



# Finding a New Job this Year

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The start of a new year is quite a good time to think about finding another job. In South Africa the best time to look for a job is February to April. Many people wait until the end of the year to receive bonuses and then resign. Many companies have a new strategy to action and need people to make it happen. So, the beginning of the year can often see organisations engaging in quite a lot of recruitment.

Some tips for looking for a job

1. Whether we like it or not, a cover letter and CV play a big role in getting a job. The recruiter / hiring manager will form their first impression of you based on your CV and cover letter, so you need to ask yourself, "What impression does my CV give"? First impressions are powerful and lasting. And yes, they can even carry through to the interview stage. If you need a CV professionally done, then get it done.
2. Know what job you are applying for. Unless you are a student looking for vacation work or part-time work, employers want to know you have given thought to your career path and know what career you want. Make sure you can explain why this job you are applying for is right for you as well as for the organisation.
3. Most people start with a template for a CV and then start writing down their career history. Before you do that just get some paper and think about your skills and abilities and what you can bring to an organisation. Ask other people what your unique talents and contribution are. Really think about what you bring to the company and how you can add value to them. If you can come up with something unique about you that will suit the job you are applying for, it is one way for you to stand out from other candidates.
4. When someone reads your CV, they don't want to read your career history. You can abbreviate it in a table if you want to. They want to know what you have done that will enable you to be great at the job they have a vacancy for. So, don't write lots of irrelevant career information. Read the job description and make sure you include in your CV everything they are looking for that you have.
5. Do not ever lie on your CV. You will be found out and the repercussions could affect your career for the rest of your life. You can however talk about skills and experience you have that you did not gain in a formal job. If you were the treasurer for your church, then you can

include that information. If you were the secretary of your community football club, you can also include that. Skills and experience are not always gained in formal employment. If you have been a stay-at-home mom then you have a lot of skills and experience from that role which are transferable to the workplace.

6. Do not write your CV from the perspective of listing your career history. Do not write your CV from the perspective of what you want from a job. Write your CV from the perspective of how you can help the company achieve their goals. You will be hired if the company thinks you can add value to them. You want the hiring manager / recruiter to glance at your CV and think to themselves, "We have got to have this person".
7. You need a plan for job hunting. Don't do it on an ad hoc basis. Don't be casual. Be intentional. Your plan should include the different methods available for finding a job which typically are the internet, recruitment agencies, word of mouth, networking, social media especially LinkedIn, contacting companies directly, and any other creative ways you can come up with. Be interesting, and don't be afraid to reach out. But don't hassle people all the time.
8. Part of your plan must be a commitment to a certain number of hours each week to finding a job. Decide what you need to do and then stick to it. Finding a job is largely a numbers game, so each time you apply for a job you are one step closer to getting one, unless you are going about your job search wrong.
9. Your mindset matters. Looking for a job can be very discouraging and demotivating. You will need to work on your motivation, as well as your confidence, and communication skills if they are not good, so you remain in a good frame of mind. Your state of mind will have a bigger impact than you realise of whether you will be hired or not.

Don't see finding a job as a chore. Like most things in life we can choose to make this a more pleasant or more awful task than it needs to be. Try and not approach finding a job from a point of feeling desperate. Yes, you do want a job. And like most people, you probably need a job. And if you don't have a job you could feel quite scared and worried. However, there are jobs out there, lots of them, and there are jobs out there that are new and different and that you probably are just right for. Put in the work and get the right job for yourself. That is a great way to start 2024.