

# Guide to Writing a Pharmacy CV for Employment

## Steps to writing your CV

1. Start with a message
2. Arrange the skeleton or outline of your CV and choose descriptive headings that highlight your experience
3. Fill in content and describe each experience in a way that is relevant to the employer
4. Format your document to help the content stand out

### Step 1: Start with a message

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Employers need to understand how your experience, skills, and interests make you a good match for the job. In your professional CV, also known as your curriculum vitae, you will need to layout evidence that makes the case that you are a strong candidate for the position. For community jobs you will have 1 – 2 pages and for hospital positions you will have 2– 3 pages to present your case. But, before you begin writing, consider what overall message you want to convey with the data you share in your CV. What do you want the employer to know about your academic background and your clinical, teaching, research, community and leadership experiences (both paid and unpaid)? What information will clearly demonstrate that you have the required skills and experiences to be successful and that your presence will be a positive addition to the organization?

It may help to think about what employers look for in a candidate.

#### What do employers look for in applicants?

Employers may vary in terms of how much value they place on a particular type of experience. However, in general, they tend to look for candidates who have a range of clinical experiences and skills (as demonstrated through clinical rotations and internships), strong pharmacotherapy knowledge (acquired through education and clinical experiences), a strong work ethic and commitment to the field (demonstrated through university and/or community leadership and/or service), an ability to work in a team environment, leadership skills, strong communication skills, and in some cases research experience. Therefore, consider incorporating the following type of information into your CV. This type of information will help support your argument that you would be a good match for the job.

- **Academic training**  
Include where you went go to school, degrees, date of graduation, certifications/licenses, specialized trainings, honors and awards
- **Professional skills and experience**  
Include relevant clinical, work, volunteer, and school activities such as: pharmacy practice experiences (internships), clinical clerkships, research, leadership experience, community health/public health/ health related experience, teaching experience, management/customer service experience, counseling/mentoring/advocacy experience, international/global health experience, population specific experience (i.e. underserved population), clinical projects, presentations, publications, language skills.

The sum of these relevant experiences is your message. So how do you use your CV to share this message? By organizing your experience in an easy to read outline made up of descriptive section headings.

### Step 2: Arranging the outline or skeleton of your CV and choosing descriptive headings highlighting experience

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#### How to Organize Document

Think of your document as being divided into 3 sections:

- A. Academic training – educational background
- B. Relevant professional skills and experience – clinical, work, volunteer and school activities
- C. Outcomes - accomplishments/outcomes/results/ from educational and professional experiences

The 3 sections above are an invisible backdrop or framework for your document and not the actual headings.

Below are examples of headings you might use in each of the sections.

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**A. Academic Training** – Start with your education at the top of your document. The employer needs to know you are you have the appropriate training for the position.

## Example Headings

- Education
- Certifications (this heading can also be placed toward the end of the document in the outcomes section)

**B. Relevant Professional Skills and Experience** – Your skills and experience are detailed in the body of your document. On average students choose 5 or more headings from this section to organize and highlight their skills and experience in an easy to read format for the employer. For additional ideas on choosing headings, view the sample Community Pharmacy CVs at [career.ucsf.edu](http://career.ucsf.edu).

- Research Experience
- Basic Science Research Experience
- Lab Based Research Experience
- Clinical Research Experience
- Translational Research Experience
- Oncology Research Experience
- Diabetes-Focused Research Experience
- Public Health Research Experience
- Clinical Clerkships
- Clinical Experience
- Teaching & Mentorship Experience
- Teaching & Counseling Experience
- Teaching & Curriculum Development
- Medical Education Experience
- Medical Software Development Experience
- Project Management Experience
- Health Policy Experience
- Health Disparities Experience
- Health Promotion Experience
- Art Recovery Experience
- Clinic Coordinator Experience
- Outreach & Education Experience
- Public Health Experience
- Adolescent Focused Public Health Experience
- International Based Public Health Experience
- Professional Service & Leadership
- University Leadership & Service
- Community Service & Leadership
- Consulting Experience
- Clinical Experience
- Clinical Trials Training
- Project Management Training

**C. Outcomes** – In the last section of your CV, include the accomplishments/results/outcomes from having been involved in the above educational and professional experiences.

## Example Headings

- Presentations
- Honors and Awards
- Specialized Training and Certifications
- Professional Associations
- Clinical Projects
- Conferences
- Publications
- Language Skills

You tailor your experience to the employer by using descriptive headings the employer cares about. You organize the headings within each section according to your strengths and what you believe is most relevant to the employer.

## Step 3: Fill in the content and describe experience in a way that is relevant to the residency

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Students often question what and how much content to include under each experience. When describing clinical and non-clinical experience, you want to include 5 content areas: setting you worked in, team you worked on, populations

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you served, clinical issues you dealt with, and your accomplishments and skills. In terms of content length, as samples will show, it ranges from 2 – 6 bullets or 4 – 8 lines of text. Usually more than that, can be onerous for an employer to read.

Below are examples of the 5 content areas to include in your text highlighted in different colors.

- **Settings**
- **Issues you addressed**
- **Who you worked with**
- **Population you served**
- **Achievements/skills**

## **Clinical Example**

**Safeway Pharmacy, Intern Pharmacists**, San Francisco, CA. Month 0000 - Present

- Processed new prescriptions and refill requests for predominately lower income elderly patients
- Counseled patients regarding medications and recommended OTC products
- Evaluated medication dose and monitored patients for drug-drug interactions
- Answered phones and contacted doctors' offices regarding prescription changes and refill requests

**Walgreens, Intern Pharmacist**, Bakersfield, CA Month 0000 – Month 0000

- Received and transcribed verbal prescriptions, transferred prescriptions, filled and dispensed medications,
- counseled patients, and advised on and recommended over-the-counter medications
- Reviewed patient's profile for duplicate therapy and drug or disease interactions; resolved problem prescriptions, and served as translator for Spanish speaking patients

**Kern Medical Center, Intern Pharmacist**, Bakersfield, CA Month 0000 – Month 0000

- Compounded suspensions for neonates and pediatric patients
- Worked with nurses, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacist to reconcile missing or problem orders
- Reviewed anesthesia medication usage, prepared unit dosed medication, filled pyxis machines, and preformed out of date checks

## **Non-Clinical Example**

**Student Instructor for Expanding Education Through Social Action** Month 0000 - Month 0000

Course sponsored by Cal Corps, University of California, Davis

- Taught service learning course for fifteen undergraduate students
- Arranged speakers for course and led discussions on topics such as multiculturalism, health care, hunger and homelessness
- Assisted students with volunteer placements in the community and maintained records of volunteer hours and course attendance.

**Red Dress Fashion Show, APhA-ASP, UCSF** Month 0000

- Collaborated with team of student leaders in planning and implementing fundraising event raising \$5000 for research in heart disease in women

In some cases it may not be possible, or necessary, to include all 5 content areas in your description. However, when relevant, provide this information. By sharing this level of detail, employers can see you are comfortable working in a variety of settings, with a diverse group of health professions and/or patient populations, and that you are familiar with a range of health issues

Once again, for additional ideas on describing your experiences, review successful sample pharmacy community CV's donated by fellow UCSF pharmacy students on the OCPD website [career.ucsf.edu](http://career.ucsf.edu)

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## Step 4: Formatting

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Suggestions to help your document content stand out

- Margins: Top/bottom margin = .5 **and** Right/left margin = .5 to 1 inch
- Fonts: Times New Roman, Calibri, Cambria, Garamond, Helvetica, Garamond, Arial, Eurostile, Optima, Palatino, Georgia, etc...
- Font Size: 10-12 font (With smaller fonts like Times New Roman don't go below 11)
- Headings: bold and capitalize
- Indent /bold/capitalize/italicize/bullet content in document that you want the reader to notice upon first glance (use bold and italics sparingly and to highlight most important information in each section)
- Content descriptions can be presented in bullet form or paragraphs (length of descriptions range from 2 – 6 bullets or 4 – 8 lines of text)
- Document Length: 1–2 pages for community pharmacies and 2 – 3 pages for hospital pharmacies
- Put name and page number on each page in the upper right header or lower right footer (do not include first page which has your contact information already listed)
- Do not include personal information (i.e. birth date, birth city, personal marital status, photos)
- Would you like more help?
- OCPD has resources and services to assist you with your professional CV.
- To view professional CV samples, visit OCPD's web site at [career.ucsf.edu](http://career.ucsf.edu)
- If you would like your CV reviewed by an OCPD counselor, schedule an in-person, phone, or email review by calling 415–476–4986
- The Office of Career and Professional Development (OCPD) is located in the Medical Science Building Lobby, at 513 Parnassus Avenue, Room S140 and is open Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm.