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COMMENT: Building a CV – part two

In my previous comment column, I outlined the early stages of building a CV. I now focus on how to aim for that top corporate HR job – once graduation has come and gone.

The problem with being a new graduate is that there will generally be very little to put onto a CV outside your studies or the odd holiday job. Padding things out will generally not work. However, a voluntary activity or membership of a club where you have held a responsible position may help to impress an employer – as will, of course, any awards achieved. Do not be afraid to highlight aspects of your studies that have particularly engaged you – although take great care in the way this is expressed as it could look naïve or "trying too hard".

A solid CV has no gaps or significant weak spots. Yes, it is OK to take time out after graduation to tour the world or experiment with various career paths, and some of these

may well be artistic – serving a passion to play an instrument, going into interior design, or writing that novel in a cramped garret room. But if these pursuits do not go anywhere then getting back on track can be much harder than building a corporate HR-orientated CV from the outset.

These days it is not really an option to move on to a Master's degree, but a necessity. The question is – should it be for an MBA or a subject speciality? MBAs will not generally be of any value unless there has been a significant period of experience in a professional or managerial job. If the gap between first and higher degree is three years or less, then a Master's in HRM, law, finance, economics, statistics, psychology, or even a second language will prove far more useful. It is also essential to spend time broadening your knowledge of the world. It is pointless trying to gain a position in a multinational company if your geographical

awareness is poor. A good way to assess suitability for a Master's degree and your current general knowledge can be found through this [test](#).

The essential characteristic of a strong CV is that it shows sound personal qualities and a determination to succeed. In HR, of course, interpersonal skills are also key. Avoid at all costs successive periods as an intern and make sure any internship is with a prestigious organisation. Likewise, a succession of jobs, each lasting less than 18 months, indicates to a future employer that you cannot stick at anything for long, may have performed badly, or could have an unfortunate personality trait. Of course, being with one company for several years can eventually reduce your chances too of moving on – unless it is to a rival enterprise. Periods of employment in the public service will particularly reduce any chances of transferring into the private sector, especially if the service has been in local government.

In many countries men, and sometimes women, must undertake military service. On the whole it is better to get this out of the way before pursuing a career – as this will interrupt any later career building you will do. Regard military service (or any substitute activity) as an integral part of your career and note what you have learned. It should not be hidden away on a CV, but described as a useful opportunity for personal development.

A CV for someone five years or more into their career must have achieved a certain shape. People generally move up hierarchies because they look like people suited for more senior positions. I once employed a law graduate who was every bit a high court judge in the making. Sure enough, they left

to train as a barrister and learnt very quickly how to fraternise in judicial circles. Generally you become what you look like becoming. But this does not mean that you are unsuited to less responsible tasks. If you have to undertake administrative tasks, for instance, do them ultra efficiently and suggest improvements. The trick is to avoid sycophancy, but get noticed. Keep on the radar of those two levels above you without undermining your immediate manager.

There is no need to become the workaholic, but being later than others to work and sticking closely to weekly contractual working hours (however flexibly) places a huge question mark over your commitment. One defining characteristic of a future corporate star is someone who clearly cares about their company, is a bit of a perfectionist and not only reads their emails out of normal working time, but answers urgent communications whatever the hour.

CANADA: Reforms in pipeline

Several provinces of Canada are in the process of introducing important labour reforms.

In Alberta, the Fair and Family-Friendly Workplaces Act (Bill 17) was introduced to the Legislature on the 24th of May, 2017. If passed, the legislation will amend the Employment Standards Code and the Labour Relations Code, both of which first came into effect back in 1988. It will provide protection for annual leave and stronger entitlements for vacation, holiday, and overtime pay. It is anticipated that most of the changes will be effective by the 1st of January, 2018.

The Ontario government has announced a plan to introduce The Fair Workplaces and

Better Jobs Act, 2017. If enacted, the Employment Standards Act, 2000 ("ESA") and Labour Relations Act, 1995 ("LRA") will be significantly changed to increase protections and basic standards for Ontario workers and ease the path for trade union representation. The proposed changes cover the minimum wage, vacation pay, overtime pay, the termination of assignments, employee misclassification, and employee contacts. Legislation is likely to be agreed by this Autumn and take effect by the end of 2019.

In Manitoba, two new laws came into force earlier this month (Bill 28 and Bill 29). These put an effective rolling four-year freeze on public sector pay and also reduce the number of trade unions in the health sector. Manitoba is also leading the way in the provision of leave for victims of domestic violence. Last year it introduced a right to five days paid and five days unpaid leave – plus the possibility of additional unpaid time off for up to 17 weeks. This move has led to interest in other provinces and the United Steelworkers of Canada has incorporated such leave into its programme for a new national collective agreement.

CHILE: Union bonanza

A major reform of union rights has just taken place in Chile - through which the government seeks what they call a "modernization of labour relations". The Labour Reform Law [20940] allows unions to organise on a multiple company basis, provided they have sufficient members in each company. They may also bargain on behalf of groups where they were previously banned from representation – such as apprentices, interns, and those with contracts

for the completion of specific tasks. Unions have also gained the right to receive regular information from employers for bargaining and other representational purposes. Employers will also need permission from the union(s) to extend benefits agreed during collective bargaining to other groups that the unions do not represent.

One new radical measure is the creation of emergency teams to provide a minimum level of services in a company in the event of a strike. 180 days before the expiration of a collective agreement, a company must write to all relevant unions outlining the minimum services that must be maintained and its translation into personnel to make up the emergency team. A copy of the letter must also be sent to the Labour Inspectorate. When making the assessment, companies must consider such factors as the prevention of accidents, the protection of property, damage to the environment, and the maintenance of public services.

If the union(s) do not respond to the notification then the company will be free to hire external staff to make up the team. But they may not use this as a pretext to hire more staff than would be agreed with employee representatives. In any case, members of the team must be paid either their normal remuneration or, in the case of temporary hires, an equivalent level according to skills required.

CHINA: Growth in real earnings

Pay increases in China are forecast to rise by around 7% this year. This will mean a real increase in spending power of around 4%. Six Chinese provinces have recently revised their minimum wage standards and Tianjin

will increase its rate to RMB 2050 a month (\$US295) on the 1st of July. The minimum wage in Fujian province will rise by an average of 6% with effect from the 1st of July, 2017. The new wage levels for different cities will be RMB 1700 (\$US250) in Xiamen, RMB 1650 (\$US243) in Fuzhou and then rates down to RMB 1280 (\$US188) in the smallest cities and towns. Minimum hourly rates for part-time employees will also now range from RMB 13.6 (\$US2) to RMB 18 (\$US2.6).

Coastal province Shandong implemented their new minimum wage standard on the 1st of June, 2017. The new minimum monthly wage is set at three levels: RMB 1810 (\$US266), RMB 1640 (\$US241), and RMB 1470 (\$US216). Expressed at an hourly rate, the new wage is RMB 18.1 (\$US2.7), RMB 16.4 (\$US2.4), and RMB 14.7 (\$US2.2).

Graduate starting salaries are rising fast and now stand at around RMB 4500 a month (\$US661). This is partly due to the increased demand from private sector businesses. Back in 2012, 25% of graduates entered public sector jobs, but today it has fallen to 19%. However, Chinese mainland graduates still lag behind those in Taiwan, where last year average graduate starting salaries reached \$NT28116 (\$US932) a month.

Not only is pay continuing to rise quickly in China, but with it the cost of housing. Average prices for new builds are over 10% higher than in the Summer of 2016 – and 13.5% in the capital Beijing. The government has tried to curb such cost growth, but property speculators have moved their attention to smaller inland cities and the flattening of house prices in some larger cities is leading to a reduction in new starts – thus fuelling prices for older property.

USA: Contractors and joint employees

On the 7th of June, 2017, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the withdrawal of two Wage and Hour Administrator Interpretations on joint employment and the status of independent contractors. The DOL stressed that its actions do not “change the legal responsibilities of employers under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act.”

The DOL’s action is favourable for most employers and should remove the possibility that a company with very little control over an employee could be cited as being in a joint employment relationship. It should also remove the grey area that has been created by the FLSA’s broad definition of the term “employment”. However, companies should still make sure that their workers are properly classified and be aware of the possible liability that might still be created by a joint employment relationship.

Pay, Tax and Benefit Trends

BELARUS: According to the official statistical agency Belstat, average gross monthly wages in April 2017 stood at BYN 776.7 (\$US366). Real wages rose over the year to April by 2.9%.

CHINA: A bilateral social security agreement between China and Spain has just been signed. Under the agreement, Chinese nationals working temporarily in Spain, and Spanish nationals working temporarily on assignments in China, will both be exempt from mandatory social security contributions in the host country, including pension and

unemployment insurance contributions. So far, the Chinese government has signed Bilateral Social Security Agreements with Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, South Korea, The Netherlands, and Switzerland.

CZECH REPUBLIC: Over the year to Q1 2017 the median monthly pay level increased 5.2% to CZK 23704 (US\$1006). The male median pay level reached CZK 25905 (US\$1106) whilst female pay reached CZK 21162 (US\$904). 80% of employees earned wages between CZK 13200 (US\$564) and CZK 43107 (US\$1841).

ESTONIA: During the first quarter of 2017, average monthly gross pay stood at 1153 euros (US\$1297) and the average hourly pay at 7.13 (US\$ 10.3) euros. The average monthly labour costs per employee were 1556 euros (US\$1751) and the hourly labour costs were 10.10 (US\$11.4) euros. Moreover, ITC (at 2004 euros or US\$2251) and financial services (at 1917 euros or US\$2157) continued to be the highest paying sectors.

FINLAND: A new family leave allowance is now available to employers from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland ("Kela"). It is a flat rate sum of 2500 euros (US\$2784) and is payable once a "qualifying" female employee has been on fully paid maternity leave for one month. Kela has now also amended its rules about compensating employers for accrued paid annual holiday entitlements during maternity leave. This is now limited to the first six months of the maternity leave period.

GERMANY: Over the year to Q1 2017, hourly labour costs in Germany rose by 2.5%. Average gross earnings rose by 1.9%, whilst non-wage costs grew by 4.5%.

Other Global HR News in Brief

CHINA: The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security recently released the amended version of the "rules for handling arbitration cases about employment and personnel disputes" and "organization rules for arbitration of labor and personnel disputes". The revised rules come into force on the 1st of July and will standardise the procedures for handling both individual and collective labour disputes, as well as strengthen the roles of those who work in China's arbitration system.

CHINA: Since the 1st of June, 2017 a new cybersecurity law has been in force across China. This requires international companies to store customer information within China and to seek approval before transmitting that data out of the country. Failing to comply with the requirement could result in substantial fines.

FINLAND: The Finnish Occupational Health Care Act (1383/2001) has been amended and the changes are now fully in force. The principal new obligation is for employers to arrange occupational healthcare for employees who have been made redundant on financial or production-related grounds. The obligation continues for six months after the employee ends their job – unless they become re-employed during that period. The changes will only apply to employers who regularly employ at least 30 employees and to those of their employees who had at least 5 years continuous service. After the redundancy, the content and scope of the occupational healthcare services should be equivalent to the services offered prior to the termination.

GLOBAL: The search engine Google is teaming up with a number of online recruitment sites such as LinkedIn, Monster, CareerBuilder and Facebook to provide an integrated jobs portal. This will also contain ratings of employers and typical commuting times.

INDIA: India is the only country in the world where the civil aviation authority sets the specific terms and conditions for commercial airline flight crews. The most controversial restriction relates to the notice period that must be given upon resignation. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is proposing to set a minimum of six months' notice for first officers and co-pilots and twelve months for "commanders". Pilot associations are planning to challenge the proposal in the Bombay High Court as it will make it virtually impossible for them to obtain alternative employment with a foreign airline.

INDIA: With effect from the 1st of July, 2017, non-residents, foreign nationals, individuals residing in the states of Assam, Jammu, Kashmir, and Meghalaya, and all nationals aged over 80 years are no longer required to quote their 12-digit identity number when applying for the Permanent Account Number used for tax declarations.

INDIA: Many employers in India fail each year to submit form 16 to employees, outlining tax deducted in the previous year. The deadline for this is May 31st – so forms not yet given to employees are now attracting a cumulative fine of INR 100 (US\$1.55) a day.

JAPAN: It has long been a problem for married Japanese women who wish to carry on using their maiden name for professional

purposes, in spite of the Civil Code obligation to adopt the husband's family name. It is possible to gain permission to use both names, but only through a highly bureaucratic process which involves employers providing a range of company payroll documents. It is now planned by the government to simplify this procedure and allow married women to have both surnames on their passport.

MEXICO: Employers have frequently subcontracted their staff to avoid statutory obligations. However, this has led to uncertainties concerning the tax treatment of service fees and the reclaiming of VAT. Last year the tax authorities amended a number of financial measures to allow this practice to continue, but only if certain conditions were met – such as the provision of pay slips to companies by their subcontractors and confirmation that VAT submissions have been made. The deadline for compliance was extended to the 1st of July, 2017 – so employers now only have a few days to ensure that procedures are in place and operating properly.

NIGERIA: In order to speed up business transactions, the Acting Nigerian President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, has signed three executive orders. These require that business visa applications be processed by Nigerian consulates within 48 hours of submission. All government agencies must also publish a list of the criteria and processing times for permits they are responsible for issuing. Any approvals for applications not received within the specified period will be assumed to have been granted to the applicant by default.

NORWAY: If a company has its operations stopped by Norway's Labour Inspectorate because of an imminent danger to life and health, a substantial fee for breach is now payable. Infringements of rules governing work at a height are not less than NOK 50000 (\$US5942) and the upper limit is now 1.4 million kroner (\$US166380). In 2016, 580 breaches of rules concerning working at a height were found and 736 breaches relating to a danger to life or health. Most violations are in the construction industry and often foreign workers are involved.

QATAR: Although Qatar has been in the news recently over a boycott by many neighbouring states because of links between its ruling elite and terrorist groups, employers may also feel uneasy about many of its restrictive and often arbitrary laws. For instance, a fairly recently revised article 138 of the penal code makes it an offence punishable by up to three years imprisonment to insult the Gulf Cooperation Council flag, the national flag, or any flag of a non-hostile state – even by lowering it. Severe penalties also apply to collecting donations – even for a firm's charitable cause – without official permission and taking part in public gatherings of five or more people – which could include a company sports event. Moreover, any gift (however small) to a public official can be classified as bribery and land both parties in prison for up to ten years.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Restrictions on the operations of Turkish companies in Russia and the ban on the employment of Turkish nationals in the country have now been lifted. Turkish business people visiting Russia for short periods are now entitled to visa-free travel.

SAUDI ARABIA: According to the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in France, French passport holders travelling to Saudi Arabia for business purposes are now eligible for multiple-entry visit visas valid for up to 4 years.

SLOVAKIA: New rules have been introduced to assist multinational companies undertake intra-company transfers (ICT) of non-EEA nationals. Amendments to the Act on Residence of Foreigners (No. 404/2011) and the Act on Employment Services (No. 5/2004) have now come into force. ICT applications will be processed in 30 days and provide the holder with a work and residence permit for up to three years. During this period they may also work in company operations located in other EU countries for up to 90 days in any 180-day period.

SOUTH AFRICA: The trade union Solidarity has made an application to the Labour Court to place the negotiating body "The Metal and Engineering Industries Bargaining Council" into administration. The Council is experiencing severe economic difficulties and has for some time been unable to perform its disputes resolution function for the 340000 employees and 10000 companies that it serves. The wage round in the engineering sector is also about to commence and a future collective agreement may not be possible if the Council is not able to function.

SPAIN: Although the National Court (Audiencia Nacional) decided in 2015 that employers are obliged to record the daily work of all of their employees, the Supreme Court has recently ruled that employers are now only required to keep records of overtime hours. However, government

inspectors are continuing to require detailed working time records and therefore it is wise to maintain full records if possible. Fines for noncompliance are up to 6250 euros (\$US6988).

UNITED KINGDOM/AUSTRALIA/USA: The UK deadline for statutory annual returns to the HMRC for employee share plans is July 6th. Australian employers have until August 14th to submit their employee share scheme returns, but statutory statements to employees must be issued by July 14th. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in a financial penalty. The US deadline for filing returns online in respect to stock options or purchase was March 31st – with a one month extension on application. The penalties for failure to make returns is no less than US\$560 for intentional disregard and corporate penalties for non-submission can add up to a maximum of US\$3193000 per year.

VIETNAM: For the next year – until the 30th of June, 2018 – business travelers from France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK may enter Vietnam for up to a maximum of 15 days without a visa.

Dates for your diary:

July 1st 2017: Employer/Employee Friendly Acts come into force. **US State of Georgia**

September 24th 2017: Federal elections will be held in **Germany**

October 1st 2017: Burqa ban comes into force in **Austria**

January 1st 2018: **New York** paid family leave law effective

January 1st 2018: New **Swiss** Citizenship Act comes into force

March 1st 2018: **Israel** data security regulations come into force

May 25th 2018: Final effective date for **EU** General Data Protection Regulations

March 31st 2019: **Brexit** negotiation deadline

Travel Warnings

AMERICAS: Tropical Storm Bret has caused flooding and power outages in Trinidad and Tobago and is making its way on to South America. Meanwhile, a second disturbance currently over the southern Gulf of Mexico, could bring very heavy rain and flooding to the northern U.S. Gulf Coast.

BELGIUM: The central train station in Brussels was struck by a terrorist attack on June the 20th. Visitors should remain vigilant and avoid the immediate vicinity.

CHILE: Central and southern Chile have been affected by recent heavy rain and thunderstorms. Some principal city streets have been flooded, whilst traffic lights have failed. Some neighborhoods still have no power.

COLOMBIA: Visitors should be on high alert as crime-linked violence and kidnapping occur in both rural and urban areas.

ETHIOPIA: There continue to be reports of unrest, particularly in Gondar and Bahir Dar in Amhara State. Visitors should exercise great caution due to the potential for violent attacks and arbitrary detention.

GABON: Afric-Aviation has announced the temporary cessation of its activities.

GERMANY: Several intercity rail tracks in Germany have been hit by arson attacks ahead of the G20 summit in July. Services in several locations – including the eastern cities of Leipzig and Dresden, as well as long-distance lines linking Berlin and Prague – have been disrupted.

KENYA: Visitors should remain vigilant as there have been several attacks on security force vehicles, using improvised explosive devices, along the Dadaab-Liboi road in eastern Garissa County.

MALAYSIA: Malaysia Airlines has cancelled its direct flights to and from Darwin in Australia.

MALI: The US Embassy in Bamako has issued a security warning concerning an increased threat of attacks in Bamako.

MOROCCO: Visitors should avoid the capital city, Rabat, where tens of thousands of people have been marching in support of strikes in the Rif region – particularly around the northern city of Al-Hoceima.

PHILIPPINES: On the 21st of June hundreds of gunmen attacked troops in a southern Philippine village in Pigkawayan, a farming town about 160 kilometres (100 miles) from Marawi city. There are no confirmed casualties, but 5 civilians who were used as human shields remain missing.

PORTUGAL: Forest fires have been reported recently in the north of the country – leading to loss of life. Visitors should consider the risk of traveling to the affected areas.

PERU: Visitors are required by law to obtain an entry stamp. Immigration authorities will need evidence of entry to Peru, such as air or a bus ticket and an exit stamp from the last country you visited.

PAKISTAN: Gwadar airport is to be closed from the 1st to 31st of July.

UZBEKISTAN: Samarkand airport will be closed to all flights from the 1st to the 31st July 2017.

UK: British Airways cabin crew are to stage a two-week strike from 00:01 on Saturday July the 1st to 23:59 on Sunday July the 16th.

USA: A flash flood warning remains in operation for parts of Metro Atlanta.

USA: Excessive heat warnings have been issued for parts of California, Nevada and Arizona. Visitors should expect flights cancellations.

YEMEN: Around 129000 suspected cholera cases have been detected in 20 out of Yemen's 22 provinces since April. Out of the total reported cases there were 923 deaths (0.7% case fatality rate).

FedEE News

LEAVE IN CHINA: Detailed tables covering all provinces and metropolitan areas of China are now available in our knowledgebase. These are presented in both English and Chinese. The tables relate to [minimum monthly wages](#), [minimum hourly wages](#), [Maternity, paternity and parental leave](#).

EMPLOYMENT LAW PROGRAMME: The latest addition to our new-style video training modules [Germany](#) has now been posted on line. The next two additions will cover the USA and Nigeria.

LUGGAGE TAGS: Please contact us for our attractive full-sized FedEE [flag](#) and also for our new extrasafe FedEE [luggage tags](#). All are free of charge to member companies and their nominated users.

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