



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE



Simple but extensive guidelines on compiling your Curriculum Vitae



A place of quality, a place to grow, from hope to action through knowledge.

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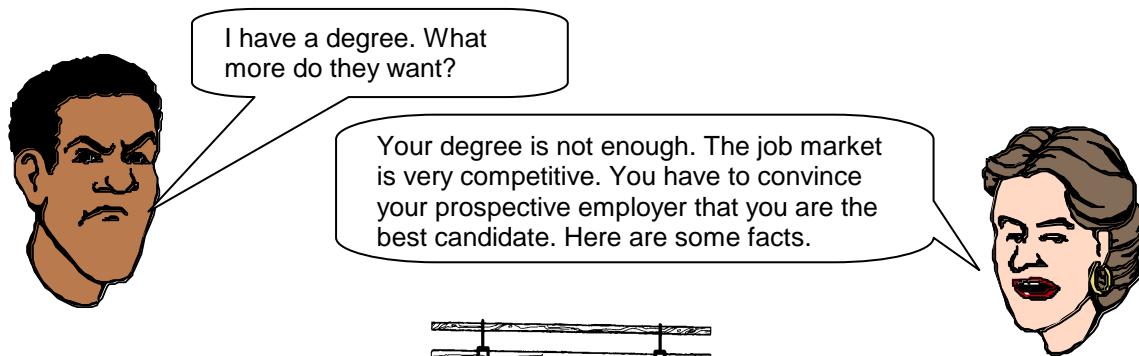
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shared by Winston Middleton

INTRODUCTION

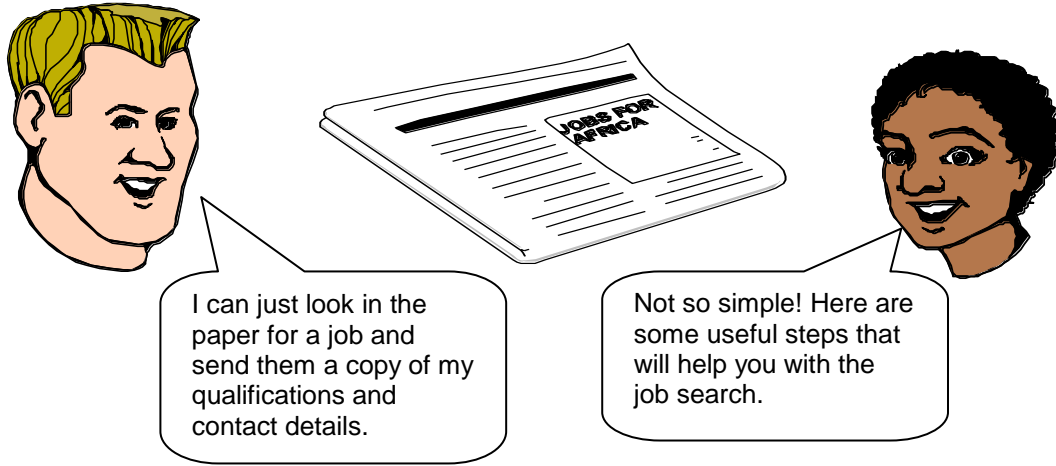
The information for this manual is drawn from the experiences of the author in career services at the University of the Western Cape including evaluating the curriculum vitae of students. The manual is targeted at tertiary students who are in the process of looking for their first job. While focussing on the process of compiling a curriculum vitae and its content, the manual will also address the questions which students have raised during presentations, workshops and individual consultations. The general format of this manual will be to state the issue or topic and then provide a description, guidelines and examples.



- Adjust your job search strategy as the number of graduates increase and the job market becomes more competitive. There are many more applicants competing for the limited vacancies.
- A tertiary degree provides a competitive edge in the labour market.
- Over 60% of UWC graduates find employment after graduation.
- Of the graduates who did not find employment immediately, 60% did so within the first six months of searching.
- Some of the difficulties experienced in securing employment include a weak CV, letter of motivation and interview skills.
- Work related skills developed through co-curricular and extra-mural activities are critical job selection criteria.

The demands of the world of work have changed from previous years. Thus students should spend sufficient time during their studies in preparing for the job search. One's qualifications should rather be viewed as a key to open a door of opportunity. Many academic subjects at university adequately prepare students for the **theory** and focus less on **practical/technical** skills. Graduate students in the workplace are expected to learn quickly, solve problems, work in a team, demonstrate leadership, be innovative and have good interpersonal, organisational and communication skills. Thus students have to develop many of these marketable skills beyond their academic work. Recruiting is also becoming more sophisticated in order to ensure equity and transparency.

JOB SEARCH PROCESS



FACT FILE

- Most South Africans today can expect to change jobs several times during their working life.
- Students should focus on obtaining their first job after graduation.
- The job search process has a number of stages which, if implemented systematically, could enhance your success.
- Preparing your job search support materials is one step in the process which will demand sufficient time and energy.
- Career planning starts in your first year.

The basic steps are outlined below.

PERSONAL		CAREER	
ANALYSIS	This personal assessment includes your interests, abilities, job values, qualifications, experiences and achievements. You need to know what you want from a job and what you have to offer to a potential employer.	OPTIONS	Gather information on various career fields and then specific jobs which will satisfy some of your needs. Be inclusive as possible at the beginning. Assistance can be obtained from Careers Service of the Office for Student Development and other sources such as career counsellors, lecturers, friends alumni and relatives.

CAREER

DECISIONS

After the initial exploration of possible careers, several options such as work, postgraduate study or travel will emerge as realistic and attractive. If you decide to work, you must then determine where your qualifications and experiences fit best, and which type of companies, organisations and jobs you should target.

SUPPORT

MATERIALS

This phase requires the preparation of your CV, letter of motivation and other supporting documents. These include certified copies of your study record, certificates of award and achievement, testimonials and other relevant supporting documents.

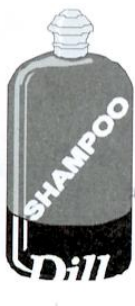
DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

Your job search strategy will involve surveying the job market, preparing for interviews, contacting employers and submitting job applications.

- Network with people in career fields that interest you, read newspapers and journals, contact relevant professional bodies and research your career field and a wide range of companies and organisations. Information can be obtained from your Resource Centre at the Office for Student Development.
- Surf the internet sites of companies to obtain current information such as mission statement, structure, products/services, graduate recruitment opportunities, annual report and location.
- Prepare for the interview by watching relevant videos, preparing and practising interview questions, and even arranging for a mock interview. After applying for various positions, you may be short-listed to attend a screening interview.
- Follow up on all interviews by sending thank-you letters. Thereafter you may be invited to attend a second interview or assessment centre. On being offered a job, you may negotiate the offer and then accept it in writing.

In essence you have to decide what you want and what you have to offer, and then develop a strategy to achieve your career goals. The challenge is exciting and there will be several disappointments. It is, however, important to evaluate your disappointments to ascertain what you may have done “wrong” or what you need to do to improve your interview presentation.

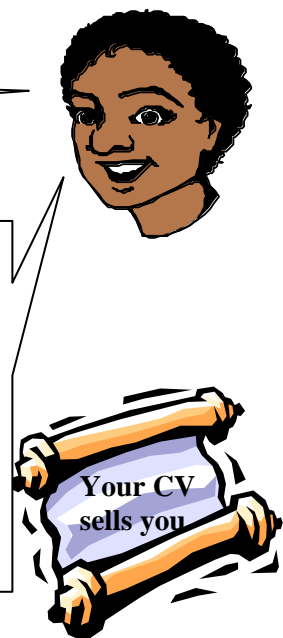
In order to sell this shampoo, one needs to create an advertisement that would provoke the interest of the consumer to buy the product.



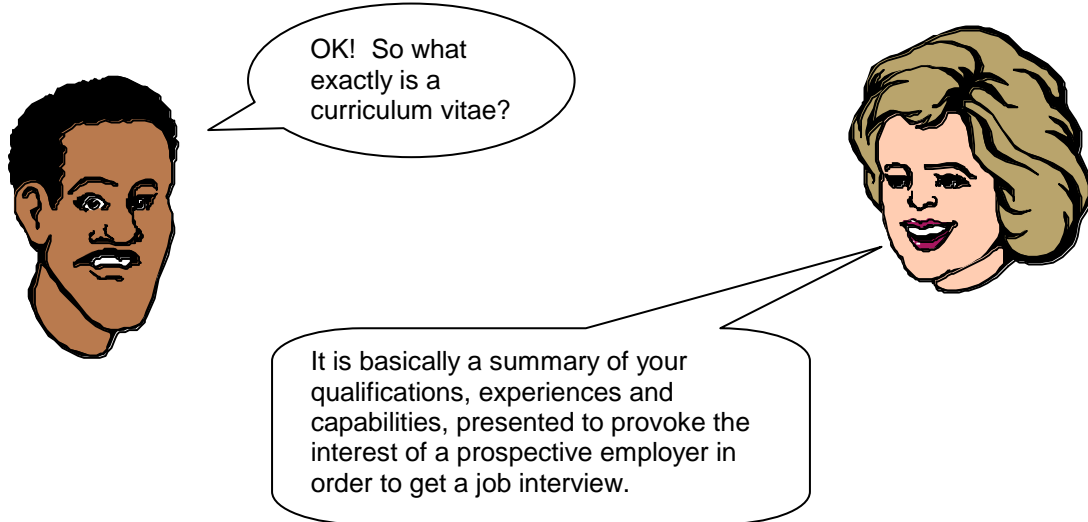
ADVERTISEMENT

Dill Shampoo has all the natural nutrients that stimulate healthy hair growth and gives your hair a beautiful shine and lustre without an oily appearance. Dill Shampoo also says goodbye to nasty dandruff and deep massages your scalp for natural health and well-being.

Similarly, you need to sell yourself to a prospective employer to create enough interest to secure an interview. Also list your qualifications and skills and how you will benefit the company and be an asset to them.



WHAT IS A CURRICULUM VITAE?



FACT FILE

- An effective curriculum vitae or CV is not a detailed life-story but a well-structured, concise, easy-to-read presentation of what you have to offer.
- Do not include any information which could lead to your disqualification before you have a chance of an interview.
- A CV is not a shadow – it **precedes** not follows you.
- A CV is not a fact sheet.
- A good CV should evoke the reader to say, “*Wow, somebody knows what she wants. Let me invite her to an interview.*”
- The CV is a tool in your job search. Developing a CV is not merely a technical exercise - you are also preparing for the interview. You are thus the best author for your CV.

A well prepared curriculum vitae indicates an organised and methodical person.



That sounds easy. I know how to write essays. It will only take me an hour to put my details on paper. I'll impress anybody with my writing expertise.

I wish it was that simple. I worked on six drafts before I came up with a concise CV.



I started compiling my CV in my first year of studies. After working 15 years, I still update my CV regularly, even when I am not searching for a job.



OK. So I can write a long, impressive CV now.

Golden Rule: Keep it short and sweet.

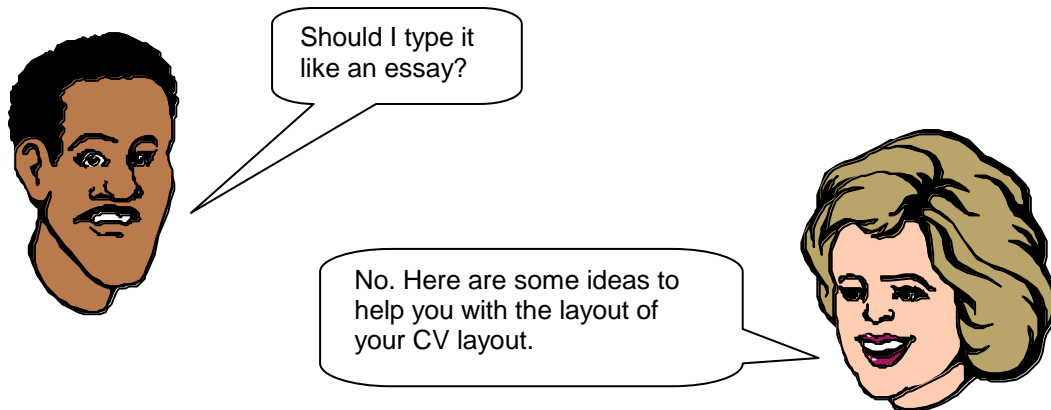


Motivational speakers and feedback from company interviewers strongly suggest that “short is sweet”. By keeping your CV short (stick to the important points!) there is a greater chance that you will attract the attention of the reader. Eliminate information which is repeated, stated in different words or implied elsewhere in your CV. Experience has shown that students who have little to market often present longer CVs by repeating or providing superfluous information.

A CV which is too long becomes tedious to read. Try to achieve a balance by giving sufficient information to interest the reader while leaving out enough to make him/her want to interview you. Do not burden a reader with the extra work of sifting out the relevant facts. A comprehensive CV should not exceed two to three A4 size pages using only one side of the paper. An abridged resume (one page) contains highlights from your comprehensive CV and is targeted at what you are applying for. You will need both a comprehensive CV and a resume depending on the requirements of a company.

HINTS FOR KEEPING YOUR CV CONCISE

- * Use phrases instead of complete sentences, e.g., “I was chosen by the Head of Department to coordinate the work of the student tutors” could be restated as “coordinated student tutors”.
- * Eliminate repetitions. If you did similar tasks in different positions, explain only one in detail.
- * Don’t elaborate on information that is already implied or included elsewhere. For example, don’t give details about your primary and high school education if you are already a post-graduate student unless there is specific information which you wish to share.
- * Concentrate on the recent positions if you have many past jobs and experiences and merely list the others.
- * Eliminate superfluous information such as your height, weight, children's names, etc. unless it is relevant.
- * Consolidate your information by giving one or two examples only.



HOW TO ACHIEVE AN EFFECTIVE LAYOUT

There is no single correct way of compiling a CV. Much depends on a combination of factors and personal preference. The choice of words will distinguish an effective CV from a weak one. A generic CV might simply be lost in a pack. Be wary of simply copying a format from a book or the internet - other students would have read the same book or internet site too! You need to focus the information towards a specific career objective or advertised position so that the reader can clearly determine your suitability for the job.

Every word in your CV should be there for a reason!

Use set margins (not necessarily lines!) on all four sides of the page. The appropriate use of white space emphasizes what is on the page and thus the CV does not look cramped. There could be two main columns of information that line up. In order to scan a CV easily, one should clearly separate the different sections through consistent headings, sub-headings and underlines. Make headings and/or sub-headings bold and a size bigger. Just as an effective advertisement, your CV should be concise, informative, attractive and create a good first impression. Avoid different (fancy) print fonts. An effective layout tries to direct the eye unconsciously to the important parts of your CV and to make it effortless for the reader to form a mental picture of yourself. One's margins, punctuation marks, underlining and white space between information should be consistent. Information can be highlighted in several ways to add visual interest.

FORMATTING HINTS

- * Use UPPER CASE letters for important headings or titles.
 - * Underlines or *italics* could be used to emphasize accomplishments.
 - * **Boldface** type should be used judiciously.
 - * Indents separate different types of information. Do not use too many levels of indenting as this will lengthen the CV unnecessarily.
 - * "Bullets" such as *, - or > are set in front of short, separate points to create an attractive list.
- * Boxes to highlight information should be used discerningly.

Keep your language simple. Writing in the second or third person ("your candidate", "he" or "I" does not make the CV appear more objective). Do not start

sentences with the pronoun “I” or the adjective “my”. Avoid repeating words in the same sentence or paragraph.

The CV should be typed in double-spacing on one side of the paper only. Staple the pages together or use a simple method of binding. Ensure that your name and page number appears in small print at the bottom of each page. Use a good quality paper, a computer and laser printer in order to produce an attractive CV. Generally white rather than coloured paper is used. It will be easy to make adjustments to your CV if it is saved on a memory stick.

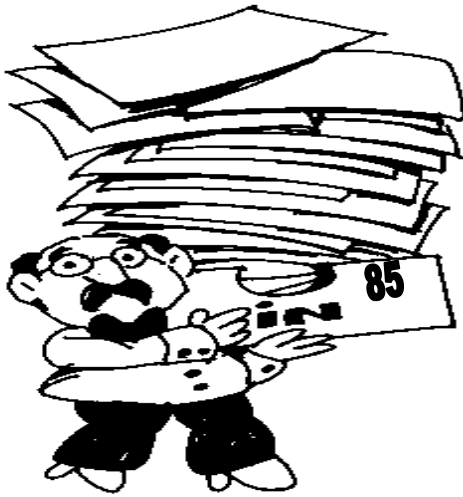
You will not achieve the best layout of a CV on your first draft. It requires several drafts of editing, shortening of sentences, deleting of unnecessary words, checking for spelling and grammatical errors, reviewing phrases until it says exactly what you mean, and eliminating redundancies and confusing style. Do not use correction fluid and neither should errors be corrected by writing over it. Thereafter give it to knowledgeable friends, colleagues, family members and/or a careers counsellor to critique. Type a final version and review it for the last time. Do not send poor photocopies of your CV - it should be as neat as the original. Use an envelope large enough to fit into an envelop without folding it.

***Type your CV on a computer and save it to a flash.
It is easier to update!***

Try making your CV different from the others which will be received for the same position. While your qualifications and experiences might be similar to other applicants, you should focus on the particular position and why you are the most suitable candidate. Eventually the critical difference will be what you emphasize and the way in which you present yourself. For example, you might shift your financial related experience from the section titled “*Other Experience*” and record it under “*Relevant Experience*”. As no two work situations are identical, a CV has to be adapted to suite the criteria for each job. Remember that you are trying, with your CV, to win an opportunity to be interviewed. Thus compile your CV from the point of view of the reader and ensure that you have presented it in a clear, logical sequence so that the parts form a harmonious whole rather than it being a conglomeration of separate pieces of information. Emphasize the positive and relevant points and merely summarize the information which is not directly related to the job at hand.

HOW ARE RESUMES SHORT-LISTED?

During the first phase of short-listing CVs, especially if there are many applications for a vacancy, recruiters have suggested that they will rarely spend more than a minute scanning a CV in deciding whether it merits a complete reading. Your CV must be appealing otherwise it will simply be discarded due to the difficulty in reading it. CVs are then sorted into two stacks, namely, “consider further” and “reject”. The selection at this phase is usually done on the basis of the minimum criteria for the post.

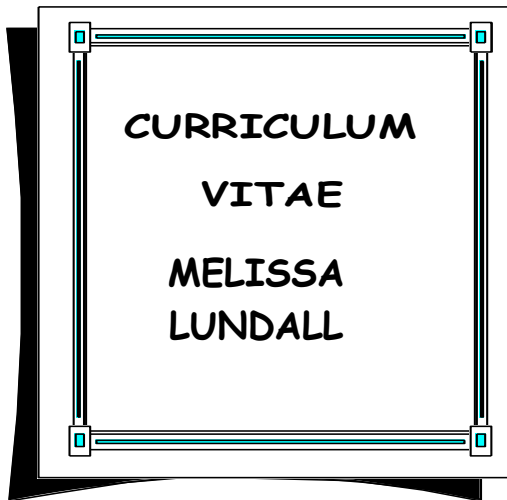


Then the reader will spend a little more time in sorting through the first pile again and make further cuts on the basis of quality and presentation.

Thus candidates who may be well qualified in their field may not be considered for an interview due to the poor quality of their CV. Despite an intention to look through the rejected pile again, one often does not have the time to do so and those applicants will all get a polite rejection letter.

On considering the number and availability of the interviewers, a decision will then be made about the number of applicants to be interviewed. The CVs will be further scrutinised according to the quality of the candidates.

COVER PAGE



The cover page should be neat, simple and attractive, and contain the words “curriculum vitae” and your “full names”. Other information such as your address and date of compiling the CV are not necessary. On examining the CVs of over 200 students, three important issues arise.

- The border should not be excessive nor unnecessarily fancy. Refer to the examples in the CV resource file. A cover page without a border gives the appearance of being empty and unattractive, and does not create a good first impression. The single line border creates a good first impression.
- The double line is more attractive to the eye while the bold line stands out clearly. Students might choose a border fill but it is advisable not to select it too dark as it could fade as one makes photostat copies.
- The setting out of the wording and the choice of font are also important.
- The use of graphics is inappropriate. There are examples where the graphics and the setting out of the wording can look very attractive. The use of one's photograph on the cover page is also not desirable. Avoid illustrations, formats and too many mixed-type styles. A pastel colour cover page is attractive.

STRUCTURE OF THE RESUME

Authors advance different resume formats. This manual will focus on a combination of the chronological and functional formats which seem to be useful for the first job search of young graduates. The combined format provides the flexibility in emphasis, highlights major areas of accomplishment and strength, and allows you to organise the information in an order that supports your work objectives. Work and organisational experiences are placed in chronological order (many persons start with the present or most recent experience) to emphasize continuous career preparation.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Alternative headings are personal data and personal details.

SURNAME	:	State surname
FIRST NAMES	:	State full names
ADDRESS (<i>Boarding</i>)	:	Full present address including postal code; no abbreviations!
ADDRESS (<i>Home</i>)	:	same
TELEPHONE NO.	:	Number where you can be contacted immediately.
DATE OF BIRTH	:	Full date rather than age. Not necessary for both.
PLACE OF BIRTH	:	Town and Province. (<i>Optional</i>)
MARITAL STATUS	:	Usually stated as "single" or "married". (<i>Optional</i>) If another category, use own judgement.
RELIGION	:	(<i>Optional</i>)
NATIONALITY	:	State, e.g., South African
HEALTH	:	If you have health-related impediments to the performance of the respective job, then you might consider alluding to it in the cover letter. A CV emphasizes your abilities and not impediments!
SEX	:	Personal choice. However it does make the work of the reader easier instead of guessing the sex and for equity purposes. ("Sex" refers to anatomy and biological differences between men and women while "gender" refers to the psychological differences between individuals and/or groups.)
DEPENDENTS	:	(<i>Optional</i>)
DRIVER'S LICENCE	:	State code and year obtained.
LANGUAGES	:	State languages which you can speak, write and/or understand. If language is a critical factor to the job you are applying for, then state your proficiency with respect to each language.

Note that all the colons are in line. It is neater and easier to read as one can connect the information in the LHS column with that in the RHS one.

Some students distinguish between their home language and other languages. If so, ask yourself what message you wish to convey to the reader. Communication across language groups is vital in the world of work and thus your linguistic abilities enhance your qualifications.

Your population identity number and criminal record could be excluded from the

CV as this is usually requested on the application form. The above-mentioned biographical details usually appear on the first page of the CV.

Suggested format

John Tom Doe

Contact: 083 123 4567 / 12345@myuwc.co.za

Parow Valley 7500 Cape Town

DoB: 1 May 1990, South African, Coloured, Male, Driver's Licence: Code B 2010
English, Afrikaans

PERSONAL STATEMENT

The labour market is very competitive. Having the appropriate qualifications and experiences gives you a competitive edge. In addition, you have to think of ways to make your CV stand out above the rest, catch the attention of the reader and arouse curiosity. Think of something which helps your personality shine through the facts about you. The reader should, after going through your CV, feel able to like you as a colleague and want to interview you. This section also allows you to market your knowledge areas or areas of expertise within your career field so as to demonstrate a broader interest in your career field.

Yeager provided a useful rule of thumb: *if you're staying in the same general field, emphasise work experience and employment history; if you're changing fields, emphasise skills, knowledge and areas of expertise. With a career objective such as "seeking human resource position in the textile industry that will utilise my skills in project management, problem-solving and personnel management to improve employee productivity", one will then highlight the areas of expertise such as project management, problem-solving, personnel management and issues pertinent to the textile industry, and simply list the other skill areas (1988).*

You might wish to mention the qualities not easily classified as skills which you possess in terms of the specified criteria, for example,

- * Marketing/sales qualities: motivated, assertive, productive, self-starter, highly organised, manage time well and energetic;
- * Management consulting: work variety, challenging work, high personal standard of service, success through hard and diligent work, strong interpersonal and relationship skills, self-starter, fast learner, good problem-solving skills and logical thinker.

[Refer to Jackson (1991:30-31) for a list of personal qualities to utilise.]

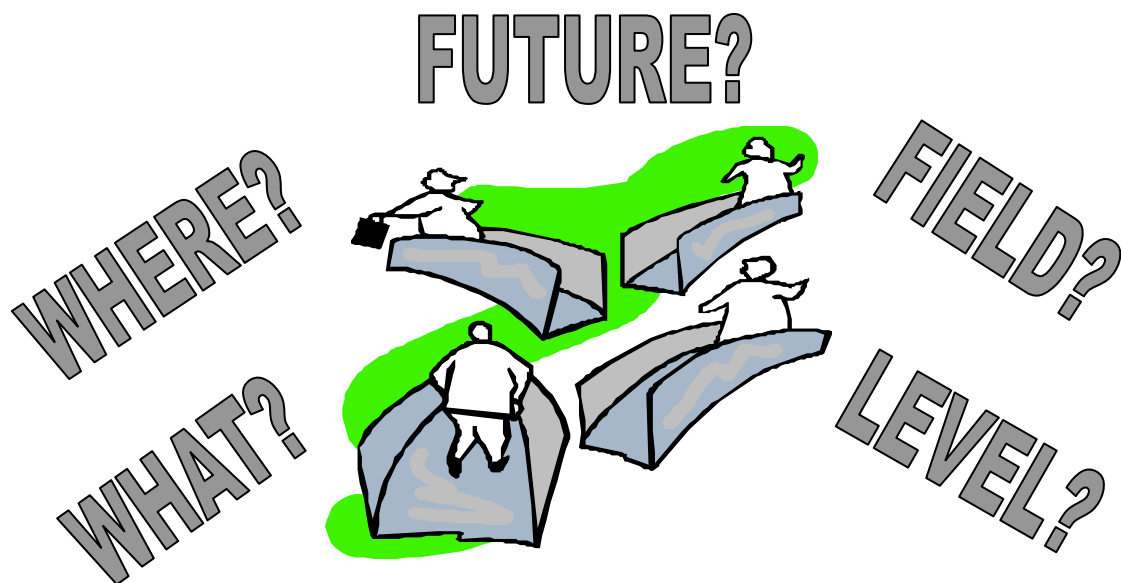
CAREER OBJECTIVE

Provide a clear, concise, well considered and realistic career and job objective for the immediate future.

Alternative headings are position sought, employment goal and professional objective.

CAREER OBJECTIVE INCLUDES:

- *what you can do or what you have to offer* --> What?
- *what job/ department/ division you desire* --> Where?
- *entry level of responsibility* --> At what level?
- *the type of organisation you seek* --> Field?
- *long-term goal* --> Future?



Parker (1989) provided a simple exercise in developing a career objective by posing a few critical questions:

Q : *What work do you want to do?*

A : Teach.

Q : *Who do you want to teach?*

A : Disadvantaged children.

Q : *What subject you want to teach?*

A : Biology.

Q : *Where you want to teach?*

A : In a public school.

Q : *Level of responsibility?*

A : Class teacher.

Then your career objective could read as follows:

"Position as biology class teacher of disadvantaged children in a public school."

Further examples of career objectives are:

- Entry level position in financial department of a major company.
- Social worker in a family-oriented agency and specialising in child abuse.
- To obtain a trainee position in ??? department with the goal of becoming ???
- **Immediate goal:** A position as a trainee journalist with a local newspaper.
Long-term goal: To become a sports editor.
- To start as a ??? trainee with the opportunity to advance to managerial level.
- To secure a challenging position with a progressive company as a
 - ??? offering full utilisation of my proven skills in ???; or
 - trainee ??? in the field of ???.
- An entry level position in the human resource department with the opportunity to later specialise in recruitment and selection.
- Position as junior programmer within a systems development team with the aim of ultimately becoming a systems analyst.

- An entry position as a laboratory analyst in a brewery with the eventual goal of advancing to production management level.
- In the short term, I would like to be a programmer at an entry-level position. My long-term objective is to become a software engineer.
- **Short-term** : *To start as a trainee consultant in the marketing and sales planning areas of the company.* **Long-term** : Strategic consultant.
- Position in marketing division of a motor vehicle company utilising my strengths in communication, organisation and mechanical aptitude.
- Position as corporate executive assistant with opportunity to use abilities in organisation, public relations and project supervision as well as excellent computer skills.
- Position in personnel where my training and skills in management, organisation and counselling will be utilised and developed.

The career objective is the shortest yet most difficult section to compile. A minimum number of words, about 3-5 lines, should be used in clearly stating your career objective. This indicates that you are in charge of your job search and your resume reflects this clarity. Parker (1989) stressed the importance of stating what job you are looking for immediately in a company (short-term goal) and where you wish to aspire to in the future (long-term goal) so as to demonstrate an informed career path.

For example, your entry-level position might be a recruitment officer and the long-term goal a human resource manager. In this way the reader is informed about the initial role which you are willing and able to fill from the employer's perspective, what's in it for them and not for you, and why you will be an asset to the company. The interview, and not the CV, is the place to talk about what's in it for you.

- A career objective must not be too broad, for example, “to obtain a dynamic position with a progressive company where I will utilise my abilities to the full”. You must be clear about the kind of work or company you wish to join. In this way you can focus on the needs of the company in terms of the vacancy.

- Like a good advertisement, an effective career objective provides a clear idea of your skills and suitability within a particular field. This information could be used for a similar post in another company as well. It is thus incumbent on you to consult information brochures or websites of companies to gather information on their structure and activities in order to ensure that your career objective could be accommodated.
- A clear career objective provides guidance about what to include in the CV, what to emphasize and what to leave out. In this way you make it easier for the reader to notice the points of your experience that would be related to the advertised job. Given the diversity of opportunity in the workplace today, you might have more than one target in related or different fields reflecting diverse sets of interests and skills.
- Each CV should contain only one career objective unless your various objectives can be accommodated in the same company. You will need a different version of your CV to cover each area of employment or job target if they are not in the same work field or if they are diverse.
- If the job title is not spelt out or if you are not responding to an advertised position, then one could use a job target. This is a particular work description or title in a given field that could exist with a number of employers. Your job target is informed by your skills and interests. Sales representative, merchandiser or cost accountant, are all example of job targets.
- Do not create the impression that you regard the specific job merely as a means to moving to something better as soon as you have gained enough experience. Keep in mind the limitations of the career path within the department concerned. Keep your projections within the bounds of possibility.
- At all times, you must keep your career objective in mind as this will guide you in what and how much information to include in your CV and the order in which it should be presented.

The section which provides the strongest argument for interviewing you will immediately follow your career objective. For a recent graduate with no career-related experience, the education section could offer the strongest argument for relevant capabilities and knowledge. However, over time, practical work experience and skills usually take precedence and move up on the CV.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



Alternative headings are Education, Academic History or Educational History

This covers your high school, tertiary, formal and informal studies.

It is not necessary to include details of your primary school education. The type of information includes the qualification/s achieved and/or those you are busy with, name of institution, town, date qualification was obtained or will be obtained, the year you started and subjects. Be selective with the subjects and mention those which are relevant to the position for which you are applying. Subjects are grouped into major and auxiliary subjects.

- Alternatively, highlight your areas of specialisation. An academic transcript with details of your modules could be included as an appendix.
- The information should be listed in chronological order starting with your current or last qualification. The advantage of this method is that it gives the reader an immediate indication as to whether the applicant has the required qualification.
- Normally one would not include certificates or an academic transcript unless it is requested. Use your discretion about mentioning the grades of individual subjects. If you have very good symbols, you could state it. Generally, employers look for an upward trend in marks and like to see a strong finish.

The following is a suggested layout of this section.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	
Advanced Diploma in Management	: University of the Western Cape Will be completing in Nov. 2016
B.Sc.	: University of the Western Cape, Bellville 2013 - 2015
Major subjects	: Mathematics & Accounting
Auxiliary subjects	: Physics, Information Systems, Management
Grade 12	: Little Flower High School, Ixopo 2012
Subjects	: English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Mathematics, Physical Science, Accounting

Your intended studies should enrich your career path, and benefit your work and employer as well and not be for personal gain only.

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Give details of other formal and non-formal training received and skills acquired especially those which are relevant to the job for which you are applying. Include specific language/computing skills as well. Additional knowledge and skills favourably impress an employer and demonstrate that you are versatile, industrious, and have the capacity to improve and keep updated in your career field. This information is particularly useful if you are young and recently qualified with little work experience and are useful indicators of your potential.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work history, career history and employment history are alternative headings



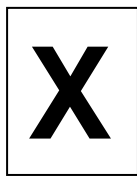
Work experience includes part-time, full-time and casual jobs, paid and voluntary. If you held various positions in the same organisation, list these separately. Employers appreciate students' experience of life and work outside of school and university. Do not omit jobs which seem menial.

Employers become interested in you because of your potential value to the company. Devote more space to the jobs which are relevant to the post for which you are applying or the recent positions. As you go back in time, the job descriptions should become shorter. It is assumed that each successive job, especially in the same company or organisation, will have greater responsibility. Write concise descriptions of the duties and what you gained from your work: skills, attitudes, insights and experience. If you had several work opportunities (and organisational experiences), summarise your personal, transferable and functional skill areas into one paragraph.

A simple exercise is provided by Parker to sharply reflect your relevant skills and experiences. Write down the specific skills or special knowledge areas required for your career objective or advertised post on separate pages. Under each skill or knowledge area write action-oriented "one-liner" statements that clearly and concisely describe how you used or developed those skills in the past. Then assemble the separate pages into one page or paragraph (1989:13-17).

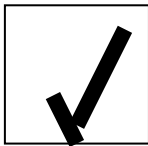
The start of your sentences must stimulate the reader's interest to learn more about you. Remember that your CV is also a demonstration of your writing skills. Couch your descriptions in terms that relate to specific employer concerns. Be explicit by using active verbs to start sentences and paragraphs, and short sentences that convey meaning. Combine duties performed with a description of the results you have produced in your work. While stating the specific skill, one must also state in which way it could be applied, e.g., managed budget of house committee (rather than simply stating budgeting experience) and helped set up peer counselling programme (rather than peer counselling skills). In this way the reader will get a better sense of what you have done successfully.

A limp style of writing would read as follows:



My duties included promoting new products in the store instead of relying only on advertising posters. I used a database to identify competing products. This resulted in a 30% increase in income.

An action style could be formulated as follows:



Developed and managed customer promotions. Managed a database to provide information on competitors. Increased revenue by 30%.

You need to describe the value of your activity to the company or organisation and take credit for your role, e.g., set up a system to monitor and manage the work done by the casual student workers.

An accomplishment is a product that people can measure. A duty is not a result but an obligation of every worker. Results drive home a point! You must demonstrate that you are, in fact, a producer and not merely just another dutiful worker. Quantify your achievements by using amounts and rand values and, where appropriate, tell how much, how many and how often. For example, state how many people you supervised, how much money you were responsible for in order to arouse the reader's interest. Be persuasive about what you have to offer. Don't be modest but do not go overboard.

There is normally little value in giving the reasons for leaving previous positions. You will probably be questioned on this subject at the interview. The reasons could be included if you left voluntarily, under amicable circumstances or if you

have worked for many different employers. The guideline is whether the information will improve your chance of obtaining an interview or not.

INFORMATION FOR EACH POSITION HELD COULD INCLUDE:

- *title of post*
- *name and location of company/organisation and, if necessary, the type of business*
- *dates of work*
- *duties (main job functions and special duties in order of importance)*
- *skills and qualities developed*
- *achievements for which you take the credit*
- *name of your supervisor and a contactable telephone number for the last two positions over the last two years if you did not include them as referees*

The layout could be done as follows:

WORK EXPERIENCE

Position	:	Name of company/organisation, town Type of business Dates (years and week-ends &/or vacations)
Duties	:	specify
Skills developed	:	specify
Supervisor	:	Name and telephone number

[Consult the following references for action verbs, sample skill words and other guidelines: Parker, 1989:17, 55-57; Jackson, 1991:61-62, 192-204 and Lewis & Corwin, 1996:22-23].

ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Organisational experience includes extra-curricular activities and voluntary services during your school and tertiary years, and in the community.

Such activities indicate a well-rounded personality and useful marketable life skills which further demonstrate your competency to do the job for which you apply.

Take credit for your role in an organisation or activity by clarifying your contribution. If, for example, you worked in a team on a specific project, you can say "collaborated with" or "co-led".

The guidelines, type of information and layout of this section are similar to that of the previous section. Instead of stating the skills which you developed, you could also state your positions and experiences in relation to the specific career field, e.g. local government, and then, at the interview, elaborate further about the skills.

For example:

ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE

2000-2003	Chairperson of local Civic Association
1997	Secretary of local Civic Association
2003	Voter educator for local government elections
2000-2002	Facilitated workshops on local government issues
1998	Submitted comment on the Draft White Paper on Local Government in South Africa

In summary, the information contained under work and organisational experiences helps you to demonstrate the marketable or functional skills which you have developed and which can be applied on the job. If you have such experiences, you might consider clustering those skills by looking for the common factors.

IN YOUR CV

List all your skills:

- 1 -----
- 2 -----
- 3 -----
- 4 -----

AT THE INTERVIEW

Elaborate on the various skills which your have acquired :

What do you have to offer?

What value could you add to the company?



For example, if several of your demonstrated abilities relate to working with people (i.e. supervising, directing, advising, motivating), you might classify these as "human relations", "interpersonal" or "management" skills. The term under which skills are grouped will depend on the field you are entering. "Human relations" might be appropriate for a person interested in a human resource or management

position while "interpersonal" might be appropriate for a social service field. It is not enough merely to claim specific skills; one has to validate it through the CV.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

Your association with and participation in professional organisations further demonstrates an interest in your career field. State the name of the professional organisation, position you held/hold and the applicable dates. Specify any papers, articles or publications which you have written or in which you have featured.

ACHIEVEMENTS

An optional heading is Accomplishments

Do not take your achievements for granted and neither should you be modest about saying what you are good at. Distinctions tell us that you are ambitious, hard-working and motivated. Quantify your achievements in a proud, non-arrogant way. Do not be boastful; merely state the facts. If you don't, nobody else will and you will do yourself a disservice. Leave the elaboration for the interview.

These should be listed under their respective headings or separately. Include details about the following:

- educational, organisational and other personal achievements;
- prizes, awards and scholarships which you received and
- personal efforts to finance your studies from jobs.

PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES

Record the major assignments and seminars which you have written or presented, and the relevant presentations, workshops and conferences which you facilitated and/or attended especially as it relates to your career field.

INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

This is not irrelevant. Interests and hobbies are listed to further indicate a well-rounded personality especially if it has some relevance to the job for which you are applying. Participation in extramural activities is also an indication that there is some depth to the applicant and that s/he enjoys social and intellectual stimulation outside her/his career. Instead of simply stating "reading" as a hobby, be specific and mention "reading science fiction" or "reading African novels".



This gives the reader a better idea of your interests and can provide an introductory topic for the interview. Kowen advised against indicating (party) political affiliation on a CV unless you are applying for a position in a political party. Most job functions are performed in a similar manner irrespective of your political convictions. Avoid a political confrontation at the first meeting with a prospective employer(1989).

Participation in sport is not essential, but it gives an indication of the applicant's ability to conform to laid out disciplines in a sport. If it is a team sport, it will show your ability to work in a team. Individual sport is indicative of the ability to work on your own to achieve an objective. Team-work and/or individual effort might be what is required in the particular job.

REFEREES

An optional heading is References

A referee is a person who is willing to testify to your academic potential, work-related experience and/or your character. Credible referees would include a lecturer, mentor, employer and supervisor. Include at least one current academic referee in your list.

- Always get permission from referees about your intentions before listing them in your resume. This enables them to anticipate enquiries and to be mentally prepared to answer questions about you. Do not allow any calls from employers to come as a surprise to them.
- Provide referees with a copy of your CV and cover letters.

The following information should be included: title, full name and surname, position held, full (work) postal address and code, telephone and fax numbers and code, cellphone number and E-mail address. Make sure that these details are current.

The layout could be done as follows:

REFERENCES	
Dr. A. Manyana	: Senior Lecturer, Department of Management, University of the Western Cape.
	Tel. : (021) 959-0007
	Cell : 071 234 6543
	E-mail : amanyana@uwc.ac.za

ADDENDA

An addendum or enclosure is a supporting document which has been omitted in the main body of the CV and is added at the end in order to keep the CV concise. Never enclose an original document. Have copies certified in order to prove its authenticity. Examples of documents include educational qualifications, short course certificates, identity document and testimonials. Place the enclosures in the same sequence as referred to in your CV. If there are many addenda, number them for easy reference. Do not include unnecessary documents. However this information is usually requested only at a later stage.

DEALING WITH DISABILITIES

One should take cognisance of the prejudice that exists in the job market and deal with this issue positively and succinctly. Declaring one's disabilities in a CV should be carefully weighed up. If you have specific disabilities, you should assess the extent to which it will impact on the job for which you are applying.



Answer questions on disabilities honestly especially if asked in an application form. Use the "if but" technique of stating what the disability is and then immediately stating how you cope with it or the impact which it has on your work performance. If you had a serious illness you could attach a note from your doctor indicating that you have fully recovered or that it will not affect your job performance.

As with all statements one should substantiate them with an example:

I had a similar job with similar duties during the past year. Mrs Wise, who is one of my referees, will confirm my suitability for this post".

Never apologise for a disability!

EVALUATION OF YOUR CV



Having spent many hours over several days or weeks developing your CV, you may be too close to it to evaluate it objectively. Ask your counsellor or a knowledgeable person for feedback on your draft CV. The following is a summary of the critical criteria. Add evaluation values to highlight areas that need attention.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Layout and Style

1: Need attention 2: Fair 3: Good 4: Excellent

<i>Is the layout simple and attractive?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Are the headings appropriate?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is the material well balanced with adequate white space?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is the typing neat and easy to read?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Are the photocopies of the CV and supporting documents clear?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is the CV too long? Could it be shortened?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Are there any spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Are all statements easily understood?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Do action words communicate accomplishments and results?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Does the overall appearance invite one to read it?</i>	1	2	3	4

Career objective

<i>Is the career objective concise, clear and unambiguous?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Does it focus on the goal at hand?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is it a realistic next step?</i>	1	2	3	4

Relevance

<i>Do my qualifications and experiences relate to my career objective?</i>	1	2	3	4
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<i>Do the skills presented reflect an understanding of the desired job?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is all the required information reflected?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is all the information relevant?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is there any unnecessary information or repetitions?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Is the CV orientated for results and what I have to offer?</i>	1	2	3	4

Personal appeal

<i>Do I sound warm, personable and unique?</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>Are there clues about work values and professional motivation?</i>	1	2	3	4

Overall, are YOU satisfied with your CV? If you are not, then another reader will not be satisfied. Does it make the reader want to meet you?

MARKETING YOUR RESUME

Personnel agencies

Recruitment is a time-consuming process. Many companies do not have the resources nor the capacity to process the many telephonic enquiries and applications for jobs. They would rather spend the time on their core business activities. Employers are increasingly making use of personnel agencies to find suitable staff on their behalf. Also, if a company is looking for a candidate with specialist skills, it is more likely that a well-established specialist consultancy will have a suitable candidate on its files. Thus an employer will obtain the names and resumes of a few potentially good candidates who they could interview further.

There are advantages of seeking a job through an agency. The job-seeker could be offered a variety of positions, is assisted with interview skills and can be advised on various aspects including feedback on an interview, enumeration and the state of the job market. Some agencies also offer career guidance. In view of this, candidates are advised to cooperate with their consultant. The names of personnel agencies can be obtained from the Yellow Pages and newspapers. Clarify beforehand any costs from your side whether at the start of the process or at the end. Read any contracts carefully before signing. Some agencies may tie you into their agency for a specific period of time. Be careful of this strategy which could limit your chances for finding a suitable job.

Advertisements

Your job search should include responding to advertisements in newspapers and professional journals, among other. Some newspapers have job advertisement supplements on specific days.

An increasing number of companies are posting job vacancies on their web sites. This is economical for the company as a wider range of applicants could be attracted. It also serves as a screening device to attract those applicants with some degree of computer literacy. Newspapers are also placing their job vacancy advertisements on the Internet. To see an example of this, visit the Sunday Times website at www.sundaytimes.co.za/careers/.

Students can also surf the Internet and explore the pages of the World Wide Web in order to make contact, nationally and internationally, with persons in the job market and to seek job opportunities. Some personnel agencies and companies have their own web sites of on-line jobs, e.g. Human-Mundels (www.human-mundels.co.za). These can be obtained from the newspapers. It also serves as a screening device to attract those applicants with some degree of computer literacy.

There are also various career portals such as www.pnet.co.za; www.careerjunction.co.za/careerseekers; www.jobs.mg.co.za; www.jobfood.co.za and www.jobmail.co.za. Students can also surf the Internet and explore the pages of the World Wide Web in order to make contact, nationally and internationally, with persons in the job market and to seek job opportunities. Some personnel agencies and companies have their own web sites of on-line jobs. e.g. Human-Mundels (www.human-mundels.co.za). These can be obtained from the newspapers.

Networking

Networking, according to Lewis & Corwin (1996) and Settler (1998-1999), means simply identifying people and organisations that you think may be useful to you in your job search, informing them that you're looking for work, letting them know your range of skills and interests, and then asking for possible leads.

Direct mail campaign

You should not be embarrassed by this action as, if roles were reversed, you would in all probability assist others. Nurture these contacts as far as possible.

COMPILING A ONE-PAGE RESUME

A direct mail campaign or prospecting involves finding out the name and position of a person to whom you could send your CV and following it up with a telephone call. In this way you tap into the network and make contact with a particular person in an organisation by sending an unsolicited resume.

Increasingly companies are asking for a one-page resume which captures the essence of one's unique offering for a particular job. The resume should be concise, the layout effective and perfectly matched to be effective. Carefully analyse the job advertisement to determine that all information in your resume is relevant. List your qualities and skills, then the criteria for the post. Lastly, identify your skills which are the closest match. Each word must deserve its place. Leave as little white space as possible.

A one-page resume can be compared to an advertisement of a product – your chance to brand yourself in few words. As an exercise, watch an ad on TV and decide whether it catches your attention to want to purchase the product. Now read your resume to determine if it conveys a strong first impression and what is unique and compelling about you.

STRUCTURE OF THE RESUME

Biographical details

Full names

Postal and Email addresses

Telephone numbers

Qualifications

If one common stream, state highest qualification only.

If qualifications vary, state relevant ones.

Include dates and majors if space permits.

Occupational background

Job titles, employer, years and (technical and soft) skills summary which are the best match for the advertised job.

Organisational experience

Only if relevant to the specific post.

Professional affiliation

Only if relevant to the specific post.

Personal statement/Achievements/Accomplishments

Could include the value you could add to the organisation, your achievements and awards received. This is your last chance to reveal your unique persona for success and why you are the ideal candidate for the job.

CONCLUSION

The general rule in deciding on what information to include in a CV is to ask yourself whether the said information will help you to get the job interview. If you are doubtful, then exclude it. At all times use your discretion. Adapt your CV for each job application. The essential message of the CV is twofold, namely, that you have the experience, credentials and basic skills needed for the job, and that you are talented in the areas that really matter. The same CV should not be sent off to different companies for different jobs. Lastly, keep your CV up to date at all times in order to be ready should an opportunity knock at your door.

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