PREPARING A GOOD CV

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Most job, internship, and graduate school applications require a CV or resume to be included as part of the submitted application. With a seemingly ever-increasing applicant pool, what sets your resume apart from someone else's? How will you make your CV stand out so you get an interview? Bruce Doddridge, head of the Chemistry and Dynamics Branch in the Science Directorate at the NASA Langley Research Center, addressed these questions in his talk "Applying for Positions in the Professional Workforce: Resumes and Resumix," during the 16th Annual AMS Student Conference in Seattle in January.

Doddridge noted that "putting together a CV is the easy part, how you make an impression is a challenge." As a selection official for NASA, Doddridge has had plenty of experience reviewing CVs and knows firsthand what it takes for a CV or resume to stand out. Here are the "nuts and bolts" of a good CV, according to Doddridge:

1) *Is well organized, lucid, and coherent.*
2) *Has consistent formatting and follows the formatting requirements, if applicable.*
3) *Is free of typos and grammar errors.* "Errors can be an orange flag to selection officials."
4) *Is accurate and free of embellishment.* "Embellishments will be checked. If you make it to an interview and you have embellished, you probably won't get the job."
5) *For a B.S. graduate, is two to three pages.* "You will also want to have a one-page resume prepared, especially for meetings like the AMS Annual Meeting."
6) *Will be the reflection of you.* "Don't be frightened to highlight your positive professional [strengths], but also your personal strengths."

Doddridge said that if you follow all six of these "nuts and bolts" and are a qualified candidate for the position for which you are applying, chances are you will still have a lot of similar "stuff" in your resume or CV to other candidates. You can further differentiate your CV with what he refers to as "positive discriminators." These are the things he looks for:

1) *Required qualifications and experience.* "Do the best you can within the application to demonstrate your suitability for the position even if you aren't an absolute fit. You never know. It's like buying a lottery ticket. You never know."
2) *People that get better with time.* "Mistakes will happen whether you are set up for them or not." This could be a person whose GPA improves every year or a person who improves their responsibility level both professionally and personally with the things that they are doing.
3) *People on a positive career path and people that learn from their mistakes.* "A mistake is not a bad thing! Learning from [a mistake] is a very positive experience that you can parlay forward to improve yourself."
4) *Making informed decisions along the way.* "When you come to a fork in the road, you take it. You have to take it. But making an informed decision on which way to go is what really matters."
5) *Broadened experiences.* "Not only with research but with professional and community service. Internships are fabulous. I really key in on that. If I see someone who has taken an internship, whether it is in my agency, another agency, or outside of that agency, just anywhere, I look for that as a positive discriminator."
6) *Flexibility and adaptability.* "This is something we look for very much in the federal government. I know corporate America looks for this too. Being a specialist in a very focused area is fine, but you have to have general skills, both your hard skills and your soft skills, as well as to be flexible and adaptable. Also, if you are going to ascend and go on a positive career path into management or leadership positions, that is absolutely essential—as is the ability and the willingness to manage change. The higher up you go, the more that is going to matter. Anyone that has ever taken a sociology class knows that the thing that people—humans—have the hardest time dealing with is change. It's something that we deal with and we manage it. And we manage it effectively and positively."

7) *Leadership potential.* "I look for that in choices that you've made now, as a student, and forward in your professional or scholastic career. I also look for, as far as community service is concerned, things you've done outside of the community, things that have nothing to do with what you are doing in atmospheric science but demonstrating commitment, leadership, and responsibility. These are things called 'softer skills,' they are things that people don't think about, younger people don't think about, but is something that I am looking for in future leaders, people that I want in my organization, someone that is going to take my job one day, with pleasure, I want them to have soft skills."
8) *Any skill that you are proficient in.* "This may be a surprise to us, even if it is not [common], I'm looking for someone with language skills, someone that has done things outside of meteorology altogether, can show a trait, a characteristic, can demonstrate some commitment and diligence and expertise in something that—you never know—may parlay into something that you can use in your job."
9) *Work–life balance.* "It's last but it's definitely not least. People who 'get it' on work–life balance tend to be happier, more effective, and lead through example. I find that the people that work for me that understand work–life balance, and practice it, are by far the most effective, happiest, and best workers I have."

LIVING ON THE REAL WORLD

[Editor's Note: The following post is adapted from William Hooke's blog, Living on the Real World (www.livingontherealworld.org/). Hooke is the former director of the AMS Policy Program and currently a senior policy fellow.]

A Televised Red–Blue Debate on Climate Change?

Originally posted July 18, 2017

One of the topics that came up while I was on the road for the past month. Haven't seen anything more on it this past week, so this post may be "kicking a dead horse." (In any case, this horse deserves to die.)

A bit of world news from July 11:

> WASHINGTON (Reuters) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the early stages of launching a debate about climate change that could air on television–challenging scientists to prove the widespread view that global warming is a serious threat, the head of the agency said.
>
> The move comes as the administration of President Donald Trump seeks to roll back a slew of Obama-era regulations limiting carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels, and begins a withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement—a global pact to stem planetary warming through emissions cuts.
>
> "There are lots of questions that have not been asked and answered (about climate change)," EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt told Reuters in an interview late on Monday.
>
> "Who better to do that than a group of scientists…getting together and having a robust discussion for all the world to see," he added without explaining how the scientists would be chosen…

Dictionaries tell us that debates are public discussions involving opposing points of view, or formal contests in which affirmative and negative views of a proposition are presented by opposing speakers. Google the expression "famous debates," and you'll be treated to a host of links, mainly reserved for presidential campaigns (think Kennedy–Nixon or Bush–Gore), with the Lincoln–Douglas senatorial debate thrown in for good measure.

Not bad! Debates are best reserved for topics where there is no single right answer, or where audience judgment matters—like "I'd make a better president than that person." As for those formal contests, such as high-school and college debates, the rules for judging and scoring these over the years have grown progressively more arcane.

But when it comes to questions such as "What will nature do next?," where the answer matters, and where *nature*, not any *human* judge or audience, is the final arbiter, then *a common search for truth* is a better approach than *debate*.

Meteorologists have long known this. A fixture in the profession is the so-called map discussion,