

## WHY IS YOUR CV SO IMPORTANT?

It is called a CURRICULUM VITAE, meaning a "life list". Don't mess up the spelling of the name. If you use it, then use it correctly.

Imagine you are the employer. Imagine getting 50 CV's across your desk in one day. How would you choose who to interview? Obviously the CV's that stand out, the ones that make you take notice. Perhaps you do not have exactly the job history for the position. Perhaps you are a school or college leaver. *Your job is to get your CV noticed or it will go to the bottom of the pile.*

1. Your CV **makes the very first impression** about you.
2. It is a kind of **sales agent for you**, to "sell" yourself to the employer.
3. It provides your employer with an idea about **your track record** before you even get to the interview.
4. It helps the employer prepare questions to be discussed at the interview.
5. For these reasons, your CV has to make a really good first impression. **NON NEGOTIABLE.**
6. If your CV is sloppy and full of typing mistakes and does not have complete information about you, it will go to the bottom of the pile of applications.

## WHAT SHOULD GO INTO YOUR CV?

1. Your **PERSONAL** details
2. Your **EDUCATIONAL** details
3. Your **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**
4. Your **CONTACTABLE** or **WRITTEN REFERENCES**
5. A **SKILLS EVIDENCE LIST**

### 1. Your Personal Details

- 🍷 Name (as on your ID or passport and your preferred name if real name is Andiswa Ngxito (Cynthia))
- 🍷 Male or female
- 🍷 Permanent address
- 🍷 Telephone numbers (make sure you give enough contact numbers. If the employer cannot reach you, they will go to the next applicant)
- 🍷 Date of birth and age

- 🍷 Your home language and other languages spoken (don't pretend you can speak the language well or write it if you only have a vague understanding of it)
- 🍷 Identity number or passport number
- 🍷 Driver's license and code (if you have one)

The following items are optional:

- 🍷 Marital status
- 🍷 Husband/wife/partner's work
- 🍷 Details regarding children
- 🍷 Health, including any problems
- 🍷 Hobbies and interests

### 2. Your Educational Details

- 🍷 School attended and year completed
- 🍷 Highest Grade passed
- 🍷 Subjects passed (Grade 12 only). These are important because they will not be discussed in the interview but might help your application. For example, if you want to be a cashier and you have done Grade 12 Maths or Accounting your employer can see you are comfortable with numbers
- 🍷 Leadership roles at school like prefect or soccer captain
- 🍷 School awards and achievements
- 🍷 College or university attended and year completed.
- 🍷 (Remember to indicate if your course is incomplete. Do not pretend you have completed it if you still have a year to go!)
- 🍷 Subjects passed
- 🍷 Qualifications obtained

### 3. Your Employment History

- 🍷 Start with your **most recent job and work backwards** in order. Don't put the jobs down in any random order. This looks sloppy and we do not want a sloppy CV remember! Be clear.
- 🍷 Give the **company name** and the **full name of your employer**.
- 🍷 What kind of business was it?
- 🍷 What was **your position** there?
- 🍷 **What dates did you work?** The month and the year. Be very specific and know your dates well. Be totally honest here. This is very important for the interview later!
- 🍷 What were **your duties**? Give some detail but make it relevant. Show key areas of responsibility.
- 🍷 What was your **reason for leaving**? Do not write "contract expired" if you had no contract. Be honest without putting the employer off. You do not want to write things like "had a fight with my boss". Rather 'interpersonal differences'. Be honest but leave the difficult details for the interview.

- 🍷 If you have done **voluntary work** in your community, include this in your CV. Work is work, paid or not. It can show your interviewer you are involved, you are a caring person and you will have learned certain skills doing that work.

### 4. Contactable or Written References

- 🍷 The person's name (first name and surname)
- 🍷 Their position
- 🍷 The company name
- 🍷 A contact number (be sure the number is still valid). If you have a written reference, this can be faxed off with your CV.
- 🍷 **Never ever create a fake written reference.** You will be found out!
- 🍷 Only give employers as references if you can. Remember, the person interviewing wants someone else to tell them what kind of employee you were. Never put down friends as references, your employer wants to know how you work, not what kind of friend you are!
- 🍷 If you have not worked, then put down a teacher or a priest in your church or a coach in your sports club who can give you a good character reference.

### 3. A Skills Evidence List

This section is VERY, VERY important if you want to get your CV noticed. This section talks about what you can do as a result of **your personal growth/learning and your experience**. It tells your employer a bit about how you operate best.

Ask yourself the question: **WHAT ARE MY SKILLS?** This is not only about what you do....it is about who you are.

Look at all your life experiences and see what great qualities they reveal about you. Explore the gifts you have, the lessons you have learned in life that you could bring to the workplace.

Some examples:

- 🍷 I was the captain of my soccer team. I learned: leadership skills, how to communicate with people, how to motivate people, how to make decisions, how to set an example:
- 🍷 I was a prefect at school. I learned: how to communicate with people junior and senior to me, how to handle conflict and assert myself, how to be responsible.
- 🍷 I was a dispatch clerk. I learned: how to pay attention to detail, how to keep good records, how to take responsibility, how to administrate well and work within systems.

Things to explore in your skills evidence list would be personal qualities like:

1. Leadership ability
2. Organizational skills
3. Communication skills
4. Initiative
5. Commitment
6. Flexibility
7. Ability to multi-task
8. Caring and kindness towards others

You need to take time over this section. You need to take time to know yourself well. Why? If you make the extra effort on your CV, you will be noticed and you will be asked to go for an interview!

**Remember, your CV is just a ticket to the interview. It is your way in!**

## DO YOU NEED A COVERING LETTER

Lastly, if you can, produce a letter of motivation for a that specific position, stating why you are really keen and a suitable candidate.

Be sincere and real and don't write sentences full of nonsense, that you copied from a CV or business textbook!

Don't repeat everything that is in your CV - just state clearly what you want.

Make sure you get the employer's name spelled correctly.

**GOOD LUCK.  
NOW GO OUT THERE TO BE NOTICED!**

**DREAMWORKER**  
working for the unemployed

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## TIPS ON HOW TO HANDLE THE INTERVIEW

If you have done your work on your CV and have managed to get the interview, well done! This is your one chance now to **GET THE JOB!**

- Be VERY familiar with your own CV.
- Know the dates well, people's names, the position you had. Any hesitation makes it seem you might be covering something up.
- Interviews are stressful, so avoid extra stress by:
  - Being early for the interview
  - Being sure you know exactly where to go
  - Being sure you have the name of the person you are seeing
  - Having a contact number in case you are unavoidably delayed
  - Having something to eat before hand as stress takes energy away from mind and body
  - Dressing properly and neatly.
- Remember, your CV tells your employer your story, but they want to get to know your personality. Take a copy of your CV with you.
- Be confident. Shake hands firmly. Speak clearly and not too softly.
- Speak positively and never moan about a previous job or badmouth an employer.
- Don't fidget, put away keys or pens that can distract you.
- Switch off your cellphone.
- Don't cross your arms - it looks too "closed off". Rather put your hands on your knees, to maintain an open body posture if you are nervous.
- Sit up straight rather than slouching back in your chair.
- Wait to be seated to avoid sitting in the wrong place!
- Keep eye contact - no looking around the room or at your feet!
- When asked about your work history do not answer "It's all on my CV!". Your employer is trying to get to know you.
- Be honest with your answers even if you have to admit "I don't know".
- Know all your personal strengths and abilities well. Be proud of who you are.
- Listen well and ask a few questions. It shows you are interested.
- Thank the person for interviewing you. Do not nag about when you will be told the outcome.
- Be patient - they have many to interview for the post.
- Kinds of questions you may be asked:
  - What are your strengths/weaknesses?
  - What pleases you/what annoys you?
  - Give an example of how you handled pressure?
  - Why do you want this job/why should I employ you?
  - What have been your failures/your achievements?
- **Let DreamWorker know how your interview went!**

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**PREPARING A GOOD CV  
The Do's and Don'ts!**