

## Writing an Impactful CV

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A good CV is essential, as it acts as your first contact with potential employers, showcases your skills and can easily cost you an opportunity if not well-written. It's always good to review your profile and see if it fits with a role before sending it out.



### **Best practices for CV writing**

Showcasing yourself as the ideal candidate for a job means showcasing your qualifications, skills and personality in a way that instantly appeals to recruiters. Here's a guide to some good CV writing and how you can showcase your skills for each job application

#### **1. Structure it with Strategy:**

- **Contact Details:** The ideal CV structure is one which starts with all the 'need-to-know' details, such as name and contact information.
  - Make sure they're at the top, in bold, and are easy to read.
  - Appropriate email address
  - Phone number with country code and 10 digit number (e.g. +91 9876543210)
  - Check phone numbers and email addresses to make sure they're correct.
- **Professional Summary:** Next comes your Professional Summary which, in two to three lines, summarizes what you have accomplished professionally to-date. Following details should be included:
  - How many years work experience do you have?
  - In which functional area?
  - Nature of responsibility?
  - In what key roles?
  - Key Skills
- **Career Objective:** Career objective should align with what you are looking for in your next opportunity, this should again be a few lines.
  - Long-term vision and how does this job opportunity fit into the overall career objective?
  - Connect the dots effectively
- **Work Experience :** The work experience section of your CV is where you show your professional track record. It needs to be accurate, highlight your achievements and include relevant points that prove you're the right person for the job.
  - List experiences in reverse chronological order (most current experience first)
  - Begin each item by stating the name of the Company, location, dates, and job title
  - Describe what a organization you worked with did (Key Business, Size, Scale, products – two lines to give any reader an understanding of your company)

- List team managed with numbers if applicable (managed a team of 30 sales reps with 6 direct reportees)
  - Describe your responsibilities and accomplishments in relationship to the job/organization
  - Describe your responsibilities in concise statements led by action words such as achieved, delivered, built....). Focus on those skills and strengths that you possess and that you have identified as being important to your field. Try to incorporate industry specific key words. Show potential employers exactly how you will fit their position and their company.
  - Be sure to vary your action words. You do not want all your descriptions to sound the same. Use present tense for those activities which are ongoing and past tense for those with which you are no longer involved.
  - Whenever possible, quantify your accomplishments and responsibilities. That is, use numbers, amounts, rupee values, and percentages (e.g., "Increased monthly sales by forty percent," "Supervised and trained five new employees," "Handled daily receipts totaling \$3000," "Designed 14 costumes for local production of").
  - Limit your description to the three or four most important points.
- **Education:**
    - Like your experience section, your education should be listed in reverse chronological order
    - Include the name of the institutions and the dates you were there, followed by the qualifications and grades you achieved
    - Highlight any particular achievement in that institution such as "Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in University", "Dean's list", etc
  - **Projects:** You may want to include some projects worked on if they are not already covered in your work experience section. Include:
    - Fulltime projects that stood out in size, impact or uniqueness
    - Your role
    - Connect experience to job opportunity
  - **Achievements / Awards:** Highlight achievements that have stood out in your career
    - Awards, courses, certifications, workshops, etc.
  - **Key Skills:** If you're writing a functional CV, or have some abilities you want to show off to the employer immediately, insert a key skills section underneath your personal profile. You should aim to detail four to five abilities at most. Factual and don't exaggerate
  - **Interest / Affiliation:** You can boost your profile by inserting a hobbies and interests **section** at the end. This can help to show how well you fit into the company or the industry or give an insight into who you are as a person. Be careful though; avoid listing hobbies that don't add value to your CV or are run-of-the-mill, like reading. Draw on interests that make you stand out or are relevant to the job.
    - Highlight any clubs or interesting activities that may reveal more about your personality.
    - Share any relevant affiliations or networks

- **References:** This can be a good to have in your profile but is not mandatory. You can include a line that reads ‘references available on request’. If you give references they must be relevant to your work history
  - Former Team Leaders and co-workers
  - Not friends and family members
  - Ensure reference contact information is updated

## 2. Formatting and spacing guidelines

If you’re unsure of how to format your CV, it’s worth downloading a few CV templates to familiarize yourself. After all, formatting and spacing your CV is equally as important as the content. Here are some formatting and spacing tips to bear in mind:

**Length:** The standard length of a CV in India is 2-3 pages depending on length of experience. However, one size doesn’t fit all, see what showcases your experience but don’t make a notebook.

**Headings:** Each section must be introduced by a big, bold heading to ensure an easy read.

**Font type:** Most employers will receive your CV in a digital format, so choose a clear font like Calibri or Arial. You can use a different font type for your headings, but keep it professional and easy-to-read too.

**Font size and page margins:** The body of your CV should be between 10 and 12 point font, and your headings between 12 and 14 points. Keep your page margins around 2.5cm, but never reduce them to less than 1.27cm or your CV will appear cluttered and hard to read. White space ensures clarity and professionalism.

**Proofreading and consistency:** Your formatting must be consistent throughout your CV to keep it looking slick. Don’t spoil your polished look by including typos and inaccuracies; proofread to capture every mistake or invest in intelligent spellcheckers like Grammarly.

**Tailoring, keywords and ATSs:** It’s perfectly acceptable to keep a generic copy of your CV for your own records, but if you’re applying for a job, it must be tailored to the role. Not only will this show employers why you’re a match, but it will help your application beat the Application Tracking System (“ATS”) robots too.

**Saving the file:** It’s likely you’ll send your CV via email or through a job board. Save your CV as a pdf file to ensure recruiters can open it on any device. A pdf will also maintain formatting, so you can be sure that employers will see your CV as you intended.

**Other things to add:**

**A headshot:** while not mandatory it's become a norm to add a professional picture on top of the CV.

**Age and date of birth:** Some companies have years of experience, age and retirement criteria, having this information helps check for those.

**All the best:**

Get your CV right from the outset, and you may well find a job more quickly. Your CV is your chance to make a great first impression and secure yourself an interview, review your profile with these guidelines, and send it out. Wish you all the best in your journey.

**SAMPLE ACTION WORDS :**

Review these tips for how to get your resume past the applicant tracking systems employers use, and this list of action keywords to use to get your application noticed when applying for jobs.

**A**

Achieved, accomplished, acted, adapted, addressed, analyzed, authored, authorized, assessed, assisted, appraised, amended, advised, allocated, altered, accelerated, acquired, aided, assembled

**B**

Budgeted, built, brainstormed, balanced, blended, boosted

**C**

Compiled, combined, challenged, chaired, committed, communicated, coordinated, calculated, contributed, commissioned, confirmed, customized, created, challenged, critiqued

**D**

Decided, developed, disclosed, documented, discovered, designed, determined, demonstrated, deferred, distributed, directed, devoted, drafted, doubled, diversified, designated, dedicated, discussed

**E**

Exercised, expected, earned, elected, engaged, entered, engineered, employed, edited, evaluated, entertained, eliminated, exchanged, ended, estimated, exempted, endorsed, expedited, experienced, enforced, explained

**F**

Facilitated, focused, financed, fueled, figured, fit, formed, fortified, functioned, formulated

**G**

Guided, grouped, gave, garnered, granted, generated, guaranteed, gathered, graphed

**H**

Hired, handled, helped, headed

**I**

Improved, identified, installed, inspired, interviewed, issued, invested, illustrated, implemented, incurred, innovated, inspected, invented, interpreted, inaugurated, informed, induced, instilled, incorporated

**J**

Judged, joined, justified

**L**

Located, lectured, launched, litigated, lobbied, led, listened

**M**

Mastered, managed, merchandised, modified, met, minimized, modeled, measured, moderated, motivated, multiplied, marketed, maximized, moved, mediated

**N**

Negotiated, noticed, navigated, networked

**O**

Operated, owned, observed, oversaw, organized, obtained, oriented

**P**

Participated, printed, proposed, pursued, persuaded, perceived, preserved, processed, produced, promoted, planned, performed, pioneered, passed, prioritized, proficiency, provided, profiled, polled, presented, procured, purchased, placed, permitted

**Q**

Quoted, qualified, questioned, queried

**R**

Ranked, resolved, received, rewarded, revised, revitalized, revamped, responded, restored, rejected, reinforced, reinstated, rehabilitated, remedied, redesigned, recruited, recovered, recorded, reduced, replaced, retained, retrieved, reversed, ran, raised, reached, reviewed, researched

**S**

Saved, secured, stabilized, scheduled, screened, settled, separated, sent, selected, shaped, shortened, showed, signed, simplified, sold, specialized, staged, standardized, steered, stimulated, strategized, surveyed, supported, supplied, substantiated, set goals, supervised, studied

**T**

Trained, tabulated, took, traveled, transformed, tested, transferred, tailored, targeted

**U**

Utilized, uncovered, united, updated, undertook, unified, upgraded

**V**

Verified, valued, validated, visited, visualized

**W**

Witnessed, worked, weighed, wrote, won, welcomed