

VINAYAK SHARMA

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dynamic senior leader with 14+ years of experience driving growth, operations and innovation in traditional Indian textiles, community-led craft ecosystems and regenerative cotton farming. Skilled in strategic leadership, product development, cross-functional team building, stakeholder collaboration and cultural program curation to deliver sustainable impact.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Strategic Business & Growth Planning
 - Sustainable Textile & Cotton Supply Chains
 - Traditional Textile & Product Innovation
 - Budgeting & Product Costing
 - Cross-Functional Team Leadership
 - B2B/B2C Sales & Negotiation
 - Brand Development & Digital Commerce
 - Vendor & Stakeholder Management
 - Data-Driven Inventory & Demand Forecasting
 - Fundraising & Partnership Development
 - Process Optimization & Quality Control
 - Community Engagement & Artisan Empowerment
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EXPERIENCE

1. Operations Lead | artisan:re - RPG Foundation, Mumbai | Sep 2023 – May 2025

Reported to promoter and collaborated with executive management to develop growth strategy and operational excellence for bridging corporate CSR with India's unorganised textile and farming clusters.

- Strategic Leadership & Growth
 - Crafted scalable business strategies expanding textiles and handloom initiatives, across Maharashtra, Telangana and Gujarat.
 - Managed ₹5+ Cr annual budgets and planning CSR spending of ₹12+ Cr for the programme.
- Operational Excellence & Portfolio
 - Directed 280+ SKU portfolio across mill-spun/hand-spun yarns, powerloom, handloom, heritage (Tangaliya, Patola and Kutchi) textiles and home furnishings.
 - Developed costing strategies for cotton commodities and cotton-based products.
 - Negotiated buyer agreements, costs and oversaw production to ensure timely delivery and satisfaction.
- Team Leadership & Social Impact
 - Led 20+ cross-functional team including 12 direct reportees.
 - Trained 150+ women artisans in weaving, spinning, natural dyeing, tailoring and embroidery, empowering farming communities.
 - Supported expansion of cotton farmer network from 500 to 1500, promoting regenerative farming and sustainability.
- Stakeholder Engagement & Program Innovation
 - Designed and delivered pitch decks for stakeholders to drive collaborations, fundraising and sales.
 - Built government, private sector and industry partnerships for R&D, market development and training.
 - Co-developed an innovation cum community hub, coordinating the efforts of architects, designers and leadership for sustainable textile and farming transformation.
- Process & Supply Chain Optimization

- Procured, deployed and optimized textile machinery infrastructure, improving cost efficiency and sustainability.
- Introduced data-backed supply chain traceability software systems to boost transparency, inventory management and consumer facing accountability.

2. Co-Founder & Director | Cotton Rack, Jaipur | Nov 2013 – Aug 2023

Built India's first institutionally funded Khadi brand, transforming the highly unorganised craft sector into a structured, scalable business.

- Introduced products in hand-spun cotton and wool, peace silk and innovative textiles like Cashmere Cotton.
- Collaborated with NGOs and artisan groups across Rajasthan, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir and Bihar.
- Developed brand language and storytelling across digital platform, packaging, exhibitions and lookbooks.
- Expanded sales footprint across India, USA, South Korea, Japan, Italy and Netherlands.
- Implemented on-demand production, cutting costs and optimising raw material stock.
- Increased product launch frequency, improving trend adaptability and reducing dead stock from 35% to 5%.
- Used city-wise sales data to optimise inventory, boosting sell-through rates and average ticket sizes.
- Built online store on Shopify and introduced a body shape calculator for personalise recommendations and improve customer retention.
- Sustained steady growth during COVID with innovative pricing and marketing strategies.

3. Assistant Professor | Indian Institute of Crafts & Design (IICD), Jaipur | Jun 2021 – Apr 2023

- Designed and launched India's first Craft Communication Design degree.
- Introduced case-based business education to replace theory-heavy curricula.
- Mentored top-performing graduates to nurture entrepreneurial and industry-ready talent.
- Boosted admissions and engagement through targeted content and marketing campaigns across digital channels.

4. Assistant Manager | ColorPlus (Raymond Group), Chennai | Jun 2011 – Oct 2013

- Launched "Orange Line" for young professionals contributing 11% seasonal revenue.
- Led Shirt category design (70% business), delivering 32% YoY sales growth.

EDUCATION

- **MBA (Online)** – Manipal University, Jaipur | 2025-Present
- **B.Des. Fashion Design** – NIFT, Delhi | 2007–2011
- **Lean Six Sigma Green Belt** – KPMG India | 2024

Tools

Adobe Creative Suite | CorelDRAW | Figma | MS Office | Shopify | AI Tools (ChatGPT, Perplexity)

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- **Lexus Design Awards India Finalist (2021)** – Cashmere Cotton Innovation
- **Industry Disruptor by UN Women (2020)** – Recognized for Sustainable Fashion Leadership
- **Top 20 Designers Under 35 (2016)** – Alliance Française de Delhi

References Available on Request