

STUDENT GUIDE 2021





ROLEX



OYSTER PERPETUAL MILGAUSS

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WEEK SCHEDULE

Online conferences

Crafting an effective CV (FR)

April 19 | 17:15 - 19:00

Crafting an effective CV (EN)

April 21 | 17:15 - 19:00

How to boost your LinkedIn (EN)

April 22 | 18:00 - 20:00

Workshops

CV corrections workshops by groups (90 minutes long).

April 26-29 | 09:00 - 15:30



#MAKEHISTORY
If I had to describe PMI
in one word, it would
be 'vibrant'
Join us
PHILIP BOURG
INTERNATIONAL

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ECG

service complètes dans
rs de la construction.
implenia

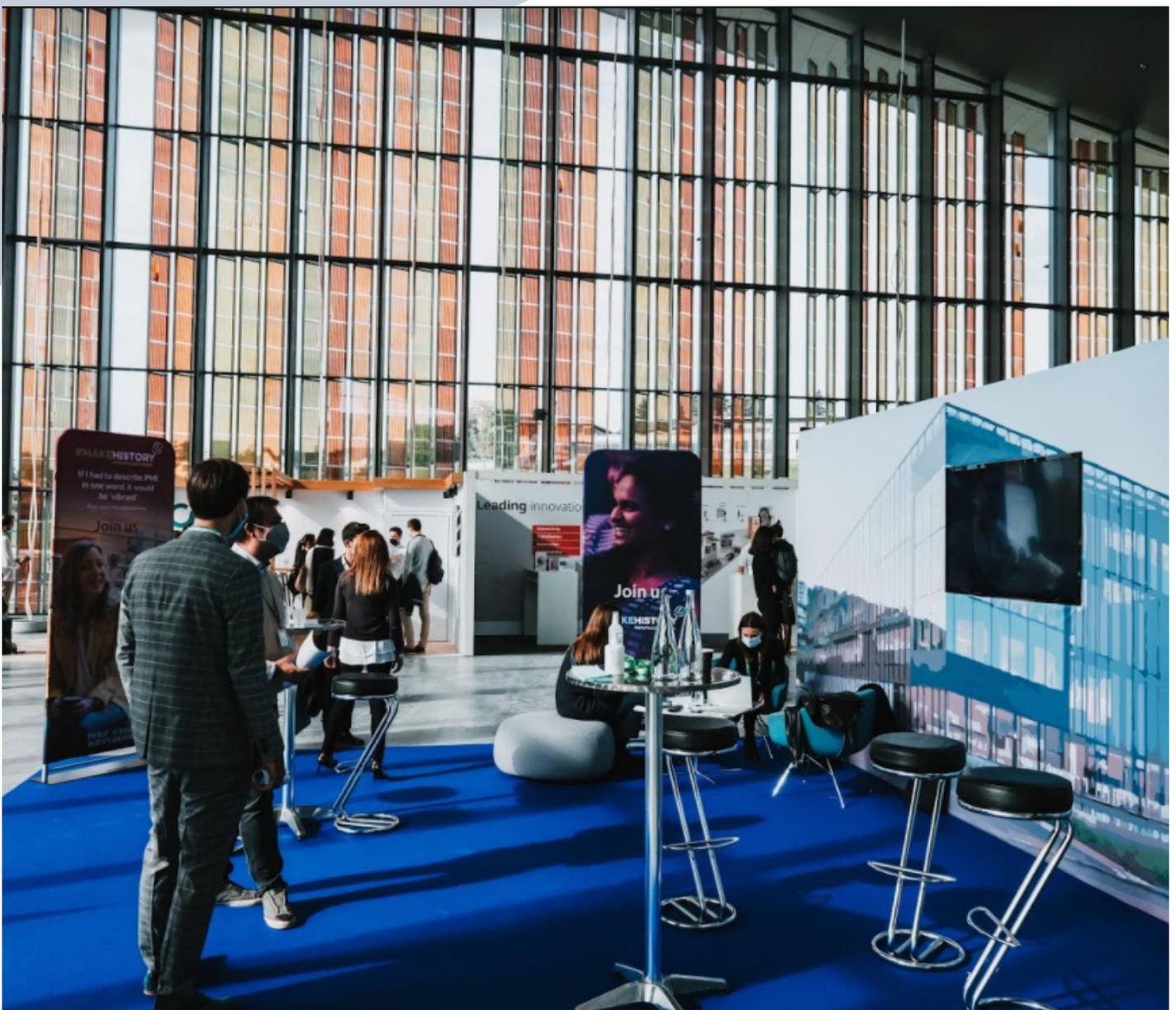
INTRODUCTION

The Forum EPFL is a student association that organizes each year the largest recruitment fair in Europe, and its 39th edition will take place from the 4th to the 8th of October 2021 at the Swiss-Tech Convention Center.

This year again, the Forum EPFL's committee has dedicated itself to helping other students and to prepare them, as much as possible, to fully take advantage of the opportunities of the fair and to, hopefully, leave it with a job or an internship!

This guide provides all the information you need to succeed in the first Skills Week of 2021. You will find several articles written by experts that will help you to prepare for the world of employment.

Due to the current sanitary situation, we have decided that this first Skills Week will be held online. Its main goal will be to help you prepare your CV and your LinkedIn profile.



SIGN UP ON THE EPFL FORUM SITE

Here are the steps to follow to register for the Skills Weeks:

1. Go to www.forum-epfl.ch.

You must create a new profile even if you already had one last year. Be aware that participation is restricted to students that are in BA6 at least.

2. Create a profile by clicking on «Login» at the top right of the home page. In the «Student Connection» tab, you can use your Gaspar account to log in.

3. Please register for the 2021 edition under «Participate in the 2021 Forum».

4. Upload your CV to your profile (maximum two pages).

5. You now need to wait until your profile is verified by our committee. You will then receive a confirmation email.

6. Go to the «Services of the EPFL Forum» section. You will find the various services offered during the week of the EPFL Forum and during the Skills Week. You can then simply register to the ones you are interested in.



THE FIRST FORUM SKILLS WEEK

We aim to offer you an ideal preparation for your research of an employment or an internship. From the 26th to the 29th of April 2021, you will have the opportunity to benefit from our services, which will take place exclusively online.

Please note that these services are reserved for the EPFL students and with compulsory registration within the limit of available places on : www.forum-epfl.ch.

Conferences on how to craft an effective CV and about LinkedIn

On April 19th and 21st, the Forum EPFL will offer an online conference on how to craft an effective CV, in collaboration with the EPFL Career Center.

You will also have the opportunity to attend a workshop on how to make an efficient LinkedIn profile. This workshop will be given by the EPFL Career Center, so make sure to be there!

CV and cover letter correction workshops

These two documents are at the basis of any job search. They will allow the recruiters to estimate your skills and your hypothetical future within the company you are applying for. Throughout the week, you will have the opportunity to participate in CV corrections led by Career Center experts.

NB: you need to register on our platform to be able to participate in these workshops.



THE SECOND SKILLS WEEK

The Second Forum Skills Week, one week before the Forum, will give you the chance to participate in numerous **workshops** and **conferences**. It will also allow you to get **career counselling** and practice through **job interview simulations!**

Please note that these services are reserved to the EPFL students and with compulsory registration within the limit of available places on : www.forum-epfl.ch.

Career counseling

A diploma from EPFL opens many doors into the vast world of employment. There are lots of accessible careers after graduating from EPFL. You will get the opportunity to discuss your multiple options with professional career counselors, who will help you find the most fitting professional career according to your wills and skills.

CV & cover letter correction

These two documents are crucial for any job search. They will allow the recruiters to estimate your skills and your hypothetical future within the company you are applying for.

During the Forum Skills Week, you will have the chance to bring your CV and your cover letter, that you drafted beforehand and experts will correct them for you during 30 minutes individual interviews.

Job interview simulation

Before obtaining a job or an internship, there is one last step left: the job interview. In order to prepare you for this decisive last step, you will have the opportunity to simulate a job interview for 30 minutes. During this time, professionals will ask you typical job interview questions and will then give you feedback.

Professional photoshoot

Your CV picture is very important when it comes to presenting yourself to decisive people. Thus, the Forum EPFL provides you with a professional photographer, allowing you to get the perfect picture. Participation is free but registration is required.

NB: We strongly recommend that you register to the CV correction of the first Skills Week as the number of places is limited for the second Skills Week.



Effective CV's for young professionals

Stephen Fischer, Career Advisor, EPFL Career Center.

If you are like many of your peers, you already know that if you Google a “perfect CV for engineers, you can get “About 172,000,000 results in just 0,41 seconds.” Then if you spend just 15 seconds opening and glancing at each webpage, you’ll be looking for 29,514 days for the answer. Or, if you prefer to take advantage of our team’s 12 years of market knowledge, read the best practice tips below.

Let’s start with defining the role of an industry-oriented CV: think of it as a key to the interview room. Its purpose is not to tell your life story, so its moniker is a bit of a misnomer. Instead, it is like the chapter headings you see when you use the “See inside” option for a book on Amazon. You need to give concise, incremental and relevant details about your technical skills and your pedigree as a student, intern, volunteer and employee. This latter section for young graduates is usually as thin as the paper you are writing on, so the other sections need to be robust and comprehensive.

No holding back: false modesty or, worse, ignorance about who your different readers will be, puts your application at a complete disadvantage. We estimate that even at MSc level, an EPFL graduate should have nearly half a page of technical skills—don’t limit these to a list of software or programming languages, though. Include key marketable skills like process engineering, AutoCAD, spectroscopy, clean room and wet lab techniques. Be as specific as you can: “Protein analysis,” instead of “Biology,” and “Stochastic analysis,” not just “Statistics.”

If, like many of your peers, you have also led groups, even informally, and taken responsibility for all or part of at least one project, here is a place to add additional skills like logistics, intercultural communication and project management. This section should closely emulate the “Skills & Endorsements” section of your LinkedIn profile.

Let’s debunk two myths right away: for virtually the entire world, with certain exceptions in North America for mega-corporations, you do not

need to limit yourself to one page. Bachelor’s students may not need the extra space, but anyone can use two, and PhD’s may even add a third page, perhaps as an optional addendum with conferences and publications. If a CV doesn’t grab someone’s attention in less than a minute, it won’t matter how long it is, and vice versa, once you have the “fish on the line,” so to speak, they’ll be more than willing to roll past a page break.

The second received idea is that your CV must be identical to your LinkedIn profile—the opposite is in fact the case.

You need to consider your online version as a kind of home base, broad and accurate enough so that it won’t contradict your many CV’s, each version of which must be adapted to the company, the role and the types of skills needed in same. Recruiters now fully expect you to have selected the most relevant skills and experience to highlight on your CV, and as long as there is no factual contradiction (dates of degrees, different majors, etc.), the two-step process will consist of them going to your online profile after being motivated by what they saw on your CV.

You need to write for both a generalist, often someone even younger than yourself, who will work off a “wish list” or “ticky-box” chart provided by the future boss of the person to be hired. The chances of her being an engineer or a researcher, even for a pharmaceutical or manufacturing company, are almost nil. If your CV demands attention, it will then be read by a more senior person, though also someone likely to have a different specialization than you do. Spelling, grammar and layout are given inordinately high importance by most recruiters, and silly-sounding email addresses are reason for some not to look further at your CV—fair or not, they go by their first impressions, so if you claim to be “very good at making very small things” as a Swiss optical engineer once said to me on a plane, but have several typos or misspellings on your documents, this will give the opposite impression

“Show, don’t tell” is the golden rule, which is why

we suggest that you list the main technical skills which relate to the role you are applying for at the top of your CV, but generally refrain from putting soft skills or character traits (“good team worker” and “energetic, motivated researcher” are not only generic, anyone can claim these). Describing your Master’s Thesis work in terms of project management, from concept to outcomes, and mentioning that you had to work with two

more senior engineers and another department based in Zurich will give the reader much more about your interpersonal skills than simply listing them, no matter how accurate they are.

Finally, be concise, clear and comprehensive throughout your CV: this will give you the best chance to unlock the interview room door and give you a chance to share your compelling motivation and aptitude for the job!



«It is a key to the
interview room.»



OLIVIA WILSON



PERSONAL PROFILE

Professional Summary

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Project Management
- Team Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Client Relations

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Time Management
- Decision Making

WORK EXPERIENCE

Senior Project Manager

Project Lead

EDUCATION HISTORY

Master's Degree

Bachelor's Degree

Effective CV's for young professionals

Header

First and last name, address, telephone and e-mail.

Strong points

A powerful summary so that we can remember you.

Education and diplomas

We will stop at the high school diploma, except for special cases.

Professional experience

Mention the most relevant experiences: not all experiences are interesting.

Skills and projects

Specify the level and the language stays.

Extra-professional activities

Attention to relevance and interest!

Personal situation

Age, nationality, marital status and children.



Header

Strong points

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Education and diplomas

2007 Master EPFL in Computer Science
2002-2007 Engineering studies at the EPFL
1998-2002 Gymnasium, scientific maturity

Professional experience

2005 Company A: Project X (6 months internship)
2004 Company B: project Y (summer internship)
2003-2005 Company C: replacements

Skills and projects

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Languages

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Extra-professional activities

Personal situation

[Redacted]

FOSTERING A NETWORKING ATTITUDE: ONE ENCOUNTER AT A TIME

Par Stephen Fischer, Conseiller en carrière, Centre de carrière EPFL.

“There are as many ways of networking as there are individuals. It comes down to knowing yourself well, using your strengths and capacity in ways which make sense to you.”¹

A common misunderstanding about the importance of networking is that it involves complicated actions and therefore is only useful for people with large, active networks. While you may have only three or four truly intimate friends, it's likely that are in contact on a regular basis with 30-40 people, and that if you put your mind to it, you could come up with a list of as many as 100-plus people you could contact to facilitate finding someone of influence for your job search, and that you know the names of at least 2,000 people.

As a young professional today, you are likely to be “connected” with dozens or even hundreds of other people via various platforms yet remain stymied when asked to approach an employer at the Forum. Research has shown that there are roughly four degrees of separation between any two people (slightly less than it was 20 years ago, thanks to social media).²

Networking does impact your job search: according to both studies by the Swiss Department of the Economy (SECO) and our own graduate surveys, 22-23% of the jobs found by both generalists and EPFL graduates came through networking. If you add in the amorphous category, “Other,” which we suspect might include contacting previous employers or lab mates, but not seen by the respondent as “networking” per se, this figure could be as high as 30%.³

Studies show that women tend to prioritize sympathetic connections (feelings), proximity and accessibility to a limited circle of people whom they trust. Men, however, often have a relatively large circle of people with whom they exchange help and favors. A man will use his network more to express ideas and/or to promote projects he feels are of value, which women are less inclined to do. Women tend to have a smaller pool of contacts (50 on average vs. 72 for men), and to be less satisfied with their networks.

In fact, 85% of personal networks for both sexes are maintained by regular face-to-face contact.⁴

For many people the hardest thing to talk about is themselves, especially in the context of needing something (a job) from someone who is perceived to have the decision-making power (more senior person in the field, or the actual recruiter), so we suggest that you begin by creating opportunities to speak with strangers about neutral topics—what their company or lab is doing, always a classical topic, and generally flattering to your interlocutor.

Manage Every Encounter Thoughtfully

As with most social interactions, networking is an exchange: even a very senior person may need new ideas, perspectives or insights from interacting with you. On the other hand, instead of focusing on your immediate needs, such as finding an internship, you will tend to be more relaxed and confident when speaking about a topic related to the other person's career path or company. Showing sincere and informed interest is a gift in and of itself and can open up psychological space for the other person to fill by returning focus on you. Generally speaking, most will return the favor of showing interest in you and your objectives, but all in good time: start with the other, each time.

Even a spontaneous meeting with someone active in your field should present an opportunity to express your career interests and to gain insider views of the sector or field.

Most scientists and engineers seem to have trouble giving a concise presentation of themselves, hence our focus during networking seminars on the so-called “Elevator Pitch.” This is a storytelling exercise, and should be prepared in writing ahead of time, but not memorized (you don't want to sound like a robot), weaving in your most recent degree/current studies but with a focus on what you would contribute to the field and where your interests are. It can be between 60-120 seconds long and is also the kind of response you'll be expected to give at the beginning

of a job interview when asked to tell the recruiter about yourself. See the inset for a kind of general overview of the pitch and check out the websites listed in the footnote below for tips on creating an effective one.⁵

Small events can be great, because they seem more manageable, and it's probably true that you have a better chance of meeting five new people out of 50 than you might out of 5,000. On the other hand, you may feel more "pressure to perform," and attract attention before you feel ready for it. A word of caution to extroverts, who have the impression they are "naturals" at networking. In my experience, everyone needs to spend time thinking about their specific goals, and to understand as best they can those of their potential interlocutors. You should practice your pitch while looking in the mirror, not at a set of notes, at least a few times before an event which could offer opportunities to meet people who could have influence on your career. Don't just trust the fact that your friends all say you're the life of the party, or you may have a very enjoyable but entirely superficial experience, while your shy classmate makes a quiet but serious impression and walks away with a fistful of business cards.

Earlier is always better

The earlier you start, the better. In other words, starting to meet people and practice your interactive communication skills well before you are under pressure to sign a contract. Of course, you can join the on-campus chapter of Toastmasters International for great support and training in public speaking but by joining any club, sports group or volunteering in the community are all investments of time and energy which will foster both confidence and interpersonal skills. To a certain extent, you play a role throughout the job search, and as with your CV and online profile(s), you show the most relevant traits and capacities in the best light possible.

So think about creating a kind of stage persona for yourself as a job-seeker and networker; far from false, it is a kind of public display version of yourself—well dressed, poised, and extremely

well prepared to meet key people in their field, whether in the elevator, at the drinks reception, or in the assessment center. Consider keeping a notebook on your networking interactions (and interviews, too), capturing what worked best, what you learned, and what you will improve next time.

Fostering a networking attitude, when consciously solicited by practice and reflection is available to everyone, and will be adapted to your gender, your character, communication style and culture as well as the circumstances you find yourself in. It is essential for meeting employers and startup entrepreneurs at the Forum, of course, but also excellent preparation for your future job interviews (see separate articles in this guide)

¹ Je réussis grâce à mon réseau, A. Bosetti & M. Lahore, DUNOD, 2016

² An optimal algorithm used by Danish researchers found an average degree of separation of 3.43 between two random Twitter users, requiring 67 requests for info to Twitter. A near-optimal solution of 3.88 can be found by making just 13.3 requests. Bakhshandeh et al (from Wikipedia)

³ Graduate employment survey EPFL, 2014: carriere.epfl.ch/telechargements

⁴The 30 Second Elevator Speech, PDF : <http://sfp.ucdavis.edu/files/163926.pdf>

⁵ EPFL-UNIL Toastmasters Club : <https://toastmasters.epfl.ch/>





HOW TO USE LINKEDIN TO BOOST YOUR APPLICATIONS

Marine Conte, Marketing Coordinator, Academic Work

LinkedIn is the world's first professional social network and had, in April 2018, about 260 million active accounts (We are social SG study). Interacting on this network is a major advantage in your job search and could lead you to your next professional adventure. Tips & Tricks to optimise your profile and help you stand out from other applications.

Photo & intro: your business card

On LinkedIn, having a profile picture multiplies by 7 your chances of having your profile consulted by users of the network. So let's get started: depending on the industry for which you wish to work, dress appropriately, put on your best smile and upload your picture.

Under your picture sits the caption, or if you prefer the title of your profile. By default, LinkedIn will choose the name of your latest occupied position. However, we suggest that you change it and insert keywords related to the industry or the position you are looking for. This way, a search engine will find you faster and with ease.

Next, as an introduction to your profile, comes a presentation paragraph, which you must not neglect: this is where you briefly describe what you are and what you look for. This paragraph must be precise, concise, and we suggest that you add to it the easiest way to contact you, such as a phone number or an email address.

Experiences before formation

If you have already completed internships, immersion tasks in corporations, or your first contracts, do not hesitate to position them ahead of your formation, as this is what interests companies.

As you detail the tasks and missions you have accomplished, strive to give as much tangible data as possible, this to allow a recruitment agent to get an idea of your achievements. With this in mind, we suggest you keep a journal during your internships or missions, and to record in it all the data you may need when you will be looking for a new professional adventure.

Furthermore, do not hesitate to contact your previous employers or teachers for recommendations directly from LinkedIn: thus, they will appear on your profile in a form more visible than a scanned letter. Finally, your associative experiences count for a lot, and this even more in certain countries (such as the United States for example) as it shows your interests and your willpower.

When it comes to your formation, it isn't relevant to add any distinctions you could have received as well as the subjects of memoirs or thesis papers on which you may have worked. These could prove interesting subjects of conversation to start an interview.

Be social

LinkedIn is a social network, and it should be used as such! Just as Facebook or Instagram, the algorithm will make you appear much higher in the search results if you interact more than your namesake:

- add contacts,
- ask to join groups,
- share content related to your formations and your interests.

On the long term, this active vigil (we do it every day!) will allow you to truly stand out and will support your application in a positive manner.

Social Networks



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



Google+



Pinterest



Tumblr



LinkedIn

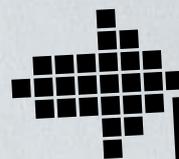


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