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## CV Makeover: From Freelance to Consultant

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## Robert Alvarez 's 'After' CV

### Jinfo Newsletter

Every month, the Jinfo Newsletter presents a makeover of either a CV or a job vacancy advert, presenting a before version and an after version. All identifying characteristics are changed.

To submit your CV or job advert for possible inclusion, send it to <[monique.cuvelier@freepint.com](mailto:monique.cuvelier@freepint.com)>.

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## CV Makeover: From Freelance to Consultant

Having spent years working as a temporary and freelance researcher and librarian, Robert Alvarez wanted to spin that experience into a consultancy career. He knew he'd built up unique experience dealing with organisational crisis and change and wanted to offer those skills.

'[I'd like a job helping companies that] need someone to come in, sort it out, get it up and going and then go', he says.

His CV included his full work history, but he was afraid it would emphasise how often he'd changed jobs and his age versus his years of experience.

We asked Nicola Franklin, head of information recruitment at Sue Hill Recruitment, for help refocusing his CV. Sue Hill Recruitment, based in London, specialises in the UK library and information sector with both public and private clients.

Franklin has looked at many consultants' CVs during her five-year tenure at SHR. She manages a team of seven recruitment consultants who work on temporary and permanent roles that span librarianship, information management, records management, archives, and knowledge management at all levels, from library assistant to heads of information services.

### **Subtracting and Adding**

Franklin started at the beginning: the profile.

'The profile section is usually utilised to describe the person specifically as "an information management or knowledge management consultant" and to introduce his specialise or main areas of focus or expertise', Franklin says.

But Alvarez's profile was 'aimed at securing another library manager job, as it highlights skills with LMS and content sources, management and communication skills'.

She pared down what was there to present Alvarez as a specialist consultant who is able to asses user needs, formulate recommendation and give advice.

While the profile was packed with information, the rest wasn't. 'Robert's CV included simply an employment history describing permanent or contract library management roles', Franklin says.

She added an Achievements section ('Highlighting key outcomes or deliverables from various previous roles or projects') and a Skills area, listing key technical expertise. She says this should be in terms of informational skills (e.g., taxonomy construction) and IT (e.g., knowledge of Documentum or Sharepoint). This space can also reflect project management and soft skills, such as presentation and training.

## CV Makeover: From Freelance to Consultant

### Strong Language

Action words are all-important, especially when it comes to employers looking for a consultant to come in and straighten out a mess. They're looking for someone who radiates competency.

The Career History section is the place to show it. It should be loaded with action words, says Franklin. She says this section should ideally contain bullet points of responsibilities and use words such as:

- instigated
- initiated
- led a project to
- introduced
- organised

But Alvarez had chosen a narrative style for this section. Franklin says, 'Throughout the CV the language used is descriptive and narrative, rather than consultative and business-like. It should be focused around projects and achievements/outcomes'.

She suggests using phrases such as 'conducted a best practice audit', 'defined and delivered information-service improvements', 'designed standards and guidelines for the EDRM file plan', 'developed procedures and guidance for information staff'.

Alvarez's after CV is full of words that say 'mission accomplished'.

Alvarez feels like this is exactly the image he'll be projecting when he submits his CV for new jobs: 'I reckon I could get a contract post on this!'

### CV Makeover

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## Comment

"As a freelance researcher, I miss picking up intelligence about new sources etc. from colleagues in an office setting. FreePint provides me with a wonderful online community of peers all over the world, who share their collective wisdom."

Freelance Researcher, UK  
September, 2006

## Comment

"City Professionals has been recruiting in the library & information sector since 1994 and have advertised in many specialist publications over the past eleven years.

We use the Jinfo website regularly because we are assured of a cost effective and accurate response to our advertisements and a swift and efficient service".

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## Robert Alvarez's 'Before' CV

### Curriculum Vitae

Robert Alvarez, B.A.(Hons), M.CLIP

58 City Road Sheffield S1 2AX

Tel: 0114 272 5185 / 0114 272 5186 (m) e: [Robert.Alvarez@email.com](mailto:Robert.Alvarez@email.com)

### Profile

Able and experienced, aware of the practicalities of information management. Cheerful disposition, an excellent communicator at all levels. Good management skills. Good team player, also able to work alone. Familiar with most LIS library management systems, also most major hosts and databases (Reuters, Lexis-Nexis, Dialog, BvD Suite, and various scientific databases). Expert Internet/Web searching skills, basic Front Page, DreamWeaver, and Contribute (CMS).

### Employment History

**January 2004 ABC Scientific Group, Large University, Sheffield**  
**to present date 2005 Library Resources Manager, Cholton Library**

Remit: Leading a team of six, creating library strategy pertinent to ABCSG, while mindful of overall LIS strategy within Western of England Region.

*Achievements and responsibilities:*

- IT Needs Requirement drawn up, leading to improved IT, including installation of broadband. Close involvement with Internet & intranet developments, responsible for several sections' updates/amendments.
- Improved access & facilities for all science staff, including improved stock
- Marketing, including Induction programmes pertinent to lab & non-lab sectors in place.
- Leading courses & training users on all databases pertinent to ABC [incl. Google]
- Responsible for budget, ordering, staff development, and higher unit profile.

**January 2003 Association of Science Librarians, Sheffield**

**February 2004 Information Manager**

Remit: to manage Information Centre and staff during maternity absence. Was asked to remain & job-share, following manager's part-time return.

*Achievements and responsibilities:*

- Completion of scientific classification module; set up budget systems; stock selection; oversee launch of Science News Bulletins to members, via email; answer web enquiries from members & others, on a wide variety of topics. Staff management. Strong involvement with other departments. First contact for many callers to ASL.

**October 2002 De Montfort University, Leicester**

**November 2002 IT Resources Centre Manager**

Remit: to look after staff and students in the ITRCR. Two-month contract

*Achievements and responsibilities:*

- maintain Centre to highest standards while awaiting permanent member of staff. Managing Staff (permanent & temporary), and agreeing staffing rotas. Demonstrate web searching to students.

**November 2000 Scientific Research Company, Sheffield**

**November 2002 Senior Information Officer**

Remit: information management for a small science research organisation, specialising in UK and European retain analysis and consultancy, with minimal budget

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Successful projects included acquisition of information on: energy; air toxins; children's health; European

## Robert Alvarez's 'Before' CV

standards; trade; production; plastics, etc. Streamlined journal subscriptions via free subscription agency.  
Acquisition of news and competitor analysis via free newsfeeds.

**November 2000 KSOS, Ltd. Sheffield**

**September 2000 Research Associate**

**September 2000 SCI, Sheffield**

**July 2000 Information Officer**

*Two temporary posts, a month in each. One in sales, one in customer service.*

**May 2000 MM & Co, Sheffield**

**April 2000 Law Librarian**

Remit: to organise Law Information Centre, and provide enquiry service to all law specialists worldwide

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Cleared backlog of 4 months' invoicing, while maintaining enquiry service. Use of Lawtel, Lexis-Nexis, Butterworths Online, CCH-Croner, FT-Profile, OneSource.

**January 1998 Law Partnership, Sheffield**

*R. Alvarez/CV2*

**January 2000 Deputy Librarian**

Remit: management of large LIS unit, comprising 14 staff, providing support to consultant engineering organisation, with offices worldwide.

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Evaluation of services offered to ensure appropriate and cost-effective delivery. Performance measured against planned budget and Service Level Agreements. Recruitment and development of library staff; training; monitoring workloads.

**August 1997 XYZ Company, Sheffield**

**January 1998 Support Centre Manager**

Remit: to raise local awareness of Support Centre, and promote XYZ products and services.

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Contact made with all major intermediaries in the area. High level of customer care, via follow-up by letter or telephone, increased footfall to Company. Full budgetary responsibility.

**June 1993 Nonprofit Association, Sheffield**

**September 1997 Information Manager**

Manager of a busy information centre. First contact for many callers to the organisation. Responsible for gaining and retaining the contract for outsourced enquiries from Government Council. Balanced the contradictions of a tight budget against competing information needs.

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Fee-paying consultation, research, & training performed for external clients. Financial targets for this attained. Timely delivery of reviews for publication in journals. Business-oriented team development, plus closer co-operation with other departments.

**June 1993 Scientific Company, Sheffield**

**February 1993 Information Audit team member**

*Responsibilities included:*

Check and catalogue acquisitions onto company database. To audit information holdings of one department to agreed standards.

## Robert Alvarez's 'Before' CV

**February 1993 Scientific Research Ltd., Sheffield**

**April 1990 Information Manager**

Remit: to modernise and update the Library & Information Service

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Introduced full external online services into organisation. Implemented plan to modernise and upgrade internal database (Status) to a fully networked system, searchable by remote end-users. Customised user interfaces, with online help macros. Organised training for all users, both groups and individuals. Full budgetary authority for Unit.

**January 1990 DEF Ltd, Sheffield**

**April 1986 Information Officer**

Energy business. Full technical and business information provision to UK, Japan, US, & Europe.

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Proactive promotion of service to managers and engineers. Production of sector research, via online searches and journal scanning. Production of Current Awareness Bulletins.

**1985 Temp Workers, Ltd, Sheffield**

Duties included: client liaison, market research, office administration

**1985 Business Administration Course, Sheffield University**

Keyboard skills & word processing

**1984 John Lewis, Sheffield**

Store Clerk

### Education & Qualifications

1981 A Levels – Private Tuition

1984 B.A.(Joint Hons) 2.ii Biology/Chemistry

1993 **Member: Science Institute**

2002 **Member: Professional Organisation**

**Committees: Member, Science Librarians Group; Past Board Member, JJFL; Industry Information Group; Engineering Special Interest Group; Member, Librarians Group**

**Hobbies: Golf; Cooking.**

## Robert Alvarez's 'After' CV

### Profile

Experienced information professional, specialising in the re-organisation of information and library services to meet user needs. An excellent communicator at all levels, a good team player, also able to use initiative.

### Achievements

Co-ordinated the improvement of IT services for an Scientific Group, liaising between various departments internally and resulting in xxx improvements. Streamlined journal subscriptions via introduction of a subscriptions agency to manage the journals, resulting in budget savings. Successfully identified and sourced relevant information in a specialist market sector under tight budget constraints.

### Skills

- User needs analysis
- Developing and presenting training courses
- Service development and improvement
- Service marketing
- Expert user of many LIS library management systems
- Experienced with the major aggregators and online databases (e.g. Reuters, Lexis-Nexis, Dialog, BvD Suite, and various science databases)
- Expert Internet/Web searching skills, basic Front Page, DreamWeaver, and Contribute (CMS)

### Employment History

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#### *Achievements and responsibilities:*

- Drew up IT Needs Requirement, which led to improved IT, including installation of broadband. Close involvement with Internet & intranet developments, responsible for several sections' updates/amendments
- Led a team of six staff
- Created library strategy pertinent to ABC, while mindful of overall LIS strategy within Western of England Region
- Improved access & facilities for all science staff, including improved stock
- Marketed the service, including Induction programmes pertinent to lab & non-lab sectors in place
- Led courses & trained users on all databases pertinent to ABC [incl. Google]
- Responsible for budget, ordering, staff development, and higher unit profile

**January 2003 Association of Science Librarians, Sheffield**  
**February 2004 Information Manager**

#### *Achievements and responsibilities:*

- Managed Information Centre and staff during maternity absence
- Invited to remain & job-share, following manager's part-time return
- Completed scientific classification module
- Set up budget systems; stock selection
- Oversaw launch of Science News Bulletins to members, via email; answer web enquiries from members & others, on a wide variety of topics
- Staff management
- First contact for many callers to ASL

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*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Managed information requirements for a small science research organisation, specialising in UK and European retain analysis and consultancy, with minimal budget
- Successful projects included :
  - Acquisition of information on energy, air toxins, children's health, European standards, trade, production, plastics, amongst others
  - Streamlining of journal subscriptions via free subscription agency
  - Acquisition of news and competitor analysis via free newsfeeds

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**September 2000 SCI, Sheffield**  
**August 2000 Information Officer**

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**April 2000 Deputy Librarian**

*Achievements and Responsibilities:*

- Management of large [12 staff] LIS unit, providing support to partnership organisation with offices worldwide
- Evaluation of services offered to ensure appropriate and cost-effective delivery. Performance measured against planned budget and Service Level Agreements
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- Increased footfall to Centre via high level of customer care, via follow-up by letter or telephone
- Full budgetary responsibility
- Raised local awareness of the Support Centre, and promoted XYZ products and services

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**September 1997 Information Manager**

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- Balanced the contradictions of a tight budget against competing information needs
- Provided fee-paying consultation, research, & training for external clients. Attained financial targets
- Delivered reviews for publication in journals
- Business-oriented team development, plus closer co-operation with other departments

**June 1993 Scientific Company, Sheffield**

**February 1993 Information Audit Team Member**

*Responsibilities included:*

- Checked and catalogued acquisitions onto company database
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