



Career Guide

A Career Information Resource
2023/2024

Welcome note

NWU Career Centre team

The North-West University (NWU) Career Centre proudly presents you with the 14th edition of its Career Guide. In this publication we share career opportunities and resource articles that can assist you on your career path.

As a team, we have reflected on the work that we have done in the past, and we are confident that our experiences have enriched the contents on this edition of the NWU Career Guide. We hope you find this information helpful and useful to better prepare yourself for your future career.

The fourth industrial revolution is changing the future of work and presenting opportunities for new sectors and jobs. The South African labour market remains competitive, with many graduates competing for the same job opportunities. Stats SA's Quarterly Labour Force Survey shows that the official

unemployment rate was 32,9% in the first quarter of 2023, with youth (15 -34 years) unemployment rate increasing by 1.1 percentage points to 46,5% during the same period. According to the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the number of graduates has increased as a result of attainment of higher education qualifications, but due to mismatches between labour market and demands and educational qualifications, graduates find it difficult to find employment after graduation. Therefore, it is crucial for higher education institutions to focus on graduate employability to widen the youth's knowledge and skills base. The NWU is repositioning its graduate employability strategy to respond sufficiently to the new market needs and industry trends.

The NWU Career Centre is poised to assist and support you in getting closer to your dream opportunity or your next breakthrough.



This guide presents you with resources that can assist you towards building a meaningful career path for yourself.

Our dedicated Career Centre staff across our campuses are there to help you; offering a range of services and resources to facilitate dialogue, address concerns, guide

you to the best possible career suitable for you, and to assist you in making decisions for career success.

Best wishes
The NWU Career Centre team.



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Campus Liaison Officers

M

Relebogile Sekati

Campus Liaison Officer

Mahikeng Campus

Building ADC

Office 139

018 389 2935

Relebogile.sekati@nwu.ac.za

P

Nombulelo Malunga

Campus Liaison Officer

Potchefstroom Campus

Building F25

018 299 4409

Nombulelo.Malunga@nwu.ac.za

V

Tshepiso Mothupi

Campus Liaison Officer

Vanderbijlpark Campus

Building A14, SL333

016 910 3345

tshepiso.mothupi@nwu.ac.za



The Career Centre Team



Thoriso Maseng Manager: Career Centre

Building F25
018 299 2058
thoriso.maseng@nwu.ac.za

Khumbulani Menyuka Information Officer

Building F25
018 299 2020
careercentre@nwu.ac.za

Azwi Singo Specialist: Career Coach

Building ADC
Office 139
018 389 2925
35576642@nwu.ac.za

Avis Erens Administrative Assistant

Building F25
018 299 2059
Avis.erens@nwu.ac.za

Lehlohonolo Putsoane Employer Engagement Specialist

Building A14
Office: SL333
016 910 3354
hloni.putsoane@nwu.ac.za

Office hours

Monday – Friday: 8:00 – 16:30

(The office will be closed between 13:00 – 14:00).

For more information visit our website:

<http://services.nwu.ac.za/career-centre>

Student Counselling & Development

Mahikeng Campus

Student Counselling & Development is the ultimate educational function. Real student development aims at producing graduates with quality. Student Counselling & Development is the means to an end. SCD offers support to students at all levels.

The following services are provided

- Supplemental Instruction (SI) – out of class peer tutoring
- Research Support
- Peer Mentoring
- Reading Laboratory
- Writing Centre
- Study Skills
- Disability Rights Unit (DRU): offering services to students with disability
- Examination and Test taking strategies
- eFundi

Enquiries:

Student Counselling and Development:

Building: B6/Health Care Centre Building

Tel: 018 389 2592

Email: MC-SCD@nwu.ac.za

Operating hours: 08h00 - 16h30

(Monday – Friday)

Disability Rights Unit:

Building A3, Office 140

General Academic Building

HIV/Aids:

018 389 2001

- Do you need study skills?
- Are you limited by disability to access teaching and learning?
- Are you in first year and struggling to read and comprehend what you read?
- Do you have problems with your academic writing? (assignments / research)
- Do you have problems with computing?
- Do you have problems with writing your research proposal?
- Do you sometimes feel frustrated with your studies and wonder how other students made it to graduation?
- Do you need small peer support groups to improve your academic performance in a module?

If your answer to the above questions is "YES", visit ADC in the Student Academic Development Section.

Student Counselling & Development

Vanderbijlpark Campus

OPTIMIZING YOU!

Role of SCD at NWU

Our role at SCD is to be a hand of support in challenging times, and to inspire and develop students to reach optimal wellness potential in

all the dimensions of life, including emotional, social, physical, connectivity, growth, and influence.



Services offered by SCD:

- **Psychological services**, including individual and group psychotherapy and counselling
- **Life and leadership** skills and personal development
- Social support services, including HIV/AIDS and community engagement programmes
- **Psychometric assessments** for both prospective and current NWU students

- **Career guidance** and counselling
- Enhancing the **first-year experience**, including adjustment to campus life, and general development
- Support for students with **disabilities**

“THE FUTURE
IS IN YOUR
HANDS”



Career Development

- Career counselling
- Career guidance
- Career exploration
- Career development
- Career psychometric assessment testing
- Coaching & leadership academy



Social Support Services

- Social work services
- Meal-a-Day
- Poverty alleviation projects
- Family support
- Substance abuse programmes



HIV/AIDS Coordination

- Addressing the stigma of HIV
- Sexuality
- Women and men empowerment
- Support and counselling for rape, abuse, pregnancy, and grief
- Awareness and prevention campaigns



Disability Rights Unit

- Academic support for students with learning disabilities
- Academic Accommodations/ Concession applications (relevant supporting medical report required and registration with the DRU)

- Adapted text arrangements: Conversion of study material into accessible electronic formats.
- Assistive technological services: screenings, training, and support
- Advocacy and awareness on disability issues
- Consultation sessions
- Disability Resource Centre
- Orientation programme for newly registered students with disabilities
- Orientation and mobility training
- Support Groups
- Support with disability bursary applications



24 Hours Thuso Crisis Line

- Trauma counselling
- Initial counselling (emergency walk-in students)
- Professional services and ER24
- Referrals to the Campus Clinic and SCD



and Counselling

- Individual psychotherapy
- Personal development and coaching
- Personal problems
- Psychological challenges and disorders
- Life skills development

Line of communication with students

Thuso is a 24-hour crisis centre under the auspices of Student Counselling and Development (SCD) on the Vanderbijlpark Campus.

Thuso is an emergency crisis line available for students who are experiencing a mental-health crisis and are unable to cope with the current situation.


Our main focus is on suicide prevention and trauma intervention.


**24 Hours Thuso
Crisis Line:
082 815 9781**


To book a session:



SCD Consultation Form
Vanderbijlpark Campus

 **Our Offices:**
Campus Library
Building A14, Split Level 3, SL331

 **Office Hours:**
Monday to Friday,
08:00 – 16:30

 **Contact:**
016 910 3195
scdvc@nwu.ac.za

- Scan QR code for SCD Consultation Form
- Submit form
- Practitioner allocation
- Session scheduling with Practitioner
- Session

<https://forms.office.com/r/ncj8FmZunG>

Student Counselling & Development

Potchefstroom Campus

Student counselling and development (SCD)

Do you experience

- emotional or personal problems
- problems with your course/choice of profession
- difficulties in adapting
- relationship problems
- learning problems
- anxiety problems or
- phase of life problems?

Or do you need help with:

- extended writing time
- time management
- stress management
- life skills or
- conflict management

...THEN THE STUDENT COUNSELLING AND DEVELOPMENT (SCD) IS YOUR ANSWER!

SCD has a wide range of psychological services to help students grow and develop optimally in academic, emotional, and social areas. These services are provided free of cost to students and include a 24-hr emotional crisis intervention service offered

by the "Thuso1777" centre.

Services are offered in two (2) buildings:

Student Counselling and Development – Building F18

SCD focuses on Academic/Course/Degree support and offers the following services:



Career and course counselling

Help students to make responsible career and course choices with the aid of psychometric tests. Students may also be assisted with the revising of their curricula and career choices if they encounter problems during the course of their studies.



Psychometric Evaluations – Subject Choices, Career Choices, Career Changes & Selection Tests

Comprehensive psychometric testing and career-path guidance services are freely available to

students and members of the public (fee is charged). Some of the services available require prior Student Counselling & Development: Potchefstroom Campus booking and predetermined testing dates (selection tests). If you are unsure about your career-path, you can book an appointment on eFundi or call us at 018 299 2893.

- Assessment for Course and Career Guidance and Changes (for NWU students).
- Grades 10–12: Career Counselling and Guidance.
- Grade 9: Subject Choices.



Disability Rights Unit

The Disability Rights Unit (DRU) aims to help students registered with them to gain equal access to educational opportunities at the NWU so they can participate freely and actively in all facets of university life: “If we are unable to help you, we will find someone who can!”. All students with physical and psychological challenges are invited to come and talk to us. We offer disability support to all NWU students. We support students with the following disabilities:

- Visual Disability.
- Physical Disability (Permanent).
- Hearing Disability (Temporary).
- Speech Disability.
- Learning Disability.
- Psychiatric Conditions.
- Specific Medical Conditions.
- Neuro-Developmental Disorder.
- Neuro-Cognitive Disorder.

Contact the DRU for more information: 018 299 4431 / concessionspotch@nwu.ac.za.



Psychotherapeutic and Counselling Services

Therapeutic and counselling services are offered by registered psychologists and counsellors to promote the psychological wellbeing of the students to assist them with the successful completion of their studies, and for them to experience optimal student life.



Concessions and extended writing time

Visit our website for more information or call 018 299 2893.

Leadership, Life Skills and Personal Development & Workshops

Students can visit SCD for leadership development, mentoring and coaching, life skills development or personal development. SCD also has various preventative and developmental workshops that are presented for the purpose of developing students into well-rounded and responsible members of society.

Thuso1777 – Building E14

Thuso1777 focuses on Emotional/ Psychological support and offer the following services:

Office of the Social Worker

Delivers the following services:

- Counselling and support to students in terms of psycho-social and economic problems.
- Crisis intervention and trauma debriefing.
- Liaison with resources in the community.
- Planning and implementing developmental-orientated programmes.



HIV Testing and Counselling Services (HTS)

HIV unit related awareness and education programmes:

- First Things First and TB awareness campaign.
- STI and Condom week.
- World TB day.
- World vaccine day.
- World AIDS day.
- LGBTIQ+.
- Health and wellness for students.
- New Employee Orientation; Substance abuse; PEP; PreP.



Counselling and Support & Peer Helper Programme:

- Students Advocating Leadership & Transformation (SALT)

What can the HIV Coordinator do for you?

- HIV/AIDS counselling.
- Addressing stigma of HIV.
- Substance abuse programs and support.
- Addressing sexuality issues.
- Female empowerment.
- Male empowerment.



Psychotherapeutic and Counselling Services

Therapeutic and counselling services are offered by registered psychologists, counsellors and student psychologists to promote the psychological wellbeing of students, assist them with the successful completion of their

studies, and to ensure an optimal experience of student life. Services include individual and group psychotherapy, counselling, and group debriefing.



Crisis Intervention

Thuso1777 has a 24-hr crisis line for emotional support: **018 299 1777**.

Residence Peer-helpers

Peer-helpers is a system in which students in the residence context receive peer-helper training in order to guide students with interpersonal problems. The main task of the peer-helpers is to give support to students and to refer them to the appropriate support services. Additionally, their task is to launch and coordinate psycho-educational and awareness campaigns in residences. The peer-helpers are not counsellors or psychologists, rather facilitators of emotional wellbeing. They are under the strict supervision of a registered psychologist who also coordinate the system. **Ask your House Committee Member for more information about the peer-helpers.**

Office hours & Enquiries:

Thuso1777:

Monday to Friday: 8h00 – 16h30
(018 299 1777)
(Building E14)



SCD:

Monday to Friday: 8h00 – 16h30
(018 299 2893)
(Building F18)



Email:

SCDpotch@nwu.ac.za

Join our Facebook Page: NWU Student Counselling and Development (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NWUSCD>)

Join our Instagram Page: NWU_SCD (https://www.instagram.com/nwu_scd/)

Book an appointment on eFundi: <http://scd-nwu-ac-za.web.nwu.ac.za>

Visit our website: <https://services.nwu.ac.za/student-counselling-and-development>

DO YOU WANT TO BE A CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT,

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To find out more about the Thuthuka Education Upliftment Fund (TEUF) go to the SAICA website www.saica.org.za/initiatives/thuthuka

To apply for the Thuthuka bursary, visit www.thuthukabursaryfund.co.za/
2024 applications close on 31 August 2023.

Do you feel your life is not worthwhile?
Thuso1777

Emotional
Crisis Help Line:
018 299 1777

NWU Alumni Gallery



Dimakatso Mohapi



Which organization are you working for and what is your current job title?
Currently working part-time at Vodafone Hungary and studying full-time Msc in Computer Science

After completing your studies, how was your first interview and how many interviews did you get invited to before getting a job offer?
I only applied for one job that was sent by my lecture

What would you say is the most important thing to do when going for an interview?
Understand how your skill fit and how it can transform the organisation

Was it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional?
The transition from being a student to being a young professional can be challenging. As a student, having a structured schedule and clear guidelines for assignments and

exams. As a young professional, I have to navigate a new work environment, figure out new responsibilities, and adjust to a less structured schedule. it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional.

What key competencies do you use in your workplace every day?
Data Analytics, Programming, Machine learning, Business Acumen and Problem Solving.

What do you enjoy most about your job and please share strategies you use to handle difficult situations?
Research and Learn:As a Data scientists I conduct research to identify the latest tools, techniques, and best practices for solving the problem at hand. I also learn

from others who have tackled similar problems and leverage their expertise. When faced with a difficult problem, as data scientists I take a step back and define the problem clearly. Identify the key challenges and constraints and determine the resources that are available .

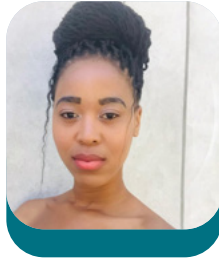
What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?
I like how my lectures assisted us to get a job on our final year

Would you have done anything differently?
More work shops

What advice would you give to students entering the job market?
Build relevant skills beyond your academic curriculum, Network with other students you will need them after university life, be persistent and Stay positive.

What are some of the positive, personal attributes that you have gained from NWU during your academic years?
TTime Management: Manage my time effectively, juggling multiple classes, assignments, and extracurricular activities. This helped me to develop strong time management skills that can be valuable in their personal and professional lives.

Sandile Mokoena



Which organization are you working for and what is your current job title?

PSG Wealth as an advisor assistant

After completing your studies, how was your first interview and how many interviews did you get invited to before getting a job offer?

The first interview was not good as I did not know what to expect and I had to do a video interview first and the app was not easy to navigate. The follow-up interview was on teams it was a bit better, but I was very envious and unsure of my answers.

I do not remember the number of interviews exactly, but I think it was between 10 to 13 interviews.

What would you say is the most important thing to do when going for an interview?

Prepare for possible questions and research the company beforehand. Make sure you know and understand what the company does.

Was it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional?

Yes, as I was now used to studying

from home and doing everything online, I had to get used to going to work every day. I also had to learn to effectively manage my finances in such a way that I ensure that my income last me the whole month. Once I started working family responsibilities increased which puts more pressure in me to succeed.

What key competencies do you use in your workplace every day?

- Communication
- Quick thinking/Learning
- Teamwork
- Planning and organizing
- Client orientation

What do you enjoy most about your job and please share strategies you use to handle difficult situations?

The work environment is very healthy, relaxed and has a supportive structure.

- I prepare ahead of time.
- I make sure I fully understand my

task and how to do it.

- I ask as many questions as possible to get clarity.
- I start with a task right away instead of putting it aside for later as the work may pill-up.
- I do small and easy tasks first and prioritize urgent tasks to be done first.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

There are many social groups you can be a part of to grow, learn and interact with others. Like leadership or societies or library assistance and many more. I learned to priorities, multitask, help others and be financially independent as I was part of several educational initiatives like IS leader, tutoring, library assistance and leadership.

Would you have done anything differently?

Yes. I wish I had applied for various vacation jobs or part time jobs while studying to gain work experience because a lot of jobs require work experience even entry leave jobs.

What advice would you give to students entering the job market?

Try to gain work experience during your university career and be involved in social and cultural activities the institution has to offer.

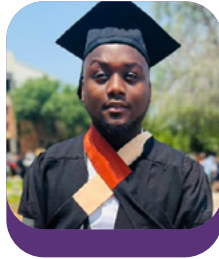
Do your honors degree if you can, that makes you competitive against other applicates and it can count as a year's experience for other companies.

Apply for jobs in your second year already so that you get used to interviews in all sorts via zoom, videos, or face to face. This will also help you get better with the assessments that companies issue.

What are some of the positive, personal attributes that you have gained from NWU during your academic years?

- Work hard and resilience
- Honesty and trustworthiness
- Reliability and Responsibility
- Positive thinking
- Sociability and thinking outside of the box.

Rorisang Phogojane



Which organization are you working for and what is your current job title?

I am working at Taletso Tvet College as a lecturer in Office Practice (All Levels)

After completing your studies, how was your first interview and how many interviews did you get invited to before getting a job offer?

It was an amazing experience yet I was a bit scared as I didn't know what to expect but I managed to do good. I have only went for one interview.

What would you say is the most important thing to do when going for an interview?

The most important thing to do is to have self confidence and believing in yourself. Ensure that you prepare thoroughly for the interview and you understand the position you will be interviewed for.

Was it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional

I wouldn't say it was difficult but it wasn't too easy as responsibilities piled up. It is the same as moving in with your partner when you were used to staying alone. Priorities change and the way you do things change also.

What key competencies do you use in your workplace every day?

- Time management: It is very important to know how to utilise time in your workplace so you can know which tasks to prioritise and being punctual.
- People skills: Having skills to know how to deal with different types of students and being able to address them properly.
- Self Reliability: Where you are able to do most of the work on your own and not always relying on your seniors for help.
- Competency in the workplace: Having the skills and knowledge of the field you are specialising in and working according to the expectations required.

What do you enjoy most about your job and please share strategies you use to handle difficult situation?

I enjoy seeing students pass and move from one level to the other until they graduate. It also encourages me to give my all.

The way I handle difficult situations is not the same as for another person. I analyse first the situation before making a decision. I find all the alternatives there is to be so I can choose the best one and work with it. I try by all means not to be hard on myself. I allow a breather along those difficult times and motivate myself to push harder.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons??

Seeing people graduating always inspired me. I always felt motivated after the graduation seasons and believed that it was also possible for me to get there and even push further.

The lessons I got there were for me to stay in my lane and do what I was there for which was to study. I prioritised my studies before any other thing.

Would you have done anything differently?

No, I enjoyed everything I did there I believe I did what was necessary for me. I have no regrets about anything.

What advice would you give to students entering the job market?

Ensure you understand the position you will be applying for. Understand all the dynamics of the job. Always be eager to learn and to listen when you are being advised. Do not act like you know everything and become big headed but always put your Chin Up!

What are some of the positive, personal attributes that you have gained from NWU during your academic years?

The ability to interact with different people. Always being confident with the job as the presentations there prepared me for times like these. I am always eager to learn new things and I am open to new challenges and opportunities.

Tshegofatso Molebatsi



Which organization are you working for and what is your current job title?

I am employed in the South African National Defence Force. I am Human Resource officer working in the Education, Training and Development in the Defence Works Formation. This department of the defence is responsible for training soldiers into becoming Artisans and other specialized skills in the Building and Construction profession. It is the same department that is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all state houses allocated to the SANDF. With effect from 01 April 2023 the Department of Public Works handed over to the SANDF all services they used to provide for the allocated. My office is responsible for the training and development of Military artisans.

Artisans are be divided according to their selected trades and registered at TVET colleges to complete the N1 & N2 to qualify for their red seal.

Once they have completed their training, they undergo workplace Exposure for 18 months thereafter go for trade test preparations administered by this office.

The trade test is done and member becomes a qualified Artisan. After qualifying members, we verify the qualification before accepting them into the different units, then identify the gaps in which they can be placed and utilised.

We Have the Following Trades:

- Bricklaying
- Carpentry
- Electrical
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Plastering & Tiling
- Welding / Boiler making

After completing your studies, how was your first interview and how many interviews did you get invited to before getting a job offer?

I had already been employed when I completed my post graduate studies at the North West University. I have never really applied for any new employment outside the SANDF as I have been with them for 17 years and have been relatively happy with the

work I do. However recently I have applied to companies just to explore my horizon.

What would you say is the most important thing to do when going for an interview?

Answer: I believe it is knowing the company or industry of which you are applying to through research. Acquaint yourself with their mission, vision and value goals. To ascertain whether it is the kind of company you would like to work for or be associated with. To be well prepared for the interview by having done your homework for the job, you would have applied for. To believe in yourself and confident that you are the right candidate, portray it in your demeanor and conduct during the interview.

Was it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional.

In my observation as a Human Resource Manager I believe the difficulty that most students experience in terms of adapting to being a young professional, is transitioning from the theoretical environment of being a student to being a professional. Applying the theory and accepting the practical world is a bit far from what you

have learned and it is only the foundation. They say experience is the best teacher and at times I have found that the struggle is mistaking having a formal education with experience. Most of them have and "I know "Human Resource" is because I studied it which couldn't be far from the truth. It is my personal believe and qualified opinion as 17 year old practitioner in this field that, young students when they embark on the workplace, should have a flexible and adaptable mind of wanting to learn and be taught by their predecessors or who have been in the field to teach them the ropes.

What key competencies do you use in your workplace every day?

Leadership, Integrity, Communication, Problem solving Skills, Decision Making, Empathy, Ethics and Team Work

What do you enjoy most about your job and please share strategies you use to handle difficult situations?

I enjoy working with people. Seeing people prosper and develop into something better gives me much peace. I believe when you work in HR and truly believe as I do that the human capital is the most

important and valuable assets of any organization. Then it is your duty to ensure that it is well taken care of for the benefit of both the organization and employee.

Strategies I use:

Communication is the best cure for most problems in a work environment. Informed people make better decision and are likely to respond amicably when furnished with all the information of whatever situation you might find yourself in.

Honesty and Integrity: I believe in always being honest with the people your work with even if the truth is not favorable to you. It builds trust and loyalty. Your subordinates, peers and co-workers will respect for the decency of being honest with them. Always be a man/ woman of integrity in everything you do, especially in the HR profession, you cannot work with people and have no sense of what is wrong or right. The human resource profession is built on trust and respect and you cannot be morally bankrupt when you are in it.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

The NWU portrays a very professional approach in everything they do. They treat their students with respect and adult approach. It allows you to grow and push yourself as an individual. I have always loved academia and every time I would be in class I would be reminded of why I had so much love and respect for those who are professional academics because they are the lectures at NWU epitome of academic excellence in our country that is my personal opinion. Their credentials also speak for themselves. There is nothing as gratifying than being taught by people who not only have studied what their teaching but also have the experience to support it. It gives you the impression that they are serious about their image and the product they offer which is education as well empowering the world with profound knowledge.

Would you have done anything differently?

Answer: There is nothing I would do differently. The only thing I wish I could do differently is maybe I should've pursued my dream of becoming a professional academic maybe I would be a lecturer or research student at that prestigious institution.

What advice would you give to students

entering the job market?

Answer: They should have the patience and tenacity of adapting into the professional world by accepting the fact that they are new to that world and are just like when they first went into university to obtain their qualifications. They should leave the "I am graduate therefore I know better attitude". They know nothing, they should enter the job market with that at the back of the mind, be willing to learn and be taught. Humility and the right attitude go a long way in this world despite popular believe.

What are some of the positive, personal attributes that you have gained from NWU during your academic years?

Answer: It help me improve some of the things I did professionally. My leadership and management skills became sharper. I was exposed to new way to approaching things and situations at work. You could say I now did things in an in depth manner because I had better knowledge and skills. It is true when they say "knowledge is Power", when you know better you do better. I can undoubtedly say that I am better Human Resource Officer because of what I was exposed to during my post graduate studies at NWU. My work ethic is as sharp as it was before.

Kesalopa Gill



Which organization are you working for and what is your current job title?

Provincial Treasury:
Director Information Management

After completing your studies, how was your first interview and how many interviews did you get invited to before getting a job offer?

The first interview was challenging as it needed one to have experience. Although I did not have the requisite experience, the interview motivated and I learnt from the opportunity on how interviews are conducted and not to attend them from a point of fear but viewed that interviews are an opportunity to market ones services

I got my first job after the second interview.

What would you say is the most important thing to do when going for an interview?

In depth research about the organisation and extensive reading on the job requirement places one in a better position to navigate various questions

Was it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional?

Yes, finding balance between the theory and practicality of the world of work because university studies offer more theory than practical. It will be advisable for universities to provide compulsory practicals for certain studies especially in humanities faculty.

What key competencies do you use in your workplace every day?

Overseeing the Communications, ICT, Security and Records Management requires one to interchangeably implement the following competencies: Strategic Capability and Leadership, Project Management, Change Management, Client Orientation, knowledge management, Problem Solving, Customer focus and communication and Financial Management

What do you enjoy most about your job and please share strategies you use to handle difficult situations?

The fulfilling part of my job relates to Project Management and staff empowerment.

In respect of handling difficult situations, sharing of work information with all staff allows one to ensure that staff team members are knowledgeable on the various aspects that each team member is responsible for. In times of challenges, they are able to share ideas on solving problems that the unit encounters.

Keeping a daily diary is crucial in keeping track of work and milestones. This makes it easy to identify possible risks and challenges of time.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

The spread of course timetable provided enough time to study between the course during the day as well as before exams.

Would you have done anything differently?

I would have advised the institution to create formal practical times with various institutions to ensure that they produce entry level seasoned communicators.

What advice would you give to students entering the job market?

Students especially ones in internships and learnership programmes are encouraged to avail themselves to various sections in their line of study. This would give them broad experience and allow them opportunity to choose a field of speciality

What are some of the positive, personal attributes that you have gained from NWU during your academic years?

Commitment to seeing projects finalized

Commitment to doing work correctly from the start

Commitment to deadlines and not putting off work to later/procrastination

Makgobalo Cascious Mofokeng

Which organization are you working for and what is your current job title?

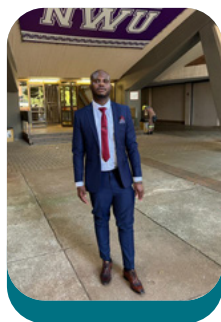
I hold the position of Senior Project Administrator / Coordinator at the South African Centre for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR). SADiLaR operates under the funding of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and is hosted within the Faculty of Humanities at the North-West University (NWU). However, it is mandated to serve the 26 public universities in the country.

After completing your studies, how was your first interview and how many interviews did you get invited to before getting a job offer?

I had my initial interview with an insurance company for the position of telesales consultant. The entire experience was incredibly nerve-wracking for me. I had diligently prepared for the usual typical interview questions, only to find myself unexpectedly faced with a role-play interview instead.

What would you say is the most important thing to do when going for an interview?

In order to prepare for the interview, it is essential to dedicate ample time to conducting thorough research on the company or organization.



Familiarize yourself with their background, goals, values, and any recent developments or accomplishments. Additionally, strive to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the specific role you are applying for, including its responsibilities, required skills, and industry expectations.

Was it difficult to adapt from being a student to being a young professional?

The transition to permanent employment was remarkably smooth as I had some roles and work experience while I was still a student before my current role.

What key competencies do you use in your workplace every day?

I prioritize three principles in my role as I think they are crucial in my work. Firstly, integrity because I handle sensitive and confidential information. Secondly, teamwork because it plays a crucial role as I actively engage with various stakeholders on both national and international levels. Finally, effective

communication is vital as I ensure the smooth flow of information regarding the progress of the projects, we are engaged in.

What do you enjoy most about your job and please share strategies you use to handle difficult situations?

I value flexibility and accountability as we are working in a hybrid model as part of the New World of Work (NWOW) pilot set out by the university post the covid-19 rules and regulations. I effectively manage challenging situations by employing a diplomatic approach and leveraging my skills in emotional intelligence.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons??

The university successfully executed the NWU 2018-2025 strategy, which resulted in the establishment of a cohesive and unified institution. Prior to this, the university experienced fragmentation, with each sister campus adopting distinct systems, approaches, and even branding. The Mafikeng campus was using navy blue, the Potchefstroom campus used maroon, and the Vaal campus distinguished itself as a green campus. However, thanks to the implementation of the new strategy, we achieved the transformation into a singular entity with the purple university colours. Through this experience, I

have gained the understanding that transformation is achievable when there is a genuine willingness to embrace change.

Would you have done anything differently?

Certainly, I could have dedicated myself further to charitable endeavors and possibly not taken academic breaks.

What advice would you give to students entering the job market?

I would advise young professionals on the importance of financial management and developing financial acumen. Additionally, I would motivate young professionals to dedicate themselves fully to their work in order to become invaluable assets. Lastly, I would advise them to acquire technical skills that are essential in the context of the 4th Industrial Revolution.

What are some of the positive, personal attributes that you have gained from NWU during your academic years?

Coming from diverse family backgrounds as students, I have acquired the invaluable qualities of empathy and sensitivity. Additionally, my academic journey has significantly enhanced my linguistic abilities as I had the privilege of befriending individuals hailing from various regions of the country, each with their unique linguistic heritage.

Future World of Work

You have probably encountered many reports on the world of work as it is now and in the future. Some are descriptions and others maybe predictions of the future or post-pandemic world by thought leaders, while others are prescriptions of the future by various consultancies. These combined may seem like an intimidating mix of different accounts of the world of work, as is and in the future – with many forecasts or scenarios of its future and forewarnings or signals of your place in the possible futures. With the COVID pandemic, it felt as if both the present and future are ‘knocking on our doors’ at the same time and both requiring urgency now. You may have heard, for example, of the ‘great reset’, the ‘new normal’, and the ‘future that is now’ in response to the pandemic. You have seen there are different possible forms of employment and ways of working such as remote, flexible, hybrid, and gig working. The pandemic has accelerated the future and you may feel that you are now studying, living, and working in both the present and



Dr Ajay Jivan
SABPP: Head of Research and Assurance

the future-now. This means you need to pay attention to and address both the present and the future-now and your place in it.

This can be bewildering. It is certainly a challenge to focus both on your employability now and your employability and place in the future. It is also daunting as new reports are constantly released of how industries and jobs are evolving and changing and with it the skills that will be in demand. These reports, such as the ones released by the World Economic Forum, also point to uncertainty regarding new industries and the jobs that may emerge therein. This includes jobs

from green and digital transformations of corporates, industries, and economies as well as disruptions of them from innovations such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). Witness the many discussions on the impact of Chat GPT and other examples of Generative AI.

The innovations in technologies, in particular, are centre stage in the many reports and debates on the future. You must have heard of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and some of the associated technologies such as cloud computing; internet of things; augmented and virtual reality; distributed ledger technology; advanced automation and robotics; additive manufacturing; 3D printing; artificial intelligence; data analytics; geotechnology; nanotechnology; biotechnology; and neurotechnology. Some are already making reference to 5IR. All the talk of 4IR or 5IR, exponential technologies, exponential growth of AI, new normal, and new ways of working and forms of employment can be difficult to navigate. It can be hard to find your bearings as these point to significant changes to work, the workplace, and the workforce now and in the future.

What can help you navigate

the future world of work? First, focus on you – your head, heart, hands (which is a simple model used in leadership development). Consider your mindset, perspectives, and the way you approach the future. The future world of work demands continuous lifelong learning, enrichment of your mental models, and reskilling. Your tertiary education will serve as your scaffolding and launchpad. It is the beginning of your working life and career. You have a ‘marathon’ ahead of you in the world of work from this starting block, with many transitions and changes in your working life and career. For this marathon you will need a mindset that is growth-oriented, and you will need to further develop key capabilities such as learning to learn, critical thinking, complex problem-solving, futures literacies, collaborating, self-management, resilience, and an appreciation of diversity and inclusion. These will help you develop richer and broader mental models. As you develop these you will develop your vision of your place in the future and execute on it. You will figure out your purpose, what inspires you, and your path(s) forward.

The path forward is not always

a straight line or singular path. Agility is a common theme in the discussions on the future world of work. It requires investment of your time, dedication, and work. A word of caution: many equate agility with entrepreneurship, and many assume that entrepreneurship is only for certain persons or personalities or that entrepreneurship only refers to software or digital platforms. You need to critically question these assumptions and other assumptions that you will encounter. Do not narrow your perspective or limit yourself.

Second, understand your context(s) – the world of work as-is that you will confront and as it is evolving. Take what you are encountering and reading and break it down into the three ‘buckets’: work, workplace, and workforce. Ask yourself: what are the changes in work and how it is organised; what is driving this change; how is the workplace and organisation changing; what is driving this change; how is the workforce and forms of employment evolving; and what is driving this? Identifying and understanding the drivers in each ‘bucket’ can help organise your mental models of your context(s) and provide you with a more

structured way to engage with the debates on the future world of work.

You need to pay attention to the above-mentioned changes in the specific occupations, jobs, and industries you are interested in and will be entering in. For example, as you begin your career you will need to continuously explore how 4IR and technologies such as AI will impact your chosen occupation, job, and industry by reading and engaging with both general and sector-specific discussions on the impact of 4IR and other factors. In the future you will need to evaluate how 4IR and other drivers of change will augment or redefine your work and job, and you may need to consider how it may substitute some of your tasks or lead to job reduction. This can be daunting and lead to anxiety about the future. However, proactively approaching the future can help you to navigate and transition through these changes. Again, agility and flexibility are common themes in the discussion on the future world of work.

To help you navigate the future world of work you could explore the various factsheets that are published by the South African

Board for People Practices (SABPP), a HR professional body in South Africa, on the above themes and on the changes in work, the workplace, and the workforce. These can provide you an entry point and map to engage further on the future world of work. You can click on this link for the [2021 Fact Sheets¹](#) and [2022 Fact Sheets²](#) for example. The table below provides specific factsheet links to explore.

Your head, heart, and hands	Mindset, emotional intelligence, and experimentation³ (see in particular page 20 of Factsheet 2020/02, March) Future readiness, employability, and literacy⁴ (Factsheet 2021/02, March) Future lifespan and employee life cycle⁵ (Factsheet 2021/03, April)
Your context(s)	Understanding our evolving context⁶ (Factsheet 2022/10, October) Understanding 4IR⁷ and its impact (Factsheet 2020/01, February) Understanding the workforce transition issues for the green, digital, and crisis-led transformations⁸ (Factsheet 2020/04, May) Understanding changes in work and workforce transitions⁸ (Factsheet 2020/04, May) Understanding changes in work and definition of employees⁹ (Factsheet 2021/01, February) Future employability and reskilling¹⁰ (Factsheet 2021/02, March) Future skills for HR professionals¹¹ (Factsheet 2022/11, November))

Remember you have a voice in the future. You have the agency to shape the future. These need investment by you in your own self and your paths and futures.



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Making Business Opportunities Happen

A business opportunity is the chance to meet a market need, interest or want through a creative combination of resources.

So many people want to be entrepreneurs but do not know where to start. Problems exist everywhere and as an entrepreneur, your main objective should be solving those problems. Every business you know of does that, and the better they are at providing solutions to those problems, the better they do. It is important to start seeing problems as opportunities; the mind shift will open your eyes to an endless flow of ideas and business opportunities.

As an entrepreneur, you should always live with your eyes wide open and learn how to view problems as a means to create solutions.

To find business opportunities and make it happen, you need to do the following five things: Identify problems as opportunities; be in the right place at the right time; be quick to act without cutting corners; team up; and execute.

Identify problems as opportunities

You can start your business opportunities by hunting around to see what the majority of people are struggling with or what they are looking for. The most successful entrepreneurs understand how to sniff out, test and execute unique opportunities more efficiently than their counterparts.

Most opportunities disguise themselves as problems. They can arise when new technology or products enter the marketplace and other people do not yet know how to harness those technologies.

Think outside the box while knowing what is inside the box.

Thinking outside the box is an age-old cliché but, applied effectively, can really be the key to business success. Analyse data to find the opportunities others have missed. Finding points of pain or frustration and then finding a corresponding innovative solution will keep your business ahead of the game. Before you can think outside this mythical 'box', it is essential that you first need to know what's inside it. This means knowing anything and everything about your industry – past, present and predictions for the future. Only by knowing what is already available, what has worked, what has failed and what your rivals have planned for the future, you will be able to come up with something truly innovative and fill that market gap. In short, do your homework.

Get a sense of direction

When trying to find opportunities, do not be too general. You should be taking control of what opportunities you are trying to find by being specific about your particular situation. The only way to do this is by adopting a sense of direction. Which opportunities are you looking for? How are you going to find them? How are you going to act on them? Write down what you want to achieve. This will motivate you and set you on a course that will inevitably open more doors.

Understand needs and wants and the fuzzy grey line between them

Understanding the difference between needs and wants is essential. For example, you need food to live, but you could survive without ice cream (although you might not want to). This is an issue that often causes confusion for consumers and you can benefit from that confusion by presenting the benefits and values of a product or service that would usually be a luxury item (a want) as being essential (a need) in order to achieve the desired fulfilled/fashionable/healthy lifestyle.

Do what others don't want to do

Look for things that others don't want to do. This could be because these things are time consuming, dirty or boring but, dull as they may be, they still need to be done. By taking that bullet and offering products or services for mundane tasks, you could soon transform your product or service from a want into a need.

Make the impossible possible

Solving a problem that nobody else has a solution to will obviously put you ahead of the game, so start by recognising what the sticking points are. Write down the flow of activity for a situation, recognise how this could be improved or which ways would ease the pressure and go from there. Remember, you need to know the problem first, but generally, there is always an answer somewhere.

Keep a journal

Recording all the opportunities and meetings you have will be helpful in the long run. Not all of these will work out, but your journal will make sure you don't overlook anything that does not catch your eye at first. This will also help you to keep track of your progress and learn from your mistakes.

Positioning and timing

It is important to be in the right place at the right time. Once you have identified a potential opportunity, it is important to plan ahead and prepare yourself to act on it. You must know exactly what you need to do, for then it is just a matter of execution. Leverage all your skills and experience to bring in the right resources and be perfectly positioned to move quickly when the time is right. Gain as much knowledge and experience as possible; this helps with the homework thing. By talking to your peers, you'll gain essential industry insight and the better access to information you have, the more likely you will be able to take advantage of a situation quickly.

Have confidence while knowing that it is OK to fail

Once identified, it's important that you take advantage of an opportunity, even if it is not guaranteed to succeed. After all, innovation doesn't come from certain outcomes but from taking risks and trying new things. Taking

this jump will always be scary, but the more knowledge and experience you have, the easier and less risky it will be.

When all is said and done, as long as you're professional and polite, sometimes it's OK to be a little bit cheeky. Don't be afraid to aim high; after all, you might just be surprised.

Be quick, but do not cut corners

Every opportunity has a window of time, so you have to be quick. Never rush, though, as that will lead to issues such as poor work and overlooking pitfalls. Rushing can cause big mistakes and is a sure way to fail. Cutting corners is also a sure way to deliver substandard products or service and leads to poor customer satisfaction and/or legal issues.

Be reliable

In many ways, reliability is the key that opens every door; it's one of the big traits you should adopt. When you start flaking out, people don't want to work with you. When you break someone's trust, they will not be willing to share or collaborate with you.

Time

Time is limited; you cannot do all the work on your own. Assemble the right team that will be able to understand the opportunity and can help you meet those goals on schedule. Together, you can build a rapidly growing business and team, and establish yourself as the market leaders.

Collaboration and networking

You may prefer to be a lone wolf, but in business, this will not get you very far. The fact is that you have to network and collaborate, because other people also have a lot of great ideas. Use those great ideas to propel you to greater heights. Go out of your way to attend events and network. Set aside some time every day to network on social media platforms like LinkedIn. Build those relationships. The only way you can start to collaborate is through networking first.

Find a mentor

A mentor is someone who has already achieved more than you. Do not get jealous, seek them out. I have always believed that a mentor is the key to getting better and finding brand new opportunities. These are the people who can help you achieve more, but you have to be willing to humble yourself in order to seek out the help of someone else. Be willing to admit that you don't know it all, even if it is tough. Mentors are important. They are there to motivate. They are there to inspire. They are there to take you to new heights.

Outsource

Save those precious minutes on non-essential tasks. The time saved could be used to chase down and follow up on more opportunities and gain more knowledge and experience.

Execute

Execution is the most important point. It looks different for every business, but it is important that you should be productive and not just busy.

Have you ever heard of the businessman who constantly says he is just waiting for the right opportunity to come along? Waiting to be inspired

How to Budget for Start-Up Success

There are many important elements to consider when starting a new business and one that usually gets forgotten along the way is a budget. A budget is essential to ensure your SME future, but to many budding entrepreneurs, the task of putting one together is both daunting and unknown. Here are some top tips for drawing up a plan to control your finances and give your new business the best chance of success.

By Gary Epstein

Budget Planning

Budgeting is essential. It allows you to control your cash flow and make provisions for larger costs, as well as giving you an indication of when the time is right to invest in your idea further and expand it. You have to stay in control of your expenditure at all times, whether you are a million-rand multinational corporation or a small and operational start-up. The only difference? How much and where budget is allocated.

See your budget as a plan to control your finances. You don't want to run out of cash and fall short of payments. Similarly, you want to know you can meet your current goals, as well as plan for future ones.

Although it works hand in hand with cashflow projections, it is important to note the distinction between a forecast and a budget. A forecast is a very

means, potentially, waiting until the end of time. I am not going to do that and you should not either. Don't wait for the opportunity, go find the opportunity, whether it is a trading opportunity or a simple small-business opportunity.

Opportunities can appear anywhere and at any time, but it is a myth that they just pop up out of nowhere and without any warning. The biggest businessmen in the world worked hard to make those opportunities happen. However, don't start patting yourself on the back because you found an opportunity. Take advantage of it.

"Opportunities are like sunrises. If you wait too long, you miss them," Virgin Group founder Richard Branson quotes writer William Arthur Ward in a recent blog post. Like sunrises, opportunities are fleeting and will pass if you are unprepared. Branson says that they do not always come at the perfect time, either, so you must be ready to seize them when the chance presents itself. "Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don't recognize them," Branson quotes columnist Ann Landers. Ironically, hard work is the key to taking advantage of opportunities. If you put in the time, effort and commitment, you'll open many doors for yourself. It's only a matter of noticing opportunities and acting upon them.



important business management tool that is essentially a cost prediction of the future, whereas a budget is a planned outcome of this same future based on the objectives of your business plan. To break this down even further, a budget is about profit and the cash flow forecast is about cash.

Your budget in practice

Once your business is operational, it's essential to plan and tightly manage its financial performance. Creating a budgeting process is the way to keep everything on track. See your budget as the GPS for your business – it will keep you heading in the right direction.

A budget should include your revenues, costs, and your profits or cash flow so that you can figure out whether you have any money left over for capital improvements or capital expenses. A budget should be tabulated at least yearly. Most yearly budgets are also divided up into 12 months, with blank columns next to your estimates to fill in with your actual results as the year progresses. You have to factor in potential market changes, customers and their demands, competition from rival companies, your business objectives and key performance indicators, team management, forecasts and any obstacles you may encounter along the way.

How to draw up a budget

Dedicate time to this process and if possible, seek assistance from your accountant or financial team to provide you with estimates for your budget. As a start-up business it is likely that this role will land on you, and it will be your responsibility to ensure your budget is realistic.

Your budget must include projected cashflow, typically on a monthly basis. This allows you to pinpoint any issues immediately, rather than waiting, running the risk of making the problem far greater.

A budget must also encompass costs – fixed ones such as rent and salaries, variable expenses including materials and products, and one-off capital costs, such as a lease or buying a computer. Finally, a budget must take account of revenue forecasts. This means both historic sales and future sales must be included.

Don't kid yourself

There is no benefit to creating an artificial profit by overestimating earnings, or underestimating costs. Make sure you have built in the cost of your time and the sensitivities of seasonality, depending on the market you are entering. When you grow as a business, you must also consider staff holidays and how this will affect turnover. Although you may not immediately need to give yourself a salary, eventually you will and you will have to include this in your budget, too.

Be flexible

Once you make a budget, you should stick to it, but be open to reviewing and revising it as needed when the market, pricing, or anything else that could have an impact on your business changes.

Budget to monitor growth

The great thing about budgeting is the ability to benchmark performance. Comparing your budget year on year also allows you to implement your key performance indicators if they do, in fact, need revision, as well as comparing figures for growth and projected margins with your market competitors. Remember to always review and revise. Ultimately, as an entrepreneur, your business's budget is also your budget. Owning an SME means allowing it to impact both your business and personal considerations. Budgeting your own expenditure could mean the difference between success and failure. So be smart with your start-up. Don't cash out before you can cash in.

GARY EPSTEIN is the MD of EasyBiz, the distributors of QuickBooks Accounting Software in South Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Entrepreneur Magazine: February 2014

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NWU Alumni in Entrepreneurship

Boipelo Maselwane



What is the name of your business/company?
BKT PARTY RENTALS.

What inspired you to start your own business?

The catering business started as a joke between my mom (Relebogile Maselwane) and I. She used to cook for our Church during fund-raising events and I would help out. Over the years people kept on encouraging me to start a business and the rest his history.

My Aunt- Keitumetse Masemola inspired me to start my business. This was during Covid-19 lock down. I had just graduated and had no prospects of employment. We searched on YouTube for current and fun jobs at a low cost. That's when my balloon business started.

How did you come up with your business idea?

- The catering idea came from my family and community members.
- The balloon business was from my Aunt and YouTube.

How did you overcome those challenges?

- I managed to start the business with the help of my family.
- Funding is still an issue with regards to equipment and day to day runnings of the business.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?

My biggest challenge is funding.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start their own business?

Taking the first step is better than no step. You need to stop talking about starting and actually do it. Many ideas sound crazy and silly until you actually do it!

What skills do you think are essential for entrepreneurs to have?

- Patience
- Determination
- Willingness to learn and start all over again
- Hunger for success
- A strong backbone.

How did you fund your business initially?

Donation from my mother and Aunt.

What have been the most rewarding aspects of running your own business?

Discovering new places and seeing the look on people's faces when I render my service.

What have you learned from your experiences as an entrepreneur so far?

A business is like a child. It needs you to constantly check on everything it does. You need commitment and love for it. There are good days and bad days.

What mistakes have you made, and what have you learned from them?

- Did not know how to do book keeping but I am currently learning and hope it makes a huge difference in my business.
- Learning Costing- I took Entrepreneurship Classes for it.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

- The diverse opportunities people were given from different backgrounds. I also liked how different caterers were invited to work.
- I loved the Art gallery open days- different people would come together to show love and appreciation for Art.
- Always be true to yourself , no matter what!
- Fight for what you believe in

Petrus Nicolaas Basson

What is the name of your business/ company?

Turftill Pty Ltd.

What inspired you to start your own business?

My Dad already owns a farming enterprise, I worked with him for a while and then we decided that it is better that I start my own company, but we still function under the same controlling company.

How did you come up with your business idea?

I grew on what was already happening on the farm. We farm maize, soy beans, layer chickens and I started a division of cattle.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?

To get good employees to help me take care of all the maintenance work. Also getting people to care as much as I do about the venture. I also struggled a lot with managing a fairly large company with little to no experience. Starting a business from the ground up takes tremendous amounts of dedication and grafting, but building on a large existing enterprise at such



a young age with no experience takes a completely different type of dedication and stress.

How did you overcome those challenges?

A lot of interviews took place trying to find the perfect people and then trial and error. I gave each person a 3-month training contract and only after, if they proved themselves, would I give out permanent contracts. I unfortunately went through a lot of employees, but now I have a very good team. To overcome the management issue

I looked to my dad a lot for help, but also nearby farmers who have grown a business in the same way that I had to grow this one.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start their own business?

Be ready for long hours, lots of stress and quickly learning to recover from setbacks and not let it get you down. Also don't be afraid to ask for help or using already existing enterprises as a stepping-stone to get you where you need to be. Starting your own business does not necessarily mean starting with nothing. I believe that growing a business takes just as much, if not more, hard work than starting one from scratch.

What skills do you think are essential for entrepreneurs to have?

To be able to face any challenge and not back down from it. Learning quickly from your mistakes and to be able to ask for help when it is needed.

How did you fund your business initially?

Capital from the existing farm.

What have been the most rewarding aspects of running your own business?

Being able to look back on a season and seeing all the challenges you faced that felt you will never get through them in the rear-view

mirror. Then you see how much you have grown, thinking a lot less of those challenges and realising you are now able to take on even bigger problems.

What have you learned from your experiences as an entrepreneur so far?

Anyone can do it as long as they have a can-do attitude and not backing down from any problem.

What mistakes have you made, and what have you learned from them?

Too many to count and name. I think my biggest mistake through the years was not managing my temper and realising the consequences it has on the people who work for you and who you work with. It is vital that you treat each and every person you meet with the respect that you expect.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

I was very involved in the university student structures and did three terms in the SRC office. There I learned a lot of lessons in dealing with outside people and getting a little taste of the business world and what is expected of you. I also learned that I am very good in dealing and working with people and still use those skills today in my business.

Zinhle Maseko

What is the name of your business/ company?

Bloc Footwear

What inspired you to start your own business?

In all earnest, I was inspired by various experiences and a very enthusiastic person during my undergraduate years to embark on my entrepreneurial journey. So, when Bloc Footwear idea was proposed, I was inspired and financially ready to take my calculated risk. What inspired me about Bloc was the story behind my business partner's (Gift Sithole) life journey who started out as a famous dancer and DJ from Soweto. During the height of his fame, promoting big-name brands such as Nike and Puma was the status quo. However, the frustrations of dancing with heavy sneakers opened up a window of opportunity for Bloc. Gift began designing sneakers of his own and manufactured a few samples using his own money. He reached out to me and proposed the idea of starting a sneaker business but required funding to start manufacturing more pairs to sell. I was sold by the idea and partnered with him in 2021 to start the Bloc Footwear business together. In an attempt to reinvent himself from DJ and



Dancer to an entrepreneur, I was quite keen on providing working capital to start the business in a quest to fulfill my own journey. Our value proposition to the market was to eliminate the trade-off most sneakers offered by providing lightweight and comfortable athleisure that would be suitable in all environments, whether hiking, jogging or a simple day at the office with a pair of jeans. Moreover, with the vision to take the brand international and my extensive experience in the boardroom of one of the major banks in South Africa, I also had something to offer beyond providing working capital. This led me to be intricately involved as a director and the daily operations of the business.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?

Access to finance remain a major challenge for start-ups. Our sneakers are very expensive to

make because we use a special lightweight, strong material for the sole, which is what keeps the shoe comfortable and “cushiony”. The sunk cost of establishing a product and a brand will make one think twice. By the time you’re established with a viable product, scaling becomes an entirely uphill battle on its own. Moreover, as one begins scaling, there are the challenges of assigning roles and responsibilities to previously “free-spirited” human resources that now need to be held accountable based on given KPIs.

How did you overcome those challenges?

We thought of some innovative ways to raise capital for the business. So we started looking for alternative, more affordable materials we could use to manufacture a similar sneaker. We found something similar but it wasn’t exactly what we wanted, so we manufactured only one hundred units that we could use to sell during our “pilot” phase of testing the market while raising the funds we required to manufacture our original sneaker. Through the sale of those sneakers, we were able to raise at least a third of the amount of money we required to manufacture our original Bloc sneaker, we then supplemented those funds with cash from our

personal savings, salaries and personal loans from the bank. We took heavy financial risks to get where we are today, it felt scary at the time, but because we believed in the brand so much, we knew it would be worth it in the end. That’s how we were able to manufacture the Bloc sneakers you see today.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start their own business?

Be willing to take calculated risks for your own business. Remember that you need to make sacrifices for your own business before you ask anyone to sacrifice for it. People invest in people who invest in themselves, so until you have invested in your own ideas, it will be extremely hard for you to get funding to start your business. If Gift had come to me with merely his idea to start a sneaker brand, I would have never invested in the business, because I would’ve thought that he did not take his own idea that seriously. Instead, he came to me with a product in his hand, 6 sneaker samples to be exact, which he spent his own money to manufacture. That showed me that he was serious about starting this business, so I was convinced that I was investing in and partnering with the right entrepreneur.

What skills do you think are essential for entrepreneurs to have?

Understanding time and space is essential for entrepreneurs as it defines your ability to manage uncharted environments. While leadership skills are the more commonly acknowledged skills that are required, being self-aware can help alleviate unnecessary costly experiences that one does not need to endure. Moreover, so much of your growth as an entrepreneur depends on how well you connect with people. How well you communicate your vision and goals for your business with your team, and your openness to receiving feedback from them. Being humble enough to reach out to other successful entrepreneurs for advice and guidance and being willing to learn from them. How well you handle difficult conversations with your co-founders or business partners, especially when faced with difficult challenges in the business, is so critical to the growth of the business. Many businesses die too soon because of founders who fail to communicate effectively with their partners. Some became arrogant and acted like they knew-it-all. No entrepreneur can grow successfully in silos, we all need someone to help us grow in businesses, and that’s why it is so important to learn to connect with people so well.

How did you fund your business initially?

We funded the business using our personal salaries, income from our other business ventures, savings, and personal loans we took from the bank. We have tried to avoid getting private funding from external parties as much as possible because this usually comes with hidden T’s and C’s that can be detrimental to small businesses still trying to establish themselves in the market. We did however reach out to various government funding institutions for investments, unfortunately, they take years to process applications.

What have been the most rewarding aspects of running your own business?

Seeing the love and support we have been receiving from people across the country, the excitement and smiles we have seen on people’s faces after purchasing Bloc sneakers from us. People are always amazed at how comfortable and lightweight the sneaker is. That has been the most rewarding aspect because it shows that we have kept our promise to provide a stylish sneaker that would be comfortable enough for nearly every South African.

What have you learned from your experiences as an entrepreneur so far?

- “When the student is ready the

teacher will appear. When the student is truly ready... The teacher will Disappear.” — Tao Te Ching. This profound quote, at least the first part seems to sum up my journey so far, quite well. While we all wait for our dreams and opportunities to cross paths, self-preparation is the only sphere of influence we have the most control over. It is better to wait for opportunities than for opportunities to find us not ready, as chaos and confusion might be the source of our regret. Moral of the story? Prepare for the opportunities and wait for your turn to be the teacher.

- Skin in the game – As one of the greatest speakers of our time Vusi Thembakwayo once said, it's easy to throw in the towel when one doesn't have skin in the game. So, as one progresses along their business journey, one should all come to terms that having skin in the game changes the landscape for any entrepreneur and creates a sense of urgency.
- Imposter Syndrome – Much to our human weakness, when we find ourselves in spaces, we are not familiar with, our natural predisposition is to assume we don't belong in those spaces we'll find ourselves in. The palpable fear that you'll experience is valid but

that is no excuse to not occupy those boardrooms and make the difficult calls. Understand that the fear means you are biologically sound and your ability to envision things, even if it's not in your best interest, means that your brain is functional. So, feel the fear and do it anyway.

What mistakes have you made, and what have you learned from them?

In one of my previous business ventures, which involved the development of a mobile and web application that would solve one of the most critical socio-economic problems faced in Africa, my business partner and I spent over a year pursuing external funding to complete the development of our app. We had only developed a prototype, but we needed an exhaustive amount of funds to build a fully functional app that we could take to market (MVP). We had received global recognition for our innovative app idea, and won several competitions where we received some funding. Even though we had attained notable success for our innovative solution, we still hadn't raised enough capital to finish developing the app. After some time, I realized that we had spent too much time seeking funding, pitching our novel business solution from one investor

to another, whereas so much of this time could have been spent working on the business, brainstorming alternative ways to raise capital to fund the project without placing too much reliance on external funding. After over a year and a half, we had very little to show for all the investor pitches we spent so much time on. This reminded me that many of us, when venturing into new businesses, focus too much of our time and effort going around looking for funding to transform our own ideas into businesses when we should be spending more time working on innovative ways to generate revenue to grow our own businesses. After all a business is only a business when it makes money right? Otherwise, our ideas serve no purpose to the world until we've turned them into reality. Rather find ways to turn your business idea into reality and then seek funding to grow the business than to wait for someone to hand out cash to you to transform that idea into a business. One important lesson I have learned from many of my experiences in life is that God would never give you a dream without giving you the capacity to realize that dream. And sometimes we only need to search within our sphere of influence to see that we have all that we require to realize that dream.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

I spent my first two years at NWU as an academic. All I cared about was mastering all my modules and getting recognition for my work. After being awarded Top Achiever in the BSc faculty for my first and second years, I developed the urge to try out something new. I started taking part in some campus activities and committees, and even enrolled for the Mr and Miss NWU pageant. In all honesty, this was a quest to test whether I could be as good at other things as I was in academics. Winning the Miss NWU 2016 pageant taught me a very big life lesson – you never know how great you are at something until you try it. Since then, my whole life has been about exploring, experimenting, and trying to excel at other different things. In 2018, I was inspired to start traveling abroad. I have since visited a total of 11 countries across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Northern Africa. Traveling has been a fundamental aspect of my professional career and entrepreneurial journey. I have drawn much of my wisdom and courage from traveling. I believe that traveling is important for every entrepreneur because it helps one develop the ability to question the age-old ineffective techniques and methodologies and it forms a threshold for new ideas and solutions.

Lwazi Nene and Moeketsi Mofokeng

What is the name of your business/company?

The Name of our business is “ student heights accommodations.”

What inspired you to start your own business?

We were inspired by the high unemployment rate and the desire to create a vehicle that will generate income for

us and empower others through employment opportunities directly or indirectly via our business stakeholders and associates.

How did you come up with your business idea?

We have identified a gap in the real estate market , more especially in the student accommodation sector in the vaal triangle area.We saw that there was a lack of coordinated business relationship amongst the stakeholders(Students , Landlords and institutions of higher learning). We saw the need of establishing a business model that is centred around integrating the business relationship between the latter



stakeholders. So student heights accommodations provides property management, property development, consulting and shuttle services to private accommodation providers and students.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?

Our Biggest challenge was the start-up capital. As we all know that starting a business requires resources so that we can be able to cover important expenses such as marketing and professionalizing the business to attract clientele (office space, branding, daily operational costs).

How did you overcome those challenges?

We knocked on all doors possible and through God’s grace and hardwork, determination and perseverance, some doors opened.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start their own business?

The best advice is to start where you are and use what to have. Do not be afraid of failure, as failure builds character, the most important aspect in entrepreneurship is your business idea and the vision, do not let it die while you are still alive.

What skills do you think are essential for entrepreneurs to have?

- Communication - As an entrepreneur you must be an active and effective communicator as you are dealing with different stakeholders.
- Leadership - Leading by example and not being afraid of taking tough decisions and steering the direction of your business.
- Adaptability - You must be an all round student when you are an entrepreneur, one must be able to adapt to changing markets and always be creative and innovative to stay relevant

How did you fund your business initially?

We combined our available resources and received some business funding support from the Masia Brothers (Bovua Holdings), who are also our business mentors.

What have been the most rewarding aspects of running your own business?

The most rewarding aspect is seeing our business grow exponentially in various ways, from increasing the clientele database, acquiring business assets, achieving financial targets and increasing our team yearly. Lastly, being in control of our time.

What have you learned from your experiences as an entrepreneur so far?

We have learned that it is not always a smooth journey, things might not go according to plan but through perseverance and consistency you can eventually defy the odds. Respecting your business and clients increases your value, never stop learning from other entrepreneurs who have walked the path, to be as versatile as possible in order survive the ever changing economy and business market.

What mistakes have you made, and what have you learned from them?

- Not differentiating between a business and personal relationships-Affects the growth and operations of the business, separate the two at all times
- Prematurely sharing your business ideas/plans or strategic information with everyone- not everyone wishes your business well and might use that to their advantage.
- Misusing the business resources for non- business-related purposes- weakens the business growth and independence.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

For the both of us we can safely say that being leadership stood up-us, it exposed us to various opportunities that scrutinized and developed our characters. We ave learnt a lot from dealing with students and the very same skills and knowledge are being applied in our daily lives. Not to mention the great student life memories NWU gave us , indeed it all starts here.

Joel Khoele

What is the name of your business/ company?

Joel Stitch by Stitch Patrao PTY Ltd.

What inspired you to start your own business?

I grew up watching my grandmother sew clothes, I have learned from her, and it then became an interesting hobby for me. After that exposure, I decided to upskill myself and learn different sewing techniques.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?

I realized that there was a gap in the Tailoring market. I would have to travel all the way to town to tailor my clothing, which made me realize that students of the NWU were probably facing the same challenges. This is what gave me the idea to start a tailoring business on campus.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when starting your business?

The challenges were Financial, I sacrificed my meal and book allowance to buy equipment, which had led me to find alternative ways to study and to have food. What



kept me going was the voice in my head saying, "You cannot wait for funding to start, you just have to start".

How did you overcome those challenges?

In addition to finding study alternatives, I took it upon myself to find good mentors who are business-minded, they guided me and advised me throughout my entrepreneurial journey. Not only was I a good listener, but I have also implemented the ideas and remained humble and disciplined in the process.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start their own business?

If you have a business idea that will sustain you, do not wait for everything to be perfect, just start with whatever you have. Find information about available opportunities such as youth business funding programs.

What skills do you think are essential for entrepreneurs to have?

- Creativity: Think outside the box and stand out from everyone else it will help you to be easily recognized.
- Be strategic in how you present your product.
- Be Disciplined.
- Always ensure that you equip yourself with the skills relevant to your business and keep yourself updated with everything happening in your market environment.

How did you fund your business initially?

I have initially funded my business with my NSFAS meal and book allowance.

What have been the most rewarding aspects of running your own business?

- Being exposed to the real world and having challenges that helped me grow psychologically.
- The financial capability to make provisions for myself and my loved ones, and the feeling of fulfilment when I see them happy.
- Being an employer at such a young age.

- Being exposed to a diversity of cultures, styles as well as people and their perspectives.
- The ability to incorporate what I have studied from varsity into my business, e.g., modules such as Business Management and Organisational Behaviour have had an impact on how I conduct my business today.
- Recognition; being exposed to more business opportunities even outside of the NWU.

What have you learned from your experiences as an entrepreneur so far?

- Consistency is Key
- It is more beneficial to be a trend-setter than to follow trends and social standards.

What mistakes have you made, and what have you learned from them?

At first, I struggled with understanding how people behave, I have had encounters where people were not keeping their ends of the bargains. I did not realize the importance of having contracts that legally binds the stakeholders I was working with, and that had financial consequences on my end.

What stood out for you during your years as a student at the NWU and what were your greatest lessons?

- What stood out was the support I have received from the NWU and the opportunities/platform that I have received to showcase my skills abilities in such a high standard. I am also grateful for the recognition I have also received from institutions outside of the NWU.
- The most essential thing I've learned is that it's crucial to avoid mixing business and pleasure, and that I alone am responsible for seeing that the vision I have for my company comes to life. It is my obligation to make sure that my interactions with friends and family won't harm my business because of things such as friendship favours.



Introducing Yourself

The Cover Letter

A CV should always be accompanied by a cover letter which conveys your personality and enthusiasm, and draws attention to your experience and suitability for the job you are applying for. Your cover letter can differentiate your CV from the others – make sure that you grasp the opportunity to market yourself. The letter should intrigue the reader so that he/she would want to read the entire CV.

Layout

The letter should have only three paragraphs:

The first (very short) paragraph should contain the reference to the advertised post, the reference number in the advertisement, and where and when the advertisement appeared. If the CV is sent after a telephone conversation or personal referral, it should be mentioned here.

The second paragraph (the longest in the letter) should indicate the way in which your own knowledge, qualifications, skills and personal qualities are suited to the post requirements.

The final paragraph (which is also very short) should mention your positive expectation to hear from them, thank them for their time and draw their attention to your contact details.

Appearance

The cover letter should:

- be a formal business letter, like we all learnt at school;
- fit on one page;
- be neatly and clearly printed on the same good quality paper that you used for your CV;
- be well laid out and easy to read; and
- be free of typing, spelling or grammatical errors.

Contents

The contents should:

- be brief and structured. Avoid repetition of lengthy information that is covered in your CV;
- address the relevant contact (if mentioned in the job advertisement). If no contact person was mentioned, the salutation should read 'The HR Manager', 'The Advertiser' or 'Dear Sir/Madam'. Don't write 'To whom it may concern';
- refer clearly to the post title, any reference number, as well as where and when the advertisement was noticed;
- refer to your CV and emphasise relevant points;
- outline your current situation briefly, as well as the reason why you are interested in the job;
- emphasise the reason why the employer may want to meet and employ you;
- highlight your skills, achievements and possible contribution to the organisation;
- contain phrases that express your personality;
- ensure that the reader is left with the impression that you are a potential match for the job; and
- close with a polite and positive expression of interest in further dialogue with the employer or recruiter.

Cover letter tips

Always analyse an advertisement and identify requirements before writing your letter and updating your CV.

The main purpose of the letter is to motivate the recipient to read your CV as well.

Pose short questions or develop concise statements that entice the employer to turn the page and take a look at your CV.

Get right to the point – assume that the reader is merely skimming your letter and looking for a good match for the vacancy.

Your goal should be to write something that resonates perfectly with that which is already on your reader's mind.

SAMPLES OF COVER LETTERS

- www.coverletterexamples.net/
- www.bestcoverletters.com/
- www.resume-resource.com/covers.html
- <http://susanireland.com/letter/cover-letter-examples/>
- <http://workbloom.com/cover-letter/cover-letter-samples.aspx>



For a career that's as dynamic as you are...

We're your go-to™

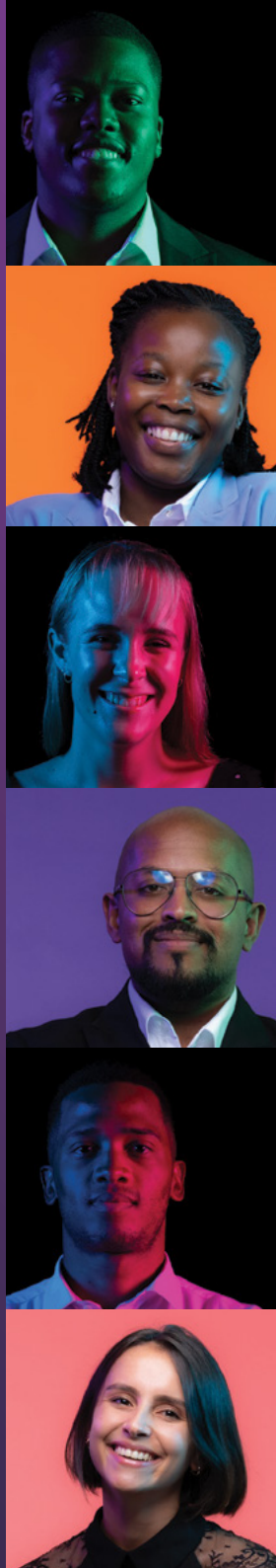
IQbusiness is the leading independent management and technology consulting firm in South Africa. Our internship programme gives innovative thinkers and does the space to hone their abilities and gain valuable experience in multiple industries and roles. So you can keep discovering new ways to be **your best you**.

Be part of a team that helps companies overcome their toughest business challenges. Bring your independent thinking, an appetite for change and let's do great work together.

Applications open on Friday, 1 June 2023.

www.iqbusiness.net/graduate

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Your Curriculum Vitae

The Ultimate Marketing Tool

Your CV is your marketing tool and its focus should be on your skills that contribute to the position you are applying for. The following should be included:

Personal details:

Your name and surname should be prominent and could even be the title of the document. Telephone numbers should be current. If you use an informal or comical e-mail address, you may wish to create a new e-mail address that includes your name. It is not always necessary to include information relating to your nationality, age, sex, marital status, languages or health. Ensure that you are easily contactable at the address you provide and, if applicable, include information regarding your driver's licence.

Career objective:

An objective gives focus to your CV – the reader will know immediately what you are looking for and if you are a good candidate for the advertised position. This is the section in which you must state your career focus and impress the reader with your achievements and strengths.

Educational information:

List brief details of your academic qualifications, starting with the most recent achievement/qualification. List the degree, diploma, matriculation as well as the year and name of the institution. The older you are, the less important your school information will become. It might not be necessary to include the school subjects. Indicate your interest for the immediate future. What are you looking for now? It is also important to include everything you achieved while you were studying. List competitions won, awards received and leadership positions you served in, e.g. chairperson of committees. End this section with a short sentence about the extracurricular activities that you participated in.

Work-related experience:

List your most recent experience first, continuing in reverse chronological order. Use short sentences,

positive language and highlight relevant achievements. Mention the positions you held and companies you worked for, including the dates. Ensure that you include your part-time, volunteer and vacation work. Mention in detail the skills, abilities and experiences you acquired during your work. Because you want the reader to find information quickly, you will need to organise your experiences in categories. Possible category headers are the following: Relevant experience, Volunteer experience, Teaching experience, Lab experience, Community service, Clubs / Organisations, Awards, and Other achievements.

Skills:

It is important to match your skills to the job you are applying for. A CV that highlights relevant skills and experience will boost your chances of getting an interview. If you are going to apply for different jobs, you should tailor your CV to each job. Detail specific skills you have gained and also their relevance to the job you are applying for. The ability to work on a computer is a key skill. List all the programs you are able to work with, as well as your proficiency level on each program.

References:

If this is your first job, it would be wise to nominate tutors or mentors as your references. Always verify that references are willing to provide information about you before you include them in your CV. Your references should be able to answer questions on your achievements, work ethics and personality.

Presentation and layout:

The layout of the CV could already demonstrate whether you meet the skills specified in the job advert. The CV must be easy to read and visually appealing – avoid using excessive underlining, bold italics, long paragraphs and multiple fonts. It is a good idea to use bullet-point lists. Headings are useful for scanning and must be consistent in style. You can even use headings taken from the advertisement or job specification. First impressions matter – use quality paper and check for correct spelling and grammar.

Which style of CV would be best for your job application?

The chronological CV is the most familiar CV format and outlines your education, experience and achievements in reverse chronological order.

The skills-based CV focuses on evidence of your relevant skills. Use headings to present your skills, which should be focused on the needs of the employer.

The academic CV can be useful when you apply for an academic or research career. Use appropriate headings to explain your research interests, e.g. Dissertation, Research abstracts, Areas of expertise, Publications, Presentations and/or conferences attended, and Awards.

Do's & Don'ts

CV Don'ts

- Don't overuse the personal pronoun I.
- Don't send the same CV with every job application.
- Don't describe duties – focus on achievements.
- Don't use lengthy sentences; rather use a bullet list for an easy to read format.
- Don't exaggerate or lie.
- Don't leave gaps in your educational and employment history.
- Don't give relatives as references.

CV Do's

- Keep it short, concise, easy to read and straightforward – focus on content, not length.
- Check for typing, spelling and grammatical errors.
- Adjust your CV to fit the specific job you are applying for.
- Focus on the job and ensure that your CV is relevant. Make sure that the relevant experience and skills are prominently displayed.
- Keep the reader in mind.
- Be positive and relay your strengths.
- Include a career objective.
- Include a cover letter.
- Demonstrate that you understand the nature of the job being advertised and explain why you want to work in that area.
- Highlight briefly how your skills and abilities fit the vacancy.
- Research the company before you compile your CV.
- Print on quality paper and ensure that the layout is good. Print the cover letter on the same type of paper.

Curriculum Vitae

Example

AWESOME STUDENT

081 234 1234 | awesome.student@gmail.com

Postal Address: PO Box 1234; Mahikeng, North-West; 2531

Alternative Number: 076 789 6789

1. Personal Information

Nationality	South African
Languages	Tswana, Afrikaans and Engels
Driver's License	Code A en B

2. Personal Profile

At least 10 words (adjectives) which will describe your personality, personal qualities or traits which will lead to success in the specific job/career, as explained in the CV workshop by the Career Consultant.

3. Career Goal / Objective

Explain what kind of a job you are looking for at what kind of a company. Show the prospective employer what you are looking for matches their job vacancy/company. You may include it only in your covering letter. Refer to: Functional area (job); level in the organization; type of organization; size of organization; eventual goals and specific skills sets.

4. Academic Background

- 4.1 List qualifications starting from highest and include only the subjects which are necessary.
Refer to academic record for all subjects.
- 4.2 Other courses attended and skills obtained.
- 4.3 Academic Achievements.

5. (Life) Experience

Remember: "VERBS & CONTEXT"

Typical headings are given below. It will be unique in your situation, as explained in the CV workshop by the Career Consultant.

- 5.1 CULTURE - Debating; Music; Singing; Dancing; Acting; etc
- 5.2 SPORT - Soccer; Tennis; Ballet; Athletics; etc
- 5.3 LEADERSHIP
- 5.4 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
- 5.5 ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- 5.6 ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES - Research; Data gathering/-processing; Student Instruction; etc

6. Work Experience

Name of employer; period, job title AND a description of what you did.
Remember: "VERBS"

7. References

Employer:

Mr. P. Wessels; Sunshine Pharmacy; Mafikeng.
082 123 4567

Lecturer:

Dr. J. Alison; Department of Statistics; NWU; Mafikeng.
082 234 5678

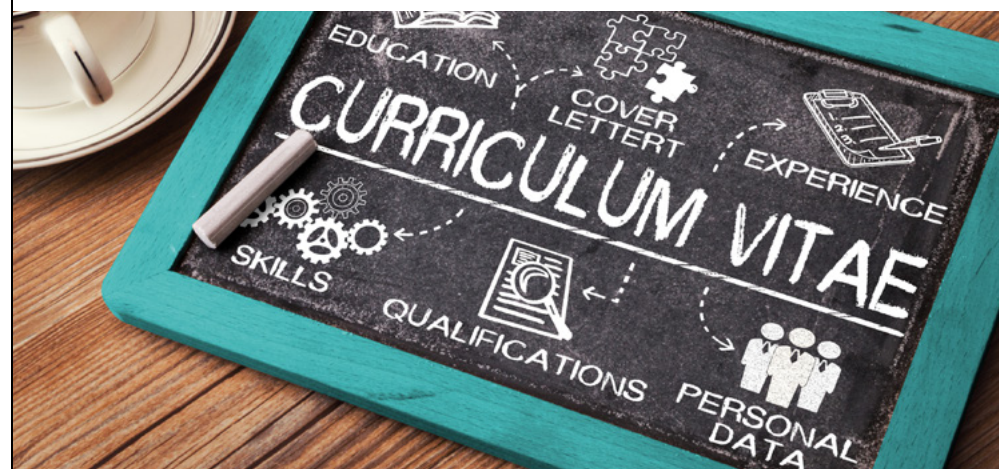
More CV tips:

- Font should be easy to read, size should be between 10 and 12. Avoid colour.
- Your address could also be in table format underneath your name and surname.
- Your email address should be professional. Avoid nicknames. Highlight briefly how your skills and abilities fit the vacancy. Organise your experiences in categories.
- Make sure you include the institution, degree, date of completion and main subjects. Start with the most recent qualification. It might not be necessary to include the school subjects.
- The older you are, the less important your school information will become.

Be Concise

Continue revising and fine-tuning your CV. Proofread! Don't rely on a spellchecker. Have two or three different people proofread your CV.

Ensure that your CV is well spaced and visually attractive. Check and recheck your CV for errors.



Curriculum vitae

Checklist

Check the list below against your current CV to make sure that you have the basics covered.

Your CV in General

- Does your CV look attractive? Would the reader be interested in you as a candidate?
- Is it well organised, concise and structured into one to three pages?
- Has the CV been checked for spelling, grammar and typing errors?
- Is the lay-out well balanced and the space used effectively with headings?
- Is it easy to read, with clear font and characters that are not too small?
- Does the most relevant information occupy the most space?
- Did you print your CV on good quality paper?
- Did you adapt your CV to suit this specific application?
- Did you create a cover letter to accompany your CV?
- Will the employer be able to contact you by using your personal details on the CV?
- Did you use action verbs & short sentences and phrases that are to the point?
- Are you sure your e-mail address is professional?
- Are the pages numbered?
- Does your CV include a cover page?

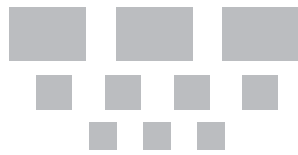
Your References

- Did you include contact details of your references?
- Have you asked your references permission to cite them in your CV?

Your Educational Information

- Except for your tertiary and secondary education, did you include additional training?
- Did you include all your qualifications, as well as the completion dates?
- Your Work Experience and Skills
- Did you list your experience chronologically?
- Did you list the most recent experience first?
- Did you emphasise the most relevant experience?
- Did you explain any gaps in your work experience chronology?
- Did you tailor your CV to the specific position you are applying for?
- Did you include your career objective and core competence?
- Does the career objective align with the position you are applying for?

Did you know that the average employer will spend approximately 10 to 20 seconds reviewing your CV the first time? You MUST, therefore, attract attention – make the seconds count!



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PEOPLE | PLANET | PROFITS

Q Are you a law or accounting graduate?
Do you have a highly developed sense of ethics?
Do you want to help others while making money?

A A range of interesting careers in fiduciary practice awaits you.
“Fiduciary” implies a sense of duty and care – which is what you will have as a fiduciary practitioner whether you are in trusts, wills, estate planning or administration, or tax advice.

What must I do?

- Become a candidate member of the Fiduciary Institute of Southern Africa (FISA)
- Then consider doing the Advanced Diploma in Estate & Trust Administration through the University of Free State (distance learning)
- Following which you can apply to FISA for the ultimate designation of Fiduciary Practitioner of SA[®] (FPSA[®])

Did you know?

FISA has developed an extensive archive of fiduciary-related court case summaries. You can read these on our website under “Court cases”.

Join us



Find out more at www.fisa.net.za or contact secretariat@fisa.net.za

From Virtual Work to Hybrid:

The Future of Work Arrangements

Azwi Singo

Specialist: Career Coach

It is undeniable that Covid-19 had a devastating impact across the globe and its consequences will still be felt for centuries to come. Is that all doom and gloom? No, out of this misery, with hope that always define us as humans, there is a new work arrangement embraced for knowledge workers. That is the hybrid model. It is that flexi type of work that allows one to split their time between brick-and-mortar office and remote work. In this arrangement, one can control when and where to perform their tasks which give rise to more work engagement which results in workers being fulfilled with a healthy work-life balance.

The downside of hybrid work arrangement is that of loneliness. Mental health has been receiving huge attention lately and one major risk factor of hybrid work is employees feeling lonely. Hybrid work can also lead to a barrier between employees who prefer working from home

and those who opt for physical office, and this may lead to poor team relationships. Access to technology may be a barrier to those opting to work away from their offices. Some home may not be suitable for this type of work and organisations need to adjust their policies to accommodate certain requirements and laws that governs employment relationship, which in turn may escalate the operating cost of business.

Are there any benefits associated with hybrid work? Recent literature indicates that there’s quite several advantages for both employers and employees offered by this type of work arrangement. The greatest advantages of hybrid work to date are improved work-life balance, more efficient use of time, control over work hours and work location, burnout mitigation, and higher productivity. Hybrid work provides the flexibility for employees to work in ways that are most effective for them.

For employers, hybrid work has the major benefit of an increase

Power Skills to Increase Your Employability

Dr. Karina de Bruin

Managing Director, JVR Academy

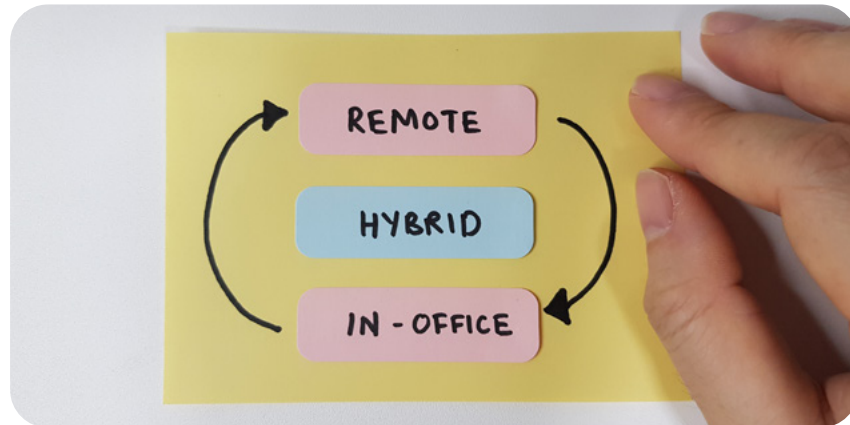
The fact that South Africa is suffering from a high unemployment rate may cause a lot of worries to many of us while studying at university. Many young people do not find a job because of the mismatch between their education or training and labour market needs and requirements. Another concern is the prediction that technology is going to replace people in many jobs.

There is hope!

Bad news, yes! But...there's hope! The Harvard Business Review, Deloitte, and many other publications highlight several human characteristics that would be extremely relevant in the future world of work. These include imagination, creativity, problem-solving, and strategic mindedness.

Work activities that involve these abilities are not that easy to automate and therefore the involvement of people (rather than robots) is almost guaranteed. Furthermore, a basic internet search of non-technical workplace skills and analyses of job advertisements have confirmed the importance of these and many other skills. These include among others teamwork, communication, emotional intelligence, self-management, negotiation, planning and organising, initiative, critical thinking, resilience, and adaptability. These skills are often commonly referred to as 21st century skills or employability skills. We call them POWER SKILLS.

POWER SKILLS are skills that are necessary for finding, keeping, and being successful in a job. In times of high unemployment and work environments marked by technological take over, employers have more choice of applicants and will favour those who stand out from the rest.



in efficiency. Most important tasks to be performed are assigned to the right professional at the right time and that means reduction in waste and optimal utilisation of resources. It has been proven to have huge impact on the increase in productivity. When employees have a say on how and when tasks are to be performed, they tend to take ownership of the roles and responsibilities and that increase their productivity which affect positively the bottom line of the business.

Hybrid work decreases the need for bigger office space hence it reduces the rental or real estate costs and

lower the overall operating costs of business. It also cut on the commuting cost of the employees. Hybrid work arrangement redefines collaboration amongst teams and groups in the organisations. There is no need for face-to-face meeting as teams can use the available technologies to meet virtually.

In conclusion, there is a big shift between virtual work and a hybrid model which represents an evolution on how work arrangements can be approached. This provides flexibility for employees and more efficient use of their time. One can say – it is the new future!

Most Sought-After

Skills, Competences and Traits

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability/Flexibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Judgment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analytical thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attention to detail | <input type="checkbox"/> Leveraging diversity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business acumen | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career motivation | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial awareness | <input type="checkbox"/> Numeracy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational awareness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict management | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consulting | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity/Innovation | <input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer focus | <input type="checkbox"/> Resilience/Tenacity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decisiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedication/Commitment | <input type="checkbox"/> Results orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delegation | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk-taking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> External awareness | <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of self |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independence | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Influencing | <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information seeking | <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthiness/Ethics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IT appreciation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction (give and receive) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity | |

Differentiate yourself!

To stand out from the thousands out there in the same position as you, you need have well-rounded POWER SKILLS. Being at University provides the perfect opportunity to **develop** these skills. You just need to find these opportunities, take part in them, and consciously work on developing, and documenting them. As a simple exercise, ask yourself the following questions and list the skills that you use in these situations:

- Which activities demonstrate **TEAMWORK**? (remember about all those group assignments!)
- Where do I need to use **CRITICAL THINKING**? (don't just memorise your work – have a critical opinion that you discuss in the test paper!)
- What **LEADERSHIP** skills do I have? (yes, now is a good time to list any activity where you were involved in leading others – and it does not have to be a huge thing!)
- Where did I show **RESILIENCE** and **ADAPTABILITY**? (think about a time where you just had to keep going regardless of difficulties – perhaps even on a daily basis!)
- How does my involvement with campus societies show that I have **EMPATHY** and value **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**?
- Don't forget about **PLANNING, ORGANISING, and TIME MANAGEMENT** (which are all crucial for successfully completing your qualification!)

The responsibility to FUTURE PROOF yourself by developing POWER SKILLS, lies in YOUR hands! Go for it! If you want to learn more about POWER SKILLS and how to develop these, please visit: <https://jyrafriagroup.co.za/academy/power-skills>

1

Things I wish someone had told me in my first year at university!

Bright-eyed and bushy tailed, I walked onto campus! Books were piled into my shiny new bag and I was wearing spanking-new jeans, clean All Stars and carrying a pencil bag with every colour highlighter you could imagine. I was ready to take on the world, one faculty at a time. Ambition was my name and a BA in Journalism was my game.

They gave me lists of books, classes, lecturers, maps... and a student card (with a dorky picture of me on it). What they didn't give me, though, was everything that I learned and earned in my first year:

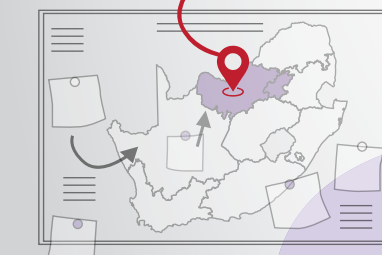
- Smile on your student card photo – you don't want to look like a criminal for the next four years.
- Buy a pair of tekkies or flip flops for those flights of stairs.
- You won't make friends on your first day; you will be too worried about finding your lecture venues.
- Coffee is a prerequisite and it's cheap.
- Buy your textbooks second hand, because it's more economical than buying new ones.
- Remember, unless you decide to stand out, you are only a number to the lecturer.
- Join a society – you'll meet people, get involved in something you love and learn valuable skills.
- Your education is yours and yours alone. Don't expect any hand-outs.
- Love what you do; if you don't, no one else will.
- Most of all, be willing to grow in many other ways over the next few years, other than just your degree. Keep an open mind!

Don't be afraid to make mistakes, as they don't define who you are; varsity is so much more than textbooks and marks.

NWU CAREER CENTRE

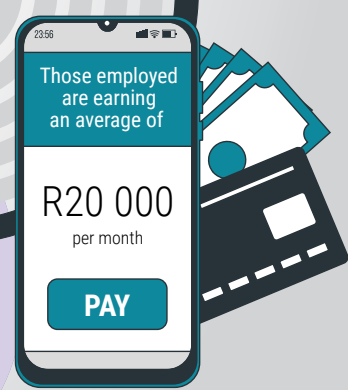


2022 Graduate Destination Survey



39% did vacation work while studying

68% did vacation work related to their studies



UNIVERSUM CAREERTEST
2023 RESULTS

69 247 STUDENTS
26 UNIVERSITIES
10 209 NWU STUDENTS

TOP 3 CAREER TYPES

- 1 Change-Maker
- 2 Ground-Breaker
- 3 Globe-Trotter

EXPECTED MONTHLY SALARY (ZAR)

R 26 105
R 22 971



IN EMPLOYERS

TOP 3 IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES

- 1 Ethical standards
- 2 Professional training and development
- 3 Leadership opportunities

IMPORTANT IN A UNIVERSITY
TOP 3 ATTRIBUTES

- 1 Educational excellence
- 2 Safe campus environment
- 3 Excellent professors/lecturers



NWU UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATE THESE WITH NWU

TOP 3 ATTRIBUTES

- 1 Safe campus environment
- 2 Educational excellence
- 3 Friendly and open environment



MOST USED ONLINE PLATFORMS TO LEARN ABOUT EMPLOYERS

- 1 LinkedIn
- 2 Careers24
- 3 Facebook
- 4 Online network/ community from the university/ career centre
- 5 WhatsApp

TOP 3 PREFERRED INDUSTRIES

- 1 Education
- 2 Banking
- 3 Hospital and Health Care

2023 RESULTS

10 209 NWU STUDENTS

69 247 SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS
26 UNIVERSITIES



R 26 105



R 22 971

EXPECTED SALARY

GENDER PAY GAP - 12%



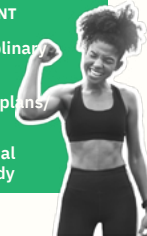
TOP 3 ATTRIBUTES IN A UNIVERSITY

MOST IMPORTANT

- 1 Educational excellence
- 2 Safe campus environment
- 3 Excellent professors/lecturers

LEAST IMPORTANT

- 1 Interdisciplinary courses
- 2 Good meal plans/cafeterias
- 3 International student body



IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES IN EMPLOYERS

- 1 Ethical standards
- 2 Professional training and development
- 3 Leadership opportunities



MOST USED ONLINE PLATFORMS TO LEARN ABOUT EMPLOYERS

- 1 LinkedIn
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- 4 Online network/ community from the university/ career centre
- 5 WhatsApp



Online Application Tips

Recruitment on the internet is growing extremely fast. There are already thousands of recruitment agencies publishing vacancies on their websites. Newspapers, online publications and company websites also carry vacancy advertisements. If you neglect to use this vast range of potential vacancies, you will be missing out on potential opportunities.

Online job application advantages

A job-seeker

- can apply quickly and easily for many jobs;
- can store his/her CV online where potential employers might see it;
- has 24-hour access to vacancies;
- can track his/her applications;
- has fast response;
- obtains automatic notification of vacancies according to his/her profile; and
- finds job hunting easier and more effective.

Preparing for online job hunting

Most people prepare their CV by using word processing. Unfortunately, this may cause your CV to be unsuitable for the internet. It may happen that recruiters do not use the same technology and are not able to process it. Companies receiving

your CV may also use another method or computer and could therefore have difficulties in reading your CV.

In some cases, you will have to convert your CV to a text version that can be read on any computer. 'Plain' text (also called ASCII text) is the safest and most common Internet format. A .txt file will be recognised by any technology – it is also commonly used for email communication.

Plain text gets rid of italics, bullets and all fancy formatting.

The question now is: What can you do to enhance this plain text version?

Open your text (.txt) file in Notepad (Windows) or Simpletext (Macintosh) and consider the following suggestions:

- For bullets, use asterisks, plus signs or dashes.
- For underlining text, use capital letters.
- Use a line of dashes or asterisks to separate sections.
- Redo all spacing, using only the space bar.
- End each line with an 'enter'.
- Check for special characters, as they may have been translated into symbols.
- information you add, the better your chances of obtaining the position.
- If there is a field for a cover letter or notes, use this to write a short cover letter.
- If you want to keep some information private, compulsory detail can be noted as 'on request'.
- Remember to update your details frequently to keep your CV near the top if a date sort is used in the recruiter's database.

Recruitment sites

Some recruitment and job websites provide electronic forms that can be used for entering your CV details. The completion of e-forms can be very time-consuming. Consider the following tips:

- Cut and paste information from your text (.txt) file, not the word processor.
- It is not necessary to complete a field unless it is compulsory – just remember that the more

E-mailing a CV

Company websites do not always use online recruitment agencies to advertise their vacancies. Many of these sites request that you send your CV via e-mail.

What Makes You Competent?

Understanding Your Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes

If you want to be successful, you should try to absorb as much knowledge as possible, right? Well, not quite. At least, not only knowledge! I believe success, whether we talk on a professional or personal level, derives from three factors: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Most people, however, pay excessive attention to the knowledge component, while neglecting the development of the other two. Before discussing the argument further, we need to define what we mean by each of these factors.

Knowledge is practical information that is gained through learning, experience or association.

Examples of knowledge:

- Second-degree equations
- Human anatomy
- The rules of monopoly
- How to change a wheel
- The capital of Zimbabwe is Harare

Skills refer to the ability to perform specific tasks and to apply knowledge.

Examples of skills:

- The ability to communicate effectively
- The ability to write clearly
- The ability to play an instrument
- The ability to solve problems
- The ability to dance

Attitude involves how people react to certain situations and how they behave in general.

Examples of attitudes:

- Being proactive
- Being able to get along with other people
- Being optimistic
- Being critical towards other people
- Being arrogant

Now, if you can imagine a pyramid with three horizontal levels, and you picture attitudes at the base of the pyramid, skills in the middle and knowledge right on top, you will notice that attitudes form the important foundation. One should,

Keep the following in mind when you e-mail your CV to a company:

- Use the content of the e-mail as your cover letter.
- State that you are attaching your CV in MS Word and also as a text file – name the
- attachments with your own name.
- Ensure that you have included your name and the job that you are applying for.
- The subject of the e-mail should already give an indication of the content, e.g. Application – Librarian, your reference job #76693.
- Job-hunting advice on the internet

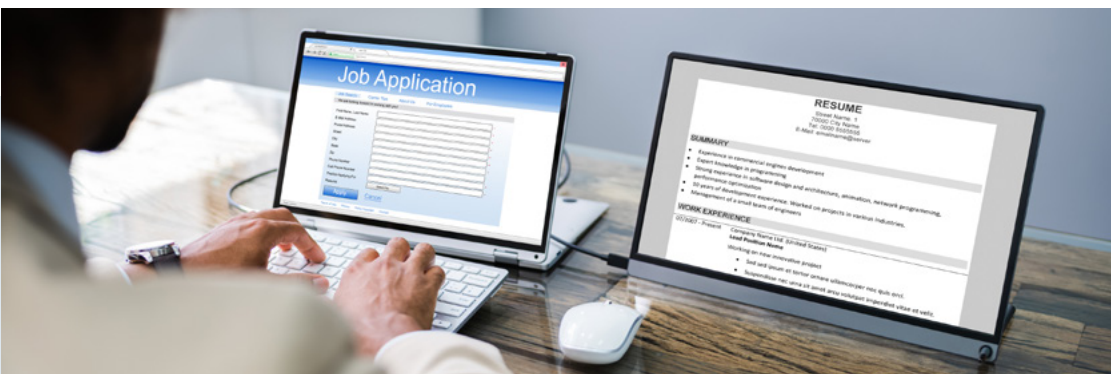
A job search strategy

- How to write a CV
- How to write a cover letter
- How to prepare for an interview
- Research companies

Beware! – security and privacy

You are giving personal details on the internet – never give references on your e-form CV. There can be no guarantee that your information will remain private.

(Some information was adapted from 'Job hunt on the net' by Julie-Ann Amos.)



therefore, focus on developing the right attitudes before attending to the skills and the knowledge.

If you take a look at the five attitudes we have used as examples, it is clear that one would desire to develop and acquire the first three, but not the last two. Distinguishing between a desirable and a problematic attitude is actually an easy task.

Why then do we fail to dedicate enough energy to the development of valuable attitudes? First, because we might think that attitude is affected by genetics, meaning that some people are born optimistic, while others are naturally pessimistic and that there is nothing one can do to change it. This is far from the truth. While most people are naturally inclined to behave in certain ways – we call that personality – we can still change radically or develop specific attitudes at will.

Developing or changing an attitude will sometimes require more deliberate effort than developing a skill or gaining some knowledge, but that is exactly why it is also more valuable. The second reason why people fail to focus

on attitudes is because they are not aware of the benefits they would derive from them. Common sense states that the more knowledgeable someone is, the more successful he or she will be. While this affirmation might be true, it is only so if that person also has the right attitudes.

After developing the attitudes – a lifelong process, by the way – one should focus on skills. Basic – general or common – skills, such as the ability to communicate and to solve problems, come before knowledge, because they are sometimes necessary to understand the subject matter and can be applied to many different situations.

Job-specific skills, however, are the practical application of the knowledge that has been learnt, like preparing financial statements or drafting a contract, and are therefore developed simultaneously with the development of the knowledge.

The top part of the pyramid is the knowledge. Now, whilst I argue that prior to getting the knowledge, one should develop attitudes and competencies, I am

not saying that knowledge is not important. Far from it, knowledge is essential. But if you consider the information and communication technologies revolution that we live in, you can see that virtually anyone in the world has access to all the information that has ever been produced.

I know that information and knowledge are two different things, but the process of transforming one into the other is not that complex. What I am saying, therefore, is that knowledge alone will not be sufficient. It does not represent a competitive advantage per se.

Consider two different men, John and Mark, working for a financial services company. Both of them are eager to succeed, so they both spend lots of time trying to grow professionally. John uses his time gaining only knowledge and as much of it as possible. He studies balance sheets, financial reports, accounting practices, read financial news, and the like.

Mark, on the other hand, gets the knowledge that is necessary to carry out his job. Other than that, he invests time to develop his creativity and innovative thinking, to improve his insight into people's behaviour, to develop a more positive outlook on life, to improve his pro-activeness and to become more organised and goal focussed.

Should the financial services sector enter a downturn someday, who do you think will have a harder time to keep his job? I am sure you have guessed it.

In summary: Success at personal or professional level will inevitably derive from three factors: attitudes, skills and knowledge. Most people pay excessive attention to the knowledge component, while neglecting the development of skills and attitudes. Make sure that you are focusing on all three components – it is the best strategy in the long run.

Benefits of attending Career Fairs

Unlocking Opportunities and Building Connections

In today's digital age, where virtual networking and job searching have become the norm, attending in-person career fairs may seem like a thing of the past. However, these traditional events still hold immense value and can offer unique advantages for students seeking to jumpstart their careers. In this article, we'll explore the benefits of attending in-person career fairs and why they should be an integral part of your job search strategy.

Face-to-Face Interaction:

One of the greatest advantages of attending an in-person career fair is the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with employers. Unlike online job applications or virtual events, career fairs allow you to engage directly with recruiters and representatives from various companies. This personal interaction allows you to make a memorable impression, showcase your communication skills, and demonstrate your enthusiasm for the organization and the role you're interested in. These interpersonal connections can often lead to valuable insights, referrals, or even on-the-spot interviews.

Networking Opportunities:

Building a strong professional network is crucial for career advancement. In-person career fairs provide an ideal setting to connect with industry professionals, recruiters, and fellow students who share your career interests. By engaging in meaningful conversations and exchanging contact information, you can expand your network and establish valuable connections that may prove beneficial in the long run. Remember, many job opportunities are not advertised openly, and having a network of connections can provide you with insider information and referrals.

Discovering Hidden Opportunities:

While online job boards and company websites are valuable resources, they only provide a fraction of the available job opportunities. In-person career fairs often attract a wide range of employers, including those who may not actively advertise their vacancies online. By attending these events, you gain access to a broader pool of potential employers and can discover hidden job openings that might align perfectly with your skills and interests. Additionally, some companies use career fairs as a primary recruitment method, giving attendees a higher chance of being considered for available positions.

Showcasing Your Personality and Soft Skills:

Your resume and cover letter are essential tools for securing a job interview, but they don't fully capture your personality and soft skills. In-person career fairs allow you to showcase your interpersonal skills, such as effective communication, confidence, and professionalism. Employers can gauge your enthusiasm, passion, and overall fit for their organization beyond what can be expressed on paper. Your ability to engage in thoughtful conversations, articulate your experiences, and highlight your strengths can significantly impact the impression you leave on potential employers.

Access to Industry Insights:

In-person career fairs often include industry-specific panels, workshops, and presentations. Attending these sessions can provide valuable insights into current industry trends, career paths, and emerging opportunities. You can learn from professionals who have firsthand experience in your desired field, gain valuable advice, and expand your knowledge about the industry. These insights can help you make informed decisions about your career path, fine-tune your job search strategy, and enhance your understanding of what employers are seeking in candidates.

Career Fair Preparation:

Participating in an in-person career fair requires preparation, from researching attending companies to refining your elevator pitch. This process can significantly enhance your job search skills and boost your confidence. By preparing for career fairs, you develop the ability to articulate your career goals concisely, present your qualifications effectively, and navigate professional settings with ease. These skills are transferable and will serve you well in future networking events, interviews, and professional interactions.

In conclusion, while online networking and virtual job searching have their advantages, attending in-person career fairs offers unique benefits that cannot be replicated in a digital environment. From face-to-face interaction and networking opportunities to discovering hidden job openings and showcasing



Visit NWU CareerZone

Apply for jobs

Research on employer profiles that work with NWU

Have at any time video interview practice / mock interview!

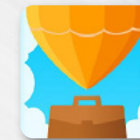
Sign up for Career events and workshops

Access and participate in virtual career fairs

Connect and sign up for appointments with Careers staff

Access Careers Services online resources via the resource centre

Connect and reach the Career Centre



Symplicity

<https://nwu-za-csm.symplicity.com>

Who are we?

The largest RegTech company in the world. A world-leading service provider within VAT reclaim, compliance, and corporate regulation. We service 20 000 clients including more than 50% of the Fortune 500 companies.

We have over **40 wholly owned businesses** worldwide, servicing clients in **107 countries**.



VAT IT CA Programme In a nutshell

Our CA programme is centred around entrepreneurship, management decision making and innovation. Throughout your 3-year articles programme, you will complete several rotations across 6 of the VAT IT divisions and departments including:



We mentor and support our trainees along their journeys to qualifying as CA(SA)'s, providing training to help them through their qualifying board exams (ITC and APC), and working alongside them to achieve the SAICA training requirements. But over and above the technical stuff, our trainees spend their articles having fun and shaping their careers – often staying on with us after their articles within leadership positions.

We're looking for creative, driven individuals who are ready to innovate, collaborate, and lead. VAT IT is made up of a community of challenge seekers, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

Are you up for the challenge?

Success stories

Those who recently completed the TOPP programme with us are now in the following roles within the VAT IT Group:

Siqiniseko Buthelezi
Head of Growth
S.Tax

Sheldon Donnelly
Head of Service
TecEx Medical

Amy Shenker
Head of R&D
TecEx



The Job Search is Just Like Dating:

Five tips for recent graduates

Most university students think about dating every day, some more often than they think about job search! Many have become experts in the process, because it comes naturally to them, while others are not successful, because no-one has ever told them how to go about it. When it comes to the job search, some new graduates can feel even more inexperienced than in dating.

Listed below are five lessons from dating that can help you to secure your dream job:

Your friends set you up, you search online or you look around for opportunities in your daily routine. Just like you do when you want to date, employers also look at their social networks long before posting a job advertisement. New graduates should network with their friends, professors, alumni and acquaintances about open positions in their desired field. The best way to do this is by having a complete LinkedIn profile, adding as many contacts as possible and asking people to write you a recommendation on your LinkedIn Profile page. Having several recommendations builds credibility and trust, both of which are very attractive to potential employers.

The supermodel icebreaker: Recent graduates should treat hiring managers and HR recruiters like supermodels or celebrities. The reason is that hiring managers, like supermodels and celebrities, get approached countless times each day and become very selective. One way to be noticed and remembered is to **give a gift**. In the job search, this equates to a portfolio, consisting of a cover letter, your CV, letters of recommendation and a sample project (where applicable). Such a portfolio does for the recruiter what a bunch of red roses does for your date. When a hiring manager receives a neat, relevant, easy-to-read and complete portfolio, they spend

more time looking through it. If all they receive is a CV (or worse, only their own application form), they spend on average only 10 to 15 seconds reviewing it. Let your portfolio be a surprising gift!

Tell amazing stories. On a first date, you should talk about common interests, experiences, passions and your background. In an interview, you need to tell stories about past educational and professional successes and experiences. The reason is that when employers are convinced that you were “amazing” during a project, an assignment, a group task or an internship, they will predict that you will be “amazing” with them. Your stories should always be relevant and interesting, just like on a date. In essence, you want to demonstrate that you meet the requirements of the job description and that you make a good “(work) partner.” Doing this will make you a strong candidate when decision time comes.

Make a good impression. Dress up and drop off your portfolio in person. Remember the supermodel comparison? You stand your best chance if you look

your best and hand-deliver your portfolio. If this is not possible, send your dream employer a hard copy of your portfolio. If the application process only allows electronic submission via internet or e-mail, strive for a personal touch to the words you use in the e-mail or in any open field (i.e. “Type comment here”). Applicants who do this and create a positive and lasting first impression are the ones who get noticed, get the interviews and rise to the top of the applicant list. It’s also smart to be nice to every receptionist/agent you encounter, either in person or telephonically. Many times they are the ones who will distribute your portfolio to the hiring manager or HR representative.

Research your dream date. Find out as much as you can about your dream employer and know their mission. You will become an appealing and desirable job applicant by doing so. Less than half of all job seekers do this and it’s an easy way to shine. Not knowing anything about your interviewer or his/her company makes you seem average and a “bad date.”

These five tips, namely network, **give a gift, tell amazing and relevant stories, make a good impression and research** work for getting a job or an internship, whether during your studies or right after graduation.

See, you are much more of a job-hunting expert than you thought! And it is not so difficult. Just remember to treat your dream

employer like a special date and you will be a lot closer to securing a lasting relationship in your dream job than you were ever before. In the process, there’s a good chance that you will become more confident and have a pleasant interaction – pleasant for both the recruiter and yourself.





Sample Questions

Prepare a list of your own questions for your informational interview.

1. On a typical day in this position, what do you do?
2. What training or education is required for this type of work?
3. What personal qualities or abilities are important to be successful in this job?
4. What part of this job do you find most satisfying? And most challenging?
5. How did you get your job?
6. What opportunities for advancement are there in this field?
7. What entry level jobs are best for learning as much as possible?
8. What are the salary ranges for various levels in this field?
9. How do you see jobs in this field changing in the future?
10. Is there a demand for people in this occupation?
11. What special advice would you give a person entering this field?
12. What types of training do companies offer persons entering this field?
13. What are the basic prerequisites for jobs in this field?
14. Which professional journals and organisations would help me learn more about this field?
15. What do you think of the experience I've had so far in terms of entering this field?
16. From your perspective, what are the problems you see working in this field?
17. If you could do things all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? Why? What would you change?
18. With the information you have about my education, skills and experience, what other field or job would you suggest I research further before I make a final decision?
19. What do you think of my CV? Do you see any problem areas? What changes would you suggest?
20. Who do you know that I should talk to next? When can I call him/her? May I use your name?

Interview Tips in a Nutshell

The information that is contained in your CV has created in the employer enough interest in you to want to meet you and find out more about you. An interview gives you the opportunity to showcase your qualifications, abilities and personality to an employer, so it pays to be well prepared.

Be prepared to explain everything that you have written in your CV in such a way that you convince the interviewer that your

- qualifications and knowledge are applicable and relevant to the position that you have applied for;
- experience in formal work, as well as in voluntary activities, has equipped you with the skills that are required in the position that you have applied for; and
- personality traits and personal drive, passion and interest will contribute to success in the position that you have applied for.

Personal appearance:

- Be well groomed.
- Dress appropriately.
- Do not chew gum.
- Make eye contact.

Preparation:

- Learn about the organisation.
- Have a specific job or jobs in mind.
- Review your qualifications and experience for the job.
- Be ready to describe your experience briefly, showing how it relates to the job.
- Be ready to answer broad questions, such as "Why should I hire you?", "Why do you want this job?" and "What are your strengths and weaknesses?".
- Practice an interview with a friend or relative.



Tips for Getting Hired After Varsity

The interview:

- Be early.
- Learn the name of your interviewer and greet him or her with a firm handshake.
- Use good manners with everyone you meet.
- Relax and answer each question concisely.
- Use proper language – avoid slang.
- Be cooperative and enthusiastic.
- Use body language to show interest – use eye contact and don't slouch.
- Ask questions about the position and the organisation, but avoid questions whose answers can easily be found on the company's website.
- Show your knowledge.
- Explain what you are able to do.
- Show what type of person you are, what it is that drives you and what you are passionate about.

- Avoid asking questions about salary and benefits during the interview. Leave those questions for when the job offer is discussed.
- Thank the interviewer when you leave and shake hands with him or her.

Do not:

- spend much time talking about money and fringe benefits;
- act uninterested in the company or job;
- act defensively when questioned about anything;
- speak badly about past colleagues or employers;
- answer with only a 'yes' or a 'no'. Always motivate your answer;
- interrupt the interview, even if you have to use the bathroom; and
- let your cellphone ring or beep during the interview.

Consider me a cautionary tale. I was one of many misguided university graduates who underestimated how difficult it would be to find a job after graduation. I didn't expect to collect my degree and walk into a sea of headhunters waiting to hire me, but I had no idea that it would take me a year after graduation to find a job in my field.

I thought I was doing things right. I took my classes really seriously, got good grades and built relationships with my professors. I paid my own way through school, so I had to balance a full-time job with being a full-time student. Unfortunately, my crazy schedule left no time for internships (or sleep).

My younger sister is at university now and I'm determined to make sure that she doesn't go through the same post-varsity struggles that I did. Varsity students, please heed the following advice (your wallet and your sanity will thank me later):

1. Don't wait until graduation to start your job search

It sounds obvious, but this is a common mistake. I told myself that I was too busy, which was true. But I should have made the time.

Job-hunting is a long process that takes patience. In fact, when I finally got an interview for my current job, it was after months of checking the company's website for an appropriate opening. I knew I wanted to work here, so I kept checking until a position opened up that I was qualified for. Start making your post-university career plans as soon as possible.

2. Show off your skills

A CV can only say so much, particularly when you don't have a lot of experience yet. Consider starting a blog, creating a website or making a video to show off your specific talents. Listing "strong writing skills" on your resume isn't nearly as effective as showcasing those skills with particular examples of your work.

To really capture a company's attention, try making your site or blog tailored specifically to your dream job. This will give you an opportunity to show how much you've researched the company and the requirements of your desired position.

For example, if you want a technical writing position, put together a sample proposal as if you already had the job. This not only shows what you can do, but also gives the company examples of the ideas that you would bring to the position.

3. Be an active intern

The "go get me some coffee" internship stereotype exists for a reason. Just because you're assigned menial tasks, doesn't give you an excuse to be passive. Ask for more difficult tasks. Offer your ideas. Find out about what the company's hiring process is like. Talk to your superiors and seek out a mentor. Get descriptions of entry-level positions within the company and work towards gaining the necessary skills to land them.

One of my friends from varsity had a company create a position for her after graduation because they were so impressed with her as an intern. It isn't enough to land an internship. Make yourself indispensable.

4. Apply high

One of my favourite professors advised me not be afraid to "apply high." She said this after I complained that every job I wanted required years of experience that I did not yet have. She told me that just because a job had specific requirements, didn't mean I shouldn't try for it if I believed I was capable of performing.

I admit, I thought my CV would get thrown away as soon as employers realised that I didn't meet every requirement. Yet, when I found out about the opening for my current position, I went for it, despite my minimal experience. I wrote a strong cover letter that got my application through the door. I came to the interview confident and well-prepared, and even though I didn't meet each job requirement on paper, I still got the job.

As a newbie to the workforce, you have to be ready to prove that you can do it – but it's well worth the fight.

5. Network here, there and everywhere

Though the job market isn't ideal right now, new graduates have an incredible array of networking tools at their disposal. Use every single one of them. Maximise every possible resource.

Streamline all of your social media pages to reflect your job search. Use your Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook contacts to connect to new people in your field or people that work at companies that you're interested in.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that networking ends on the computer. Talk to anyone and everyone you can that might be able to help you. Use your internship, your job, your professors and the friends of your mom. Job-hunting is not the time to be timid.

6. Be a realistic dreamer

People always advise “do what you love” and students often apply this philosophy when deciding what to study. The truth is, certain majors are more likely to lead to a job. I believe that people should chase their dreams, but I’m also a realist. If you major in esoteric knowledge, your job options will be far more limited than those of someone who majors in accounting. You have to figure out a way to make your dream job work in the real world.

I majored in writing, so I’m no stranger to disdainful comments about my job prospects. If I had a rand for every person who made a writing major joke to me, I wouldn’t even need a job; I could retire early and work on my novel.

Though fiction is my one true love, I took every possible writing class while I was in college. By graduation, I had experience in fiction, nonfiction, technical writing, journalism, publication editing and design, writing for advertising, writing for public relations and writing for broadcast. I wanted to be as well-rounded as possible to increase my job options.

Though I now write in a corporate environment, I love my job. I might not be on the shelves of a big publisher (yet), but I am getting paid to write. I am pursuing my dream and paying my bills at the same time. It might have taken a year after graduation to get here, but I’m here now.

The lesson: Don’t wait for the perfect job to land in your lap. Work hard, network and don’t give up on your dreams – just be smart about them.



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Email: potchcareercentre@nwu.ac.za

Vanderbijlpark Campus

Building A14, SL 333
Tel: 016 910 3345
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