit	Cross examination	Interaction
KYC	Mediation	Time management
Acquisition	Understanding business	Partner
Merger	Testing statements and balances	Litigation
Bribery	High profile	

CAREER SUMMARY

It can be difficult to present a career history which involves promotional and locational moves within and between firms. Here is one way to present a clear summary. This history itself is of course entirely fictional.

Job Title	Department / Firm / Location (City & Country)	Date from – date to
Senior Manager	Forensic Services / ABC LLP / London, UK Disputes	10/2012 – Present
Manager	Forensic Services / ABC LLP / London UK Disputes & Investigation	08/2010 - 09/2012
Manager	Forensic Services / ABC LLP / Southampton, UK	01/2010 – 07/2010
Assistant Manager	Forensic Services / ABC LLP / Southampton, UK	01/2008 – 12/2009
Audit Executive	Audit Assurance / XYZ LLP / Southampton, UK	09/2007 – 12/2007
Audit trainee	Audit Assurance / XYZ LLP / London, UK	09/2003 – 08/2007

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CAREER DETAIL

For every employed position during the past 10 years, work backwards chronologically from your present role. Suggested format for each position as follows:

Senior Manager	Forensic Services / ABC LLP / London, UK	10/2012 – Present
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Optional: include a 1 or 2 line narrative explanation of reason for and context of the role.

A - Skills & Responsibilities

- Use
- Bullet
- Points

B – Key Clients and Industrial Sectors

Only if it is possible for you to list them. Usually done on Auditor CVs.

C - ‘Portfolio’ or ‘Cases’

For each case use a bullet, specify your role on the team (leader, manager, ‘in-charge’) how big the team was, how long your involvement lasted, what was the key challenge, what was your personal contribution and what was the outcome. Case examples listed below.

- Loss of profits
- Breach of warranties
- Contentious valuations
- Expert determinations
- Professional negligence
- Matrimonial dispute
- Fraud: cases, claims, valuations
- Criminal defence
- International arbitration
- Pension covenant assessments
- Litigation support

D – Other Notable Achievements

- Internal recognition or awards – i.e. top examinations result in the firm, top fee income for the year,
- Put onto Partnership Fast Track programme
- High profile marketing activity such as television / radio appearances
- Hyperlinks to mentions in the press.

INTERESTS & ACTIVITIES

- Do include interests in which you can demonstrate authentic passion, progression, achievement and completion.

Few additional tips:

- Do Not Put, “Surfing the Net”
- Do not put “Reading” unless you can say what are you are reading and why...i.e. “passion for crime thrillers, currently reading...etc.”
- Do not put “Travelling” unless you can say where you have recently travelled, what you did and why.

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To conclude...

We hope that you found this CV guide useful.

If you did and would like further advice on CVs, interviewing and related testing (i.e. Watson-Glaser) and potential career paths into, through and from Forensic Accounting, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

From London, we recruit advisory accountants, forensic accountants and technologists for Big 4 and boutique firm partners in the UK, Middle East, SE Asia and Australia.

Best wishes

Chris

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