

Prepare for your job search

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**We're
HIRING!**



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Looking for a job can be a job itself, so we thought we would share a few tips to help you on this journey by answering a few questions you may have.

WHAT DO I NEED IF I WANT TO APPLY FOR A JOB?

Most important will be your CV – this is what you are using to "sell" yourself to a potential employer!

It's also a good idea to have the below items/documents and information ready before applying for a job:

- A cell phone so that companies can contact you. If you can, invest in a smartphone so that you can get email and WhatsApp
- An email address
- Copies of any certificates
- Photo of you
- Copy of ID book or Passport with SA visa stamped (If you aren't from SA)
- Reference letters
- Food portfolio if applying for a Chefs position
- It would also be beneficial to have apps such as Zoom and Skype, as many employers will want to do interviews via one of these means, and they all have different preferences to which one.

HOW MANY PAGES SHOULD MY CV BE?

Ideally, 2 pages but no more than 3 (this doesn't include certificates or reference letters).



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DO'S AND DON'TS OF CV WRITING

- Do not put a fancy border or background on your CV. This is distracting.
- No different colours. Again, this is distracting and can come across as a bit unprofessional. White background with black ink only.
- The font must be all the same and a font that can be read easily like the following fonts available on WORD: Calibri, Bell MT, Arial, Times New Roman.
- Font size is important, don't go too big or too small (12-14 is good, and headings can be 16-18).
- No random clip-art images on the CV.
- Do keep it short and to the point.
- If you left a place of employment due to a negative reason such as: you didn't get on with a colleague, do not put this on your CV. Even if the colleague was the problem, it may not come across this way on paper. It is better to explain this to an employer in person if the information is required.
- Do make sure your CV is up to date, including any temporary or contract positions you may be doing while looking for a permanent position.
- Do make sure your CV is truthful and put on all places of employment are listed even if they were contract roles or you weren't at the place for long.
- Your main duties can be listed under your work experience, but only list these for your 2-3 most recent places of employment and never copy and paste duties from one job to another. Keep duties brief and relevant.



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WHAT SHOULD MY PHOTO BE LIKE?

- Your photo should be as smart and 'professional' looking as possible.
- It should be in colour; black and white copies don't look very good.
- It should be head and shoulders, not full body.
- You should be wearing smart clothing.
- You should be smiling and looking happy in the photo.
- No drinks, cigarettes in the photo.
- No other people or animals in the photo, only you.
- No sunglasses or caps.
- Hair should be neat and tidy.
- Not a selfie.
- Ask someone you know with a camera to take a photo of you and email it to you if you don't have a camera. Photos taken with cameras are of better quality than phones or use a good quality phone.

WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?

A cover letter is basically motivation for why a company should consider employing you, but this needs to be kept very brief. Sometimes people will do this as a separate letter to their CV; however, the less paperwork, the better, so I suggest you do the cover paragraph as part of your CV, this would be at the beginning of the CV and include your experience, passion, enthusiasm for employment with the company. I prefer to call this a 'Cover Paragraph'

It's important to keep it relevant to the job that you are applying for. Ideally, it should be edited for every single job and include the job title you are applying for.

Don't copy and paste your work experience in this paragraph. This will already be included under your work experience section.



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I'M APPLYING FOR A CHEF'S POSITION, WHAT IS A FOOD PORTFOLIO?

A food portfolio is photos of dishes you have cooked and plated. These should be dishes you are very proud of and, most importantly, look amazing as they are photos showing your skills. You should try to include at least 2 x starters, 2 x main courses and 2 x desserts to showcase your range of talent for cooking and presenting dishes. If you would like to send more photo's you can, but this is the minimum amount you should be submitting.

If you are applying for a pastry chef role, you can stick to photos that are relevant.

WHAT IS A WRITTEN REFERENCE?

Before leaving any employer, you should request a written reference from your supervisor/ manager. This letter should be on the company letter headed paper, with the person who is writing the references name and position and include all contact details and be signed by them.

The letter should include your role with the company/job title, a basic overview of your duties and how you performed. It may include your strengths but also your weaknesses.

It's really up to the employer what they write here, but it's information on how you performed in your role and if they recommend you.

Remember, the more reference letters you get, the better, so ask for one from every employer.

It is important to note that a written reference is different to a certificate of service which would only state your name, ID number, the dates you worked for the company, in what role and sometimes it includes your salary amount and reason you left. A certificate of service doesn't include any information on your duties or how you performed in this role and isn't worth submitting with a job application.

Now that you have your documents in place and your up-to-date CV, you need to find places to send your CV to! Now you are ready to check out our "The job search" document.

