

How to write a CV

What is a Curriculum Vitae?

Curriculum Vitae are Latin words which mean "personal history". A CV, as it is called, should have your:

- contact details,
- personal history,
- educational background,
- work experience,
- interests and hobbies.

A CV is sent with a letter when you apply for a job or a bursary. The job advertisement will tell you if you should send a CV with your letter of application. Even if the job advertisement does not tell you to send a CV, it is a good idea to send one anyway, so that the company can see the kind of person you are.

CV's must be neat

As with all formal documents, your CV should be neat, clear and to the point. There are a number of different ways of writing out a CV. Choose a style that is simple and easy to read.

- If you have access to a typewriter, type your CV. If not, hand write it neatly.
- CV's should be well laid out. Break it up into sections, for example, personal details, educational background, and so on.
- Skip two lines between the different sections.
- Make sure that all your details are in the CV.

In the second article on job skills, SPEAK looks at how to write a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

When is a CV used?

A CV is usually sent with your job application form, or you can take it with you to the job

interview. Unless a CV is specifically asked for, it is usually not necessary to include it when applying for admission to a tertiary institute or for a bursary.

An example of a CV

CURRICULUM VITAE: NOMALANGA QAMATA	
Home address	89 Cele Street Zone Five Diepkloof 1864
Telephone number	(011) 938-1456
Postal address	P O Box 2389 Diepkloof 1864
PERSONAL DETAILS	
First Name	Nomalanga Mary
Surname	Qamata
Date of Birth	10 July 1950
Nationality	South African
Home Language	Xhosa
Other languages	English and Zulu
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND	
High School	Thaba Jabula High School Highest Standard: Standard Eight
Subjects Passed	Maths, Biology, English, Xhosa, Afrikaans, History

Leadership Roles

Chairperson Student Representative Council

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Name of Company

Fanfare Paper Company
P O Box 1837
Johannesburg
2000

Post Held

Administrator

Main Job Function

Answering telephones, typing, handling clients, office duties

Dates

1970 to 1987

Name of Company

Womens Co-operative
P O Box 7452
Chiawelo
1818

Post held

General Secretary

Main Job Function

Organising and running the co-operative
All administrative duties
Ordering material
Arranging of merchandise

Dates

1988 to 1993

Reasons for leaving

The co-operative is closing down

Hobbies and Interests

Reading poetry

References

1. Ms Bongzi Matthews
Manager
Women's Co-operative
P O Box 7452
Chiawelo
1818
Telephone: 984 1976

2. Ms Ellen Brown
Human Resources
Fanfare Paper Company
P O Box 1837
Johannesburg
2000
Telephone: 29 5342

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Give two references

Ask two people if they would mind being your referees. A referee is someone who can be contacted to give information about you to the company. A referee could be someone who knows you from:

- school,
- a former workplace,
- church, or
- a social club

Make sure the people you have asked to be your referees have agreed to this. The company will contact them to ask if you are suitable for the job.

What happens when details of your life change?

CV's can be written and easily updated when it is necessary. Once you have the document, it is easy to make the changes to it.

You can make your CV look attractive, but remember that it is important to keep it simple and neat. ✪

- In our next issue we will look at going for job interviews