

Looking for Work in Finland

Dr. Daniel Valtakari



Finnish – the language barrier

Finnish language skills are important should you want to stay in Finland:

For your private and family life, like talking with neighbours and others.

For working life, like communicating with your colleagues.

Understanding what happens around you and in the society.

You need Finnish just to be a member in the society and feel at home.

If you don't feel comfortable then also working life can become a burden.

You don't need perfect language skills, in most cases it's just enough to participate in small talk and understand what happens around you.



Where are the jobs?

Most of the job opportunities never become truly public, meaning that jobs are mostly found through networks, private and public.

→ About **80%** of the opportunities are found this way.

This means you need to:

Keep yourself updated about opportunities, not only open vacancies.

Check all kind of employers, not only the obvious ones.

Let your networks know that you are looking for a job and what competencies you can offer.

Check out job fairs, different kind of media and homepages.

Use Artificial Intelligence for better efficiency.

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!



Networks

Make sure you create and support your own networks.

Professional networks at your working place.

Including your colleagues during the coffee and lunch breaks.

Including project partners and business partners.

Private networks.

Friends and neighbours, including native people.

Hobbies and schools.

LinkedIn and other social media.

Be active and work to maintain and grow these.



Coffee breaks, lunch breaks and networking

In Finland employees typically enjoy coffee and lunch breaks together. This is an informal way of discussing work related issues, do small talk about non-work matters and get to know each other. It is especially important to join Finnish people during these breaks and tune into the Finnish mindset and scheme (coffee and lunch time, etc.). This is particularly important if you wish to:

Get a reference from your supervisor or colleagues.

Get info about job opportunities.

Advance your career (even when you don't plan to change jobs).



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



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.

Searching for job opportunities – where?

Open vacancies/positions

Open job search

Jobs through different networks

Colleagues

LinkedIn, social media and similar

Friends and family

Recruitment companies

CV databases and job portals

Job fairs and marketing events



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 results?

→ 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.

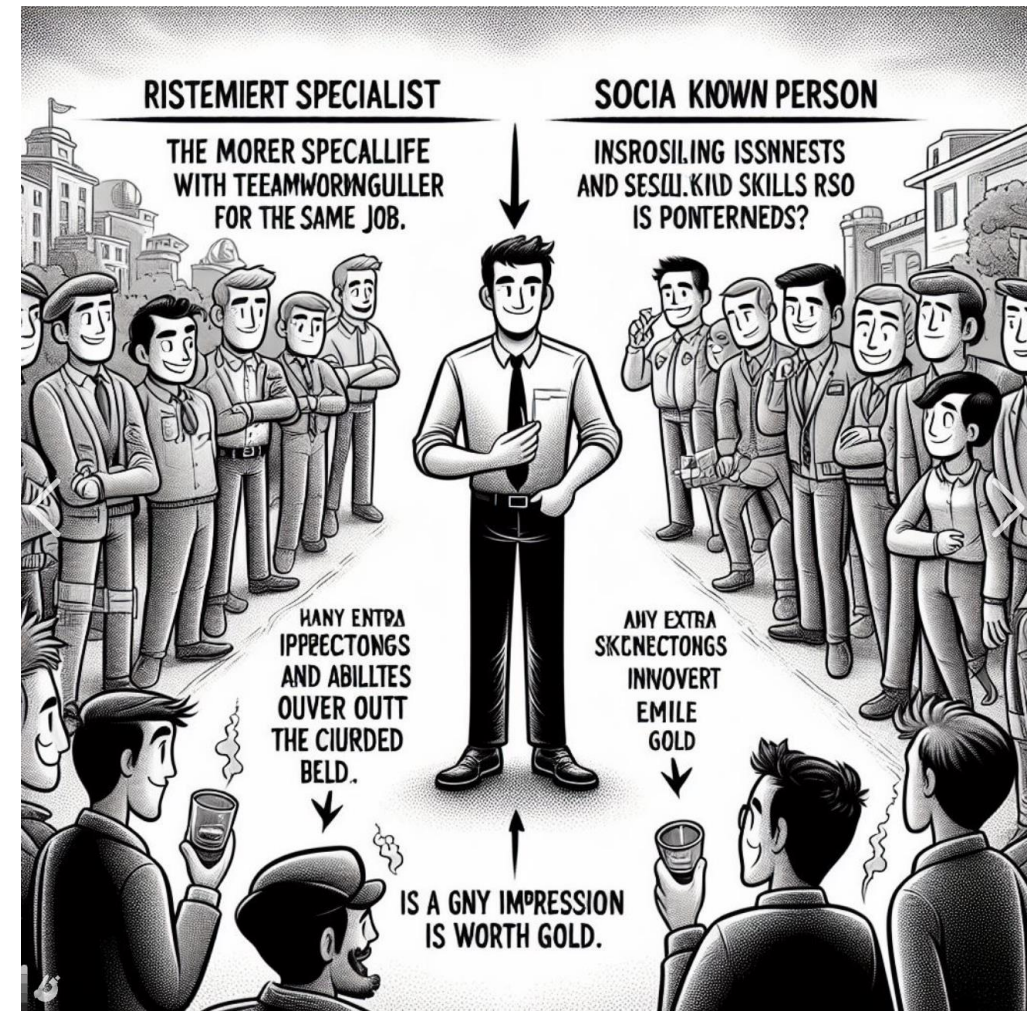
You need to impress with teamworking and social skills along with the professional skills.

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

Check what the employer is doing (business area, need of skills, etc.)

Learn as much as possible about the company and its business environment

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

Draw up a profile where you match the employer and yourself

A skills paper will you help a lot

Decide on key elements that you can offer should you be recruited

A working plan and suggestions is a strong option

Use Artificial Intelligence for better efficiency

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

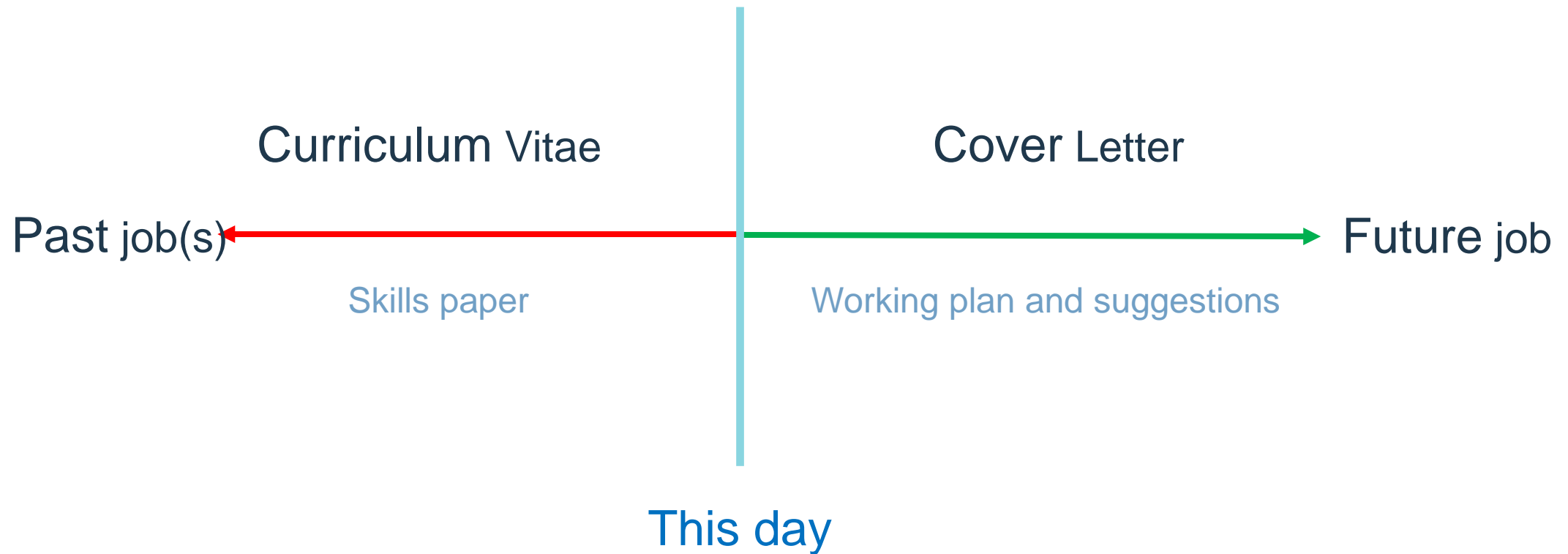
These are needed to bring to a comprehensive job application and make it possible to include the relevant things in each one of the documents.

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.

Cover letter - structure

1. Paragraph

Opening and brief description about the purpose of your application.

2. Paragraph

Establish a link between you 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

Skills paper

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



SKILLSManagement

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.

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.

AI to match requirements

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.



Gemini by
Android



ChatGPT by
OpenAI



Copilot by
Microsoft

AI aided job search

The screenshot shows a web browser window with a document on the left and a chat interface on the right. The document contains the following text:

SKILLS

Management

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

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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:

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

A security notice states: "Your personal and company data are protected in this chat". The AI response continues: "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

The chat interface also shows a text input field with "Ask me anything...", a microphone icon, and a character count "0/4000".

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Let the AI do the matching and remember to check the outcome and personalise it to look and sound as your own product.

AI aided job search

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

Further reading

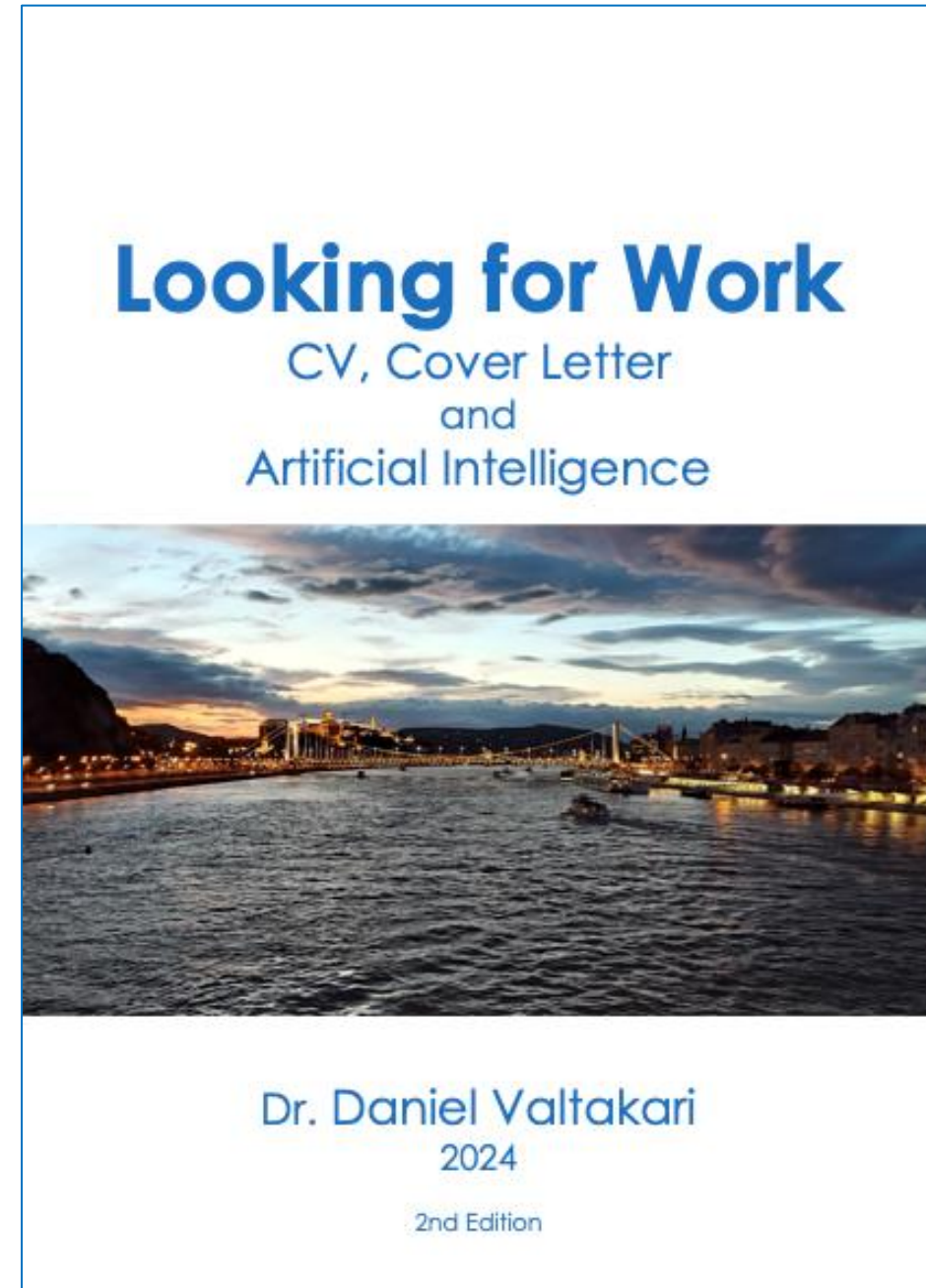
This may also be found in the guide

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

