

# ІННОВАЦІЙНІ ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ У КОНТЕКСТІ ІНШОМОВНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ ФАХІВЦЯ

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## SET OF ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING FIRST-YEAR ENGINEERING STUDENTS HOW TO WRITE A CV

*The article is devoted to the description of a set of activities for teaching first-year engineering students how to write a CV in English. Taking into account vital importance of students' ability to write a CV in English for their future career, we consider it expedient to allocate up to three classes to study it, i.e. about six academic hours, during which students will do a specially designed set of activities, totaling up to twenty. Inasmuch as a CV is a standardized, clichéd document and CVs differ in information about a person, whereas CV structure and form remain practically unchanged, teaching students how to write a CV should be done using a combined text-genre and procedural approach. Activities that should be used for the purpose can be divided into three parts: Presentation, Vocabulary and Writing. When working with activities from the first part, Presentation, it better for students to start with a careful study and analysis of samples of English-language CVs and then proceed to activities connected with CV formatting, in particular, finding information in a CV, putting CV components in the correct order. At the next stage, it is worth practicing new lexical units related to the topic (part Vocabulary), using activities for studying vocabulary, e.g. distributing given lexical units among specified categories, finding definitions of the words, filling in the gaps in the sentences, solving a word-search puzzle, using lexical units in sentences or stories made by students. At the next stage (part Writing), students move on to writing individual components of the CV (in particular this applies to such components as Professional Skills and Personal Skills, which in the case of the quite common lack of work experience in first-year students acquire great importance), as well as they start writing full texts of their own CVs and CVs for other people in order to better master the specified topic. When teaching CV writing to first-year engineering students, it is necessary to use activities both for individual work, and for work in pairs or small groups, aimed at obtaining information for the purpose of writing a CV for a particular person or analyzing CVs written by other students, thus improving students' CV writing and speaking skills.*

**Key words:** *teaching, CV writing, engineering students, set of activities.*

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## КОМПЛЕКС ВПРАВ ДЛЯ НАВЧАННЯ СТУДЕНТІВ ПЕРШОГО КУРСУ ТЕХНІЧНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ НАПИСАННЯ РЕЗЮМЕ

Статтю присвячено опису комплексу вправ для навчання студентів першого курсу технічних спеціальностей написання резюме англійською мовою. Ураховуючи надзвичайно важливе значення вміння написання зазначеного документа англійською мовою для подальшої кар'єри студентів, вважаємо за доцільне виокремити на вивчення зазначеної теми до трьох занять – близько шести академічних годин, протягом яких студенти виконуватимуть спеціально розроблений комплекс вправ, загальною кількістю до двадцяти одиниць. Оскільки резюме – стандартизований, клішований документ та через те, що резюме відрізняються між собою інформацією про конкретну людину, у той час як їхня структура та форма залишаються практично незмінними, навчання написання студентів резюме слід за допомогою застосування поєданого текстово-жанрового та процесуального підходу. Вправи, які варто використовувати із зазначеною метою варто поділити на три частини: *Presentation, Vocabulary та Writing*. При роботі з вправами з першої частини, *Presentation*, вважаємо за доцільне почати з ретельного вивчення та аналізу студентами зразків англійських резюме, а після цього перейти до вправ на формування резюме, зокрема знаходження інформації, розставлення складових частин резюме у відповідні місця. На наступному етапі варто відпрацювати нові для студентів лексичні одиниці із зазначеної теми (частина *Vocabulary*), за допомогою виконання вправ на засвоєння лексики, наприклад, таких вправ, якими передбачається розподілити наведені лексичні одиниці поміж зазначеними категоріями, знайти визначення запропонованих слів, заповнити пропуски у реченнях, розв'язати філворд, застосувати активну лексику у власних реченнях або історіях. На наступному етапі (частина *Writing*) студенти переходять до написання окремих компонентів резюме (це зокрема стосується таких компонентів резюме як *Professional Skills та Personal Skills*, які у разі відсутності досвіду роботи у студентів-першокурсників, що зустрічається досить часто, набувають великого значення), а окрім того студенти розпочинають писати повні тексти власних резюме та резюме для інших осіб з метою кращого засвоєння зазначеної теми. При навчанні написання резюме студентів першого курсу технічних спеціальностей варто застосовувати не лише індивідуальні вправи, а й вправи в парах чи малих групах, спрямовані на здобуття інформації з метою написання резюме для відповідної особи або аналізу вже написаних студентами резюме з метою їх подальшого удосконалення, таким чином покращуючи свої навички написання резюме та навички говоріння.

**Ключові слова:** навчання, написання резюме, студенти технічних спеціальностей, комплекс вправ.

**Introducing the problem.** Curriculum Vitae (CV) (US resumé) is a document that summarizes your qualifications, work experience and skills. In fact, it is your own job advertisement, as it shows your potential employer that you are the right person for the position you are applying for. It is often the first chance for you to make a good impression on them, it is an important tool that you can use to promote yourself.

Therefore, a well-prepared CV will increase students' chance of being invited for a job interview, so students should be able to write it well paying special attention to CV content and presentation.

That's why we strongly believe that university curriculum should include several lessons the

objective of which will be to help students to learn how to write an impactful CV.

**Analysis of previous literature.** Teaching business correspondence has been studied extensively (Cimasko, Reichelt, 2011, Guffey, Loewy, Almonte, 2015, etc.). As a well-prepared CV is crucial for getting a job, teaching how to do it effectively has been studied by numerous scholars (Björck 2004, Wallwork 2019) who have analyzed various aspects of teaching writing CVs, sets of activities including (Тарнопольський 2008, etc.). However, more attention should be paid to peculiarities of teaching writing CVs to students with particular students' needs, first-year engineering students, to be more precise.

**The purpose of the article.** The purpose of the research article is to describe a set of activities for teaching first-year engineering students how to write a CV, which we find effective enough for it.

**Main body.** The CV is a standardized, clichéd document. CVs differ in information about a specific person, while the layout and structure remain practically the same (Тарнопольський 2008:194). Therefore it is expedient to teach students how to write a CV using a combined text-genre and procedural approach.

In order to teach students how to write impactful CVs it is useful to divide activities used for the purpose into the following parts: PRESENTATION, VOCABULARY and WRITING.

• PRESENTATION

Students should start with getting acquainted with the layout of a typical CV as some first-year students may be unfamiliar with it at all. After getting acquainted with CV layout, students proceed to the activities that help to remember it better, such as finding particular information in given CVs, putting parts of a CV in the correct order, etc.

Activity 1. Study the examples of CVs 1–3 below and say what information a typical CV includes.

In this activity students should study examples of given CVs in order to find out what components should be present in a typical CV. We won't give either examples of CVs in activities in this article or full texts of the most activities as the description of most of the activities would get too bulky to be put in an article of this type. Besides, you may want somewhat adapt proposed activities according to your students' needs. Any CVs that slightly vary in their content and style will do as the purpose of the activity is just to identify what information can be found in a CV.

*Activity 2. Work in pairs. Look through CVs in Activity 1 again and find as many differences connected with their layout as possible.*

*Example: CV 2 contains more headings than CV 3, but less than CV 1.*

*There is no Nationality section in CV 2 and CV 3 in contrast to CV 1.*

The aim of this activity is to focus somewhat more on CV layout, noticing more details and to best remember it. Besides, practicing speaking with a partner while working with writing CVs can help to diversify the process of learning how to write a CV, as writing too much can be irksome for many first-year engineering students.

*Activity 3. Scan CVs in Activity 1 once again and say which headings in those CVs are obligatory and which are optional, as when applying for some*

*jobs additional information is required whereas 5 or 6 headings can be enough for most CVs.*

*Example: Obligatory – Address, ... .*

*Optional – Publications, ... .*

Activity 4. Scan the following guidelines for writing a CV and check your answers to Activity 3.

The aim of this activity is to go through the CV layout together once again. This activity should present information about CV layout what you consider to be relevant to your students needs. Highlight headings which are optional, draw your students' attention to them, explain the specifics of every CV section. In this activity it is useful to give structured information about CV layout by presenting it in a table explaining peculiarities of every one of them, giving additional examples and highlighting optional headings. It is advisable to put information about CV layout in the order in which it should be given in a CV. When going through the answers to the previous activity with your students, you may want to focus on specifics of each component of a typical CV which your first-year engineering students need to know.

*Activity 5. Scan the following CV and answer the questions.*

*Examples of questions:*

1. *Where does Jennifer live?*
2. *Is she working now?*
3. *What computer skills does she have?*
4. *Is she sociable?*

In this activity another example of a CV is demonstrated for students to work with so that they can go through CV layout once again. Being aware of a CV structure at this stage, they have to find information required.

*Activity 6. Part A. Work in pairs. Put the parts of Tom's CV in the correct order (use the guidelines for writing a CV in Activity 4 if you need).*

This activity helps to improve students' knowledge of CV layout. It contains a CV divided into fragments: names of CV components and text that should follow them in the mixed order. You may want to ask your students to write out that CV in full as well.

*Examples of fragments a CV can be divided into:*

- Date of birth: 20 Nov 2000
- Marital status: Single
- Professional Experience
  - Working knowledge of English
  - Clean driving licence
  - Computer skills (Word, Excel, Powerpoint)
- <...>

*Part B. Scan Tom's CV and decide if the statements below are true or false.*

In part B students are given several false / true statements. They should go through the CV in part

A again and decide if those statements are true or false.

*Examples of statements:*

1. *Tom started working full-time in 2018.*
2. *Tom can drive.*
3. *Tom isn't interested in art.*

• VOCABULARY

When working with vocabulary that students need to write CVs you can use several activities that will help them to learn it. You may want to give your students any activities which are usually done for this purpose, such as classifying, gap-filling, matching, etc.

*Activity 7. Learn the following words from the List of Active Vocabulary by heart and then proceed to other activities.*

Activity 7 should contain a list of English words your students need to know to write CVs together with their translation into Ukrainian.

*Activity 8. Look through the List of Active Vocabulary in Activity 7 and put the words from it into the appropriate categories according to the CV section they relate to.*

*Categories: Personal data: ... .*

*Objective: ... .*

*Education: ... .*

*Work experience: ... .*

*Professional skills: type, ... .*

*Reference: ... .*

Activity 9. Match English words to their definitions. The first one is done for you.

Example: personnel – the people employed in an organization.

Activity 10. Fill in the gaps in the sentences with the words in the box. Be careful – there are two words you don't need.

*Example: She has good organizational skills.*

You may want to make the process of teaching writing CVs more entertaining for your first-year engineering students by giving them a word search puzzle to solve, where students have to locate a list of words connected with CVs hidden on a grid. Make that puzzle by putting up to 15 words from your vocabulary list horizontally, vertically and diagonally in a grid of suitable size, and then fill the missing cells with any letters of the English alphabet to hide those words (Activity 11).

Activity 11. Work in pairs. Find 15 words from the List of Active Vocabulary in the word search puzzle below. Words go horizontally, vertically and diagonally. The first one is done for you.

*Activity 12. Choose 10 words from the List of Active Vocabulary and make sentences with them.*

You may want to make this activity challenging for your advanced students by asking them to make a

story or a fairy-tale with those words, not just separate sentences.

• WRITING

In this part, your students should do activities connected with writing CVs with or without prompts and your support.

As most first-year students have no work experience you may want to start this part with practicing writing *Professional Skills* and *Personal Skills* sections in order to compensate for the lack of *Work Experience* section in their CVs.

You may start with presenting the lists of professional / personal skills people can have and then ask your students to write these sections for their own CVs practicing using items from them in additional activities.

*Activity 14. Part A. Choose the position you'd like to have in the future (e.g. programmer, software engineer, petroleum engineer, mechanical engineer, civil engineer, electrical engineer) and mark the skills below as obligatory (O) or desirable (D).*

*Examples of skills:*

- excellent negotiating and persuasive skills
- developed presentational skills
- leadership skills
- PC working experience
- knowledge of hardware and software market
- driving license

*Part B. Think about the position you want to have. Write Professional Skills section for your CV. If necessary, use the list of professional skills presented in part A of this activity.*

*Activity 15. Part A. Think about the position you'd like to have in the future, and tick (☐) personal qualities which are the most important for it.*

*Examples of qualities: hardworking, intelligent, decisive, trustworthy, responsible, sociable, energetic, imaginative, etc.*

*Part B. Think about the position you'd like to have in the future. Write Personal Skills section for your CV.*

Before starting to write the whole CV, you may want your students to practise writing some other CV components.

*Activity 16. Your friend Olha Svyrydenko wants to get a position of a software engineer in a big IT company. She has prepared a CV and wants you to have a look at it and help her to improve it, if possible. Analyze the CV below, find out what important information is missing and write it for her.*

In this activity you should provide your students with an example of a CV where some obligatory sections are missing.

After working with individual sections, your students should start practicing writing the whole CV.

In the following activities students proceed to writing CVs for other people (Activity 17–18) to have more practice and to best remember it or for themselves (Activity 19–20).

*Activity 17. You are good at writing effective CVs that help other people to get the job they want that's why they often ask you to write a CV for them.*

*Part A. Read the text about Oleksandr Danylenko and write a CV for him.*

*Part B. Read the text about Maryna Kalynovska and write a CV for her.*

In this exercise students practise both writing CVs, and reading about other people. You should provide them with texts that will give enough information for writing CVs for those people mentioned.

*Activity 18. Work in pairs. Your partner is looking for a job, but he / she doesn't know how to write a CV. Interview them and write their CV using the plan below. Change the roles and practise again.*

#### PLAN

1. Name, address, phone number, email.
2. Objective.
3. Education + additional courses.
4. Work experience / achievements, responsibilities (if any).

5. *Specialized skills.*

6. *Interests.*

The last two activities are aimed at writing one's own CV which students can use in the future or they just write for the sake practice.

*Activity 19. Choose the position you'd like to work in. Then write your own CV in the form below. You should include the following categories: Personal information, Objective, Education, Work experience (if any), Specialized skills, Hobbies, References.*

*Activity 20. Work in pairs. Exchange the CVs you have written in Activity 19. Analyze your partner's CV and if there are some faults in it, point them out to your partner for them to improve it. After discussing it with your partner, show your CV to your teacher. Type this final version and remember that your typed CV should preferably be about one page long.*

**Conclusions.** Writing CVs can be difficult for first-year engineering students that's why we find it effective to use a set of activities which can be divided into the following categories PRESENTATION, VOCABULARY and WRITING, focusing on various aspects of writing CVs, with up to 20 activities in total. 3 lessons should be aimed at teaching writing CVs, for the same reason.

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