

YOUR ULTIMATE  
**GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT**  
CV GUIDE

WHY DO YOU NEED A  
**GREAT**  
DEVELOPMENT CV?



- Global development jobs are **competitive**. To stand-out from the pack of applicants, you need a stand-out CV.
- Global development has **different norms and expectations** than other industries, so standard CV advice may not apply.
- Aid workers are **always on the move**. Whether you are a consultant on the hunt for your next assignment or fully employed keeping an eye out for your next project, all professionals should have a polished CV at the ready.



**HOW**  
DEVELOPMENT CVs  
**DIFFER FROM**  
OTHER INDUSTRIES



## CV vs. Resume

- You are likely to hear the more internationally recognized term CV in global development, though resume is also commonly used. While a resume is typically a shorter document, the **terms can be used interchangeably** in global development.
- The **one-page rule does not apply**. Development recruiters like to see more detail, so don't sweat it if it takes you 2 to 5 pages to fit all of your skills and experience. Just be careful to not make it too long as very few people will read beyond 3-5 pages.

# HOW DEVELOPMENT CVs DIFFER FROM OTHER INDUSTRIES

## ALEX GIRARD

Address: 123 Elm Lane  
Washington, DC, USA

Home Phone: +1 202 xxx-xxxx Mobile Phone: +1 202 xxx-xxxx

Email: \*\*\*\*\*@gmail.com



### PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PUBLIC FINANCE, GOOD GOVERNANCE EXPERT

#### KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- An accomplished international development professional with more than **eighteen years of experience** successfully designing, implementing and managing large-scale projects in the United States, Africa and the Middle East for USAID, DFID, IMF, and World Bank.
- **Financial Management:** Expertise in both public and private financial management, municipal finance, fiscal decentralization, government accounting, and implementing integrated financial management information systems (FMIS) at the central and local government levels.
- **Good Governance and Public Administration Reform:** Extensive knowledge and experience in public sector administration reforms and delivery of essential public services in developing and transitional economies. Areas of expertise include central and local government reforms, civil service reform and modernization, administrative decentralization, institutional capacity assessments and strengthening of public administration institutions, human resources management policies and procedures, training design and capacity building for civil servants.
- **Project Management and Oversight:** Held senior level and team leadership positions working with multi-cultural teams on all aspects of project management from the idea stage through implementation to evaluation and completion. Substantial experience in request for proposals (RFPs) preparation, proposals evaluation and the subsequent subcontracts negotiations and awards.
- **Fluent in both English and Arabic,** with experience in conducting professional development seminars and workshops in leading client interactions, public administration, financial management, macroeconomics and project management.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ABC, Inc. USAID, Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (BRIDGE)  
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR / SENIOR GOVERNANCE ADVISOR, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN  
March 2010 – July 2011

- There are **different cultural norms** to balance. For example, in some countries including a picture and personal details like marital status is the norm while in others it is considered a turn-off.
- CVs are often included as part of a **project proposal**, in which case you are writing your CV to the request for proposal requirements which tend to be more quantifiable with less of a focus on soft skills.

- With so much development work being project based, professionals have the daunting task of including numerous **short-term projects or consultancies** into one concise document.
- Like any industry, there are **unique terms, acronyms and vocabulary** to development that are important to use.
- Some employers **require specific templates**. For example, the Europass resume is often the format of choice for organizations working with the EU and the P-11 format is standard for most United Nations agencies.

**HOW TO  
GET STARTED**

**CREATE A  
STANDARD  
BASE CV**



## THIS IS THE ONE YOU HAVE ON-HAND:

---

- When a former colleague approaches you about a **dream job opportunity** and you need one at the ready to share.
- To **share with your network** or recruiter when not applying to a specific job.
- To **post online** including your Devex profile.

**YOUR  
STANDARD BASE CV  
SHOULD:**

# YOUR STANDARD BASE CV SHOULD:

**Financial Management:** Expertise in both finance, fiscal decentralization, budget for financial reporting, cash management, procurement systems, and implementing integrated financial systems at the central and local government levels.

**Good Governance and Public Administration:** Expertise in public sector administration reforms and transitional economies. Areas of expertise include civil service reform and modernization, assessments and strengthening of public management policies and procedures, training.

**Project Management and Oversight:** Hands-on experience with multi-cultural teams on all aspects of project implementation to evaluation and completion. Includes (RFPs) preparation, proposals evaluation and awarding.

**Fluent in both English and Arabic,** with experience in seminars and workshops in leading client management, macroeconomics and project management.

- **Brand your core skills and experience** so it is easy for a recruiter to understand what you are great at doing.
- **Highlight your most marketable skills** or those relevant to the kinds of jobs you seek.
- Use **keywords** that will help you show up in recruiter searches, particularly when posting online.

**PRO TIP** Look at the qualifications of your dream jobs and pretend you are writing a CV for those positions.

**MAKE SURE  
YOU INCLUDE  
THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:**

**MAKE SURE  
YOU INCLUDE**  
THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

- Name and contact information
- Reverse-chronological order of your work history
- Both the names of your employer and those of any donors that funded the work (eg. USAID, DFID or EuropeAid)
- Project names and acronyms if applicable
- Location of job (including country name) and dates (including month/year)
- Project budget if applicable
- A section for languages spoken and countries of work experience
- **Nationality** (since many global development positions require specific citizenship or work authorization)

TO MAKE YOUR CV  
**STANDOUT,**  
CONSIDER ADDING:

TO MAKE YOUR CV  
**STANDOUT,**  
CONSIDER ADDING:

- A **key qualifications** section where you highlight your most impressive and relevant experience.
- **2-3 core skills or areas of expertise** to brand yourself as an expert.

**PRO TIP** Include these at the top of the first page. This is where recruiters will spend the most time looking at your CV.

A STAND-OUT  
CV EXAMPLE



## ALEX GIRARD

Address: 123 Elm Lane  
Washington, DC, USA  
Home Phone: +1 202 xxx-xxxx Mobile Phone: +1 202 xxx-xxxx  
Email: \*\*\*\*\*@gmail.com

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PUBLIC FINANCE, GOOD GOVERNANCE EXPERT

#### KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- An accomplished international development professional with more than **eighteen years of experience** successfully designing, implementing and managing large-scale projects in the United States, Africa and the Middle East for USAID, DFID, IMF, and World Bank.
- **Financial Management:** Expertise in both public and private financial management, municipal finance, fiscal decentralization, government accounting, and implementing integrated financial management information systems (FMIS) at the central and local government levels.
- **Good Governance and Public Administration Reform:** Extensive knowledge and experience in public sector administration reforms and delivery of essential public services in developing and transitional economies. Areas of expertise include central and local government reforms, civil service reform and modernization, administrative decentralization, institutional capacity assessments and strengthening of public administration institutions, human resources management policies and procedures, training design and capacity building for civil servants.
- **Project Management and Oversight:** Held senior level and team leadership positions working with multi-cultural teams on all aspects of project management from the idea stage through implementation to evaluation and completion. Substantial experience in request for proposals (RFPs) preparation, proposals evaluation and the subsequent subcontracts negotiations and awards.
- **Fluent in both English and Arabic,** with experience in conducting professional development seminars and workshops in leading client interactions, public administration, financial management, macroeconomics and project management.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

##### **ABC, Inc. USAID, Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (BRIDGE)**

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR / SENIOR GOVERNANCE ADVISOR, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

March 2010 – July 2011

Subcontracted to Save the Children for USAID-funded BRIDGE program. Provided assistance and support to Country Director and Chief of Party with strategic planning and technical direction of the three-year US\$53 million program. In coordination with the State Ministry of Finance and Economy and the Ministry of Local Government and Civil Service, designed and implemented program activities focused on:

- o Planning and Budgeting
  - o Financial Management
  - o Tax Administration and Revenue Collections
  - o Human Resources Management
- Oversaw the procurement process and negotiations of services and products ensuring vendors met delivery requirements.
  - Prepared detailed annual work plans and facilitated the definition of project scopes, goals and deliverables, costing and resource allocation. Oversaw staffing requirements including recruitment and deployment and assured effective performance management of staff and subcontractors.
  - Developed and implemented comprehensive training programs in governance, public administration, budgeting, financial management, tax administration and revenue mobilization.

**ABC Inc., USAID, Information Technology Master Plan - Implementation Phase (ITMP-IP) Project**

SENIOR ADVISOR, BEIRUT, LEBANON

April 2009- March 2010

- Contributed to the consolidation efforts of various IT units of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI), the Water Authority of Lebanon into a single IT unit, as part of institutional strengthening efforts aimed at improving policy-making, sector regulations and performance in the Jordanian water sector.
- Developed scopes of work/terms of reference (SOWs/TORs) for consultants and contractors and managed implementation of project work plan. Proficiently assessed quality of consultants' inputs and deliverables and provided recommendations for improvements.

**International Development Group, USAID/MCC, Local Governance Development Program (LGDP)**

COMPONENT MANAGER/SENIOR TECHNICAL ADVISOR, AMMAN, JORDAN

June 2007 – March 2009

Led the Municipal Local Government Component, the largest piece of a two-year \$16 million program, financed by the MCC and administered by USAID. Provided managerial and technical leadership for a team of full-time project staff and over 30 international and local consultants and subcontractors with a wide array of expertise in the planning, design and implementation of project activities. Achieved all strategic and operational results in:

- o Strengthening municipal councils and public administration capabilities
- o Improving quality of service delivery
- o Strengthening financial management systems
- o Modernizing HR practices
- o Development of IT infrastructure
- o Enhancing citizen participation in local level decision-making

**International Development Group, USAID, Local Governance Development Program (LGDP)**

SENIOR PUBLIC FINANCE SPECIALIST (SPFS), AMMAN, JORDAN

September 2004 – April 2007

- Led a team of consultants and local subcontractor in strengthening the municipal financial system focusing on budget formulation and execution, procurement, payroll, financial reporting, introducing enhanced transparency and accountability mechanisms, increasing municipal local revenues as well as investments in public services, integrating budgeting and local development planning.
- Improved effectiveness of tax management and collection by increasing the tax collection rate and improving tax payment compliance in close coordination with UNDP and the Ministry of Finance property tax project.
- Facilitated the development of training needs assessment (TNA) and delivery of capacity building training to mayors, municipal council members, and financial staff.

**Management Consulting Firm, Dfid, Economic Recovery and Governance Reform Project**

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (FMIS) ADVISOR, KHARTOUM, SUDAN

March 2001 – August 2004

- Provided expert advice in the automation of budget execution for all government ministries and the development and implementation of integrated Financial Management Information Systems (FMIS). Provided technical support in the creation of a unified Chart of Accounts to support the FMIS and accounting operations.
- Established a helpdesk to provide daily support to users in all ministries on FMIS e-Financials software. Delivered presentations and prepared training materials to the staff responsible for the administration, maintenance and technical operation of the system.
- Supervised a team of local professional and administrative staff and managed the setting of timetables for activities, project output deliveries and acquisition of goods and services.

## **EDUCATION**

**M.B.A., Business Administration** 2005 – 2006  
UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

**Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering** 1990 – 1994  
STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA U.S.A.

### **Relevant Training:**

- Advanced Participation Methods (Nairobi, Kenya - April 2010)
- Gender Mainstreaming Certification (Washington, DC - October 2008)
- Strengthening Financial and Procurement Systems Certification (Brussels, Belgium 2007 - 2008)
- Postgraduate courses in management and information technology, University of California, USA, 1992-1993

**IT Certifications:** Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT), 2000; Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE), 1998; Microsoft Certified Professional + Internet (MCP+I), 1998.

## **COUNTRIES/LANGUAGES/AFFILIATIONS**

**Geographic Experience:** Lebanon, Kenya, Sudan, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, USA

**Languages:** English (fluent), Arabic (fluent)

\*\*Please note this is a real CV however, names including countries and employers along with additional personal identifying information have been changed to protect the privacy of the individual\*\*

**TAILORING**  
**YOUR CV**

# TAILORING YOUR CV

The single, most important thing you can do to stand out is to **tailor your CV** when applying to specific job opportunities. While this does take extra time, we promise your **efforts will be worth it.**

With a standard, base CV in hand, tailoring your CV to a specific position is easier than you think.

**HOW TO TAILOR  
YOUR BASE CV TO  
A SPECIFIC JOB**

## HOW TO TAILOR YOUR BASE CV TO A SPECIFIC JOB

- Focus on the **key qualifications section and 2-3 core areas of expertise** to match the requirements of the job
- **Remove experience** that is not relevant to the job and will detract from your more relevant experience
- **Rename or re-order** core areas of expertise to match job requirements
- **Add-in** relevant experience that may be missing
- Use **keywords** from the job description
- **Localize** to the social/cultural norms of the organization. (For example, by adding or removing a photo)
- **Format** to a required CV template

# 3 COMMON CV DILEMMAS AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM



# Dilemma 1

---

Your work history includes too many short-term projects and consultancies to fit into a concise CV.

# SOLUTIONS

---

- Consider including a **“highlights reel”** of the most important or relevant assignments. You can preface this by saying “Select assignments include” so that recruiters know you have more experience than what is shown.
- Group these under a section titled **“Independent Consultant”** or your small business name in your work history and **be sure to not have any major gaps** in dates.

# SOLUTIONS

---

- Consider grouping assignments by **functional or technical area**.  
(Warning: Recruiters will still want to see a reverse-chronological ordering of your work history)
- Have a **short-version CV** with select assignments, plus a **long-form version** with all of them included. You can offer to share the long-form version with recruiters who want more detail and it can be a handy reference to draw upon when tailoring a CV to a position.

# Dilemma 2

---

You're transitioning to global development from another sector.

# SOLUTIONS

---

- Focus on **transferable skills**, ones you have gained in your previous career that you see highlighted in global development job requirements.
- **Translate keywords** and terms to resonate with global development recruiters. For example, instead of saying “sales and marketing” you may want to use the commonly used term “business development”.
- **Avoid using industry-specific jargon** from your previous line of work.
- Include any **volunteer, consulting or pro-bono work** that may be relevant.

# Dilemma 3

---

You have large gaps in employment.

# SOLUTIONS

---

- Given the project-based nature of development work, **this sector is more forgiving** than others when it comes to gaps in employment. However, gaps over 3-6 months can **raise red flags**.
- Include any **volunteer or consulting** work you have done in between employment, even if it is not directly related to your career.

# SOLUTIONS

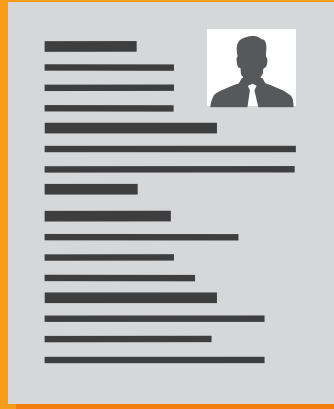
---

- Only in **extreme cases**, consider a functional resume format where you arrange your work experience by areas of expertise rather than on a timeline. (Warning: recruiters are known to loathe this resume format and often see it as a way of covering up a lack of recent work experience, so only use this when you don't have anything else to lose)
- Consider mentioning reasons for employment gaps in your cover letter, but focus more on the **reasons why you are now looking for work.**
- **Do not** mention reasons for unemployment in your CV.



**SOME FINAL TIPS**  
**BEFORE YOU APPLY**

- Apply **consistence use of tenses**.
- **Use a simple file name** that includes your name, eg: Alex\_Girard\_CV. Recruiters love this as it makes it easier to save and share your CV and it shows attention to detail.
- Make sure to **remove any track changes**.
- Have a friend **proofread**- it is much easier for a second set of eyes to catch mistakes.
- Use a **professional sounding email address** and never use your work email address.
- **UPLOAD** your new and improved CV to your Devex profile!



To learn more about the dos and don'ts for your global development CV, watch this Devex exclusive [webinar](#).

**devex**  
Do Good. Do It Well.™