

ht think!

EXECUTION IS KEY, WARN HEADHUNTERS. A CREATIVE CV ONLY WORKS IF IT'S ALSO CLASSY

WORK IT, BABY

CVs are getting quirkier and braver. 3D art, a Flipkart 'product listing', even a 20-page magazine – there are no limits when the prize is a dream job

Anesha George
anesha.george@hindustantimes.com

How far would you go to get your dream job?

Today's young, confident go-getters are not afraid to punch above their weight.

Asked 'why should we hire you, instead of someone with an MBA', one young man offered to sing and dance to prove how much he wanted the PR job; another designed a CV that looked just like the magazine he was applying to – complete with cover, contents and subscription ad.

Yet another pitched himself to Flipkart with a CV that looked just like a Flipkart product listing.

Does it work? Well, the Flipkart applicant, Aakash Mittal, didn't get a job at Flipkart, but he did get 14 other offers – and 3 proposals for marriage! He took up one of those, the job offers that is, and now works with a logistics company.

"When I saw his CV, I saw passion to bring about a change and that is exactly what the logistics field needs," says his employer, Mahesh Hariharan, CEO of Baghirathi Logistics.

"Interestingly, the unconventional approach is not limited to the 'creative' professions any more. As competition gets fiercer, we're seeing it even in fields like engineering and IT," says Sarabjeet Sachar, founder of recruiting agency, Aspiration Jobs.

Some of the approaches are downright audacious. "I got a CV from a guy applying for a job in trade marketing. It was a book that told the story of his life. And he had left the last few chapters empty, asking us to help him fill them up by giving him a chance," says Lohit Bhatia, head of staffing at IKYA Human Capital Solutions. "It certainly made us sit up and take notice, but sadly he didn't fit the job profile."

One guy who did get the job is Vishal Chopra, 24, a Roadies fan who was so upset by his failed audition that he went home and created a video making fun of the show. His video went viral, MTV saw it, and hired him to do spoofs reviewing each episode of Season 9.

"VC's 'angsty video' did quite well on the web, which made us realise that he clearly had potential. So we hired him to make the same videos to engage viewers, but this time for MTV," says Eklavya Bhattacharya, then head of digital content for MTV.

It's a fine line, though, warn headhunters. "Sometimes, creative applicants can lose the plot completely," says N Shiva-kumar, business head at recruitment company Teamlease.

"I've seen speedometers and funnels used as work experience charts. It makes no sense. If you can't execute your idea really well, you'll just end up coming across as immature or inarticulate."



1 THE MAGAZINE COVER BOY

Sumukh Mehta, 22, crafted a 20-page resume last year that looked exactly like an edition of GQ magazine. Next to his photo on the cover was a note calling it a Special Resume Edition. Inside, there were pages dedicated to qualifications, experience, even a Letter from the Editor on why he was the man for GQ. GQ was so impressed that they offered him a six-month paid internship in London. His visa never came through, but the CV went viral and drew plenty of attention to his start-up, Your Pitchh, which helps people make their CVs stand out.

"I've been inundated with calls ever since the GQ CV," says Mehta. "What I tell everyone is that they need to do their homework. Know everything about the company and show them how you would fit in there perfectly."

He recently designed a 'CV poster' for a client looking for a job in digital marketing. "She was interested in outdoor marketing and so we thought it would be fun to courier a poster of her skills and achievements. She did get an interview call."



THE ROADIES RANTER

2 STRIKER OF 'SWEET DEALS'

Rajkamal Aich, 39, an art director from New Delhi, has turned his CV into a rather unusual showcase of his talent. He's created a pie-chart using bread and butter, symbolising how he earns his bread and butter; a chart using a roti, to represent his work experience; a piece of chikki cut into pieces to represent his skills. All in a bid to get a job overseas.

"I've been in the field of art for 15 years and I don't want to come across as just another boring graphics guy with a boring CV," he says.

He hasn't had much success so far, but he's now making a Lego-based resume. "I keep hoping for a call but instead ended up getting featured in a book on infographics and quirky resumes in Japan," says Aich, laughing.

Vishal Chopra, 24, didn't make it past the auditions for MTV Roadies. So, the Chandigarh boy went home and created a video blog, ranting about how the show sucked, the judges were awful and had broken his heart.

The video went viral – and he got a call from MTV. They signed Vishal on as 'Doctor VC'. His job? To create official spoof videos reviewing each episode of Roadies Season 9.

Last year, he wanted a switch and heard that radio channel 104.8 FM was looking for radio jockeys, so he called their national programming head, put on his best RJ voice and said, "Hi, mera naam hai Doctor VC, aur agar aapko meri aawaz pasand ayi to batao kab se R.Jing shuru karoon?" He's been an RJ there ever since. "You have to be confident. Don't over-think it; just do it," he says.



2



3 A 3D CV ART INSTALLATION

Delhi's Mohit Lakhmani, 29, was tired of freelancing. So in 2012, the 3D animation artist decided to apply to advertising company J Walter Thomson India. He did this by creating a 3D, paper-sculpted, infographic-driven resume and then standing with it in the lobby of JWT's New Delhi office.

It caught the creative director's eye and he got hired as senior art director.

"Advertising is all about how you sell yourself and this boy was able to do that just right, despite no advertising background, so we got him on board," recalls JWT creative director Rohit Dhamija.

Lakhmani now runs his own design company, and is crafting a CV for a client that will look like a travel kit. The resume will be a passport; boarding passes will list qualifications; a map will cite work experience.

HT PHOTOS: AALOK SONI



HE SANG, DANCED FOR A JOB IN PR

Siddhant Valecha, 24, was bored of being an architect and wanted to quit. But his dad had one condition – he had to find another job within a week. On Day 5, he landed an interview with a PR company. They weren't impressed.

Why would they want to hire an architect? Because he wanted it more than anyone else, he said. To prove it, he sang a little song, did a little dance. Later that day, he also called one of his interviewers back and pitched a product live, on the phone. He got an internship, and was hired full-time in just 25 days.

"His rawness was what I felt worked for him. His natural instinct is to engage people in conversation and that's exactly what you need in order to make it in PR," says Rinki Chellani, then client servicing head at the PR company.

Valecha now runs his own PR company, so yes, his dad agrees that the gamble paid off.



3



4 THE FLIPKART FLASH SALE

Aakash Mittal, 24, was in his final year of ocean engineering and naval architecture at IIT-Kharagpur when he heard that Flipkart was coming in for campus interviews.

Desperate to stand out, he created a resume that looked exactly like a Flipkart product page, pitching himself as the product.

"I knew there were thousands of students vying for just a few interview slots, so I wanted to really get their attention," he says.

He didn't get a slot with the e-commerce major, but his CV was a big hit online and he got 14 other job offers – and 3 marriage proposals.

"It took me 70 hours to remodel my CV on Photoshop, but it was definitely worth the effort," he says.

Mittal now works with Baghirathi, a logistics company that was one of the 14 that offered him a job.

"When I saw his CV, I saw a passion to bring about change, and that is exactly what the logistics field needs," says his current employer, Mahesh Hariharan, CEO, Baghirathi.

VARA
R
I
E
T
Y



more on web

To hear directly from these creative guys, and see more of their quirky CVs, go to hindustantimes.com/lifestyle

AUCTION HERO WHY IS VARMA STILL RELEVANT? THE ARTIST PAINTED INDIA AS IT COULD BE

RAJA RAVI VARMA: THE COMEBACK KID

Arnab Das Sharma
arnabdas@hindustantimes.com

From a small village to the famous London auction house of Sotheby's, the afterlife of Raja Ravi Varma's paintings has acquired a certain uniqueness that is, perhaps, only rivalled by the life of the artist himself.

Born in 1848, in the village of Kilimanoor in Kerala, and related to the royal family of Travancore by blood, legend has it that Raja Varma, as a child, started painting on the walls of his house.

Earlier this month, an unnamed painting by the artist depicting the mythological figure, Damayanti, from the Mahabharata, fetched a record Rs 11.09 crore at a Sotheby's auction in New York, more than double its upper estimate.

"One of the reasons for this record price for a Raja Ravi Varma canvas is because it is so rare for his works to come out," says Yamini Telkar, the Mumbai director of Delhi Art Gallery, which owns a sizeable collection of rare Ravi Varma paintings.

"Most Ravi Varma paintings are housed in private collections, as he painted for the Travancore court. Besides, more than a portrait, the Damayanti canvas is part of

his famed mythological series, the series for which he is particularly well known."

The aesthetics of Raja Ravi Varma has become so ubiquitous today that it's difficult to imagine what impact it must have had in the royal court of Travancore.

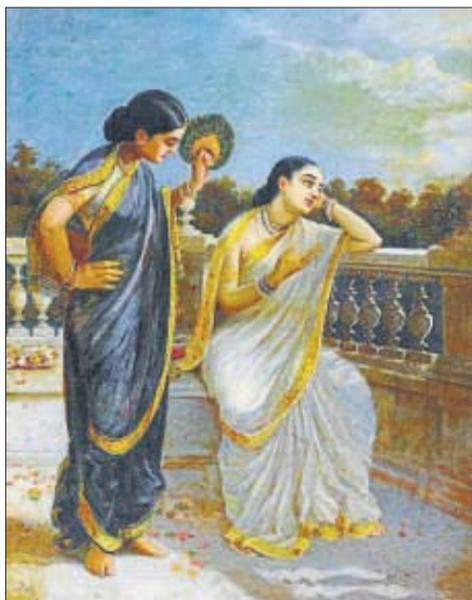
His colour palette has become the source for innumerable representations of Indian gods and goddesses, from the popular calendar art to the comic books of Amar Chitra Katha.

Daubed in bright, dazzling colours, his paintings of goddesses, draped in Maheshwari and Paithani saris, evoked a kind of femininity that in popular representations henceforth came to define 'Indianness'.

In a way, working during the heyday of Indian nationalism, Varma's works, particularly his mythological works, were embedded in the deep cultural ethos emerging at the time.

Christopher Pinney, in his magisterial work, Photos of the Gods: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India, recounts how nationalist figures like Bal Gangadhar Tilak drew from the artist's images to paint a picture of the emerging nation's mythic past, a project that was so crucial for nationalism to succeed.

With Independence, and the emergence



of progressive artists such as MF Husain in the '50s and '60s, Ravi Varma's images saw a sharp decline in terms of critical consensus.

He was treated as an obscurantist and it seemed his reputation would largely be as a painter of gods and goddesses.

As the writer Ira Pande puts it in an article on the artist, Ravi Varma was also a man of his times, a documentarian who showed in his portraits the courtly culture of Travancore, especially when nationalism was at its peak and the courtly culture had slowly become redundant. In that way, his works, while modern in their aesthetic, evoked a particular nostalgia for the mythic past.

The 21st century has been rather kind to Ravi Varma. Commenting on the critical and popular resurgence in Ravi Varma, Telkar of DAG says, "The reason for the contemporary interest in Raja Ravi Varma has got more to do with distance and time. The heavy influence of the Calcutta and Bombay Progressives is no longer as strong today, as it was in the '50s. Now, we recognise Ravi Varma not just as pioneering, but also as someone who has self-fashioned a whole new vocabulary of Indian art. During his time, Varma was pioneering in his use of canvas as a medium, and his aesthetic, while couched in the garb of tradition, was surprisingly modern."

The painting of Damayanti, for instance, is a case in point.

While the painting itself depicts the titular character, looking out of her balcony, pining for her lost lover, Nala, Varma uses bright strokes to paint her. She is draped in a lush white sari, in a way signifying her chastity.



But Varma is also mindful in not incorporating any male figure in the painting, making the female protagonist stand out.

The highest price ever paid for a Ravi Varma painting, incidentally, was at a Pundole auction in November 2016, for a work that was twice the size of Damayanti. It was called Lady in the Moonlight.

Although critics like Yamini are mindful in suggesting that the possibility of another Ravi Varma going under the hammer in the near future is rather rare, it goes without saying that the record price would, perhaps, spark a resurgence for the artist, and for the fascinating world of Travancore that nurtured him.

Raja Ravi Varma was born in a village in Kerala, in 1848. His art is still familiar to people around the world.

His painting, Damayanti (left), recently fetched Rs 11.09 crore at a Sotheby's auction. Note how a woman is the centre of his frame. In some ways, his art was surprisingly modern.