
UNIT 28 LETTERS ABOUT JOBS

Structure

- 28.0 Objective
- 28.1 Introduction
- 28.2 Curriculum Vitae
- 28.3 Presentation: putting yourself on paper
- 28.4 The Covering letter
- 28.5 Other letters about employment
- 28.6 Let us sum up
- 28.7 Key Words

28.0 OBJECTIVES

You have already learnt some basic principles of business correspondence, and become aware of different types of business letters. One important letter you need to know about is: *letters about jobs*. In this unit you will learn how to prepare your curriculum vitae(c.v.), and present it in the best possible manner. You will also learn how to apply for a job, how to accept an offer of a job, as well as reject a job offer.

28.1 INTRODUCTION

When you are looking for a job, you may have to send applications to various companies or organizations. Each employer wishes to know details about your academic qualifications, your present interests or your work experience, etc. Therefore, you need to prepare a C.V. or what is often referred to as Bio data or information about yourself. Once this is done, you can make many copies of it and when you send a job application, you can attach a copy of your C.V. So let us first find out how to prepare the C.V.

28.2 CURRICULUM VITAE (C.V.)

For a moment pretend that you are an employer who has advertised the post of a stenographer in your office. You are going to get hundreds of applications, many of the candidates may be quite unsuitable yet you have to go through all the applications to discover which are the suitable candidates so that you can invite them for an interview. You do not have much time to read everything so you wish to look at the most relevant information first. So what would you wish to know about a candidate? His/Her age? Permanent address? Marital status? Or academic qualifications or work experience?

If you have advertised for a high executive post, perhaps, you wish to know the work experience of a candidate but if it is a clerical or a stenographer's position then, perhaps the academic qualification is more important especially if it is the first job of the candidate. Thus, there are two good ways of starting your C.V.: begin with your work experience or with your academic qualifications.

Suppose, you begin with your academic qualifications. What does your employer want to know first? Your school? The name of the institution where you obtained

the degree needed for the job you are applying for? Naturally, the last one. So, if you are applying for the post of a stenographer, your employer is more interested in the institution where you learnt shorthand and typing rather than in the name of your primary school. Consequently, your information should begin with the last thing first and then move backwards. Let us see an example. Of course, you have to give your name on top so that it is obvious as to whose C.V. is being read. You must also give your complete address and telephone number so that you can be easily reached. Let us see the sequence of information and how it should be arranged:-

1. **Name and Address**
2. **Education:** Your education is central to your qualifications for almost any job. The more recent your education, the more important it will be. If you are a recent college graduate you should probably list your education *at the very top* of your C.V. If you have worked for several years, your work experience will become more important and may deserve to be listed first. It is better to divide your education into three categories.
 - (i) **Formal education:** Your college and school education. Do mention if you have outstanding marks in your college education.
 - (ii) **Special Qualifications:** These would include extra qualification such as if you have done some computer courses along with regular college.
 - (iii) **Other Education:** You may have qualifications not directly related to your job, such as if you have learnt any language.
3. **Work experience:** Employers want to know where you have worked and what you have done. Your past experience is a basis for predicting what you can do now and what you will be able to do in the future.
 - Company name(s), complete addresses and phone numbers.
 - The dates of your employment
 - Your titles and job descriptions
 - Your salary history

If you are just entering your career you must list part time and temporary jobs as well. A steady work record, shows that you have ambition (or need) and that you are diligent enough to find and keep a job.

4. **Any Special achievement or interest you wish to highlight:** You may have represented your state in hockey, for instance.
5. **Reference:** References are like witnesses. They are a testimony about you and your abilities. Most employers prefer that you provide the names of referees.

Select these people carefully. Show your wisdom by choosing people who can speak favourably about you and your work. Be sure they have business, professional, or academic status to command your reader's attention and respect.

6. **Optional Information:** So far we have considered the four categories of information that employers will expect to find on your C.V. There are other categories you can include if they make important statements about your qualifications.
 - (a) **Scholarships and awards:** Have you received academic scholarships or honours, or awards of any kind? Write a complete list of these and what you did to earn them. Awards and honours show that other

people think you have done something special. Employers will definitely pay attention to them.

- (b) **Are you willing to relocate?** Employers may have offices in several places in India, and they may want you to be flexible in this matter. If you are willing to move say so in your C.V. If you are not, it is better to stay silent. Why eliminate yourself early in the process? You may change your mind after you have looked at the company closely.

28.3 PRESENTATION: PUTTING YOURSELF ON PAPER

Now that you have gathered all the information you will need for your C.V., it is time to begin putting it on paper. As you do this, one of your primary considerations will be what your C.V. will look like when you finish it. So you need to make a positive first impression, and first impression are often visual ones. If you want to be taken seriously as a candidate, your C.V. should look like it comes from someone who should be taken seriously. Creating a positive first impression depends on producing neat, error - free copy and visually well-organised page that looks "clear" and easy to read.

- Say what you need to — provide explanations and interpretations in the covering letter.
- Organize your C.V. into visual blocks. Each block will represent all the information related to one of the categories discussed earlier (e.g. employment, education and so on)
- Organize carefully. Initially, for the first job, you are likely to follow the traditional sequence — personal information, education, experience (if any) and references. Optional information fits nicely just before your reference.

However, once you've held a number of jobs you should list them in such a way that the most recent or the most important is the first entry. This is known as **reverse chronology**, and it helps to focus your reader's attention on your most recent accomplishment.

- Use action phrases. Write entries in phrases rather than in complete sentences or paragraphs. Use phrases as "Worked as", "Supervised", "Attended". These suggest action, and helps your entries be short and concise.

We give you a particular way of writing a C.V. Please note, as suggested earlier, there are other ways of putting together your C.V.

Given below is the C.V. of Pooja Mitra, study it carefully and then write your own C.V.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Pooja Mitra

Education

Academic

1987
1985
1982

M.A. History, Delhi Universtiy.
B.A. Pass. Miranda House, Delhi University.
Higher Secondary School Certificate, Modern School, Delhi.

Professional

1990-91 Diploma in computer Application, NIIT, Delhi.
1988-90 Diploma in Secretarial course, Y.M.C.A. Delhi.

Specialised Course

1994 6 months advanced course from Computer Maintenance Corporation, Delhi.
1995 One year's Spoken English Course from British School of Languages, Delhi.

Summary of Professional Experience.

1994 Personal Assistant to the General Manager, Oberoi Hotel.
1991-1993 Secretary cum receptionist in Ancon Hospitalities, Defence Colony.

Professional Experience.

1994 As the Personal Assistant, my duties include the following:

- Drafting and sorting out mail
- Making and canceling appointments for the G.M.
- Filing and maintaining Office Records.
- Preparing agenda for weekly meetings of the Executives.

1991-1993 As the secretary, my duties included:
1991-1994

- Receiving and sorting out mail
- Attending to the incoming and outgoing calls
- Attending to the visitors.
- Taking down and preparing minutes of the meetings held by the M.D.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Was a keen sports person and represented Delhi State in various athletics around the country.

Was a member of the National Cadet Core and was part of the contingent at the Republic day Parade in 1984 and 1985.

Personal Information.

Date of Birth: 20th Dec. 1964
Address D 32, Andrews Ganj,
DDA Flats
Delhi – 110 024
Phone No. 4691032.

28.4 THE COVERING LETTER

Do you now feel ready to write applications for a job? You already have your C.V. There is one other kind of letter you need to learn before you start applying for a job

and that is a **covering letter**. While applying for a job it would not be adequate to just post your C.V., you need to include a covering letter too. The advantage of a C.V. is that once you have prepared it, you can make copies of it and can use it as and when required. You cannot do that with a covering letter because the persons you are applying to and the job description will be different in every case. The most common and simple sort of covering letter should have the following points:

What will your letter say

- *Where did you learn about the position?* Citing the source of your information can be an effective way of orienting your mind to your subject. You must mention the advertisement you saw, or that you were referred to by a placement service. "I am writing to apply for the position of Head clerk that you advertised in India Times on 7th July '99.
- *Which job are you applying for?* Identify it by title — remember that a company may have several jobs available at the same time.
- Mention those aspects which you wish to highlight in your covering letter to show that you are suitable for the job.

"With a diploma in marketing and two years of experience as a mechanist, I know I shall be an effective sales representatives for Balsara Precision Tools."

- Ask for an Interview "I will appreciate the opportunity to talk to you in person. I can be available for an interview at your convenience. Example,

Dear Sir,

With reference to your advertisement in Hindustan Times dated 5th July '96, for the post of Computer Analyst in the Commerce Department, I would like to be considered for the post. I am enclosing my Curriculum Vitae and will be happy to provide any other details that you may require.

I like forward to a favourable response.

Yours faithfully,

Since your C.V. gives all your particulars, this letter should be quite adequate. But, suppose you are a Commerce graduate and you have secured a Diploma in Business Management and have also done a course in computers. All these details are already included in your C.V., but the post you are applying for is concerned more with Business Management and you wish to highlight that part in your C.V. The covering letter gives you the opportunity to draw the attention of the addressee to your achievements in that area and any other qualification which you feel would be relevant for the job. For example, the job may require you to interact with many people so you may like to tell your employers that you were a keen debater in your college and school days. You can take the opportunity to make a special mention of these facts in your covering letter like this:

Dear Sir,

With reference to your advertisement in Hindustan times dated 5th July '96 for the post of Personnel Manager, I would like to be considered for it.

I would like to take the opportunity to mention that I had the distinction of getting the highest marks in Personnel relations. I was a keen debater in school and College and won many individual prizes in inter-college debating competitions.

Besides English, I am able to communicate in Hindi and Bengali with equal ease. I shall be glad to furnish any other details that you may require.

Letters about
job

I am enclosing my C.V. along with photocopies of my certificates. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

To Remember

1. Bio-data, Curriculum vitae (C.V.) and Resume' or Structured Resume' all mean the same thing.
2. We would like to draw your attention to some of the things that you should not do. Some years back, it was thought that you should adopt a very humble tone while applying for a job. Sentences like. "If given an opportunity to work in your esteemed organisation", "if selected, I assure you that I will do my utmost", "I look forward to being part of your very reputable firm and assure you that" etc were considered to be apt because they were flattering. The trend has changed these days. It is more fashionable to sell oneself - that means you should adopt a confident tone and try to SUGGEST that you are the best candidate for the job. Therefore, AVOID using sentences like the ones mentioned. In other words, do not give the impression that you are desperate and are begging for the job. Your tone should not give the impression that you are proud but it should show that you are very confident.
3. Try and get your C.V. done on a computer by a professional. Get your covering letter also typed.

Check Your Progress 1

1. Given below is an advertisement for a job. Read it carefully and decide which post you are eligible for. Select two posts and write covering letters to accompany your resumes.

Our client is a Multinational with diversified interest in TELECOMMUNICATION, SOFTWARE & AUTOMOBILES, To spread their aggressive growth plans in the business they are looking for

1. **PROJECT MANAGER:** B.E. (Computer/Electronics/Electronics/) or M.C.A
Experience-Two to four years in Project Management
2. **COMPUTER ENGINEERS:** B.E. (Computer/Electronics/Electrical) or M.C.A with knowledge of R.D.B.M.S
ORACLE - 7, UNIX, FORMS 4.5 Experience two to four years.
3. **ENGINEERS:** From all Engineering Disciplines.
Note: Diploma holders with more experience can also apply.
4. **TECHNICALS:** I.T.I. (Fresh/Experienced)
5. **MARKETING EXECUTIVES:** With Dynamic Personalities Fluent in English. (Male/Female)
6. **PROFESSIONALS IN FINANCE:** CS/ CA/ ICWA/ MBA.
7. **COMPUTER/D.T.P. OPERATOR:** Male/Female.
8. **STENOGRAPHERS:** Male/Female.
9. **P.R.O.:** Male/Female.
10. **RECEPTIONIST:** Female.

Human Resource Development Cell
P.O. Box 1358
NEW DELHI

28.5 OTHER LETTERS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT

You may need to write several letters in your search for employment, until you have accepted the job you want and rejected others. This section will survey these letter briefly.

Follow-up Letters

You may have two occasions when you need to write follow-up letters: once before an interview and once after.

In the first instance, you are writing because apparently your C.V. is being ignored. After a decent interval (generally a month), you might write a tactful reminder to inquire whether your C.V. reached its destination. In your letter try not to suggest that someone is actually ignoring your letter, even though you suspect that be the case. The simplest way is a direct request to ask whether your original letter arrived. Common courtesy demands that your reader answer this and explain the status of your application.

I wrote to you sometime ago regarding the post of Sales Representative. I am a bit concerned that the letter may not have reached you.

A much happier and more productive follow-up letter is the one you write after you have had an interview. It can serve several purposes. First, it is a way of saying thank you. This letter also gives you an opportunity to reinforce the good impression that you made in the interview.

Accepting an offer

Once you apply for a job, there are three main ways in which you could be offered the job:-

1. The most common way is that your particulars are found suitable, and you are sent a letter to appear for an interview. Sometime you may have to face more than one interview. During these interviews, matters pertaining to salary, allowances and the date of joining, etc. are discussed and negotiated. You may then be asked to wait till all the interviews are over and then the result of the interview may be announced and if you are selected, you are informed right away.
2. Very often, you are sent back after the interview and are told that the result will be intimated to you within a stipulated time. If you are selected, you get a letter informing you and giving you the details of salary, allowances and date when you are expected to join. In both these cases, you may be required to write a letter accepting the offer.
3. The third and a rare case is that you may be offered the job solely on the basis of your application and C.V. Here too, you would be expected to

intimate to your employers that you have accepted the offer. The question then is – how do you write a letter accepting the job?

Of course, the first thing you have to do is to acknowledge the receipt of the letter and express your thanks. The next thing is to intimate your acceptance. There are many ways in which you can do this. You are shown some of the opening sentences below.

With reference to your letter dated 12th Aug., offering me the job of Assistant lecturer in the History department, I thank you for it and am pleased to accept the offer.

Thank you for your letter dated 12th Aug., offering me the post of Assistant Lecturer in the History department. I am very pleased to accept the offer.

It is with pleasure that I accept the offer of the post of Assistant Lecturer in the History Department made in your letter dated 12th Aug. Thank you for giving me the opportunity of being part of the organisation.

Remember, that even in your acceptance letter it is always advisable to give details of the post.

After expressing thanks and informing the organisation of your acceptance, you can then intimate or confirm the date of your joining and express your keenness to work in the organisation. Example:

The terms and conditions are acceptable to me and as requested, I shall be able to join on 1st September. I look forward to being part of the team. OR I look forward to being part of the organisation.

You can, of course, mix and match the sentences. Do not make your letter long.

Check Your Progress 2

1. Write a letter of acceptance for one of the posts that you applied for on the basis of the advertisements given above.

Rejecting a job offer

In your job search you may have applied to more than one organisation and you may have received more than one job offer. You may, therefore, need to write a letter of refusal. Be especially tactly and courteous because the employer you are refusing has spent time and effort interviewing you, and may be counting on your accepting the job.

If you have accepted another offer, say so, and explain why. Do everything you can to ensure that you and your readers part company as friends.

Example

Dear Mr. Joseph,

I enjoyed talking to you about your opening for a junior design engineer, and I was gratified to receive your offer.

Although I have given the offer serious thought, I have decided to accept a position with a consultancy firm. The job I have chosen will provide me with a greater variety of duties, which I feel will develop my skills more fully in the long run.

I appreciate your consideration and I am sure I would have enjoyed working for your company.

Sincerely,

28.6 LET US SUM UP

The search for a job consists of the following steps 1) locating the job you want 2) preparing an effective CV. 3) writing an effective letter of application 4) conducting a successful interview, 5) sending follow up letters 6) accepting or refusing jobs.

We have discussed in detail each of the steps, and given you examples which you may use in your quest for a job.

28.7 KEY WORD

Curriculum Vitae What is commonly referred to in India English as bio-data.