

Module : Techniques de Communication et d'Expression III

Chapter 04: Scientific Writing

The art of scientific communication

Part one: Curriculum vitae

Curriculum vitae is Latin for "course of life". It's a collection of information on civil status, skills, diplomas and past activities.

I. Classic CV codes

There are seven basic codes to respect when writing a CV.

1. Typography

Typography is the set of techniques used to reproduce text by printing an assembly of characters in relief. It is the first contact between the applicant and the recipient. It lies between what you see and what you understand.

The number of CVs submitted to companies is constantly increasing, leaving recruiters less and less time to read them. So it's imperative to keep your CV as short as possible. The idea is to make it easier to read, because if it's read quickly, it will look shorter.

The typography should be classic, without requiring cognitive effort to decipher.

Typical font size is 12. Above this size, the reader has the impression of dealing with filler. Below that, it may be too small for the average reader, who may not have good eyesight.

Unlike friendly text messages, the spelling must be impeccable, with no abbreviations, no phonetic translations and no use of words not recognized by the dictionary.

2. The picture

your photo is placed in the top corner, opposite your contact details, with the same horizontal alignment, size and margin on the left for your contact details and on the right for your photo (or vice versa)

This symmetry is important, because the CV contains both your qualities and your defects. An ill-fitting or oversized photo reflects poorly on you in the eyes of your potential recruiter.

Here are a few tips:

- choose a good photographer who makes you feel confident, who frames well and highlights the right detail.
- Focus on the eyes. It expresses your character and motivation. Force yourself to look at the lens!
- Don't make your smile look forced. Avoid showing your teeth.
- use a white background

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3. The central title

Neither the name nor the photo should be placed in the center, as this will appear too pearly. The important thing in your CV is not you as a person, but the solution and the skills you can bring.

In the center, you should put the position you're applying for. This should be underlined with a larger font than the rest of the document.

4. The advertising banner

Below the main title, comes what's known as the ad banner/ This can include: main qualities, objectives and motivations.

4.1.Essential skills: these are presented in the form of a list, so that they can be read and understood.

4.2.The goodwills: they refer to what you have in addition to your skills and achievements, either in immaterial or technical qualities, such as:

- team management
- listening to others
- listening to requests
- open-mindedness

4.3.Objectives and motivations

Candidates can use this section to explain their objectives to the recruiter. Motivations should provide a link between the candidate and his/her future position.

5. Career path

the ideal is to reproduce a career path: your various professional experiences should tell a story to explain how all these stages have made you the person you are today, enabling you to acquire qualities and skills.

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Figure 01: CV model for students

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Part two: The professional mail

I. What is a professional mail:

In the context of professional exchanges, the message must be clear and effective. Your recipient must immediately understand your message, but also be motivated to react to it.

A business mail is therefore effective if it meets the following 7 requirements:

- 1- on reading the "subject", the recipient immediately understands what it's about and how it concerns him/her.
- 2-on skimming the run, the recipient should have a general idea of the message being conveyed.
- 3- The recipient can read the mail quickly, without stumbling over certain words or having to reread certain sentences.
- 4- The recipient understands the message you're trying to convey.
- 5- after a first reading, the recipient easily remembers the key message and the necessary information given
- 6- if the mail asks the recipient to perform a task, he or she knows exactly what to do and how to do it.
- 7- if an action is requested, the recipient is motivated to act or react

II. How to write a professional email:

Step 01: Before writing, I answer the following four questions:

1- Why should I write this mail?

To inform you of something?

To request information or action?

to respond with information?

to explain something?

to convince someone of something?

2- Who is my mail addressed to?

a teacher? a colleague? an administration?

Does my addressee know the subject and the technical notions I'm talking about?

3- In short, what is the message I want to convey?

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Step 02: *I gather the information my mail should contain*

- 1-Gather data: address and contact details
- 2- I collect the information my mail will contain on post-it notes or a mind map

Step 03: *structure the information*

- 1- I choose a plan that suits the message I need to convey
- 2- If possible, I start by telling the reader what's relevant to him/her, then give the main information or request for action. I end with a positive message

Step 04: *I write my mail*

- 1- I write a first draft of my mail
- 2- I reread my mail and rephrase it to make it clear and user-friendly. To do this, I check: word choice, short sentences, concise wording, concrete style, correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

tep 05: *I give my mails a layout that makes them easy to read*

- 1- group ideas into paragraphs
- 2- use bullets
- 3- put key words or phrases in bold

Step 06: *I frame my mail*

- 1- target your recipients
- 2- write an appropriate subject line
- 3- add a professional signature
- 4- take care of the visual presentation

Step 07: *I check that my mail is effective*

- 1- Proofread after a few hours
- 2- I make a final correction
- 3- Send the e-mail and check that it has been received

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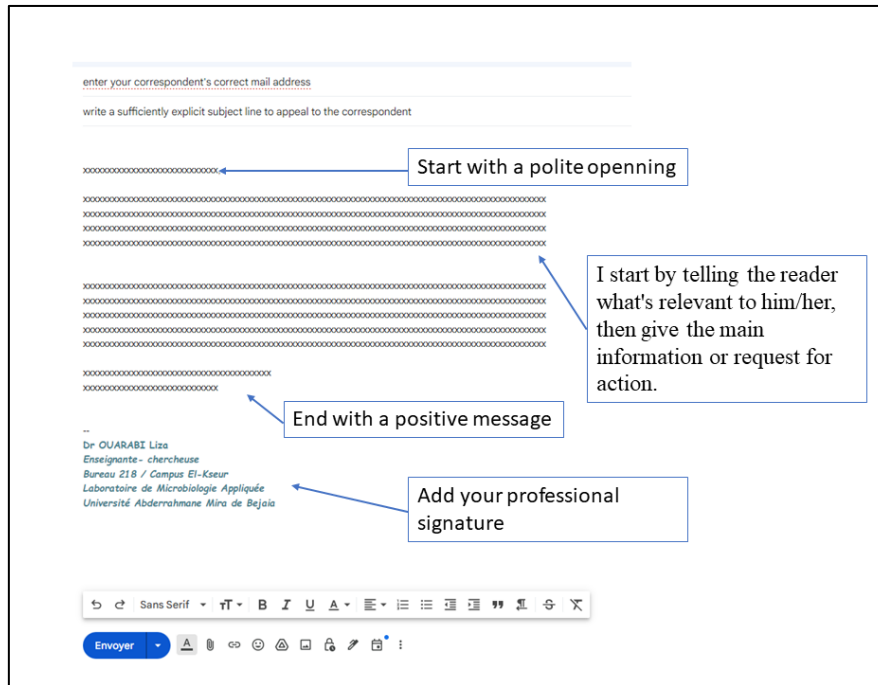


Figure 02: Part of a professional mail

References

1. Meuleman F. CV: la méthode brutale. Edipro; 2009.
2. Vervier A. Courrier clair: Outils et mode d'emploi pour vos lettres et e-mails. Edipro; 2017.