

CV of Failures

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CVs are a terrible way to judge people. That's because we only list our successes, when in real life most of what we do fails. Even when we do acknowledge failure, we often only do so selectively and in hindsight – that is once we can show how it helped us do even better down the road and was just “success in disguise”. Whilst failing is an important part of “the process”, it rarely works that neatly.

The idea of a “CV of Failures” originally comes from an [article](#) by Mealnie Stefan and I was inspired after seeing many other people do ones of their own (especially [here](#) and [here](#)).

This document is a non-exhaustive list of times that I failed in my career or was rejected. If my list is shorter than yours, then it's likely just because you have better memory or because you're better at trying things than me. Let me know if you spot anything I should add!

Degree programs I did not get into...

Still have to apply to Masters and PhDs

Academic positions and fellowships I did not get...

2020 Predoc with Harvard Opportunity Insight – rejected after first-round
Predoc with MIT Department of Economics – never heard back
RA with various academics – never heard back (x2) ; no suitable position (x8)
RA with Max Planck Institute – never heard back (x2)
RA with Tuebingen Statistical Learning – never heard back
RA with Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence – rejected before interview
RA with Univeristy of Chicago BFI – never heard back
RA with Microsoft Microeconomics – rejected due to visa issue
RA with Center for Global Development – rejected before interview
RA with The Economic Change Unit – rejected before interview
RA with UCL Constitution Unit – rejected before interview
RA with Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research – rejected due to visa issue
RA with Oxford Global Priorities Institute – no suitable position
RA with Stockholm International Peace Research Institute – cancelled due to Covid

Jobs and Internships I did not get...

- 2020 Intern with 2Degrees Investing – never heard back
Intern with McKinsey & Company – rejected before interview
Intern with Boston Consulting Group – rejected after first-round
Intern with Bain & Company – rejected before interview
Intern with Spotify – never heard back
Intern with Porsche – rejected before interview
Intern with Bosch – never heard back
Intern with Apple – cancelled due to Covid (before offer)
- 2019 Job with GiveWell – cancelled for internal reasons (before offer)
Job with McKinsey & Company – rejected after final-round
Job with Boston Consulting Group – rejected before interview
Job with Bain & Company – rejected before interview
- 2018 Intern with EBRD – no suitable position
Intern with UNDP – never heard back
Intern with Bank of England – rejected after first-round
Intern with Boston Consulting Group – rejected before interview
Intern with Bain & Company – rejected before interview
Intern with OC&C – rejected after final round
Intern with Roland Berger – rejected before interview
Intern with LEK Consulting – rejected before interview

Failures at jobs and positions...

- 2019 CSEP Speaker Events – got seven positive responses out 30+ invites I sent throughout the year, including having to cancel the Garden Party
- 2018 CDI ‘Into Business’ Seminar Series – first event saw only three people show up in a venue that was meant to hold 200

Awards and Scholarships I did not get...

2020 Survival and Flourishing Grant – did not get past shortlist
 CEA Long-Term Future Grant – “a relatively close-call application”
 Forethought Foundation Thesis Prize – not shortlisted
 Adam Smith Prize – dissertation fell short by 2%

Paper rejections from academic journals

Many works-in-progress to come