

CV, Cover Letter, Skills & AI

Dr. Daniel Valtakari



Where jobs and competencies meet

Big employers need all sorts of competencies. Don't restrict yourself!

Economists may find jobs in tech companies...

Engineers may find jobs in healthcare...

Always check what kind of competencies you may offer an employer. Be prepared both when you write and send your applications as well as when you go for the interview. Be proactive and lead the discussion in a direction that opens an opportunity to show your competencies.

→ Have faith in yourself!



Things to consider – as a future applicant

Be reliable

Deliver what you have promised

If you cannot, be frank and say it

Be on time and observe timetables

If you cannot, then at least give a heads up

You are being evaluated already during your current occupation

This affects the references you may need

This has an impact on your next job application

Be clear with what you can, want and can offer

Honesty is a virtue



Necessary skills

Find out what kind of skills that are required for the job you are applying for:

[Open position](#) - read carefully and list the skills that you recognize to be required.

[Open job application](#) - try to identify the skills that you believe you could offer.

Don't be satisfied with the apparent

→ Find out additional skills of value that the employer has not presented or perhaps not considered.



Impressions about the applicant

Do you have networks

How active are you

What are your social skills

How do you perform with other people

What are your interests outside of your work?

Are you working 24/7 ?

What does this tell about you?

Are you more efficient or do you need more time than others?

Is your work on a correspondingly higher level compared to that of colleagues who work normal hours?

→ Do more working hours truly correlate with better outcome?
→ Consider the impression you give and how you can improve it !



Who gets the job in many cases

When you compete with other people for the same job, be aware that in many cases:

The more suitable specialist is preferred to the best one.

You need to impress with teamworking and social skills along with the professional skills.

The better-known person is preferred to a stranger.

When you have connections and networks the future employer has a better idea of who you are. An unknown person is considered a risk in some cases.

Any extra skills and abilities even outside the required field are assets.

A good impression is worth gold.



Applying for a job – best practises

Start looking for just one job/employer at a time – focus on this → you can use AI

Check what the employer is doing (business area, need of skills, etc.) → you can use AI

Learn as much as possible about the company and its business environment → you can use AI

Check chat forums and social media to learn about the soft side

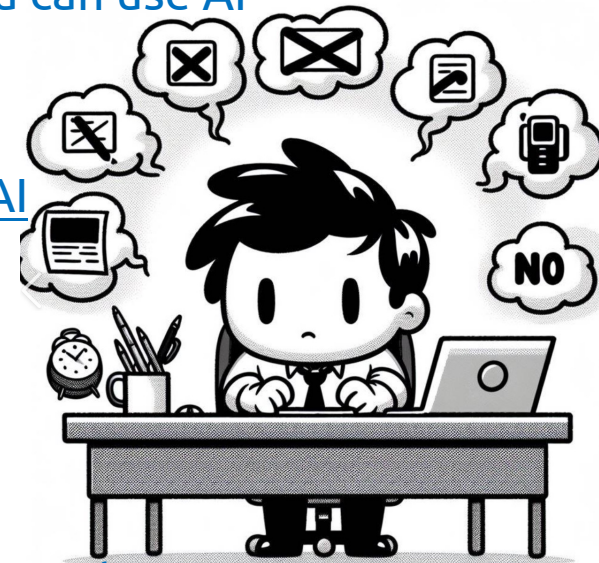
Draw up a profile where you match the employer and yourself → you can use AI

A skills paper will help you a lot

Decide on key elements that you can offer should you be recruited → you can use AI

A working plan and suggestions is a strong option

Use Artificial Intelligence for better efficiency → You will save time and achieve better results



Applying for work is work

How to set up your job application day

9-12 – Looking up info about just one possible employer (see previous slide)

12-13 – Have a break and relax

13-16 – Restructure your CV and write your cover letter from scratch

→ Send your application with documents and collect everything in a designated folder on your computer and separately 4 hard copies to bring along if you are invited to an interview (one for you and the rest to be distributed to those who make the interview).

Don't leave this to the last minute!

→ In some cases, the jobs is given before all applicants have applied or been interviewed.



Documents and papers for the application

1. CV
2. Skills paper
3. Working plan and suggestions
4. Cover letter & job application

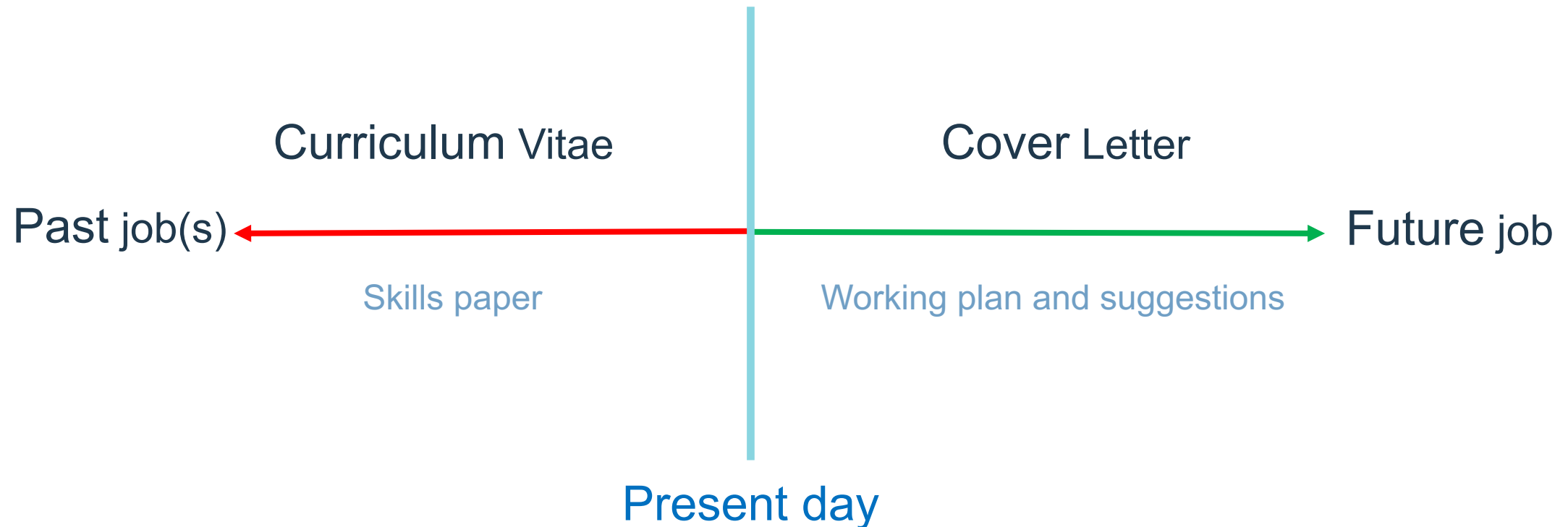
These are needed to bring to a comprehensive job application and make it possible to include the relevant things in each one of the documents.

The numbering corresponds to the order in which they should be prepared.



Curriculum Vitae and Cover Letter

The CV is all about the past and the cover letter is all about the future



Curriculum Vitae – CV

The CV includes

- Name and contact details
- Education
- Language skills
- Competencies and work experience
- Career so far
- Additional skills
- Hobbies
- The CV should be no more than two pages

Make two CV versions:

- A long one that includes absolutely everything
- A short one that is fine-tuned each time for the particular that job you are applying for

The short version is made by

- Deleting all unnecessary info
- Compressing less relevant info that is still good to be included

Example of a CV

John Doe
1st Avenue
FIN-00120 Dollby
Email: John.Doe@gmail.com
Tel: +358 47 332211
LinkedIn:
ResearchGate:

Curriculum Vitae

Full name: Doe, John Junior
Place and date of birth: Albertville, Canada, May 29, 1969
Marital status: Married, three children (-91, - 94 and -98)

Education: Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering, Orlonville University of Technology, 1995.
MSc., in Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Natural Science and Technology, University of Main, 1990.

Competencies: Chemical engineering, strategic planning and financial analyses, business and quality management, R&D and technology management.

Language skills: English, French, Swedish, Japanese, Hindi, (Finnish)

Career:
2018/8- Aalto University School of Science, Department of Chemical Engineering, post doc researching in novel materials.
2009/9-2013/11 Environmental Investment Ltd. as senior research manager responsible for B-2-B relations and new customers processes.
2002/4-2009/8 Garbage & Recyclables Ltd. as senior researcher in R&D responsible for new recovery processes.
1995/2-2002/2 Pollution Solution Ltd. as researcher in R&D for new product concepts and key account manager in the water pollution division with focus on customer service development.

ICT skills:

Office programs	Advanced
Matlab	Advanced
C++	Intermediate
Corel Draw	Intermediate

Further Education: Human Resources, management, 2 years
Industrial Management, management, 2 years
eMBA

Hobbies: History and evolution of mankind and theoretical astronomy.

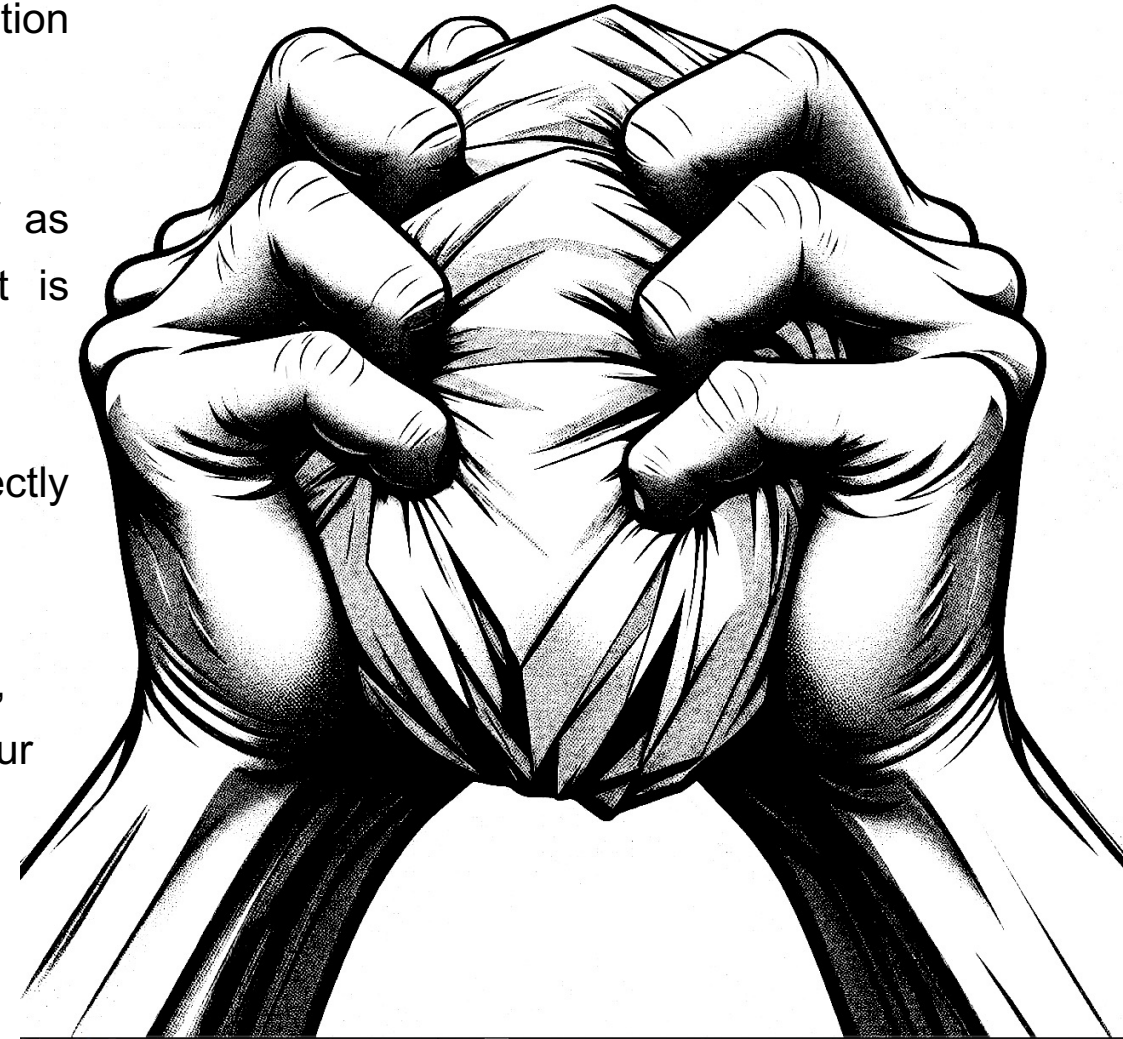
Fine-tuned summary for the CV with AI

Since your CV needs to be tailored or fine-tuned for each application separately you should consider also the following:

Step 1 – Prepare your 2-page CV based on your master CV as described earlier. Make sure that it contains information that is relevant for the position that you intend to apply for.

Step 2 – Prepare your cover letter as described so that it directly matches the position you intend to apply for.

Step 3 – As the AI to make a brief summary, 5 - 10 sentences long, from your cover letter and add this summary to the beginning of your CV.



Cover letter - structure

1. Paragraph

Opening and brief description about the purpose of your application.

2. Paragraph

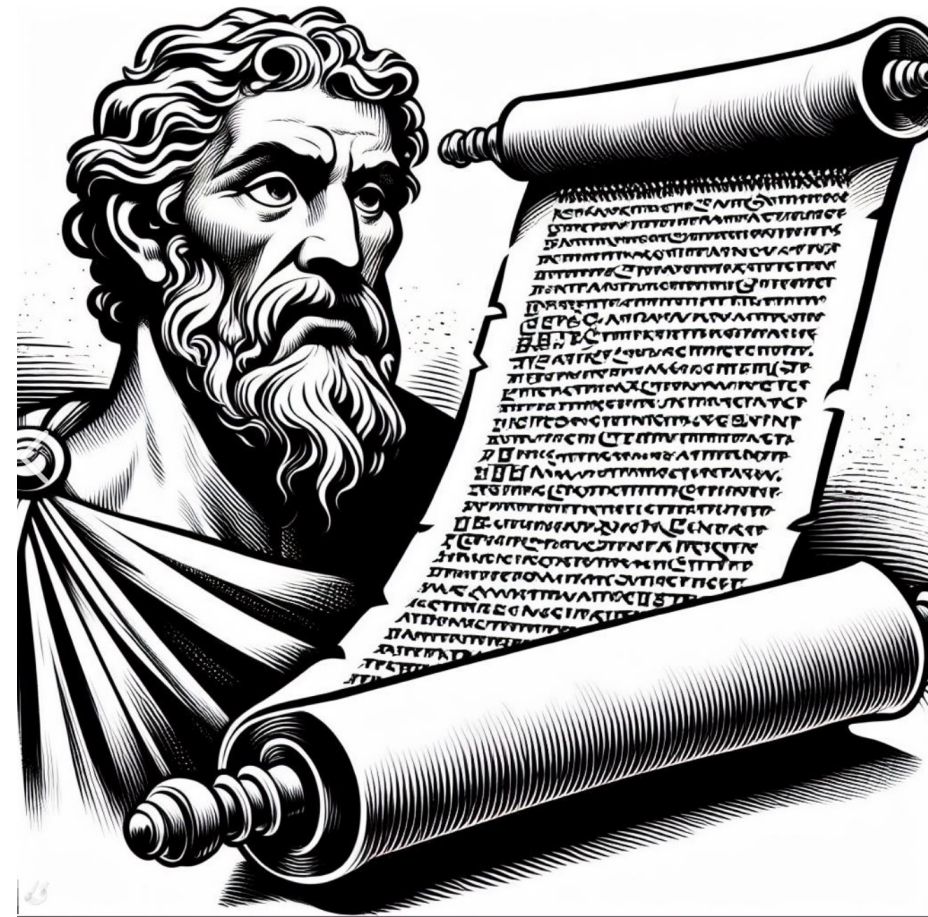
Establish a link between your past experience and your future with the new employer.

3. Paragraph

Describe what more you can offer your new employer.

4. Paragraph

End the letter assuring that you are the right person and that you are awaiting further contact.



Open application

Date

Open Application: **Name of company or employer**

Dear Ms **Name**,

Please allow me to express my interest in working for your Company by means of an open application. I am about to remain permanently in Finland for family reasons and I am looking for a job opportunity with an international scope in a field related to my experiences.

I have been living and working in Finland for some years now. I am currently leading a research project at **University** with a focus on sustainable environmental processes. The work I do is closely related to the sustainable development in the countries where supply chains of European companies are located. Development funding has a crucial role in this process. I am convinced that my experience is of value to an organisation such as yours. I can, in addition, also work with the marketing of environmental technology and give customers support and training.

The set of skills I bring includes managing projects and teams, targeted communication to specialists and technicians and product support as well as marketing. I can lead my own projects and know the challenges of customers and reporting very well - which makes me a good adviser to others in the organisation working with the processes. I am an excellent trouble-shooter, finding and implementing solutions whenever obstacles arise, especially when working with project partners of different cultural and language backgrounds. I am also prepared to work on any other positions you find my skills to fit.

Living and working in Finland for more than five years, I am used to work here, and my family has found its home here. My main working languages are English, French and German. I can manage with Finnish at least during the coffee breaks and lunch hour discussions.

I would be happy to answer any further questions and provide personal references.

Best regards,

Signature

Name

Address

Contact details

Examples of cover letters

1

2

3

4

Job specific application

Date

Application for the position of **Senior Adviser**

Dear Ms **Name**,

I am about to remain permanently in Finland for family reasons and I am looking for a job opportunity with an international scope in a field related to my experiences.

I have been living and working in Finland for some years now. I am currently leading a research project at **University** with a focus on sustainable environmental processes. The work I do is closely related to the sustainable development in the countries where supply chains of European companies are located. Development funding has a crucial role in this process. I am convinced that my experience is of value to an organisation such as yours. I can, in addition, also work with the marketing of environmental technology and give customers support and training.

The set of skills I bring includes managing projects and teams, targeted communication to specialists and technicians and product support as well as marketing. I can lead my own projects and know the challenges of customers and reporting very well - which makes me a good adviser to others in the organisation working with the processes. I am an excellent trouble-shooter, finding and implementing solutions whenever obstacles arise, especially when working with project partners of different cultural and language backgrounds. My experience with research at the **University** gives good grounds for further product and process development both with our own teams and our customers and partners.

Living and working in Finland for more than five years, I am used to work here, and my family has found its home here. My main working languages are English, French and German. I can manage with Finnish at least during the coffee breaks and lunch hour discussions.

I would be happy to answer any further questions and provide personal references.

Best regards,

Signature

Name

Address

Contact details

Cover letter – job description

Job Description

Our Company is leading the electrification revolution, and our mission is to end pollution with electrification. Our Company specialises in hybrid and electric powertrain systems for the off-highway, on-highway and marine markets. Our Company develops and manufactures high-performance power systems for heavy-duty vehicles, machines and marine vessels.

We are growing fast globally and would like to invite you to join the **passionate and driven team** and to work on the technologies that will enable the world of tomorrow to do more with less.

Job Responsibilities

As a constantly growing company, Our Company is looking for motivated employees who want to work with us on our success in the team. We are seeking the ideal Mechanical Engineer's to join our diverse team.

In this role, you will be part of a team responsible for the electrification of on- and off-highway vehicles through new product development projects. In this position you will:

- **Development and verification tests of electric machines**
- **Factory acceptance tests of electric machines**
- **Building laboratory test setups**
- **Type approval tasks or marine project approvals tasks of electric machines**

Background & Skills

To be considered for this role you hold a **Bachelor's or Master's degree** in Mechanical Engineering or similar.

You have **+3 years of experience** working with product design and development and/or engineering research. Being an effective team player, yet not afraid of **working independently or taking initiative** and having **good oral and written communication skills in English** and at **least basic skills in Finnish**.

Furthermore, we will appreciate skills and qualifications within understanding of functional safety and experience of **developing products** for our industry

At Our Company, we believe that a diverse and inclusive workplace fosters creativity, innovation, and a broader perspective in decision-making. Even if you do not check all the boxes for this job posting, we encourage you to apply anyway.

Cover letter – structure example

Paragraph 2:

- Part of a passionate and driven team
 - Development and verification tests of electric machines
 - Factory acceptance tests of electric machines
 - Building laboratory test setups
 - Type approval tasks or marine project approvals tasks of electric machines
 - M.Sc. or B.Sc. studies in an appropriate engineering
 - Good command of English
 - At least a basic command of Finnish
 - You are a team player who can take initiative
 - You can work independently
 - You have +3 years of experience
-
- Are eager to develop your skill
 - Co-create our sustainable future
 - Passion for learning new skills is an asset and makes it easier to join our team
 - Ambitious and passionate working atmosphere

Paragraph 2:

I would appreciate becoming part of your **passionate and driven team** and I feel as a team player who can take initiative. I can **work well independently** with individual tasks. I can build laboratory test setups based on the experience I have earned during my earlier career of **more than 5 years** in the industry. My skills also include **development and verification tests of electric machines** and **factory acceptance tests of electric machines**. I don't have prior experience of **type approval tasks or marine project approvals tasks of electric machines**; however, I am confident that I can learn to do these under your guidance and since I have a passion for learning new skills, which I consider to be an asset and will make it easier to join your team. I would in that way join you in co-creating our mutual sustainable future in your ambitious and passionate working atmosphere. My innovative and creative approach helps address team challenges.

My language skills include a **good command of English** and I speak quite good French. And I also have a **basic understanding of Finnish**.

Key requirements that you need to match at **Company**:

Paragraph 2:

1. Part of a passionate and driven team
 2. Development and verification tests of electric machines
 3. Factory acceptance tests of electric machines
 4. Building laboratory test setups
 5. Type approval tasks or marine project approvals tasks of electric machines
 6. at least 3 years of M.Sc. or B.Sc. studies in an appropriate engineering science (Electrical engineering, Automation Engineering, Mechanical engineering etc.)
 7. Good command of English
 8. At least a basic command of Finnish
 9. You are a team player who can take initiative
-
10. Are eager to develop your skills
 11. Co-create our sustainable future
 12. Passion for learning new skills is an asset and makes it easier to join our team
 13. Ambitious and passionate working atmosphere

Write in your cover letter how you intend to match the given criteria. You must look forward and only make reference to the past to strengthen your claim.

Paragraph 3:

If you have any skills, not listed as requirements above, add them to paragraph 3 and offer them as relevant extra that you can offer.

Note that you have to read carefully the job description including Company presentation, background skills description and any other information that is available in the job description and requirements.

Dear Big Boss,

1

Paragraph 1: Brief introduction:

I'm applying for a summer training position in your Company. My name is John Doe and I'm currently a master student majoring in mechanical engineering at My University. I have recently moved to Finland to continue my studies. I have 3 years of M.Sc. studies at My University with mechanical engineering.

2

Paragraph 2: Here you need to meet the listed requirements and expectations:

I would appreciate becoming part of your passionate and driven team and I feel as a team player who can take initiative. I am also constantly eager to develop my professional skills. I can build laboratory test setups based on the experience I have earned during my earlier career. My skills also include development and verification tests of electric machines and factory acceptance tests of electric machines. I don't have prior experience of type approval tasks or marine project approvals tasks of electric machines; however, I am confident that I can learn to do these under your guidance and since I have a passion for learning new skills, which I consider to be an asset and will make it easier to join your team. I would in that way join you to co-create our mutual sustainable future in your ambitious and passionate working atmosphere. My innovative and creative approach helps address team challenges.

My language skills include a good command of English and I speak quite good German. And I also have a basic understanding of Finnish.

3

Paragraph 3: Information with added value, that has not been asked in job description:

I have good general knowledge of 3D modeling with SolidWorks and simulation with MATLAB which enables me to Produce and revise Mechanical designs, I can also simulate Mechanical structure and systems and support the troubleshooting of the designs and models when required. Additionally, I use AI to solve problems quickly,

4

Paragraph 4:

Thank you for reading my application letter and I hope I will be hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

John Doe

Gsm: +358 123 456 78

Email: John.Doe@mail.com

Skills paper – structure

List all your skills in a document for your own use:

1. List your skills
2. Group them
3. Give a comprehensive description
4. Give the document a professional appearance
5. Bring the paper to the interview
 - a. For your own support
 - b. To be handed to the employer, if convenient and it brings added value



Skills paper – layout

SKILLS

Management

Project Management: I can conceptualise, plan, conduct and report on a different project. This includes defining activities, timelines and resource requirements. I also deliver on time what I have promised.

Team Management: I can lead a team, including establishing job profiles for each team member, establishing work plans and monitoring progress. It also includes making sure team members are treated in an equal manner and that they can develop their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

Financial Management: I can draft a budget for a specific project, a program or department or for a small organisation. This includes identifying the needs and required (sources) of financing or income and establish budget lines. I am able to monitor spending and prepare a final report, however I will need support from a financial manager providing me with software or templates if requirements go beyond simple accounting.

Event Management: I can conceptualise and host events. This includes identifying the target audience, the nature of the event, the agenda and the title. I can keep the audience engaged, making sure their interests are satisfied and they will find a clear outcome to take with them. I can select and invite speakers, presenters, appropriate rooms, simultaneous interpretation, catering, documentation, photographers, technical equipment, etc.

Organisational governance and administration: I can identify needs and roads towards improved governance of an existing structure. I will start by excellent compliance with legal requirements and add appropriate internal rules that serve that structure's purpose.

Fundraising:

Public Fundraising: Among the European Commission's budget lines as well as national level, governments' grants, I can identify those which will be suitable for our projects or our organisation. I can write and submit applications, and I can manage the grants from start to end, fulfilling all requirements including those on reporting.

Fundraising with private donors: I can activate my contacts to private foundations and deal with the specific requirements of foreign based foundations. I can manage trust-based and professional relationships with donors, understanding their priorities and convincing them of the opportunities our projects or our organisation can offer to them.

Advocacy and Lobby work

Strategy: I can draw up an Advocacy Strategy targeting decision makers at European, national or local level, or a combination of those, and implement it. Within such a strategy, I will identify at which point direct or public lobbying are useful. I am not limited to topics I have worked on in the past.

Advocacy: I can conceptualise and plan strategic position papers and other awareness raising tools designed for a specific target audience.

Lobbying: I can speak directly to decision makers, delivering a clear message and responding to their needs for evidence and expertise.

Communication

Public Speaking: I can speak in public and convince a targeted audience. Even in last-minute or unforeseen situations, I am confident in conveying a message to the point.

Media work: I can build and maintain relationships to relevant partners, getting them interested by telling stories that link to their interests and promote our own.

Writing: I can structure, formulate and edit texts according to the specific target audience. This can be short articles or longer opinion pieces. I can write short stories and professional texts. I can produce materials, presentations and guides.

Negotiation

With team members: I can negotiate with my team members as well as advise them on various topics.

Representing my employer to other partners: I can negotiate on behalf of my employer and our organisation. I will negotiate for compromises that allow both sides to win and that are aligned with goals previously agreed internally within my employer to promote our interests.

Troubleshooting

Finding ad hoc solutions: In a situation where worse come to worst, and there are no rules to be applied, I can stay calm and find a basis for dialogue to solve the issue at stake in a constructive manner.

Creating sustainable solutions: When a problem reappears repeatedly, I can analyse it, get help when needed and prepare a) a prevention mechanism or b) solutions to be applied to solve this problem in a standardised and fast way in the future.

Mediation and consolidation

Bringing people together: In any situation of conflict, I will listen to the different points of view and translate between conflicting parties. I prefer to remain neutral (unless it is a negotiation situation), understanding opposing interests and get them to formulate a way forward. When possible, I will mediate with the purpose of reaching a sustainable solution accepted by all partners.

Leading people forward: I can make people understand that the most important aspect is to move things forward and not get stuck in one problem. I can get them to resolve bottlenecks or other reasons for stagnation of a process.

Languages

I can work in **English and other languages** (name the languages).

In addition, I can use (name languages) for private and social purposes, still promoting my networking and work-related goals.

Hobbies

Music: I play in a band. Sometimes we perform for an audience at events and small concerts.

History: I am interested in the history of the human evolution.

IT Skills

I am familiar with Microsoft applications and I am a confident Internet user.

Skills paper & Artificial Intelligence

Since 2023 the publicly available Artificial Intelligence, programs and applications, has improved to the point where we can use it in our job search and preparing documents for that.

The skills paper can be used together with the AI at least for finding jobs and match criteria and skills.

Artificial Intelligence can be used to match the job requirements and your skills as an applicant. To do this successfully you must have good data about yourself (CV, Skills Paper, etc.).

Let the AI do the matching and remember to check the outcome and personalise it to look and sound as your own product. AI text is mostly, at the end of the day, quite easily recognisable (too good) and you don't want to give a bad impression.



Copilot by
Microsoft



ChatGPT by
OpenAI



Gemini by
Android

Skills paper & finding jobs

The traditional way of looking for open positions through advertisements and homepages is laborious and quite time consuming. To speed it up and make it more accurate we can use the AI to look for open positions matching our skills. This is far more accurate and productive compared to using just a CV.

The result may include position, brief job description, where the job may be found and even deadline for applying for the job and in a certain area. Look at this example.

The skills you have listed in your CV and/or skills paper are fed into the AI together with a specification of for example the geographical area where you are looking for a job.

The skills paper is more useful than a CV alone.



Your personal and company data are protected in this chat

Here are some open vacancies in Helsinki that are related to the skills listed on this page:

- **Open Application - Finland ¹**: This is a full time position at Nigel Frank International, a global leader in Microsoft recruitment. You will need **excellent communication skills, team management skills**, and **IT skills** to succeed in this role.
- **HR Trainee, Processes, Systems And Tools ²**: This is a full time position for a trainee at Teknos, a family-owned company that produces paints and coatings. You will need **project management skills, financial management skills**, and **IT skills** to support the HR team in developing and maintaining HR processes, systems and tools.
- **Talent Acquisition Trainee (Young Talent) ³**: This is a full time position for a trainee at KPMG Finland, a global

Skills paper & finding jobs

The screenshot shows a chat window with a document on the left and a chat interface on the right. The document contains a 'SKILLS' section with several sub-sections: Management, Team Management, Financial Management, Event Management, Organisational governance and administration, Fundraising, and Advocacy and Lobby work. Each sub-section contains a paragraph describing the user's skills in that area.

The chat interface on the right shows a user prompt: "Find me open vacancies in Helsinki are based on this page." The AI response includes three bullet points of job recommendations, each with a title and a brief description of the role and required skills.

SKILLS

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Protected

Find me open vacancies in Helsinki are based on this page.

- ✓ Searching your page for information
- ✓ Searching for: open vacancies in Helsinki
- ✓ Generating answers for you...

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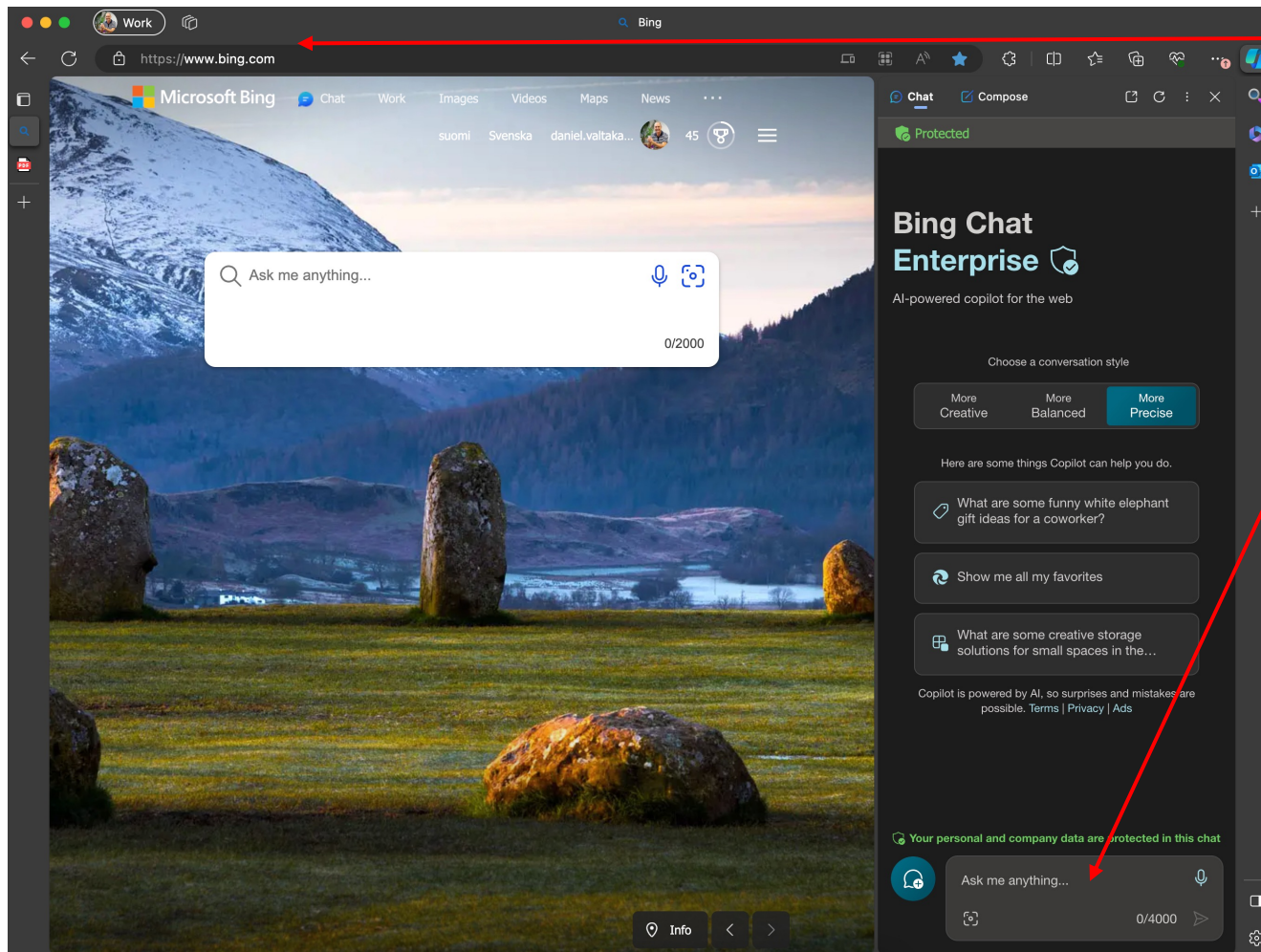
Ask me anything...

0/4000

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How to do it



Open Bing.com and drag the file to the white box in the middle.

Questions are written in the box at the bottom right, including the phrase *this page* every time, so that the artificial intelligence uses the information on that page.

Working plan and suggestions

Key expressions from the advertisement and what the job may include.

A detailed plan on all possible and relevant tasks and duties:

- What** – One issue at the time per paragraph
- Why** – Background about the importance of that particular thing
- How** – How are you going to deliver

3 – 5 lines per issue, no less and no more

A very comprehensive paper with all relevant ideas and proposals neatly described.

The text must make a fluent story, so the order of issues is important.



Working plan and suggestions (example)

Reaching out to new customers in order to introduce new growth to sales. This will be achieved with marketing over social media such as Facebook, twitter and Instagram. Personas well known to the general public may also be involved depending on need and resources.

Peer-to-peer learning and exchange of best practise to strengthen the sales team through bi-monthly meetings. The meetings shall be kept short and concise and the best practise shall be continuously monitored and evaluated.

Improving interaction with sales and R&D and production to better answer the needs of the customers and improve product quality. This will be achieved by sharing sales reports with the production and customer reviews with both R&D and production.

Tips for the applicant

At the end applying for a job and going to an interview is a also a psychological matter. Some things you can work on/affect:

Be confident and believe that you are competent and suitable.

Speak in a positive manner about yourself or your competencies.

You can learn new things and will do that once you get the opportunity.

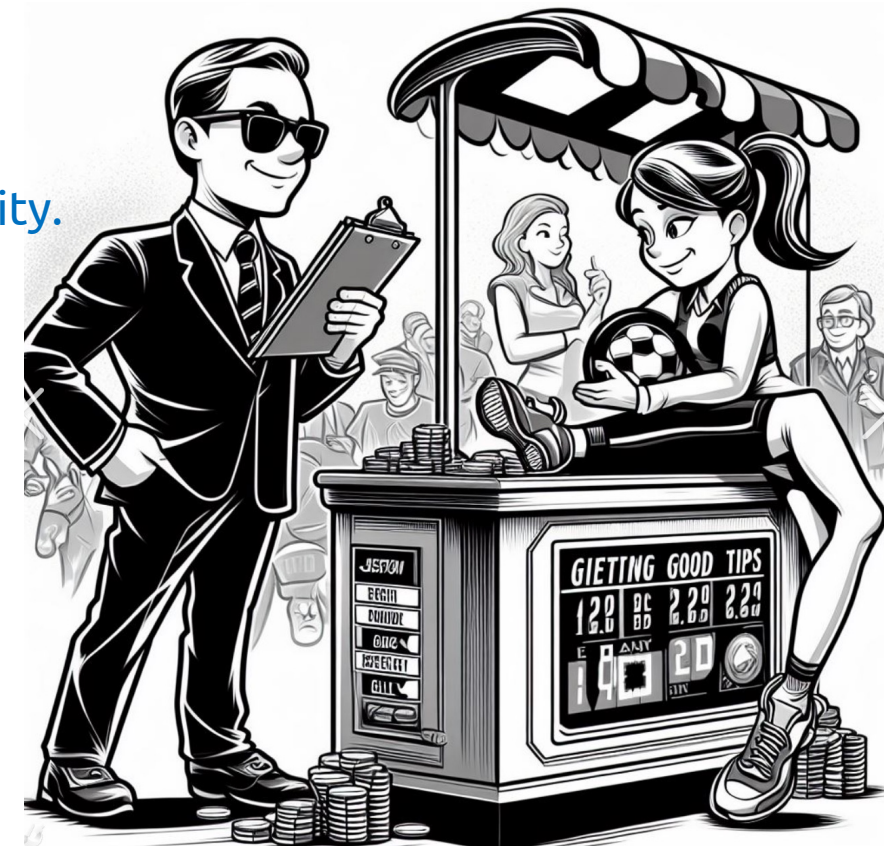
Be relaxed at the interview and trust that you have done all you can.

Look at the people you speak to.

If interrupted, continue with the new question or topic.

Stick to the topics and be clear.

Bring the necessary documents on paper, including handouts.



Further reading

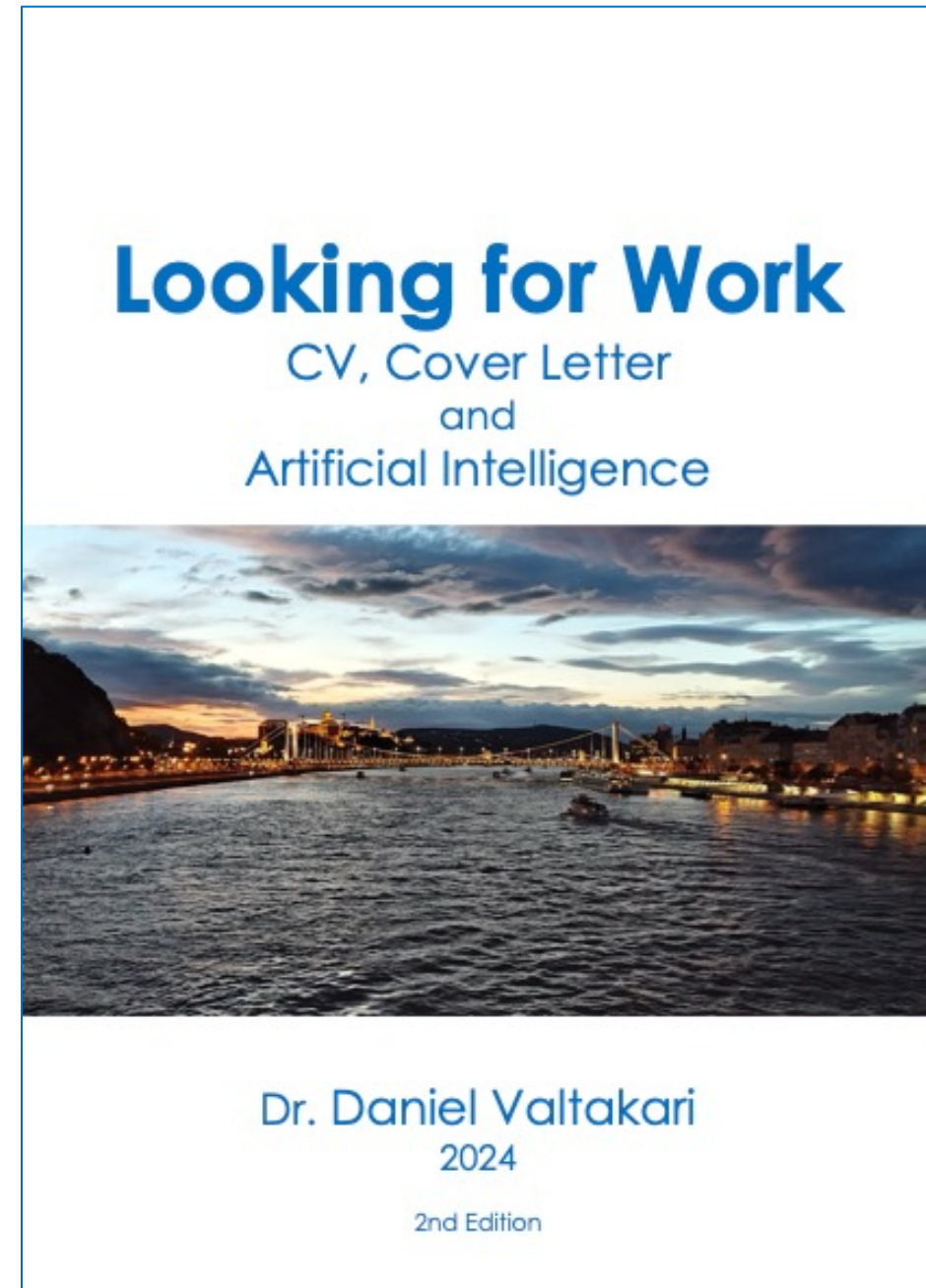
This may also be found in the guide

Looking for work - CV cover letter and ideas by Daniel Valtakari

You can download it for free as

Epub – an electronic book where you may add your own notes

Pdf – a printable version



Academic Engineers and Architects in Finland TEK

For further contact, questions and information about membership please contact

Dr. Daniel Valtakari

Senior adviser

email: Daniel@tek.fi

