



www.kontak.co.za
011 431 3542
hello@kontak.co.za

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE ON HOW TO FIND A JOB IN SOUTH AFRICA



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ABOUT

Developed and designed by **Angie Le Roux and Mel Muller**, representatives of **Kontak Recruitment**.

For over twelve years **Kontak Recruitment** as a **Recruitment Agency** and **recruiters** have worked with thousands of candidates and have found that most of them are very ill prepared to enter the job market.

This guide has been developed to help and assist job-seekers to effectively prepare, source and apply for jobs in South Africa.



YOU AS A BRAND

Personal branding is the practice of marketing yourself and your career as a brand. It is an ongoing process of developing and maintaining your reputation.



Finding a job is now harder than ever, it is extremely stressful and disheartening. It is now more than ever before very important to ensure that you brand yourself appropriately in your job search to secure a job. Employers and recruiters who are hiring are advertising jobs and sourcing online for potential employees. Connecting with people online has become far easier with access to the internet and employers and recruiters posting their jobs online and on social media.

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social Media are websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.



POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

Potential employers and recruiters who view your profile online can now get a better understanding of who you are and what you do as a potential employee. Your online presence is very important especially if you are wanting to open doors of job opportunity for yourself. Building your personal brand online allows your potential employment audience to connect with you as a job seeker on a more personal level. Building your personal brand online allows employers and recruiters to view your personal and career life on various online platforms and allows them to get to know who you are as an individual.



JOB SEEKER: YOUR ONLINE JOB SEEKER PROFILE

To achieve a positive online impact as a job seeker, you need to decide how you would like to present yourself to employers online and what you want your own personal job seeker brand to be.

Your personal brand is how you promote yourself. It is the unique combination of skills, experience, and personality that you want the world to see. Personal branding is the practice of marketing yourself and your career as a brand. It is an ongoing process of developing and maintaining your reputation.

Your aim as a job seeker should not be to over sell yourself, but rather to make yourself known as a job seeker online by creating a personal connection with potential employers. As a job seeker you should make your online profile available to potential employers and recruiters who are hiring by presenting a balanced social media presence with business and personal updates.

Each person, as a job seeker, has characteristics that define who they are, how others perceive them and how we see ourselves. As an individual looking for a job you should ask yourself what qualities you want a potential employer or recruiter to know about you and how you will go about sharing this information with them.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND JOB SEEKERS

A good place to start is to understand what type of information should be shared on the various online social media platforms.

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SOCIAL MEDIA AND JOB SEEKERS

A good place to start is to understand what type of information should be shared on the various online social media platforms.

Facebook is a social networking site that makes it easy for you to connect and share with family and friends online.

Twitter is a 'micro blogging' system that allows you to send and receive short posts called tweets.

Instagram allows users to edit and upload photos and short videos through a mobile app.

LinkedIn is a social network that focuses on professional networking and career development. You can use LinkedIn to display your resume, search for jobs, and enhance your professional reputation by posting updates and interacting with other people.



LINKEDIN FOR JOBS

Not all content needs to be shared on all online social media platforms. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are great online platforms to share information about your personal life.

LinkedIn is where your professional online job profile should shine. Your LinkedIn profile should showcase detail about your job and career achievements and successes, educational background and job specific content with regards to your field of expertise. You should be highlighting important job and career information which will help employers and recruiters to get to know the more serious side of you.

EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS: JOB SEEKER TARGET MARKET

Decide who your target audience is during your job search:

- Who do you want your posts to reach as a job seeker and how do you want to reach them. Are you targeting Recruitment Agents and Employers and which industry sectors of employment?
- What message are you wanting to send to the potential employers?
- How are you going to send this message? And
- Where (which platform) are you going to use to share this message?

RECRUITMENT CONSULTANT: WHAT WOULD AN IT RECRUITERS TARGET AUDIENCE BE:

Who would an IT Recruiter in South Africa target, possibly:

- Recruiting Agents who specialize in the placement of recruitment consultants within internal recruiting positions AND
- HR Managers and Recruitment Managers in Corporate Companies.

MESSAGE TO POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS:

What message would an IT Recruiter in South Africa want to share with potential employers and recruiters, possibly:

- Their extensive knowledge as an IT Recruiter of the the IT recruitment space and IT industry.
- That the personality is professional, friendly and optimistic.
- That as a recruiter they are very strong in sales, able to negotiate and build strong relationships with stakeholders.
- That family is important to the recruiter and the belief in a work-life balance and finally
- That the recruiter is motivated by closing deals

HOW AND WHERE AN IT RECRUITER CAN SHARE THEIR PROFESSIONAL BIO WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS:

The IT recruiter can write short articles on talent sourcing, sales in recruitment or client relationship management to post and share on LinkedIn. They could share interesting articles regarding recruitment on LinkedIn and Twitter. The recruiter can respond to question posts about recruitment and should only do so if they have value to add. By doing this the recruiter is creating a name for themselves on social media and becoming known within the right circles within the employment sector.

YOU, SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE



CLEAN ONLINE IMAGE: NURTURE YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE AS A JOB SEEKER AND PROTECT YOUR ONLINE IMAGE.

Once you have defined who you are a brand, it is essential that you as a job seeker are consistent at keeping a clean image online. Consider that once you have posted anything online and subsequently deleted it, there is always a possibility that others may have taken a screenshot and still able to share this information. It is advised to avoid posting any sort of content online that could potentially cause a negative response from others. Nurture your online presence as a job seeker and protect your online image.

HIRING AND SOURCING ONLINE: EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS

Hiring Managers and Recruiters are increasingly making use of social media as a sourcing tool to screen and recruit potential employees. Recruiters are able to search for job seekers by name on social media and view your online posts, including older posts, giving the recruiter insight into who you are and if you would be the right person that will fit into their company’s culture. In other words, will your personality as an individual employee be in tune with the personality of their organization. Take the time to google yourself and analyze what the search results reveal about yourself.

ONLINE PROFILE: SOCIAL MEDIA AND PRESENTING A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE ONLINE.

Clean up your social media accounts. Ensure that your permission settings are correct and set them up to ensure that you only allow the persons that you want to view your private posts to see them. It is recommended that you remove any content that could potentially be considered as inappropriate and leave groups that could cause damage to your online reputation.

Always use your real name and change any handles or URL’s that are inappropriate and always keep in mind that your objective is to present a professional image online and at all times.

Content that you should considering removing from your online profile would be political comments, abusive content that was posted out of anger, any content that could be considered to be “adult” in nature (social media is not the place to post pictures of yourself in your underwear), content that can be considered offensive or discriminatory, negative opinions about any of your former employers or managers. Deactivate old accounts that you may have. If you still have a YouTube account from your teenage days and no longer make use of it, remove it. Add professional bios about who you are and what makes you unique as a job seeker.

WHAT IS A PROFESSIONAL BIO?

A professional biography is a description or summary of your professional background, educational history, skill set and or achievements.



JOB HUNTING RESEARCH

Once you are sure that you have cleaned up your online presence and you are now presenting a professional image online you can start doing your job-hunting research. Find relevant job groups, job pages, job tags and influential people in the employment space to follow. Your findings should all be relevant as to where you can find jobs, share content and get professional advice from persons who are knowledgeable and influential within the career space and job market.



Follow up and tune in daily to your researched network. Review job postings, respond to posts only if you have value to add and get your name known on social media. The more you engage with potential employers and recruiters, the more online confidence you will build in your name. By engaging positively and adding value you are allowing yourself to be recognized by potential employers and recruiters as someone who can add value and this could potentially open doors of job opportunity for yourself. Remember to remain friendly and courteous at all times.



LINKEDIN FOR JOBS

A personal website or LinkedIn profile allows potential employers and recruiters to find you readily online. It is important to note that you should be cautious with your online presence or websites and take care as to who your personal details are exposed to.

Recruiters and employers generally do have a database or ATS system but do also make use of a variety of online search techniques in their search for potential employees. A LinkedIn profile is always a good place to start when looking for a job as it is essentially an online CV profile showcasing your previous work experiences and education. Take care when creating and updating your LinkedIn profile and ensure that your online profile is set to be searchable to recruiters and hiring managers. Remember to add a link of your online portfolio to your hard and soft copy CV.



YOUR CV

Your CV is the first impression that you provide to a potential employer, if you are not prepared to make an effort on your CV, why would they trust that you would make an effort in your job?



We all know that your CV is the very first impression that you give of yourself to a company. If you have made no effort with your CV it will show and you can expect very little to no response. There are many free resources available on the internet, most are international sites, be sure to use sites specifically targeting the South African market specifically if you are targeting posts locally.

A Curriculum vitae is the Latin word for "course of life", often shortened as CV, a CV is defined as a written overview of someone's life's work (academic formation, publications, qualifications etc.). Your CV will be the first impression that the potential employer will get of you and you will initially be judged on your CV. The importance of having a well-structured CV should not be underestimated, as a job seeker you need to market yourself and your CV should be considered your marketing document and therefore it needs to be presented well.

When preparing to enter the job market you need to draft or re-draft your CV to include current and accurate information relating to your employment history and career interests.

Elements to be include in your CV:

Personal Summary

Your CV should include a personal summary highlighting your expertise and skills, this is a brief overview of your experience, top skills, education and what you envisage your next step to be. Use this section to tell the reader what makes you unique from all the other job seekers that are applying for the same role.

An example of a personal summary would be:

I am currently employed as a Receptionist on a full time basis within the construction industry and have over 5 years' experience in a front-line position. This role has provided me with the opportunity to grow my financial skill set as I am responsible for the invoicing, statements and client communication regarding unpaid accounts. My natural numeric ability and keen eye for detail has assisted me in successfully navigating the financial aspects of my position. Having recently completed a bookkeeping certificate, I would like to advance my career and secure a permanent position as a Junior Accounts Administrator.

Your personal summary can be adjusted to fit each role that you are applying for, ensure that you highlight key points that you specifically would like to reader to take note of.

Personal Details

Place your personal details on your CV so that they are easy to find, close to the top of your CV is preferable. Include your contact number, email address and other information that may be useful depending on the type of jobs you are applying for. Graphic designers, for instance, might want to include a link to their portfolio. Certain information should not be included unless it is directly related to your career. An example of this would be hobbies, religion, disabilities and health. If you are a fitness instructor adding hobbies such as 'mountain biking' would be relevant as it is directly related to your career. The standard information required under the personal details include:

Full Name

Your full name should start with your first name, or the name that you prefer to be addressed by.

Nationality

If you are not South African, include if you have a work permit or permanent residency, include your permit expiry dates.

Date of birth

It is not necessary to include your full ID number on your CV, due to the increased identity theft we would recommend that you do not, rather include your date of birth only.

Residential Address

Include only the suburb and city, do not include your full physical address. If you have more than one address, list the address that falls closest to the area that the position advertised is situated in. If you are willing to relocate, indicate this on your CV.

Contact Details

This is vital, many candidates leave their contact numbers off of their CV or have changed their contact numbers. List a secondary number of a spouse or a friend and include a personal email address. Avoid using your current place of work email address and do make use a professional email address.

Driver's License

Include the type of drivers license that you hold, if you use public transport or have your own vehicle. This information is generally very important for Recruiters when they are sourcing for positions. Often positions require that you travel as part of the job and therefore it would be an inherent requirement for some job postings.

Languages

We live in a diverse country with many different languages and more often than not employers prefer employees who can speak multiple languages, listing all of them could be beneficial to you.

Notice period

Your notice period can normally be found in your employment contract and this should be listed for potential employers to understand what your availability is to start in a post. Only list immediate if you are currently not employed or if you have an agreement in place with your current employer that you may resign with immediate effect.

Optional details

The following information can be included in your CV if you like, but is optional and does not need to be included if you don't want.

Race

Some roles are only available to BEE candidates due to government requirements, if you fall into this category you should consider adding this into your personal details.

Disabilities:

This information should only be included IF you have a recognized disability, hiring disabled candidates assist companies in improving their BEE scores, providing them with this information upfront can assist in pushing your CV higher up the list.

Desired Salary

Determine what your current Cost to Company (CTC) is, this is a term used to calculate the total cost to the company to employ you and includes the company contributions of UIF, medical aid, provident fund etc. as well as your contributions. Basic salary, bonuses and incentives as also included in your cost to company.

Calculate your current salary correctly, taking into consideration any bonuses, benefits, perks and commission. Should the new employer not offer benefits, those amounts will need to be added into your salary so that you will be able to cover them yourself. Do research to understand what the market is paying for the type of role that you are applying for, take into account your level of expertise. You wouldn't want to push for a salary that is outside of this bracket nor would you like to be underpaid.

Education

Your education should be listed on your CV including your secondary schooling (high school) as well as any certificates, diplomas or degrees etc. that you have obtained or are currently completing. Qualifications that you are currently completing should be listed on your CV as current or in progress or include the 'to be completed' date if you like.

Achievements

Include information under the achievement's sections regarding your achievements and career successes. If you do not have anything significant to include it is advised to exclude this section from your CV entirely. You should include quantifiable achievements, for example: "Implemented a new excel-based client processing system that reduced time spent on on-boarding a new client by 60%" or "collected R 100 000.00 outstanding debt within the first 2 months of employment". Achievements can include awards, promotions, good educational results, elections to lead committees or charities, long term employment etc.

Professionals skills and computer proficiency

Each person has their own set of personal attributes and job skills, identify which of your skills are relevant to your career and include these on your CV. Skills should include computer programs with which you have at least intermediate to advanced knowledge and experience on.

For example, a Receptionist may include:

- Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.
- Ability to communicate effectively verbally and written in English and Zulu.
- Scheduling and organizational ability.
- Excellent time management.

Pay attention to the skills that you are listing, do not copy and paste from google, your listed skills should be a true reflection of your abilities and skills, otherwise, they do not belong on your CV.

Employment history

Most employers are interested in seeing your most recent working experiences, it is recommended that you list your employment history in chronological order from your most recent first. You should include full duties and responsibilities for your last three roles and include employment history for the last ten years. Employment for 11 years and back should still include your job title, company name and the duration of the employment.

List your experience as follows:

Company name

Include the full company name and if it is or was outside of South Africa, include the country.

Job title

If your job title is something out of the ordinary, then include a more common term in brackets e.g. Sales Guru (Sales Representative).

Duration

The duration should include the month and year that you started at the company and the month and year that you left and/or if you are currently still employed. For example, January 2016 – November 2019 or January 2016 – Current.

Duties

It is important to make sure that the duties listed are also searchable keywords, listing your duties in bullet points and providing sufficient detail without repeating yourself is recommended. Your CV is a marketing document and should be optimized for the search functionalities of applicant tracking systems'. It is a good idea to search the duties on google to get ideas on how to list them. We will use the example of a Receptionist again:

A Receptionist would possibly list duties as follows:

- Assist visitors by greeting and welcoming them, ensuring all their queries are answered.
- Notify relevant person of visitors arrival, log visitor and issue visitor badge.
- Receive and transfer calls to appropriate individuals or department.
- Taking and distributing of messages.
- Receiving and sorting of all incoming mail and distribution thereof.
- Purchase stationery and office supplies, ensure sufficient stock availability at all times.
- Coordinate meetings and arrange catering.
- Validate parking tickets.

Identifying keywords for your duties

Keywords or phrases are used to identify requirements for a job and are used by Recruiters and Hiring Managers as part of their search techniques when sourcing for candidates in Applicant Tracking Systems. They input the keywords relevant to the job post they are sourcing for into the search functionality and candidates who have those words indicated within their CV will be filtered. Keywords can relate to skills, qualifications, job titles and responsibilities.

With the increased use in applicant tracking systems it is important that you use recognized and common terms in your CV, by researching job listings and LinkedIn profiles of other people fulfilling the same type of role as you do, you can identify keywords to add or adjust on your CV.

Companies may make use of different terms for the same duty, adjusting your CV to use their terminology can assist in having your CV selected because the language used on you CV is easily recognized. For example, you come across a job advertisement that lists business development as a key duty. You are a sales representative and your CV states a key skill as cold calling, change the wording of your CV to include business development. Be specific as most recruiters will start their search with a job title. If you are a Data Capturer reflect this clearly in your job title. You should note that keywords should not be added if you do not have that particular skill, qualification or if you do not have any previous relevant experience. Keywords should be used to replace or enhance words with a similar meaning, be careful not to keyword stuff your CV.

Reasons for leaving

Each role with duties should include a reason for leaving, these reasons must be the truth and you should avoid running down any previous employers.

Choose your words carefully, instead of indicating that a contract terminated rather use end of contract, by listing that the contract was terminated could give the reader the impression that you were dismissed from that particular job.

Examples of reasons for leaving:

- Change of career focus.
- Offered a post with more responsibility.
- Retrenched due to company closure.
- Spouse transferred to a new city.
- Seeking new challenges.
- Seeking a change in environment.

References

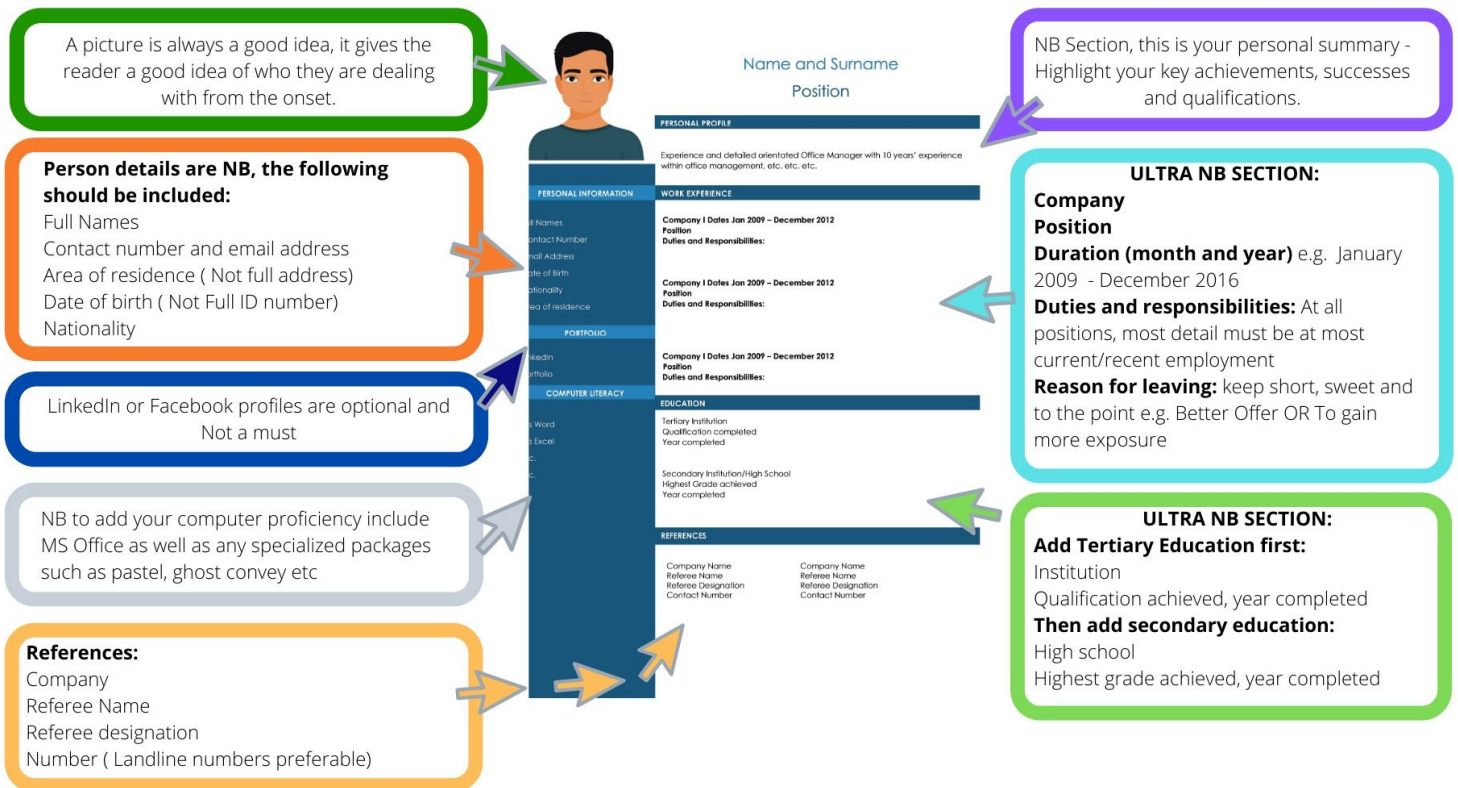
Should you choose to list your references from the onset you should ideally list the persons who you have directly reported to or someone that has supervised your work. Only list referees that you have received permission from, make sure they know they are listed as referees on your CV so as not to catch them off guard with calls.

Your reference section should include:

- The name of the company.
- The referee's full name.
- Their job title at the time that you were employed with the company.
- Contact number, a landline is always preferred.
- An email address if you have one.

Should the person have left the company, you can still have them as a reference on your CV.

JOB SEEKERS GUIDE TO A GOOD CV TEMPLATE



COVER LETTERS

A cover letter should only be provided if specifically asked for in the job-advert.



A cover letter, covering letter, motivation letter, motivational letter or letter of motivation is defined as a letter of introduction attached to or accompanying another document such as a resume or curriculum vitae. A cover letter provides you with an opportunity to introduce yourself and convey to the reader a bit of your personality. The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce yourself to the reader. The kind of job that you are looking for should be mentioned and you should show your skills and experience match the required skills and experience needed to do the job, you should encourage the reader to read your resume or CV. Finish off the cover letter with a call to action like asking for an interview or a meeting.

Cover letters in South Africa are used less seldom however should a company want to gain additional insight into who you are they may request a cover letter be included along with your job application. Your cover letter should explain why you are the candidate of choice and that your CV gives evidence of this. You should adapt your cover letter for each post that you are applying for, avoid generic cover letters.

Elements to include in a cover letter:

- Your name and your contact details including your phone number and email address. Ensure that this information is well placed and easy to find for the reader.
- Where possible address the application directly to the Recruiter or Hiring Manager.
- The name of the position that you are applying for.
- Advise why the role and the company are of interest to you, this is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the position and organization.
- A list of your relevant skills, you should include a summary about how your skills and experience match the job description of the advertised post.
- Summarize the skills that you have that best match the role that you are applying for, touch on your education and core competencies that make you an ideal match for the job.
- Highlight your achievements relevant to the position that you are applying for, give the reader insight into results that you have achieved in similar functions in the past.
- Remember to keep your cover letter brief and to the point with a maximum of one page of content.
- Finish off your cover letter by asking the reader to contact you, ask them to read your resume or CV and to contact you about an interview.
- Proof read your cover letter, does it make sense to you.

Additional tips:

- Double-check your CV and cover letter for spelling errors, grammar usage and make sure that your contact details are correct.
- Ask someone to read through your CV to make sure it is easy to read and makes sense.
- When adding a photo to your CV, it should be a head and shoulders image in front of a blank background, like a wall.
- Do not include a first-page “Curriculum Vitae”, this is a waste of space and paper.
- Avoid the use of page borders in your CV.
- Avoid scanning your CV, save and send your CV either in MS Word or PDF format.
- Scan all your supporting documentation and send as a separate document however attached to the same email.
- Should you be using google drive to send your CV, ensure that you have provided the relevant permissions for access upfront, should permission still need to be granted after the chances are high that your CV will be ignored purely due to accessibility reasons.
- Save your documents by name e.g. Angie Le Roux CV 2019, Angie Le Roux Supporting Documents 2019.

Example of how-to layout a cover letter:

Dear (Recruiter/Hiring Manager’s Name)

Introduction paragraph:

Use this paragraph to describe the role that you are applying for, why you are interested in this job and the company itself, and what makes you a good fit.

Second paragraph:

List your relevant skills, you should include a summary of how your skills and experience match the job description of the advertised post. Summarize the skills that you have that best match the role that you are applying for, touch on your education and core competencies that make you the ideal match for the job.

Closing paragraph:

Emphasize why you are interested in the post and why you are a good fit and use this section to describe how you could possibly contribute to the organisation if they were to hire you.

Call to action:

Ask the reader to move forward with your application, ask them to read your resume or CV, ask them to contact you for an interview and remember to thank the reader .

Greeting:

Sincerely,

Your Name



SOURCING OF JOBS



Now that you have given your CV the attention that it deserves and created a great CV, you are ready to start looking for a job, there are three main areas here that you would need to focus on namely your:

1. Current network
2. Online applications and
3. Offline applications

There are hundreds and thousands of platforms where jobs are advertised every day, by making use of these platforms you can source and apply for jobs for which you meet the requirements. Be careful as to not apply for the same job posting over and over as Recruiters and Hiring managers do advertise the same role over multiple platforms to attract as many applications as possible. By responding to the same advert numerous times, gives the reader the impression that you are not targeting your applications but rather sending your CV everywhere in the hope that something will stick.

It is important to understand that looking for a job can be a job in itself. You should develop a strategy, a job search plan and a 'to-do' list, write down your career goals to keep you on track. Set up a regular routine to tackle job hunting each day, make a schedule and stick to it, block out time on your calendar daily and commit to using it strictly for moving forward in your job search. Include time for searching for new job sites and job searching tools, broaden your job search techniques. Often it is not your lack of skills preventing your securing a post, but where you are spending your efforts in your job search. Focus on your competencies and not just the job titles, use job board aggregators allowing automated searches to do the work for you and deliver relevant listings.

View your job search as a project, document each company that you apply to, what role you have applied for, when you have applied for it, where you found the job opportunity, who you have submitted the application to and if you have had any feedback. This way you can easily follow up on applications and not apply for the same roles more than once.

Example for keeping track:

Date	Source	Position	Contact person	Contact details	Feedback
11 Nov	Pnet	Receptionist	Kelly	Phone number Email address	None

There are many jobs that could have multiple job titles, by researching these titles, you are able to expand your results. For example, if you are an Administrator, you could research:

- Office Administrator
- Admin Assistant
- Girl Friday
- Office Support
- Junior Personal Assistant
- Secretary
- Administration Officer
- Branch Administrator

SOURCING OF JOBS - YOUR NETWORK

Everyone has a network that they can tap into including family members, friends, old colleagues, classmates etc. that may be working for a company who is looking to hire or have had someone mention to them that they are looking for someone with your skills. By letting your network know that you are actively in the job market, they are able to extend the reach of your job search, to people you may otherwise have never spoken to.

Start by developing an “elevator speech”, essentially information that you can pass on during a brief elevator ride. This is simply a quick introduction of who you are, what you can do and what job you are wanting to secure. This way when you meet someone, you are prepared and can provide them with valuable information immediately. This can be used in an interview when someone asks you to tell them more about yourself. Practice this speech until you know it backwards.

Example:

While working as a waitress I self-funded my Human Resource Management Degree from UNISA. After graduating in 2017, I secured a Human Resource Internship at XYZ Company and was given the opportunity to gain experience in general HR administration, recruitment, on-boarding as well as HR policies and employee benefits. I will be completing my internship in two months and I am looking for an entry-level position in a corporate environment as a HR Assistant or an Internal Recruiter.

Start by putting together a list of people that you know, send them an email with your updated CV and inform them that you are currently in the job market. Ask them to forward your CV onto the Human Resource department or Recruitment Manager in the company.

SOURCING OF JOBS - ONLINE SOURCING

The majority of jobs are advertised online and can be found on various platforms including social media, job portals, company websites, recruiter websites and online newspapers. Spend some time researching the various options and record the websites, registrations etc. so you can go back to them once you have secured a job and update your status or remove your CV.

Keep in mind that these are public social websites, only let people know that you are looking for a job on these platforms if your company is aware that you are seeking alternative employment OR if you are unemployed. You do not want to put your current employment in jeopardy by posting your intention to leave.

Facebook

More than 65 million companies globally use Facebook to interact with clients and potential employees, with the introduction of facebook.com/jobs in 2017, these companies are now able to easily showcase their available positions. Using the job search filter, you can quickly identify roles that are available within your area of expertise and within the location that you are wanting to secure a role in.

Before you go ahead and apply for jobs on Facebook you should make sure that your privacy settings have been adjusted to your preferred settings and that you have cleaned up your profile. Under your intro details, Facebook offers users the ability to list career information and when listing previous companies it will automatically link you to that Facebook page. The same applies to your Education, you are able to use this space to professionally showcase your previous and current employment, giving potential employers insight into your qualifications and experience.

There are thousands of groups and pages on Facebook that share vacancies on a daily basis and they are very easy to tap into. In the search bar of Facebook type in the keywords such a jobs, employment, vacancies and careers, the search result will yield hundreds of results that can be filtered by groups, pages, marketplace etc. From there you can start to source opportunities, follow pages and joining groups. This is a great way to tap into positions advertised by recruitment agencies and companies.

Twitter and Instagram

If you have a personal account on Twitter and Instagram, you should consider creating a secondary professional account. As with Facebook, you should aim at presenting a clean and professional image to potential employers and recruiters.

Create a professional bio, make it short but give career highlights. If you are currently looking for a job include this and indicate that you have a LinkedIn profile, add the URL, that employers and recruiters can easily find and view.

Example:

IT and Finance Recruitment Specialist
Over 13 years' experience placing exceptional talent
Interested in new opportunities
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/angieleroux>

Now you are ready to start posting! The most impact you are going to have is with creating images, it is known fact that posts with images have a wider reach. Use products like canva.com to design images for free, consider what you want to share and design a few images and try and share something every day. Include hashtags in your posts, do research on the hashtags that will benefit you the most.

Consider posting:

- Quotes and motivational images.
- Advice about your industry.
- A one-minute video of yourself introducing your skills, qualifications and roles that you are wanting to secure.
- Images of you working.
- Images of yourself at conferences, events or even volunteering.
- Accomplishments in your personal life as sporting events, singing in the choir, marathons etc.

Start following others, find influencers and companies by searching hashtags such as #nowhiring #job #jobsearch #jobseekerswednesday etc. Interact and comment only if you have something valuable to add, this could open up opportunities that you could apply for. Avoid being rude or responding in anger, if you do not have something nice to say or no value to add, rather don't say anything at all.

Job Portals

Job portals, career portals or job boards are employment websites that Recruiters and Hiring Managers use to advertise their vacancies and source candidates from. These sites have a back-end login where clients of the job portals can search for candidates using keywords and are then able to review applications received via the platform. These sites are a great way for recruiters to find you and vice versa for you to source and apply for jobs that are shared from hundreds of companies.

To get started on any one of these platforms you will need to create a profile, the sites will guide you as to the information that you need to add in and how far your profile is from being completed. Always try and complete your profile as comprehensively as possible.

Once you have created and completed your profile 100%, you will be able to search and apply for jobs, search the jobs by:

- Using the search bar, add in job titles that suit your skill set, select your region and search.
- Select the advanced search options and filter by job category, regions, salary ranges, contract types etc.
- Search by using the preset categories on the front page.

Recruitment Agencies

There is misconception in the job market that recruitment agencies find you a job, this is not their function. Companies hire recruitment agencies and provide them with their available job listings, the recruitment agencies in turn source suitable candidates that they submit to the companies for the available roles.

Recruiters advertise the roles on various job portals, newspapers and social media platforms to generate applications and make use of multiple platforms to search for candidates that meet the required skills needed. Once this process has been completed, they will shortlist and select the top 3-6 candidates and present these profiles to the company for review and selection.

Recruiters receive hundreds of applications and although many do attempt to respond to each applicant, they are not always able to do this due to the sheer volume of responses that they have received. This is one of the reasons that some recruiters include the following statement in job adverts – “should you not hear from us within two weeks from date of your applications, please consider your application as unsuccessful”.

To source roles that are advertised by recruitment agencies, you should start by researching those that specialize in recruitment within your field. For example, if you google “office support recruitment agencies in Johannesburg”, the results will return a list of recruitment agencies that specialize or recruit within the office support sector.

Almost all recruitment agencies will have a dedicated page on their website where job seekers can view the current roles available and apply for the relevant jobs or alternatively an option to register your CV on their database. When you apply for a job through these online portals, your CV is automatically registered with an agent on their database. Should you not find a job that suits your experience, use the register option to add your CV to their database.

The registration process can be tiresome, but keep your end goal in mind, it will eventually be worth it. Check back on the websites for new roles and apply for the positions that you meet the criteria for. Keep in mind that there is generally more than one consultant at any given agency and each one will be working on different roles.



HOW TO APPLY FOR JOBS



Just as your CV is the first impression that you give a potential employer, the way that you apply for a job is just as important. The job adverts will more often than not give clear instructions on how to apply, follow the instructions as best you can. If you are not going to follow the instructions your CV may not be received or it may well be ignored because you have given the impression that you are not able to follow instructions. The result being that you have wasted your time in apply for the post, this is precisely what you should avoid.

When sending your application via email to an employer make use of a professional email address, keep your email focused and brief and state your intentions clearly. Write informative subject lines and stick to the instructions as provided, include the name of the vacancy that is advertised/ that you are applying for and the reference number of the particular advertisement if applicable. In the body of the mail, highlight in two short paragraphs the key points from the job advert as to why and how you meet the criteria, considering qualifications, skills and duties previously fulfilled.

For example:

Good day,

Attached please find my application for the Receptionist post as advertised. In 2012 I completed a Diploma in Office Support and I have over 5 years' experience managing a reception desk with more than 200 lines. My skills include excellent verbal and written communication in English, Zulu and Afrikaans. I am well presented, manage all interactions professionally and my computer proficiency includes intermediate Microsoft office knowledge and usage.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

When applying for jobs, you should try and avoid:

- On a social media post, "I'm interested", this will get you nowhere, rather follow the instructions provided.
- Leaving your phone number on social media posts
- Sending your CV to multiple agencies or Hiring Managers in one email
- Providing a link to your CV that does not have the correct permissions for access
- Sending all of your supporting documents when they have not been asked for
- Applying for jobs where you do not meet the minimum criteria

FOLLOWING UP ON JOB APPLICATIONS



When following up on a job application, you should aim to remind the Recruiter or Hiring Manager of your application but at the same time you do not want to make a nuisance of yourself. Before contacting the Recruiter, you should wait at least 5 – 10 working days, the recruitment process can be long and during this period they will be reviewing applications and shortlisting. Once this period is lapsed you should:

- Send a follow up email with a clear subject line “Following up on job application for “job title”.
- Remind them on which date you applied.
- Ask the reader if they could possibly advise you on what the decision timeline is OR when they would be expecting to finalize the shortlist for the role .

Employers and Recruiters prefer to receive communication via email, as this ensures that they have a record of your contact and can also respond within their own time.

Always keep in mind that they are managing multiple positions, multiple candidates and generally have busy schedules.

Should you not receive a response after 3 working days, then you should call the consultant. In the call you should confirm the position that you have applied for as well as when you applied, ask if they have received your CV and your follow up email and let them know that you would like to establish when the shortlisting will be finalized.

If after that call you still do not receive feedback, consider your application as unsuccessful.

You should avoid:

- Contacting the consultant more than twice.
- Calling every day.
- Showing up in person to ask about your application.
- Sending a WhatsApp.
- Sending them a message on Facebook.

AVOIDING JOB SCAMS



Unfortunately, the reality in South Africa is that thousands of job scams are being advertised daily, being vigilant and trying to avoid applying for job adverts out of desperation will essentially save you time, save you from losing money and in some cases even your life.

These are a few things that you should keep an eye out for when applying for roles:

- Adverts that are offering a large number of opportunities for the same job title e.g. “We are looking to hire 200 Administrators now”
- The salary being offered is much higher than the market related offer. Let’s be realistic, the chances of a data capturer position offering R 25 000 per month is very slim. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- The job requires some sort of payment upfront to cover checks or interviews etc. All recruitment agencies pay for risk checks themselves and this is generally included in the fee to the client, you should never have to pay for this.
- Requests for you to fax your CV, we live in the digital age, no reputable recruitment agency or company will ask you to fax your CV.
- You have been shortlisted for a job that you have never applied for or have been interviewed for.
- Known name companies with a Gmail address e.g. pepsi@pepsico.job@gmail.com.
- They have requested your banking details or sensitive financial information to be provided upfront, this is only asked for, by the company generally once you have been hired.
- An offering of paid training with guaranteed placement afterward.
- The job is advertised for a large company but the link for the advert is not on their website or on a reputable job portal.
- Adverts, documents, emails etc. are poorly formatted with spelling and grammatical errors.
- Emails do not include contact information nor can these details be found on an internet search.

Always check the company website, make sure that there is a contact number and physical address. You can check their social media accounts for recommendations and reviews, call them and find out who answers and what they say.

Rather be safe than sorry!

POSSIBLE REASONS AS TO WHY YOUR APPLICATION IS REJECTED



Not receiving feedback on a job application or constantly being rejected can be very frustrating and demotivating. In the current job climate, the competition in the job market is rife and often one role can receive over 300 applications.

The most common reason for rejection is for an application where your skills and experience do not meet the requirements of the job. Just because you think you can do something doesn't mean that someone is going to hire you if you are not able to prove your ability. You have to be able to fulfill the role and this needs to be clearly indicated on your CV.

Applying for jobs that you are overqualified for will also see you being rejected; companies see you as a risk for resignation when something better presents itself. Training and on-boarding of staff is a substantial cost to a company, very seldom will someone be appointed that is "overqualified".

A poorly structured CV with limited information or outdated formatting can also lead to your application being disqualified for a role. If you have not spent time on your CV to present yourself professionally, then you need to make this a priority.

Inconsistency in your employment dates, this is a red flag to recruiters, it makes it seem like you are hiding something. Your CV is filled with long paragraphs and is very difficult to read.

You are selling yourself short. If you do not like bringing attention to your success, your CV is the one place that you should not be humble, give as much information as possible about your success.

You have seen a job advert on social media and left your phone number or "I'm interested" in the comments, you will not be called. The applicants who have followed the job advert instructions will be considered.

Your CV is saved in the cloud and you have not changed your security or permission settings for accessibility. Your application is very likely to be ignored due to this.

You have submitted a scanned CV that is faded and difficult to read.

You have not read the job spec and simply don't meet the requirements as laid out in the job advert.

Your social media activity and photos pose a potential reputation risk to the hiring company.

Recruiters receive hundreds of applications for any given job advert, generally they only respond to candidates that they have shortlisted. If you have not heard from a recruiter within 2 weeks of your application, generally it is safe to then consider your application as unsuccessful.

WWW.KONTAK.CO.ZA

011 431 3542 | 010 013 0242

RECRUIT@KONTAK.CO.ZA

