

UNIDAS LABOUR SERVICES cc presents:

EXECUTIVE CV GUIDE & TEMPLATE

LET'S GET STARTED with your CV

First things first – start by realizing that preparing your CV is going to take time. The more time you spend on the preparation process – the better your chances will be of getting your dream job.

Below Some general aspects you will need to take into considering even before you start looking at the styles and the wording of the Curriculum Vitae:

- Use white paper only (when typing for fax or presentation purposes) – when preparing for e-mail purposes do not even be tempted to put in arty, decorative papers and/or backgrounds. Stay business like – because this is a business document that you are presenting in business format;
- Use MS Word only and if you are on 2007 then down-save the file into a Word 2003 compatible format. You need to realize that not all companies have updated software packages. The more compatible you are – the more chances you have of getting the interview. The quicker the “reader” can open your file and see the information – the quicker you will get the call!
- Another reason for using only MS WORD is that Agents more often than not - needs to forward your CV document to their clients and if it is in a different format – editing, adding or removing appropriate/inappropriate information becomes a problem;
- Stay clear of graphics (it makes the files sizes to big) - many agents have set up systems that automatically deletes files larger than 400kb – prior to delivery. Many large corporate companies have implemented similar systems for e-mail's containing graphics and/or JPEG/HTML attachments;
- Use ONLY business fonts (like Calibri, Arial, and Tahoma) – DON'T be tempted to use pretty fonts – remember this is a professional business application;
- Supply as many methods of contact as humanly possible - you can even include Face book, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blog Pages, Web Sites, Skype Address ;
- Only send out one CV to one Person – it is very unprofessional to send out your CV to more than one recipient. Don't even be tempted to send it to two people. 2 – 20 NO DIFFERENCE: One CV/ job application must be sent to only 1 recipient, with a targeted candidate motivation, clearly stating what position you are applying for;
- Read the advert – read it twice if need be. If the advert requests something – make sure you supply it: AS A RULE do not send out pictures of yourself or scanned document with your CV – ONLY attach them to your e-mail if they are requested by the interviewer;
- If spelling is not your strength – rather get somebody to proof your application before you send it out. Ask for help with your application. YOU HAVE ONLY 1 CHANCE TO IMPRESS;

Start building your CV today and remember that a CV is a document that needs to grow with you and your career!

The advert response note: This is a two maybe three liner note/letter that will include the following information. It is usually the information that you add into the message section of your outgoing e-mail. Do not forget to put a subject into the e-mail: “application for employment” is always a good subject.

VERY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER IN THIS SECTION:

- *Make sure it is 100% error free (especially spelling);*
- *State clearly the job for which you are applying;*
- *State where and when you saw the advert;*
- *Sign it with your name and clearly state your preferred method of contact in this section (as well as the details, mail address, telephone numbers etc)*

THE COVER LETTER also referred to as THE CANDIDATE MOTIVATION

THE COVER LETTER – arguably the most important part of any job application. Some even say there is an art to writing a great covering letter.

Why so important? Because as many as a thousand people apply for one single advertised job at any time and because the reader will only spend on average 30-60 seconds on each application.

It is so easy to get carried away by the enthusiasm and desire to promote yourself and your abilities in your covering letter. Don't – keep it short and simple but to the point, and professional.

Remember the following when writing the Cover Letter / Candidate Motivation:

- You have one (1) chance to impress the reader and it might be your ONLY chance
- Repeat the first few steps of the advert response note in the cover note (dear, date and re: position you are applying for), then remember to address the reader correctly and only after you do that go into the actual candidate motivation;
- Indicate what it is that you hope to accomplish by sending your CV (example: that you would appreciate being given the opportunity to meet with the interviewer at his/her earliest convenience);
- You need to encourage the employer to read the rest of your CV by outlining the reason you think you are the best candidate for the advertising position;
- Don't oversell yourself / don't give the interviewer the “it's too good to be true” feeling;
- Remember to mention all the certified certificates, degrees/diplomas and testimonials etc that you can make available on request. In some cases (like with international applications) you would need to make criminal and credit clearance certificated available as well;
- Close the letter by thanking the person, and end it on a positive note – something like wishing the reader a pleasant day or a nice weekend (if you apply on a Friday that is)!

The Executive CV

The Executive CV

- This CV is for people with permanent working experience... the recommendation is to always prepare 2 (two) professional Executive CV's.
 - the one being a detailed document that is presented to the interviewer at an interview (this document needs to be presented in a professional manner, it must include all the copies of your degrees, certificates and any other testimonials you feel you want to show the interviewer – remember they **MUST** be certified)
 - the second one is the short version executive CV (It is a document that is merely a shortened version of the executive document. Usually no longer than 2-3 pages. It will be an “advertisement” of your skills!)
- The detailed executive CV is a document that you will prepare and write according to the skills you have acquired BUT not forgetting to take the position you are applying for into consideration.
- The educational and employment section of this document needs to be flawless:
- This educational and employment sections must always be written “backwards” meaning start the CV with your most current position and work your way back to the beginning of your career.
- In the duties section try and avoid Technical/Industry terminology (jargon) at all cost (this will change if you are applying for an internal transfer or promotion) as the person interviewing you will most likely not understand Industry terminology in the way you have written it;
- List the duties that are applicable to the position you are applying for first (so to let the interviewer know that you have the requested experience)

Notes on how to write an Executive CV

LAYOUT OF THE EMPLOYMENT HISTORY SECTION WILL INCLUDE

Company employed at:
Position held:
Duration of employment:
Duties included:
Reason for leaving:

HOW TO FILL IN PROMOTIONS UNDER ONE EMPLOYER

Company employed at:
Position held:
Duration of employment:
 1st position held:
 Promotion received & date:
 2nd position held:
 Promotion received & date:
Duties included:
Reason for leaving:

NOTES: ONE employer with the total amount of years employed at that company must always be kept together. If you start splitting the positions at one company it might be difficult for the interviewer/employer to pick up your stability of track record at first glance.

The biggest challenge you will face when writing this CV is getting your skill across under the heading duties!

Mistakes people make on a daily basis:

- Writing stories instead of sentences;
- Writing long-winded sentences and still not getting the message across;
- Not writing down what they actually do – writing down the job descriptions that they got in there letters of appointment;
- Forgetting to start with the most senior duties first (for example if you are a PA and you have prepared Board Packs the reader will automatically know that you type)
- Forgetting the basic (for example if you are a bookkeeper and you put in that you prepared the Balance Sheet the reader does not know at what time you actually received the books and/or if you are the person in charge of the debtors and/or creditors recons)

Notes on how to write an Executive CV

SO HOW DO YOU LIST YOUR DUTIES? The only way in which we can explain this is by giving you some examples:

WRONG WORDING:

During my time at X company, I was in charge of the sales team and we made targets. I was responsible for generating new business and for closing deals. I negotiated at board-room level.

CORRECT WORDING:

Duties included:

- Managed a sales team of 5;
 - The 5 reps reporting to me all had individual targets that were set by myself;
 - Targets were set in accordance to sales-history, company projections and budgetary responsibilities
 - Managed the recruitment function for new sales staff
 - Although I managed the sales team and ensured that daily, weekly and monthly targets were reached I was also responsible for my own sales
 - Lead generation through research
 - Lead generation through referrals from existing clients
 - Client relationship management
 - Problem solving etc
-

WRONG WORDING:

- Reception duties included the answering of phones and taking messages
- Responsible for maintaining the reception area
- Faxing, filing and e-mailing
- Typing
- General administration

CORRECT WORDING:

Duties included:

- Frontline receptionist (was also responsible for the ordering of fresh flowers and for keeping the reception area neat and welcoming)
- Worked on X type of switchboard that had 10 incoming lines and 33 extensions;
- Identified caller needs and redirected their calls to the appropriate department
- Messages were taken electronically and e-mailed to the various individuals
- My responsibilities included general administration which included:
 - Typing of documents on MS Word & MS Excel
 - Preparation of Facsimile messages and transmitting them
 - Assisting with filing (both alphabetical and numerical)

The Executive CV template and guide (in red)

CURRICULUM VITAE OF put your full name and surname here

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Name & Surname: Full Name and Surname
- Contact Information: Try and give as many telephone numbers, Skype address, e-mail address etc as possible – make it easy for the interviewer to get hold of you.
- ID number: If you are not a SA Citizen then your Passport number & Work Permit or Employment status needs to be added in here
- Address: You only need to add in the area in which you live – not your entire Address
- Marital Status: Married / Single / Divorced / Widowed
- Dependants: How many children do you have and/or maybe a parent that is a dependant
- Transport: Do you have you own car or do you use public transport. This is also the section which you need to let the interviewer know if you have a truck or maybe a public transport license
- Languages: What languages are you proficient in? List them in bullet format so it will look like this:
- English Written & Spoken
 - Afrikaans Understand but don't speak
 - Zulu Home Language
 - French Can read and understand

COMPUTER LITERACY

Put the list of computer packages you are literate in (with the level) in BULLET format so it will look something like this:

- MS Word Intermediate
- MS Excel Beginner
- Internet & E-mail Advanced

CURRICULUM VITAE OF put your full name and surname here **continued**

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Matriculated from:

Add School in here

Year:

Year you matriculated

ACHIEVEMENTS

Tell us about your high school career and your achievement. Where you Head Boy or did you achieve colours in sport? List things like:

- 6 distinctions
- 1st prize in the science competition
- Head boy
- Achieved national colours for athletic
- Captain of the rugby team

TERTIARY EDUCATION

If you do not have a tertiary educational, diploma or degree, then leave this section out completely.

1. Institution:
Year graduated:
Degree/ Diploma obtained:
Majors:
2. Institution:
Year graduated:
Degree/ Diploma obtained:
Majors:

ACHIEVEMENTS

Tell us about your “Varsity” career and your achievement. Same principle as above

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER / NOTES:

When listing your degrees/diplomas keep in mind the position you are applying for and put the most relevant qualification at the top of the list. From there try and keep the entire list in chronological order. If you are currently studying towards a degree it is always advisable to put this at the top of the list. The only difference will come in when you fill in the year completed section. You can change it to CURRENT STUDIES – and don’t forget to show your progress. E.G

Institution:

Current Studies: 2002 – Date (aiming to complete in 2010)

Degree/ Diploma:

Majors:

CURRICULUM VITAE OF **put your full name and surname here** continued

COURSES ATTENDED

List the “in-house” training courses you have completed in this section. This is also the section that you use to list addition “ad-hoc” type training that you have done. This section needs to look like this:

ADDITIONAL TRAINING SHORT COURSES COMPLETED

If you did any courses in your own time (maybe evening or weekend courses) then list them in this section.

▪ Advanced MS Office course	Institution	Year completed
▪ Pastel Course	Institution	Year completed
▪ First Aid Course	Institution	Year completed

IN-HOUSE TRAINING COMPLETED

COMPANY NAME

Put the company name in here – the one that you where working for when you completed the listed courses.

▪ Credit management course	Year completed
▪ In-house computer course	Year completed
▪ Sales training	Year completed

CURRICULUM VITAE OF **put your full name and surname here** continued

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

This is where the details need to be placed. You need to take time to complete this section. The standard section will be completed under the following headings (company name, duration of employment, position held, duties and reason for leaving).

Start with your most recent position first and work your way back to the beginning of your career

Company Name:	Employer
Duration of Employment:	Total amount of years worked for this company
Position Held:	Always put your most senior position here
2 nd POSITION held:	
Promotion Received:	DATE
1 ST POSITION held:	
Promotion received:	DATE

Duties:

Remember that the person reading your CV is looking for core-competencies. Try to avoid writing long sentences:

- Write duties in bullet format
- Keep it short BUT detailed
- Look at the position you are applying for and see what the advert says – put the relevant duties at the top of the list

Achievements:	Use this section to highlight awards won etc.
Reason for leaving:	Always give a reason for leaving a company

*_*_*_*

Company Name:
Duration of Employment:
Position Held:
Duties:
Achievements:
Reason for leaving:

*_*_*_*

Company Name:
Duration of Employment:
Position Held:
Duties:
Achievements:
Reason for leaving:

CURRICULUM VITAE OF put your full name and surname here **continued**

CONTACTABLE REFERENCES

Supply the interviewer with a minimum of 3 contactable references at all times. Always try and supply landline telephone numbers.

- 1: Company worked at:
 Referee Name:
 Referee designation:
 Contact telephone number:

- 2: Company worked at:
 Referee Name:
 Referee designation:
 Contact telephone number:

- 3: Company worked at:
 Referee Name:
 Referee designation:
 Contact telephone number:

Notes:

- ✓ Check that you have aligned your document and that the layout is structured;
- ✓ Make sure that all the writing is done in black and that you have not left in any of the “guide” information on the document you send to the employer;
- ✓ We suggest you print out the document and look at the printed version before sending out copies.

How to shorten a CV for e-mail/fax purposes

SHORTENING AN EXECUTIVE CV FOR FAX / E-MAIL PURPOSES:

Shortening a CV for these purposes is very important and does not have to be difficult. Take your Executive (completed) CV and start at the top. You are now going to start by deleting information.

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

- List the computer package literate in next to each other and you don't have to put any level of experience you have in them (remove the bullets);
- The same applies to languages – list them next to each other with comma's in between (remove the bullets and the details surrounding the languages you are proficient in) do remember that you can only list languages that you are fluent in – in this section;
- Keep the entire section small with captions like: Married with two depends (instead of splitting the two), Code 08 with own car (instead of splitting the two),
- You can also put your contact details next to each other.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION (Both Secondary & Tertiary):

- Start by deleting all your subjects. If you excelled in one or more then you can add in a caption that says. (Passed with 4 distinctions) – you can fill this in next to the year matriculated in;
- Shorten you list of achievements by removing all sport, drama, cultural achievements etc. ONLY reflect academic achievements;
- You can also delete the “majors” section – unless they are 100% relevant to the position you are applying for;
- When it comes to the courses and in-house training section – shorted it. Remove all dates and colleges and you can even list them next to each other.
- NEVER delete information that could count in your favour. EG if you completed an advanced tax course and you are applying for a bookkeeping position (make sure you highlight it ... even if the advert does not request tax knowledge) – It can help give you the edge.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

- Start by taking out employment history dating back further than 10 years... don't forget to add in a footnotes saying that a detailed CV with employment history prior to X-year is available on request
- List only the duties that are applicable to the position your are applying for
- You can remove 1, 2nd and 3rd positions and only put your most senior position held at a particular company

REFERENCE SECTION:

- Remove this section completely but add in the words. A detailed CV with contactable reference will be made available on request

The Skills Matrix for Technical Applications

THE SKILLS MATRIX – this is a document that IT professionals need to add into any job application. A good way of drafting this document is in “table” format. You need to include information such as:

HARDWARE	YEARS WORKING EXPERIENCE	SKILL LEVEL
PC Building, Upgrades, Testing	7+	Advanced
NETWORKING	YEARS WORKING EXPERIENCE	SKILL LEVEL
IP & IPX/SPX	2+	Intermediate
PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES	YEARS WORKING EXPERIENCE	SKILL LEVEL
BACKUP SYSTEMS	YEARS WORKING EXPERIENCE	SKILL LEVEL
OPERATING SYSTEMS	YEARS WORKING EXPERIENCE	SKILL LEVEL

Other fields in the skills matrix could include:

- Software
- Internet & email
- Planning & Management
- Professional Skills

Note: this document **MUST** be sent out with all applications (BUT don't scan it in) it will make the document/attachment to Big.