



Financial Career Insight Series: Financial Market CVs

Paul McCormick: Trader Morgan Stanley, Barclays, JP Morgan - Financial Careers Coach

Any two people will give you slightly different advice on producing a powerful CV but of course there is commonality to any great CV. Generally, the advice is to have one great CV for all your applications rather than adjust it for each role that interests you but it is perfectly fine to adjust a few words to emphasise your key skills and experience relating to a particular position. It is also fine to have a couple of different versions of the CV if you are undecided between sectors e.g. Asset Management and Credit Rating Agencies.

Profile Statement

There is a lot of debate as to whether to include such a statement after your personal contact details at the beginning of the CV. My own preference is NOT to do so and let the content of the CV do the talking! If you decide to use a 'Profile Statement' it should contain a statement that is backed up with the detail later in the CV. Some work experience or similar which justifies why this career path is now your vocation. Something to make the recruiter read on.

Note: You must avoid statements such as "I am good at working on my own or as part of a team" "I am very determined". Such statements are unsubstantiated which anyone could claim. They mean nothing even if potentially true! Note further that the word "I" should not be used in the CV at all.

Profile Example

"A 3rd year Economics student at Exeter University who has been awarded the David Johnson Award for excellent academic achievement and who has proactively secured various financial market work experience which has fuelled a passion to now work on the Buy Side of the market".

Academic Qualifications

As well as listing your academic qualifications mention any scholarships, prizes, high percentages or grades you scored if you have these. Don't list any AS Levels or individual GCSEs. If your GCSEs are strong list as GCSEs: 6 A*, 3As.



Any additional qualifications will show you are highly motivated. CFA Level 1, the Investment Management Certificate or Bloomberg Market Concepts are well regarded. *(BMC is only about 8 hour's work only but you need to be in front of a Bloomberg Terminal to do it).* You do not have to have attained the qualification before you can add it to your CV. If the exam date is 6 months away just list it as such.

Work Experience

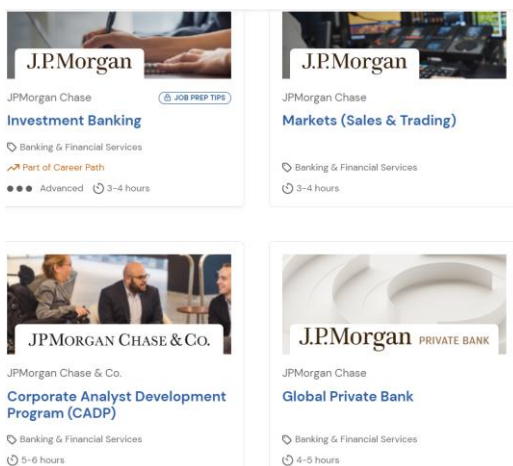
Any work experience of any length is valuable. Two days is fine, it does not have to be 4 weeks somewhere! Go out and get these short work experiences; find the contacts. Most people have no problem taking someone for two days. Longer is great of course but requires a much bigger commitment from them.

A short work experience can be represented as below; you can explain the detail at interview.

- Refinitive June 2023

Never lie on a CV but you have every right to make any experience as impressively sounding as possible i.e. if you have been windsurfing four or five times you are perfectly entitled to put windsurfing in your 'Interests' section!

Many students feel they lack work experience and therefore are applying with a disadvantage. The answer is free financial training provider FORAGE www.theforage.com



FORAGE virtual courses are impressive, free and only 3-5 hours long. Maybe do 2 or 3 courses not just 1. Then list the courses on your CV adding 2 or 3 bullet points, exemplified below. This then gives you a strong 'financial CV'.

WORK EXPERIENCE**JP Morgan***Commercial Banking Virtual Experience Program***London, UK***Aug 2023*

- Developed proficiency in financial concepts such as credit analysis, risk assessments and investment strategies by participating in live stimulations of real-world commercial banking scenarios.
- Gained experience in financial modelling, utilizing excel and data analysis tools to create financial models for commercial scenarios.

Fidelity International*Investment Management Virtual Experience Program***London, UK***June 2023*

- Acquired knowledge in asset allocation, investment strategies and portfolio managements, focusing on maximizing risk adjusted returns over benchmarks through targeted asset allocation.
- Honed my skills in evaluating publicly listed stocks by analysing the pros and cons of potential investments using SWOT analysis.

If you have other work experience, you might call the above FINANCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE and list this first and have a section NON-FINANCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE below it. This highlights the more relevant work experience higher up in your CV, so recruiters read it first which is what you want. You want them interested when reading the first half of your CV, so they carry on reading the second half!

Skills

A common mistake can be to include a 'Skills' section claiming a candidate is 'analytical' 'good communicator' 'good problem-solver'. Again, anyone can claim these skills. State your achievements in your CV; the recruiter can recognise the experience and skills you have gained e.g. if you took a part-time sales job and increased sales by 40% you do not need to list sales skills under a 'Skills' section.

Be Human

London Financial market employers don't just want to hire candidates solely with the highest academic achievements. They also want to hire well-rounded individuals who have both 'given something back' or show personality and the ability to fit into a team. Any voluntary work here is very appropriate and indeed a CV without a 'volunteering item' in today's world is dangerous to go with! Team sport or university society participation especially committee participation is also very appropriate. An interesting hobby is also welcomed as long as it doesn't suggest social isolation!

Format

Make use of bullet points since Human Resource recruitment personnel look at hundreds of CVs and need to pick out information quickly. The average time a recruiter spends looking at a CV is about 8 seconds only. Four to six bullet points per sub heading is appropriate. Bullet points are great but on certain items you need to give additional detail making the point as impressive as possible all whilst keeping a great layout.

Spelling

There is absolutely no room for spelling mistakes or grammatical errors. You might be convinced a word is spelt a certain way. Read your CV several times, spell-check and if possible get another pair of

eyes to look at it. One typing mistake and you are likely out. Don't give recruiters the excuse to eliminate you. The early stages of job applications are all about avoiding elimination!

Language

If you're applying for a Graduate Programme that by definition will attract 1000s of applicants, you need to have the right words in your CV as the initial screening may be conducted by a tracking system programmed to spot such content. The right words can be identified in most job descriptions. If you are applying to an employer outside such a scheme this is less critical but you still need to include some sector 'buzz' words.

Length

For a financial market related CV - make sure it all fits on **one page** – no exceptions. Two pages is fine but only if you have a 20-year career!

Quick Tips:

- The average time a recruiter initially spends look at a CV is approximately 8 seconds.
- Easy-to-read format with bullet points therefore required.
- Your aim is to provide 'hooks' of information only for the recruiter to want to find out more. You can give the full story at interview!
- Financial CVs need to be 1 page only.
- You must list a good amount of hobbies and interests to show you are a 'well-rounded individual'
- Be familiar with all Financial Career Insight Series documents

See strong financial CV example on the following page: Note:

- It is all about expressing your own personal CV content i.e. academic qualifications, work experience, hobbies and activities in the best possible light. You likely have more content than you first think. These are your talking points for interview.

John Stevens

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EDUCATION

University of Exeter Business School

*Economics and Politics with Industrial Experience***London**

2018 – 2022

- Cumulative Grade: First Class, 72%

Sir Thomas Moore's Grammar School

- **A2 Levels**, Economics A, History A, Politics A
- **GCSE's**, 4 A*s, 7A's

Oxford

2011 – 2018

WORK EXPERIENCE

JHL Financial Consulting

*Summer Intern***London**

July 2021 – September 2021

- Supported a London Business School and JHL Consulting publication about decision making in the M&A process
- Led business development activities setting up a lead with a media conglomerate generating +€2 billion in revenue
- Utilised PowerPoint to create pitch books for potential clients in the technology and media sector

Fintech Pictures Entertainment

*Business Expansion Analyst***London**

September 2019 – July 2020

- Analysed operational processes and logistics and made recommendations as part of an overall \$200 million expansion.
- Supported all aspects of this project whilst working in New York for a period of 6 weeks
- Moved team of 50+ in UK to larger premises.

Fidelity Asset Management

*Summer Placement Student***London**

June 2019

- Implemented an economic model demonstrating to senior managers the drivers behind the Funding for Lending Scheme
- Improved the efficiency of producing 'Bankstats' tables, reducing time spent footnoting changes in data by over 50%
- Enhanced understanding of macroeconomics and financial markets through meetings with senior economists

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

University of Exeter Business & Finance Society

*Senior Fund Analyst***London**

March 2019 – Current

- Co-managing a student run virtual fund, leading a team of 20 analysts covering TMT sector
- Investing a virtual £500k in a large-cap equities fund, currently tracking the S&P500 since inception
- Responsible for performing trading comparables in Excel

University of Exeter Careers Team

*Marketing and Events Assistant***London**

September 2020 – Current

- Lead and devise social media strategy across a variety of online platforms, increasing Twitter followers by over 100%
- Represent the Management School at selected events including the Institute of Directors Annual Convention
- Mentor over 100 students aiming to help them secure internships

Operation Michigan

*Charity Volunteer***Oxford**

Summer 2018 & Summer 2019

- Responsible for a team of 6, raising over £1800 through volunteer work at music festivals

ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

- Keen golfer previously playing off a handicap of 11
- Play 6-a-side football in an intra-mural university league
- Write 'Student Business blog' for university website
- Active member of Entrepreneurs, Politics, P.P.E, Business & Finance Society