Deutschland ist eine Exportnation. Ingenieurinnen und Ingenieure spielen eine wesentliche Rolle bei der Produktion der exportierten Güter und Dienstleistungen. Somit sind Fremdsprachenkenntnisse sowie kurze oder längere Auslandsaufenthalte unabdingbar und förderlich für jede Karriere. Sie spielen daher eine wichtige Rolle in vielen Stellenausschreibungen und sollten in der Bewerbung besonders hervorgehoben werden.
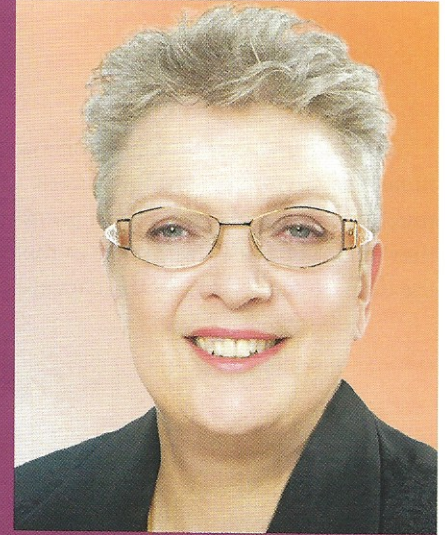
GOING INTERNATIONAL IN YOUR CV

Germany is an export nation. Engineers play a key role in producing these goods and services. As a consequence, language skills and also shorter or longer stays abroad are indispensable in promoting any career. Consequently, they play a prominent role in many job vacancy adverts and are highlighted in the application.

"Highlighted" in this context means having its fixed position in the *CV*, just as described below. If *expressly* required in the *call for applications*, it must be mentioned in the *cover letter*, too, best proven by documentable facts.

Of course, we are talking – Brexit or not – about English as the more or less global (technical) language. We find international *degree* programs in Germany and abroad which are English-speaking courses. There are mountains of *appropriate* English-language specialist literature and publications available. Most *customers* abroad will correspond, *negotiate* and communicate only in English. English can even be found as a "working language" in larger or internationally active German companies. *Obviously*, it is also often used in companies based in Germany with foreign parent organisations and/or their *subsidiaries*.

Most of those who speak English are not *native speakers* at all. That is why "Broken English" is the most spoken language in the world. It also makes a difference whether you use British English or US English. Need an example? "Lift" is British English; "Elevator" is used in the US. Both nations are *sensitive* when the wrong *term* is used. In a *call for papers* for an international conference in England, I even found the *advice* that authors were required to use the word "lift" in England, no matter where they *originate* from. Therefore, please look up your contact's website or other *sources* to see which language area the company is *affiliated* to in order to *target* your application to the region by using the correct technical terms in your documents.

As a result, you should generally *mention* your language *capabilities* in your application, including those of only basic knowledge. You never know if and when they will be useful at the targeted possible *employer*. They may have *clients* in the *respective* countries, maybe *branches*, and/or *suppliers*. Someone involved in the decisions on this vacancy may come from the respective country or is married to someone from that country. Anything is possible and most probably results in the one small additional *advantage* leading to an *invitation* for an interview.

SPEAK UP FOR YOUR LANGUAGES

If you possibly speak several rare languages, you should think of Sales & Marketing as a possible career choice. This professional group has the highest *salaries* paid to engineers and is a straight path to senior management positions more often than any other activity.

The languages to mention in the curriculum vitae or even in the cover letter, however, should *by no means* include Latin. Latin helps to open up the Roman languages more easily. But apart from the Vatican and in medicine and pharmacy, it is hardly ever used as a living language.

The same *applies* to *ancient* Greek. A colleague of mine who chose classical subjects for his humanistic A-levels once said on a business trip to Greece: "The letters are the same in ancient Greek, but the words are completely different." So, he had no idea what was written or spoken there.

And a colleague of mine from Finland who was happy to eventually go on a business trip to *Hungary*, a country that has the same language *roots* as Finnish, told me after our arrival there in the hotel, "The words are *indeed* the same, but they *pronounce* them quite differently." So, he, too, had no

idea what they were talking about, like most other people in Finland and/or Hungary.

DON'T FORGET YOUR GERMAN

Most of us will have German as our native language. And that should be clearly mentioned in the CV. There are two good reasons for this: For one thing, there are a lot of people in Germany whose native language is not German. Secondly, one can *assume* that the *applicant* will communicate in his or her *mother tongue* mostly without any major difficulties.

Should you, in any way, have been brought up *bilingually*, then please mention both mother tongues in the CV as such. The additional reason for this is that a mother tongue is often *associated* with a family context, be it a migrant background or a *parental* career-related *long-term* stay abroad. As a result, besides the *benefit* of the language, you also *gain* an additional cultural *imprint*, which can *facilitate* many things for *employees* and companies on-site in foreign contacts or foreign *assignments*.

The order of languages to be listed in the CV depends on the country and/or company you are applying for. *Customarily* you start with German, followed by English as the most widely spoken language in international technology. However, if you are applying to a French employer, I would, for example, put French next to German, even if it is qualitatively worse than your English or Russian or Mandarin. And if the call for applications requires you to prepare your application in English, of course, English should be listed first.

MEASURING LANGUAGE

It is important to describe your language capabilities according to their level, at least in your writing and spoken qualifications. There are two basic ways of doing this, which are not *mutually* exclusive, but *complementary*:
- The *evaluation* used by the European Commission Europass, known as the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages"**. It *distinguishes* between six levels: the lower levels A1 & A2, the *intermediate* levels B1 & B2 and the higher levels C1 & C2 in understanding (listening & reading), speaking (participating in conversations & *coherent* speaking) and writing. Unfortunately, this classification has not generally been *imposed* in Germany. Especially in small and medium-sized companies, hardly anyone is used to seeing an *entry* such as A1 in the CV. Therefore, the following additions are often used. >>>

abroad	im/ins Ausland
advantage // əd'vɑːntɪdʒ	Vorteil, Nutzen
advert(isement)	Anzeige, Inserat
advice	Ratschlag, Hinweis
affiliate, to	verbinden, verbunden sein
ancient // 'eɪnʃənt	alt, antik
applicant	Bewerber, Kandidatin
application	Bewerbung
apply, to	gelten, zutreffen
appropriate	geeignet, passend
assignment	(Arbeits-) Einsatz, Posten
associate, to // ə'səʊsɪeɪt	verbinden, zuordnen
assume, to	annehmen, erwarten
benefit	Nutzen, Vorteil
bilingually // ˌbaɪ'lɪŋgwəli	zweisprachig
branch // brɑːntʃ	Filiale
by no means	auf keinen Fall, keinesfalls
call for applications	Bewerbungsaufforderung
call for papers	Aufruf für Konferenzbeiträge
capability	Fähigkeit, Können
client // 'klaɪənt	Kunde, Auftraggeber
coherent // kəʊ'hɪərənt	zusammenhängend
complementary	ergänzend, komplementär
cover letter	Anschreiben, Begleitschreiben
customarily	gewöhnlich, üblicherweise
customer	Kunde, Auftraggeber
CV (Curriculum Vitae) // kə,rɪkjələm 'viːtaɪ	Lebenslauf
degree	hier: Abschluss, Diplom
distinguish, to // dɪ'stɪŋgwɪʃ	unterscheiden
employee	Mitarbeiter(in), Angestellte(r)
employer	Arbeitgeber(in)
entry	Eintrag, Nennung
evaluation	Bewertung, Beurteilung
expressly	ausdrücklich
facilitate, to	erleichtern, fördern
gain, to	erhalten, gewinnen
goods	Waren, Güter
gradually	stufenweise
Hungary // 'hʌŋgəri	Ungarn
impose, to	durchsetzen, einführen
imprint	Gepräge, Abdruck, Eindruck
indeed	in der Tat
indispensable	unverzichtbar, unerlässlich
intermediate	mittel, dazwischenliegend
invitation	Einladung, Aufforderung
long-term // ˌlɒŋ 'tɜːm	langfristig
mention, to	erwähnen, nennen
mother tongue	Muttersprache
mutually // 'mjuːtʃuəli	gegenseitig
native speaker	Muttersprachler(in)
negotiate, to // nɪ'gəʊʃɪeɪt	verhandeln
obviously // 'ɒbvɪəsli	offensichtlich, sicherlich
originate, to	stammen, herrühren
parental	elterlich
promote, to	voranbringen, fördern
pronounce, to // prə'naʊns	aussprechen
respective	betreffend, jeweilig
root	Wurzel
salary	Gehalt, Vergütung
sensitive	empfindlich, sensibel
skill	Fähigkeit, Qualifikation
source	Quelle, Herkunft
subsidiary // səb'sɪdɪəri	Niederlassung, Filiale
supplier	Zulieferer, Anbieter
target, to	genau zielen
term // tɜːm	Begriff, Ausdruck
vacancy // 'veɪkənsi	freie Stelle

- Describe the level of competence in words. Here is a list of popular phrases to put your own language ability into words:

business *fluent*: In addition to fluent conversation, also very good knowledge of the spoken and written language in general and in professional *relevance* as well as at least basic, *preferably* good, knowledge of *peripheral areas* such as the language of law, e.g. a *letter of intent,* or business texts like sales offers.

very good: As above, minus the knowledge of peripheral areas.

fair: As above, but with a need for a warm-up at the beginning of a conversation and the *occasional* need of a dictionary.

(very) good, but "rusty": Unfortunately, this happens with a lot of language skills if you do not practise regularly. They usually come back quickly after some practising or a few days in the country.

basic knowledge: Is exactly what the word *implies*. *Nevertheless*, it is important to mention it as you may build up on it more quickly when starting with more or less intensive lessons instead of *starting from scratch.*

A table with or without a visible *frame* is best for listing and qualifying your language skills. If you know your EU classification, fill in a third *column* to the right or, if you prefer, in the centre, in order to list the corresponding classification code.

LET'S GET TECHNICAL

A paragraph is also *dedicated* to so-called specialized English or the knowledge of technical terms in a foreign language. This may well be of interest to the reader of the application, especially if, for example, documentation, offers or the like will be part of your future *scope* of work. So, if you can "do it", you may work much more effectively and efficiently without looking up *reference media*, which is, of course, an advantage in the eyes of a future employer.

Employers in Germany expect *evidence* of the specified language qualification to be given in the CV and/or application letter. The letter only mentions the evidence, such as a study semester abroad at the international English-speaking University in Tampere/Finland. The curriculum vitae contains the list/table described above plus the respective evidence. I would always mention language courses taken directly in the appropriate language *row* of the table.

<<< *Undine Stricker-Berghoff* >>>

column // 'kɒləm	Spalte
dedicate, to	widmen, reservieren
evidence	Nachweis, Beleg
fluent	fließend, gewandt
frame	Rahmen
imply, to	andeuten, besagen
letter of intent	Vorvertrag, Absichtserklärung
nevertheless	dennoch, gleichwohl
occasional	gelegentlich, vereinzelt
peripheral area // pə'rɪfərəl 'eərɪə	Randgebiet, Umfeld
preferably // 'prefrəbli	vorzugsweise
reference media	Nachschlagewerke
relevance	Bedeutung, Wichtigkeit
row	Zeile, Reihe
scope	Umfang, Bereich
start from scratch, to	bei Null anfangen