

The Graduate Career Development Programme

With a foreword by
His Excellency Paul Kagame
President of the Republic of Rwanda



**Foreword by His Excellency Paul Kagame, President
of the Republic of Rwanda**

Our country's greatest asset is its human capital. Rwanda's future prosperity depends upon us succeeding to equip our young people – particularly our graduates – with the life and work–skills sought by all good employers.

The Graduate Career Development Programme is designed to achieve that precise objective through an approach of empowerment and mentorship.

I encourage you to take up this valuable opportunity to better prepare to become active participants in Rwanda's socio-economic transformation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Paul Kagame'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

A Guide to Employment for Rwandan Graduates

Prepared by

SURF
Survivors Fund

and

The Conservative Party
of Great Britain

July 2009

Contents

Introduction	iv
1. Life skills for success	1
2. Workplace skills	5
3. Research and job hunting	11
4. Further study	15
5. Work experience	16
6. The CV	20
7. Exams	28
8. Interviews	31
9. Dress	36
Appendix	v

Introduction

Hello and welcome to the Graduate Career Development Programme.

This is a guide to getting a job and succeeding in life. We've produced it to help get your career off to a flying start. We are members of the Conservative Party of Great Britain and we've spent time talking to the government, private sector employers, and students like you.

You've told us that the main thing you needed in applying for jobs was confidence: confidence about what to expect, and self-confidence in speaking to business people.

Don't worry, you feel the same way as students all around the world.

In this folder we've put together information and advice to help you make a plan for looking for a job, and understand more about what employers are looking for. We hope that with this information your confidence will increase and so will your chances of getting the job you deserve.

We recommend reading through everything in this folder when you first receive it. It is, though, divided into sections so that later on it's easy to find information you need at a particular time. We've covered the skills you told us you need:

- to get work experience
- to apply for a job
- to do well at the written test for a job
- to succeed in a job interview
- to succeed once you are in the workplace

It has been a real pleasure meeting all of you. We hope you find the folder enjoyable to read and really valuable as you make the next step in life.

We've been delighted by the warmth of your welcome and impressed with the potential of your country – and of you personally. You deserve to succeed, so please take confidence from everything in the folder. We wish you all the best in your quest for success!

With very best wishes,

The British Conservatives on Project Umubano

1. Life skills for success

Introduction

Life skills are part of your character, personality and attitude: the person you are, or you become. Not what you know, but how you go about your life.

Can you change and improve these things? Of course you can. Indeed, you must if you are to fulfil your potential for your family, your country, and yourself.

The life skills that every employer looks for are always in short supply. This can work hugely to your advantage in your search for the right career. Developing and constantly improving your life skills will dramatically increase your chances of finding employment soon after graduation. These skills will make you stand out from the crowd. They will give you what is known in business as a 'competitive advantage' – something important that you have that others do not.



They will also make you happier, because they will help you to get the very best out of every aspect of your life.

a. Attitude

The attitude with which you approach your life and work is something over which you have absolute control. Each day you can decide whether to be idle or industrious, enthusiastic or bored, to advance, to stall, or to slip backwards.

At the beginning of each day you can and should decide to try hard – indeed to do the very best you can – and to approach every task, large or small, with a positive attitude.

Sometimes this is relatively easy. When you are fit, well, happy and have enough of life's essentials it may come naturally to you. Sometimes, though, it is much more difficult, particularly when you have problems or obstacles to which there seems no end in sight. That's when your attitude is most important and influential.

By definition, thinking positively is an attitude of mind. It's entirely within your control. Get into the habit of beginning every day with a determination to give your best to it. This will guarantee that you get the most out of it.

b. Confidence

There are two important things about confidence:

- having confidence
- being seen to have confidence

Everyone has been in your position in their life, of wanting to have more confidence in themselves and what they do. As you gain more experience in life, of applying for and of working, your confidence will grow.

Meanwhile, you should do everything you can to be seen to have confidence; being seen by others to lack confidence inspires doubts in them about your ability, performance and potential. You can demonstrate confidence by being willing to take responsibility for tasks and being happy to ask if there is something you don't understand.

By studying this section, you will find the things which will make sure you have more confidence. For example, we are all naturally more confident when we have prepared properly for something; or when we talk on a subject we know well; or when, in the company of others, we feel good about ourselves. This is very attractive to employers.

Think about what makes you nervous – in other words, what prevents you from being and appearing confident – and think about what you can do to stop that happening, often it helps to practise the thing that makes you nervous. Also, think about what makes you feel and appear confident, then work out how to create those circumstances as often as possible.

c. Anticipate and prepare

Although some things in life come as a complete surprise, with a little thought most can be anticipated. If you can anticipate them you can also prepare for them. And if you prepare for them before they occur, you will get the maximum advantage from them.

A simple example: you know when – all being well – you are going to graduate. You know that you will then want to find a job, and the best one you can. You know that thousands of other graduates will be in exactly the same position. You know that there will not be enough good jobs for all of them. You therefore know that, by the time you graduate, if you want to give yourself the best chance of finding the best job, you will need more than just your degree to attract an employer.

Just by anticipating – by thinking ahead about things that haven't yet happened – you have taken the first crucial step to success. Many of your fellow students won't give this thought process any serious time and attention until it's too late. Most of them will take years longer than you to find the right job. Some of them will never find it; and they may never understand why.

But anticipation is only the start. You must then prepare, by making a plan to get you from where you are now to where you want to be by the time you graduate.

Get into the habit of anticipating and preparing – of thinking ahead in your life and planning how you are going to make a success of it.

d. Do more, do better

In everything you do, try to do more than the minimum that's necessary; and try to do it ever better. Many people will know in their heart that – if they'd tried harder or taken more care – they could have done something better, but they justify this by concluding that what they did was 'good enough'.

In fact, 'good enough' is never good enough.

Strive to exceed other people's expectations in everything you do. This will mark you out as special – at university as well as at work. It will get you noticed. It will make you happier.

Pursue excellence. Seek constantly to improve. Perfection will always elude you. The pursuit of it is one of the rules by which you should lead your life.

e. Good leader, good team member, or good follower?

If you think for a second about this title it will be clear to you that all employers need all three: good leaders, good team members and good followers.

In fact they need everyone they employ, to the best of their ability, to be not one of these three but all of them. Only two people in any organization – at the top the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or other most senior person; at the bottom the newest, most junior person – are arguably the exceptions. Everyone else will find themselves, throughout their career, in all three roles.

If you are leading: think ahead. Be clear, explain what you are trying to achieve, and within what timing or other constraints. Be fair, reasonable and considerate, listen to other people, set a good example. Take more than your fair share of the responsibility when things go wrong: Take less when things go right.

If you are not leading: be easy to manage: Think about how you can best help to achieve the objective: Support your leader and other members of your team: Don't try to succeed at the expense of others: Be concerned first with the team's success, not with your own.

f. Listen and ask

Read what follows several times. If it applies to you, resolve – this minute – never to make this mistake again.

If you don't understand something, it is a very good thing to do to ask for an explanation. It doesn't mean you are any less clever or skilled than others. It's absolutely right to make sure you know what is being asked of you so you can do it – this is much, much better than pretending you understand what you are being told, even when you don't; that approach will almost certainly end in failure.

What you must do instead is always listen and concentrate very carefully to what you are being told. This means that if you do need to ask a question you can make sure it is not something that the speaker has already answered. When they've finished telling you, then ask about anything else that is unclear. Ask as often as necessary for as long as necessary to make certain that you understand exactly what you are being told or what is being asked of you. In the end what matters is that you complete the task to the best standard you possibly can, and asking questions will help you do that.

g. Reliability and how to demonstrate it

This is one of the most important qualities you could seek to develop and demonstrate, both in the workplace and beyond. Being reliable will encourage an employer to have confidence in you, but also to trust you and therefore give you more responsibility and opportunities.

Being reliable may involve more than you think. For one thing, it means being punctual. Arriving late to a meeting at best suggests that you are disorganized, and at worst suggests lack of respect and disregard for those you are meeting with. These are both bad things for your career.

Reliability requires that you be accurate so that people can have faith and confidence in the work you produce. It means delivering consistent results and being steady in your approach to all your tasks. It means taking and showing initiative: developing new ways to do something as efficiently and as resourcefully as possible.

Finally, and most crucially, it means that you take responsibility for your actions.

h. Self-discipline

Put as simply as possible, self-discipline is the art of training yourself to do something even if you do not feel motivated to do it.

Being able to do a task well, even when you would rather be doing something else is essential to success.

2. Workplace skills

Introduction

We are now going to talk about workplace skills. We will talk in later sections about how you can go about finding a job, but first we are going to take you through the skills you need to succeed in your job. These are the skills that employers will be looking for when deciding whether to give you a job, or at least for evidence that you can develop these skills.

Making the adjustment from studying at university to having a job is a challenge wherever you are in the world. By giving you advice about workplace skills, you can be developing and using those skills before you start a job.

You must practise these skills during any work experience and voluntary work that you do. If you do all of them well, your chances of getting a permanent job will be massively increased.

Once you start your first job, the skills identified in this section will be more relevant than ever, so keep referring back to this folder once you start your job. By following the advice in this section, you will have the very best chance of a long and successful career.



a. Confidence

Confidence is vital when you are looking for a job, and it's just as important once you have found a job. You can refer to section 1, Life Skills for Success, for more ideas and advice on how to build your confidence.

b. People skills

The most successful people in working life are those who build successful relationships with other people. Never lose sight of the fact that although there is work to be done, having good relationships with the colleagues you work with is essential. This means certain things are vital:

1. *Communication is key*

Never forget – you are working with other people, and it's vital that you communicate. Cooperating and being willing to compromise are essential to succeed in working together with people.

2. *Practise patience and self control*

Controlling your emotions is very important to succeeding in the workplace. This means accepting that everyone has their weaknesses, including you, and that you must learn to work with other people. Be patient rather than getting angry, and look for ways to communicate what is frustrating you calmly and professionally.

3. *Keep the contact details of people you meet*

As you go through your working life, and even when you are looking for jobs, you will meet a lot of people who may one day be able to help you find a job. Keep the business cards of these people, and ideally record them all in an address book or somewhere on your computer. You never know when in the future you might need to call them up, or send them an email to see if they can help you.

c. Business behaviour

There are certain ways of behaving which are very important in business life. These include:

1. *The importance of integrity and how to demonstrate it*

The thing which employers value above everything else is **integrity**. This means being honest and trustworthy both with your employer and his/her customers. If you display integrity, and that you can be trusted, your employer will value this very highly indeed.

2. *Suitable behaviour in a business environment*

In a business environment there are certain situations where you will need to behave a little bit differently from at home or when you are with friends. Generally the level of communication will be more formal than in life outside work. If in doubt about whether to be formal or informal it is better to be more formal, e.g. using someone's surname rather than their first name, in writing or sometimes even when speaking face to face.

3. *Professionalism and self-control*

Being successful in the workplace means taking the trouble to be nice to people, even if sometimes you don't want to be. Even if you are in a bad mood, it is still important to answer the phone politely, and to be friendly and pleasant if you are speaking to customers. As an employee of the business

you are representing the business, and you are responsible at all times for helping it to succeed.

4. *Taking responsibility*

Employers value employees who are willing to take responsibility for things, both for the overall job that they do, and for individual tasks. It's important to take ownership a task or a problem, taking responsibility for it yourself rather than expecting someone else to do it. You will impress your employer even more if you identify things that need to be done rather than always having to be being asked to do them.

d. **Doing things better**

“We want to encourage people to do things better...”
Chief Executive of a large Rwandan company.

To be really successful, you should be thinking not just about doing your best, but about how you can constantly improve what you do:

1. Sometimes this might mean taking the initiative, exploring new ways of doing things, to see if things can be done better.
2. Sometimes it helps to volunteer to do extra work to show your keenness. This is unlikely to be wasted time – you will be recognised as a hard-working employee and you may be rewarded with promotion or more pay in the future.

“If you have two employees and you know that you can call one of them in the evening and they will answer their phone, and the other you know they will not call you again until the morning, you prefer the one who will answer the phone.”

Employer in the private sector

3. You should also have the confidence to make suggestions to your colleagues and managers about how the company could do things differently to improve. Employers value people who think about their work, and how the company could be made to work better.

e. **Basic skills**

Here are some of the basic skills which, if you practice them, will really help you to succeed in the workplace.

1. *Writing: always write everything down*

Life will be much easier for you if you use your pen and paper whenever possible to write things down – you will immediately avoid the stress of trying

to remember everything that has been said to you and everything you are supposed to be doing.

- i. Write notes of **every** business conversation you have
 - Write down instructions you are given
 - Write notes during any telephone conversations you have
 - If you are not sure whether you should write something down, **write it down**. It's better to be absolutely certain you will be able to remember it later.
- ii. Keep a 'To Do' list

One of the most important things you can do is write a 'To Do' list. This is a list of the tasks that you need to do. This ensures that you will not forget to do any of them, and it also means you can list them in order of which ones you need to do first.

2. *How to behave in meetings*

During your career you will have thousands of meetings. For the first part of your career you are likely to be taking part in meetings rather than running them. There are certain things that are very important to observe in a meeting:

- i. Turn your mobile phone off, and do not look at or send or read SMS during a meeting – this is very unprofessional (the same applies, even more so, during a job interview).
- ii. In addition to this, it is very important to behave professionally in meetings. Even if you are tired or bored you should do your best to hide this and look interested.
- iii. It is easy to look interested if you **write notes** on what is being said. This will also give you a record to look back at afterwards if you cannot remember what was said in the meeting.
- iv. Make sure you listen to what is being said, and concentrate on the discussion, you never know when your boss or manager may ask you to say something, or to do some work following on from the meeting.
- v. Don't interrupt people who are speaking, but if you have something to contribute to the discussion do feel confident enough to do so.
- vi. Always be on time for meetings, especially with customers of your business. If you are late, it is a sign of unreliability, and may mean that customers will think about going to a different company.

3. *Prioritisation and time management*

In a job situation it is necessary to make sure that you use your time effectively, so that you can get everything done that you need to.

- i. Part of this will be **prioritising** the tasks because there is not always time in the day to finish everything you need to do. A very important skill is to prioritise the things that are most important, to identify which tasks you should give the most time to.
- ii. Just as important is to understand which tasks you should be able to do quickly. It can be frustrating for an employer if you take much more time than they expect on a 'simple' task. If you find this happening, do take the opportunity to ask for help or advice from other colleagues who seem to be able to complete the tasks much quicker – they will probably be able to tell you the secret of their success.
- iii. When somebody asks you to do a task you need to ask them when they need it done by so that you can prioritise it in the context of your other tasks.
- iv. Practise breaking down tasks, to make them more manageable:
 - Plan the task in advance
 - Set yourself mini-deadlines, so you know when you need to finish it.
 - Proofreading is key. This will allow you time to read and spot mistakes and improve what you have done, in very good time to hand it in, in time for the deadline.
- v. Good English is vital in the modern Rwandan workplace. There are things you can do outside of the workplace to improve your English in your job: reading an English language newspaper, reading books in English, and listening to radio stations which broadcast in English. Think about what you can do while you are at university. Is it possible to join an English or communication class? Could you do this in the evening when you have finished your job for the day, or when you have finished listening to lectures in your subject? Remember that both spoken English and written English are important.

4. *Specific Skills*

- i. **Computer Skills:** In the modern world it's absolutely essential to develop and keep practising strong computer skills. If a colleague does something on the computer that you don't know how to do, always take the opportunity to ask how they did it, so you learn that skill.

- ii. Report writing: At university you are likely to need to write reports, notably your thesis. The advice below is just as relevant to university, but will apply should you need to write a report at work:
 - Plan how you will approach writing the report before you start, including how much time you will spend on each section. Allow plenty of time for checking your work and making modifications.
 - Make sure that you start your report with a clear introduction explaining what the report is about. It's really important to be clear about the objectives of the report you are writing.
 - At the end of the report, you must make sure that it addresses the objectives that you set out in your introduction. The middle part of the report should link the introduction and the conclusion, fully exploring the story you are telling.

- iii. Presentations: At some point in your job, it's likely you will be asked to stand up and give presentations. Here are a few points which will help you to have confidence and perform very well when you give a presentation:
 - If you are presenting something, make sure you stand up – this will help you breathe more effectively and therefore ensure you can be heard.
 - Take your time: Take PAUSES before you start, and during the presentation.
 - Breathing: Pausing will enable you to breathe, which allows you to speak loudly
 - Body posture – Stand still. Walking about creates a distraction.
 - Eye contact – make sure that you look people in the eye around the room to make them feel involved. To make it easier, you can choose certain people to look at in the audience to remind yourself to look at them all.

f. Getting help and advice

We've talked about a lot of things that you need to do to succeed at work. It may feel like a lot of things, but after a while you will find they come naturally. Remember: who starts work goes through this, whichever country they are in, so don't feel bad that there are so many things.

Wherever you come from in the world, starting at work can at times be frustrating, and it can be very helpful to have someone to talk to about it. Perhaps you could think about who would be a good person to have as a friend or family member who you could talk to about work, ideally perhaps someone with experience of the workplace.

3. Research and job hunting

a. Deciding what kind of job you want

Before you look for a job you need to know what kind of job you want to do. This is not always as easy as it sounds, and requires research into the areas you are thinking of working in.

It is best to think about the kind of job you would like, such as being a banker, lawyer, or teacher, before you go to university, so that you can study a suitable subject. Because there are more graduates than jobs, you are more likely to find employment if you study a subject that is a priority for the country, or one that is in high demand. For instance, in Rwanda today there are many people with degrees in Management, but there are not enough qualified scientists. That means that it is easier for scientists to find jobs than managers.



You should seek employment in a sector that requires people with your skills. If you apply for a job in an area that you know nothing about, or which requires skills you do not have, you are likely to be disappointed. There does not always need to be a direct link between your degree and personal experience and the jobs you apply for, but it often helps.

The best way to find out about particular employment sectors is to talk to people who already work in similar companies. They will be able to tell you what kind of job you can expect, what the salary might be, and what the cultures of the companies in that sector are like. This information will help you to decide what you want to do, and will also give you an advantage when you apply for a job. If you do not personally know anyone in a particular sector, ask your friends or other people you know whether they know anyone you can talk to. We call this networking. If someone knows somebody who can help you, they will usually be happy to introduce you to that person so you can learn more. Always have the confidence to ask - after all, one day you will be in a position to return the favour.

The internet is another good research tool for deciding on an employment sector. Look at the websites of large Rwandan companies in the sector you are interested in. Also look at online guides to the same sector from other countries. Jobs such as banking, insurance or teaching are very similar all around the world, and foreign advice can be almost as useful as Rwandan advice.

Once you have chosen an employment sector, you should start looking for internships and work experience in that sector.

b. Finding an internship

Internships and work experience will give you a taste of what you can expect in a particular employment sector. They will also give you experience which will help you to give you an advantage over other graduates and will help you to find a job.

There are not enough internships in Rwanda for all the students who would like one. That is why it is essential that you are organised and committed in your search. Always remember that every internship you do will help you find a job later on.

Some companies and charities in Rwanda advertise internships online. For example:

Companies:

Fina Bank

<http://finabank.com/rw/internship.html>

Charities:

<http://www.charitycharities.org/volunteering/Rwandavolunteers/Kigali.html>

Other employers will advertise online from time to time. Use the internet to find other opportunities.

Many other companies do not advertise internships or work experience but may give you a place if you write to them. Most companies are happy to find work for people who want to work for free.

You may be a member of an organisation or a society. If so, talk to other members with jobs who may be able to tell you about sectors and companies that are looking for interns.

You can also write directly to companies in the sector you would like to work in, even if they have not advertised an internship. For example, if you want to work in banking you could write to the Human Resources Department of banks such as Fina Bank, the Rwandan Development Bank, or Banque de Kigali. There is a list of the large Rwandan companies in many sectors on the website of the Rwanda Development Board (look at the 'links' section at www.rwandagateway.org).

What to say:

You should email or write to companies in your sector to say that you want to work for them for a short time for free. You should explain why you are interested in their company and in their sector, and tell them why you are suitable to help. Enclose a copy of your CV. Many of these companies will never reply, and more will tell you that they have no space. You must keep trying. It can take twenty or thirty letters to get one internship, but it is well worth the effort.

c. Finding a job

Finding a job is not easy. It requires a lot of energy and effort, and can take a long time. You must imagine that finding a job *is* your job. You should get up early each day, look for any job advertisements in the newspaper and reply to them quickly. You must be organised. It can help to write down which companies you have applied to each day, and to make sure that you send the same number of applications (ten, for example) each day until you find a job.

Looking for a job is similar to looking for an internship. You should apply to every company you can think of in the employment sector you have chosen. Look in the newspapers every day for jobs in the sector you are interested in. Check what skills the advertisement says the company is looking for, and use your CV and application letter to explain why you are suitable. Check when the final date for applications is, and try to send your CV to the company a long time before then. Most people send their applications near the deadline, and you will appear more organised if you send yours early.

As well as looking in the newspapers, you should look on the websites of any companies you are interested in to see if they have any job opportunities. You can also look at websites which collect job advertisements such as <http://www.rwandagateway.org/jobs/> or <http://www.lmis.gov.rw/>.

If there are not many jobs advertised, it can also be useful to write to companies in your desired sector to apply for a job even if they are not advertising one. Even if they do not have a vacancy now, they may remember you next time they need to employ somebody and invite you to interview. Use the internet to find the names and addresses of companies in your sector.

d. Researching an application

Once you have found a job advertisement or have decided to apply to a company, you need to find out more about that company. Your CV and application should explain why you are suitable to work for the particular company you are applying to. To do that, you need to know exactly what they do. Look at their website, or ask people you know to discover whether there is anyone you can talk to who is already a part of the company. Try to find out how big the company is, whether it operates only in Rwanda or is international, and why it is different from other companies in the sector. This

will help you to make sure that your application is suitable and does well. Showing that you know a lot about the job you have applied for will give you an advantage over other applicants who have not bothered to do their research.

e. Researching for tests and interviews

Many companies set written tests for job applicants. Almost all companies interview people who want to work for them. Try to get an advantage in tests and interviews by finding out beforehand about the person interviewing you or the usual content of the test. The best way to do this is by asking people. Ask your friends and contacts whether they know anybody who has applied to the same company. If they know somebody, go to see them and ask them about their experiences. The company's website, if they have one, may also contain useful information for this stage of an application.



f www.videojug.com

You might find this website useful for more tips on what we have covered about the process of looking for and winning a job. Here are some useful links, and you may find others too:

<http://www.videojug.com/tag/starting-a-job-search>

<http://www.videojug.com/tag/internships>

<http://www.videojug.com/tag/cv-writing>

<http://www.videojug.com/tag/job-interviews>

4. Further study

A Master's degree can be a great help in finding a job. This is particularly true of degrees in science, health, and other areas that are in high demand in Rwanda. The government and other organisations have money which they can loan to students who take a Masters degree to pay their fees their living costs. To get this funding you will need to choose to study a subject which is a priority for this country. The most up-to-date information on this is available in the government's skills audit, but examples of subjects which are currently in demand are:

- **Supply Chain Management**

Rather than doing a Masters in General Management, this Masters enables you to develop a very specific skill which what is the government needs.

- **Healthcare Management**

Again, more specialist and so more helpful to the government than doing a Masters in General Management. You are therefore more likely to get a job.

- **Masters in Science**

You can find out more about doing a Masters by contacting the following organisations. We suggest getting in touch right now, so that you have time to think about what option to pursue, and to make a high quality application:

- a. **Student Financing Agency for Rwanda (SFAR)**

The SFAR exists to provide loans to Rwandan students. They offer scholarships for Masters and PhD programmes. Full details are on their website: www.sfar.gov.rw

- b. **Rwanda Development Board**

The Rwanda Development Board can provide information about Masters Programmes and their effects on employment possibilities: www.rdb.rw

- c. **The Ministry of Education**

www.mineduc.gov.rw

We understand from our discussions with employers that a Masters can be very helpful in getting a job. It is very important to work hard because usually you will need to achieve 70% in your degree in order to be able to join a Masters course. However, there may be occasional exceptions – you will be able to find out more from the organisations we listed above.

5. Work experience

One of the key things you will need to get any job is a CV. This is a document which sets out everything an employer needs to know about you – your education, your skills, and very importantly, your work experience. This involves any experience you gain in a working environment such as an office, but also includes voluntary work, entrepreneurship and other activities listed below.

Work experience gives you a valuable insight to what the working world is like. It also greatly enhances your CV as it shows potential employers that you already have experience. Read the following advice but the most important piece of advice is never to leave anything out - remember to mention everything you have already done.

a. Internships

An internship is a type of work experience where you go to work for an employer for a set period of time. Most internships pay only a little money for travel etc, or perhaps nothing at all. However, they make it much easier to find a job. The best way to find an internship is to use a variety of approaches. Networking, looking for internship opportunities online, and identifying potential employers through newspaper advertisements are all different ways to begin conducting your internship search.

A guide to finding internships

1. *Begin looking early*

- Many industries and internships have early deadlines. It is sometimes necessary to start looking for an internship up to 9 months in advance, depending on what career field you wish to work in or the industry you apply to.
- Being organized and doing research to find out when these deadlines are will ensure you have the best possible chance of gaining an internship, as you will be able to spend as much time as you need on the application process.

2. *Identify career interests*

- Where possible, it is important for you to know what sort of job you want to do so you can choose the right internship accordingly.

- Different careers require different skills and so, where there is an option, it is a good idea to take up an internship in an area relevant to your degree and your abilities.

3. *Network*

- Talk with friends, university professors and any other contacts you have about what type of internship you want to do and where you would like to do it. They may have useful ideas.
- Talk to ex-students and graduates from university. This will provide you with valuable information and tips on how to pursue an internship.

4. *Use online resources*

- One of the most useful tools for finding an internship is an Internet search engine such as Google.
- Many companies list internship opportunities on their website so if there is a particular company you're interested in working for, check their websites to see if they list any internship opportunities.
- It's also a very good idea to check the job advertisement section in newspapers to identify employers who may be interested in hiring an intern.

5. *Contact employers*

- It is often a good idea to send your CV to employers you are interested in working for even if there are no specific internships available.
- Amongst other qualities, this demonstrates initiative.
- Employers often keep CVs for reference and may contact you in the future should an internship or job opportunity arise.
- Alternatively, you could telephone or visit employers in your areas of interest and inquire about summer jobs and internships.
- In these instances be prepared to give a very brief speech regarding your skills, strengths, and motivation for working for them. Have it ready before you go. Make notes on a small card to help you remember and take it with you.

b. Voluntary work

Volunteering will help you to gain and develop workplace skills, which will give you an advantage when you come to apply for a job. The skills you will learn range from learning how to work in a team, communicating clearly and effectively, learning how to use working hours efficiently, and building strong relationships with colleagues and clients.

You can volunteer as much or as little time as you are able to. If there is no opportunity to volunteer, you can establish and run your own scheme in your community or village: e.g. tutoring languages, or starting a recycling project. Running your own scheme will additionally demonstrate resourcefulness and an enterprising spirit, both very attractive qualities to employers.

c. Sports clubs

If you are good at or enjoy playing a particular sport, joining a sports club or sporting team is certainly an activity that will reflect well when it comes to compiling your CV. Playing sports helps to develop teamwork and leadership skills. You quickly learn that in order to succeed you have to work as part of a team to win the game. It is also particularly impressive and important to mention should you gain distinction in your field by being a particularly successful athlete.

d. Debating

Many people naturally avoid public speaking, which can be an intimidating prospect to those who haven't practised much in the past. Debating provides an environment to practise these skills so that when you're called on to speak during the course of your career, you will have the skills you need to do well. This increases your chances of doing well in important interviews for jobs or internships.

Debating also equips you with several other useful talents. These include the ability to critically analyze a problem and as a result be able to propose solutions to problems you are confronted with at work. Furthermore, debating will teach you good research skills and how to work in a team. Lastly it will show you how to be a good listener, as it requires you to pay careful attention and be a good note taker.

For these reasons it is an excellent idea to start a debate club or society at university if one doesn't exist. This will help you to develop useful skills to exhibit your entrepreneurial abilities.

e. Family management

At first, managing a family may not seem as though it falls under the topic of work experience. However, the capabilities and experience you gain by running a family are very relevant to employment.

It is very hard to look after a family, especially if you have had to do so from a young age. The responsibility of ensuring the well being and providing for the needs of others is one of the biggest you could carry. It is also one of the hardest and most worthwhile tasks you will ever have to do.

Therefore, it is extremely important that you mention any such circumstances or experience on your CV. This will demonstrate to a potential employer your ability to manage and balance a variety of responsibilities. It will also suggest you are a mature adult.

f. Entrepreneurship

Despite impressive growth in Rwanda's private sector in recent years there are not yet enough jobs to meet demand. A way of solving this problem may be to become an entrepreneur and create jobs for others. This is particularly true if you can identify a service that doesn't currently exist or you believe you can meet a need of the market in a different way to others. Starting your own business also gives you temporary employment as well as work experience.

Being an entrepreneur is very difficult, but there are many advantages to becoming an entrepreneur. You will have independence, the opportunity to make your own business decisions and determine your own schedule. You will also improve your knowledge of economics and finance, as well as other skills essential to succeeding at business and in the workplace. This type of work can be very satisfying.

It may be that being an entrepreneur is a route you wish to follow for just a little while. The skills you will have learnt however will show a potential employer that you are resourceful, have the ability to work independently and can motivate yourself.

6. The CV

To get a job you will need a CV. Here is our advice, based on what we have heard from Rwandan employers about what they look for in a CV.

a. Things you should do

- A CV needs to be easy for a potential employer to read quickly. Keep it brief, relevant and to the point. It should be a maximum of two pages in total, each printed on a separate sheet.
- There is no need to write 'CV' at the top. It will be obvious if the document is a CV.
- Include contact details. Make sure you will be available on the phone number that you provide and that a caller won't have to leave a message with a friend.
- Include your date of birth and possibly a recent photograph.

b. Things you should not do

- Do not include too much detail. Try to keep any piece of information to two lines.
- Do not be negative. Never start a sentence with "I haven't...". Don't point out what may be missing from your CV, particularly if it is experience.
- Don't assume that the reader will recognise acronyms (abbreviations of institutions & qualifications). Write them out fully.

c. Why your CV is important?

- You need a CV to convince an employer to give you an interview. However, even a great CV won't get you the job by itself.
- Preparing your CV will make you think about your strengths and weaknesses.
- Reading your CV before you go into your interview will help you focus and will remind you of all the things you've done which you can talk about in your interview.
- Make sure you can talk about everything on your CV in more detail.

d. Fitness for each task

- Different jobs will need different CVs. Save a basic version of your CV and create a new version for each new job you apply for. This allows you to emphasise the specific qualities each company says they want in an employee.
- Put the position applied for on the document and **remember to change it** each time you apply for a new job.
- Show that you have carried out research. Try to get hold of the Job Description and match up your experience to the role.

e. How your CV should look

Use:

- Bullet points.
- White paper.
- Appropriate type and size of type. Make sure the style is consistent throughout the whole CV.
- Underline, **bold** or *italics* to draw attention to items on your CV that you are most proud of or which are most relevant to the role.

f. Updating your CV

Think of your CV as a living document. Save new versions each time you create them, and file old CVs according to which application they were for. Each time you do something relevant, such as gain a qualification, get appointed to a post, or gain some work experience, add it to your CV. This will stop you from you forgetting later.

Ask a friend to check your CV for you each time you change it to make sure there are no mistakes.

g. How to lay out your CV

1. *Personal Details*
2. *Address*
3. *Email address*
4. *Telephone number*

5. *Education*

Start with most recent school or university, include years attended.

6. *Abilities & Skills*

State your qualifications, state when achieved and emphasise your computer skills.

7. *Employment Experience*

Include **everything** - just a day helping somewhere may be relevant.

8. *Other Interests*

Include everything and provide one or two lines of information but don't make anything up.

h. An example of a good CV

ARIADNE HUGMAN

Address: 7 Meridian Road, Exeter, EX8 XLY
Email: ariadnehugman@gmail.com
Tel: + 44 (0) 7837 878 259

Date of Birth: 09.12.1988
Marital Status: Single
Nationality: British

Education

Oct 07 – Jun 10: University of Exeter, currently reading BSc Politics

Sep 00 – Jun 07: Royal Grammar School, Guildford, Surrey

A Level: Geography (A), Government & Politics (A), Religious Studies (A), English (A)

GCSE: 7A*s, 3As

Work Experience

Apr 09 – Jul 09: *Intern, Royal Institute for International Affairs, Chatham House*

- Assisted the Communications Director and Parliamentary Relations Manager.
- Wrote press releases and edited the think tank's monthly newsletter.
- Developed new ways to engage effectively with decision-makers in Parliament.
- Contributed to and worked on research with the internal Africa Programme.
- Helped organise high-profile events, conferences and policy forums at Chatham House.

May 08 – May 09: *Treasurer, University of Bristol International Affairs Society*

- Responsible for managing the finances of a large university society with over 500 members.
- Secured sponsorship and handled expenditure of the Society's regular international trips.

Mar 08 – Mar 09: *President, University of Bristol Politics Society*

- Main representative of the Society for which I organised formal speaker and social events.

Jun 08 – Oct 08: *Intern, Office of Andrew Mitchell MP, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development*

- International development research: for example, helping to write a speech for the 2008 Conservative Party Conference; preparing concise media briefs for the Shadow Secretary of State; helping formulate oral and written PQs on the war in Afghanistan and political unrest in Zimbabwe.
- Regularly attended meetings on behalf of the Shadow Secretary of State.
- Interacted daily with high-level politicians, ambassadors, NGO directors and businessmen.
- Given significant responsibility, such as organizing international development team by-election campaigning visits and delivering accurate work to tight deadlines over long hours.
- Assisted planning on a project taking 105 Conservative volunteers to Rwanda for 2 weeks.
- Drafted and managed written correspondence and completed daily office administration.

Jul 06 – Aug 06: *CA Legal law firm working with Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations*

I became familiar with the complex legal relations between donor organisations such as DfID, their agents and the countries in which they operate during a three-week placement at an international development law firm.

Other Interests

Art (member of the Royal Academy of Arts); theatre; travel; voluntary work (two months in 2007 doing construction work in the hill tribes of northern Thailand); wine (member of the 2009-2010 University of Bristol Wine Circle committee)

References available upon request

i. An example of a bad CV

CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Details

Name: Diane Saster
Date of birth: 13th February 1995
Address: 13 Hapless Road, London sw10 24e
Sex: Female
Marital Status: Single
Nationality: English

Education

1983-1987: Hapless Road junior School
1987-1994: Hapless Road Senior School: 10 GCSEs, 4 A Levels –
Economics, Maths, History, General Studies
1994 – to date, Any University, Any Town, studying for a BA in Economics

Work History

1988-01989: Paper Round for ABC Newsagents
Delivered newspapers for 50 people
1994-1995: Assistant Bar Manager for the Pink Flamingo, Any town
I became familiar with the full range of products supplied in the bar and
enjoyed striking up a rapport with customers. (Left after disagreement with
manager).

Extracurricular Activities

Entertainments Officer for the University Drinking Society
Captain of the University Women's hockey Team

General Skills

Conversational Mandarin
Word Procesing Skills
Driving License (7 Points)

References

Dr Jones, Any Univeristy, Any Town
Mr Derek Saster, 13 Hapless Road, London

j. **CV disasters explored**

1. *Personal Details*

Name: Diane Salter

Date of birth: 13th February 1985

Unless Di's an extremely advanced toddler, she's swapped a 9 for an 8. And that's not how you spell February.

Address: 13 Hapless Road, London sw10 24e

Postcodes are given in capitals.

Sex: Female

It's quite clear what Diana's sex is and not really relevant for the CV anyway.

Nationality: English

If the unnecessary information is to be included, it should be right; i.e. British, not English.

2. *Education*

Hapless Road Junior School

While it might have been a formative experience, employers don't want to know about your junior school so leave it out. Di should have started with her most recent education too.

4 A levels – Economics, History, Maths, General Studies

It looks like a good collection of A levels, but where are the grades?

BA in Economics

Di hasn't revealed her exam grades to date or her expected final grade. Employers may assume that she's in for a third or maybe worse, even though she's a model student.

Work History

Di's changed her CV format here and it looks messy.

Paper Round

A paper-round you did when you were 13 may not impress potential employers very much; and where are those 'action' words that stress achievement and benefits?

Assistant Bar Manager

Here was a real opportunity for Di to show that she has held down a real job requiring skill and responsibility. Sadly, her description of her role makes it sound like she spent her time drinking, chatting to customers, and (eventually) getting fired. Di also worked on a vacation placement to an accountancy firm, but she's forgotten to mention it here.

3. *Extracurricular Activities*

Entertainments Officer for the University Drinking Society

Not a good thing to put on a CV unless you want to look like an alcoholic.

Captain of the University's Women's Hockey Team

This is more like it, but a little description wouldn't go amiss.

4. *General Skills*

Conversational Mandarin

Impressive but sadly untrue. Di is fluent in French, however, but inexplicably she's left this out.

Word Procesing Skills

Definitely not the place to fall victim to a typo.

Driving License

If it's not clean don't mention it.

5. *References*

Dr Derek Saster, 13 Hapless Road, London

Does the name seem a little familiar? Do not get relatives to write you a reference.

k. Covering letter



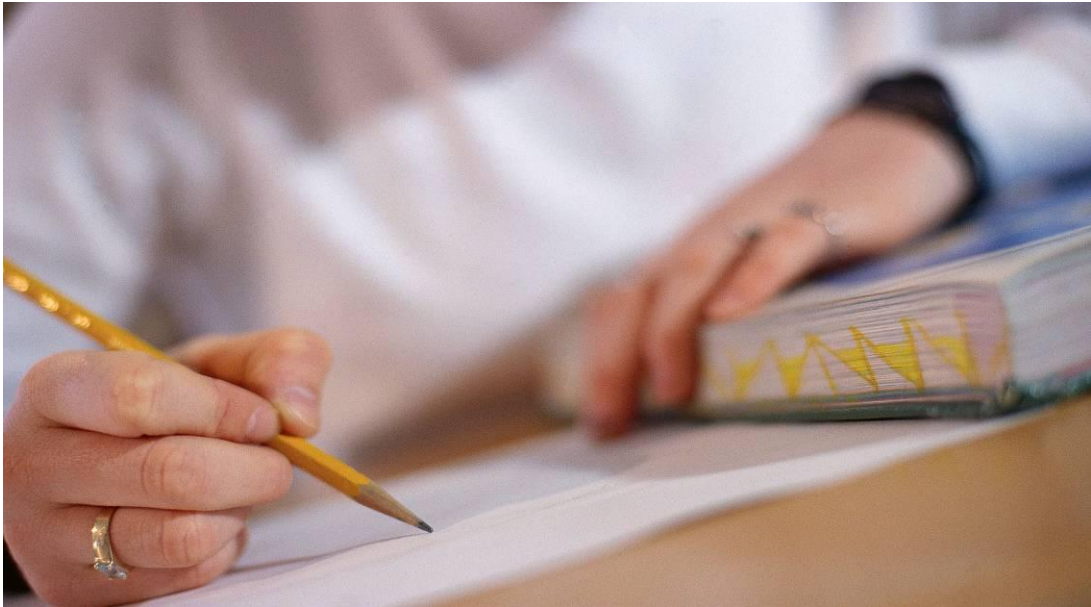
A covering letter is the letter that you send along with your CV, introducing yourself and your CV to the employer. It should be no more than one sheet of paper, and no more than 3 paragraphs. Each letter you send should be relevant to the application. If possible, it should be addressed to a particular person in the organisation, not to 'Dear Sir'. Research who to address your letter to. It may be the Head of the Department you are applying to, the Head of Human Resources, or even the Chief Executive. Type your letter and sign it in ink.

Make an early positive impression by delivering your CV and covering letter by hand if possible. Introduce yourself to the person receiving it. If it is difficult to deliver your letter yourself then use the post. In addition, **the very same day** email the CV and covering letter.

Send an SMS or call the recipient 3 days after sending your CV asking for confirmation that your application has been received. If you have posted the application and not emailed it then wait 5 days after posting.

Find out how long after the closing date the written exam or interview will be held.

7. Exams



Every job application is different. Some companies do not use tests or exams. They just interview the candidates whose CVs they like. Other employers, such as the Public Service Commission, will not give candidates interviews until they have passed written tests. The tests and exams used by employers are different, but there are some techniques that will help you in any exam.

a. Preparing for Exams

There are two parts to preparing for any exam. You must try to imagine what the questions will look like and practise your answers, but you must also make sure that you are physically prepared for exams.

1. *Physical preparation*

Exams and tests are always more tiring than you expect. Therefore you should:

- Make sure that you have lots of sleep the night before an exam. If possible, sleep more than normal so you that are well rested.
- Eat a good breakfast on the morning of the exam. You will need lots of energy.
- Make sure you get to the exam centre early. You will be more relaxed.
- Bring more than one pen. You need to be prepared.
- Dress smartly: it will make you more confident.

2. Practice

You will be much more confident in exams if you know what to expect. Ask the company what form their test will take, how long it will be, whether you will need a pen, and what kind of questions you can expect. This will help you to prepare. If possible, practise by completing similar tests beforehand within the same time limit as in the exam. Some examples of tests set by the Public Service Commission are in this folder. Practice tests for some other sectors, often from other countries but still useful, can be found on the internet.

b. Psychometric tests

Some companies, particularly banks, use psychometric tests to choose their employees. These tests aim to measure intelligence, personality, and suitability for the job. You are likely to do better in them if you practise before taking one. Practice papers can be found on the internet, at sites such as:

<http://www.psychometric-success.com/downloads/download-practice-tests.htm>

During the Exam:

- i. Read the questions. The most common mistake people make during exams is to forget to answer the questions they have been asked. Make sure that you understand what is required before you begin to write.
- ii. Think about what the examiner wants. Try to understand *why* the question has been asked before you answer it.
- iii. Write clearly. If you want the examiner to be nice to you then you must be nice to them. If you write neatly it will be easier for them to understand you, and they will be more sympathetic as a result.
- iv. To understand how the marking works. If the most important part of the paper is at the end, make sure that you answer it. If you do not have enough time to answer every question then make sure you answer the ones with the most marks first.

c. Useful links

Internships:

Ministry of Public Affairs and Labour

<http://www.mifotra.gov.rw/lang/en/internship.php>

Fina Bank

<http://finabank.com/rw/internship.html>

Charities:

<http://www.charity-charities.org/volunteering/Rwanda-volunteers/Kigali.html>

CV advice websites:

http://jobsearch.about.com/od/curriculumvitae/Curriculum_Vitae.htm

<http://www.cvtips.com/>

Practice Interview Questions:

http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/interview_questions.html

Government vacancies:

Ministry of Public Service and Labour

<http://www.mifotra.gov.rw/lang/en/jobs.php>

Large recruiters:

Fina Bank

<http://www.finabank.com/rw/careers.php>

Banque Rwandaise de Développement

<http://www.brd.com.rw>

MTN

<http://www.mtn.co.rw/index/careers>

8. Interviews



Once an organisation has looked through the CVs it has received, and possibly set a written test, there will be a few people left, one of whom will be offered the job.

You can make them decide to offer the job to you by being the best at interview.

a. Importance of the interview

For most jobs, the interview is an extremely important part of the process. Whilst your CV has succeeded in getting you this far, employers feel that it is the interview that really helps them understand what you are like and how suitable you are for the job. In order to get the job, you will have to perform well at interview.

There is a slight difference with jobs in government. You will be marked out of 100 and the written test is worth 80 points while the interview counts for only 20 points. Obviously, though a good interview will help you gain an edge over other applicants, it is less important in this sector.

b. Preparation – things you can do to help your chances *before* you go to the interview

Ask yourself

- Why am I going to this interview?
- What do I expect to get from this process?

Aim to get the job but remember that even if you fail, the experience will also help you get a job next time.

Find out:

- How many people are being interviewed.
- How many posts? BUT don't be put off if you know who the other candidates are.
- How much time is allocated for the interview.

If they are available, get hold of **and take to the interview:**

- Job Description for the role.
- The organisation's latest report.
- Standard terms of employment of the organisation.
- A copy of your CV and covering letter.

Ask yourself these questions and find out the answer if you don't know:

- What does the interviewer expect of me?
- What is the interviewer looking for?
- Do I understand fully the role I am being interviewed for?
- Is it a full time job or an intern role?

Ensure you have answers ready for these questions:

- Why do you want this position?
- What can you bring to this role?
- Why should we choose you?
- What is your best achievement?
- What are you good at?
- What are you bad at?
- Who is your role model?

The Interviewer(s)

It will help you if you can find out:

- Whether one person or several will be interviewing you.
- How important is the person interviewing you in the organisation.
- Whether the interviewer makes the final decision of who to employ or just passes on a recommendation to someone else.

c. Practice and rehearsals

Ask a teacher, an appropriate adult friend or someone from a job club to rehearse your interview technique by pretending to be an interviewer. Use a school friend if there is no-one else available.

d. Arriving at the interview

If possible, take the opportunity to visit the place where the interview will be held so that you know where it is, and reduce the risk of arriving late. You could do this by delivering your application in person.

Timing:

- NEVER be late. Arriving on time shows reliability.
- Leave time in your journey in case you suffer any delays.
- Don't arrive too early! 10 minutes before the appointment time is fine
- Wait patiently. Don't show your impatience if you are kept waiting.
- Read the notice board in the reception area.
- Introduce yourself if other interviewees are waiting
- **Turn off your mobile phone and don't switch it back on again until your interview has ended**

e. Your objective

Throughout the interview, your aim should be to show the interviewer that:

- You will be a fun and interesting person to work with.
- You will be a hard worker.
- You will achieve results.
- You will be a credit to the organisation.
- You can think independently.
- You know when to proceed and when to stop for advice.
- You deserve to have the role offered to you.
- Your past performance is an indicator of how you will perform in the future.

Remember that it helps if the interviewer like you but isn't critical

f. Personal appearance

You have only one chance to make a first impression.

- Dress smartly – a business role requires a business appearance (for more information see the next section: Dress for Success) .
- Don't overuse perfume or aftershave.
- Keep jewellery to a minimum.

g. Conduct

Be yourself. Don't pretend to be someone you are not.

On entering the interview room:

- Be confident! Immediately smile, engage eye contact with the interviewer, say good morning/afternoon and hand over your card if you have one. Then put out your hand and make a moderately firm handshake.
- Wait to be invited before taking a seat.
- Let the interviewer speak first.
- Don't use first names.

Be aware that there are three parts to an interview:

1. Introduction and small talk.
2. Main body.
3. Questions from you.

Having the correct body language is important:

- Don't cross your arms
- Don't slouch in the chair
- Lean forward slightly
- Smile
- Relax and breathe deeply

h. Questions *from* the interviewer

- Don't interrupt when a question is being asked to you. Let the questioner finish.
- Be prepared to say "Let me take a moment to think about that".
- Look at the interviewer when you reply.
- If you are interviewed by more than one person, when you are answering a question make sure you spend about 80% of the time looking at the person who asked you the question, but 20% of the time look round at the other interviewer(s) to ensure they feel involved in your answer.
- Answer the question you have been asked, NOT the question you would like to be asked.
- In your answers show an understanding and interest in the role.
- Make the answers relevant to the role you are being interviewed for.

- Avoid yes or no answers but don't go on and on and on.
- Be prepared to say "I don't know".
- Even though the interviewer may have a copy of your CV in front of him: Assume he hasn't read it. Don't refer to it.
- Speak clearly and adjust your volume in relation to the size of the room; don't speak too fast.
- Use only English words you are confident with and where you understand their meaning: If you are unsure of the English word don't be afraid to use French.
- Back up any statements you make with evidence.
- Be prepared to stand your ground, but don't argue.
- Don't be afraid of a short silence once you have given your answer.

i. Questions to the interviewer

It is normal for you to ask questions of the interviewer; it shows interest in the role and willingness to participate in discussion.

Have a list of questions written out ready, but don't insist on asking all of them particularly if you are running over time.

Ask for feedback at the end:

- "How did I do?"
- "Have I got the skills you're looking for?"
- "What happens next"

j. Conclusion

You should leave the interview believing that you have given the interviewer a good and accurate account of yourself, and that you have done your best.

9. Dress



In your job interview and in your working life it's essential to dress well to create the right impression with employers. In an interview this will help to give you the same chance as any other candidate.

Your CV has persuaded them that they should meet you, and now is the time to make the right impression.

- An interviewer's first judgement is based upon how you look even before you offer a handshake or say anything.
- To make a positive first impression, think about the job you are applying for, and dress appropriately.
- If you are applying for an office job, this will mean dressing smartly, to suggest professionalism, capability and ability.

a. Importance of dressing well for interview

A common excuse is:

- I can't afford smart clothes like other candidates – surely if I explain to them my situation they will take that into consideration?

Remember: There is no excuse. For an employer it is a simple question of whether you are demonstrating that you want the job enough and making the effort. If you can demonstrate that you have made the required effort then you are halfway to getting that job.

What does that mean you have to do?

- Beg for or borrow the necessary clothes for that job interview. An interviewer will not know where those clothes have come from

b. How dressing well helps you

Dressing smartly will help you have confidence in yourself. Knowing you look suitable for a job will make you feel like the person who should get the job.

c. What exactly you should wear

From our discussions with Rwandan employers we understand that the essential items to wear are the following.

For men:

- A shirt
- A jacket
- A smart pair of trousers
- A pair of smart-looking shoes

In many companies it is not essential to wear a tie, but if you have one it is a good idea to wear it to the interview. In general it is better to overdress (to be smarter than you need to be) than to risk not being smart enough.



For women:

- A shirt
- A smart skirt or pair of trousers
- A pair of smart-looking shoes
- A jacket is not always essential, but if you have one it will be a good idea to wear it.



d. Things to do before the interview

Plan ahead:

- Choose what you are going to wear.
- Make sure your interview attire is pressed and clean at all times.
- Check how you look in a mirror.

Prepare for the unexpected:

- Rain – have an umbrella and a coat ready in case it rains.
- Have a handkerchief and tissues with you.

e. Calmly deal with the unexpected

Don't panic if something goes wrong. If it rains and your clothes are wet and your hair is in a mess, make sure you find a toilet and freshen up before you go in. If you can, you might also carry a bottle of water and tissues in your bag to clean yourself if you spill something.

f. Things to carry to your interview

- Comb or hair brush.
- Telephone number of a taxi company.
- Mobile phone with number of employer interviewing you.
- Folder with paper and paper.

Appendix: Sample Materials

In the earlier parts of this booklet we talked a lot about how to tackle the written test and interviews that you face as you apply for jobs.

We wanted to help you get a better idea of what is expected in such tests and interviews, and so we have obtained various examples which you'll find on the pages that follow.

These examples are valuable because they are for real-life jobs, though you should bear in mind that because of this some of the specifics will vary.

Appendix 1: Written Test

Earlier, we talked about how some employers will set a written test before asking people to come for interview.

For government jobs this written test is extremely important, since out of a possible score of 100 marks, the written test is worth 80.

To help you to understand what is expected in the written test, we have included some examples on the following pages.

The first on page 40 is an example of a written test for the post of Secretary at the Public Service Commission. You will notice that the questions are varying in nature. Some questions are very general such as: 'what are the qualities of a good secretary'. Others are much more specific – particularly question 4 about how staff files are arranged. Such specific questions demonstrate the value of doing as much research as you possibly can about a potential employer, and of talking to people who work at the company. If though, you find a question like this and you are unable to answer it, don't panic. You will still get good marks for all the other questions you have answered, and you could attempt a question like this – perhaps describing a good way in which staff files could be arranged.

The second example is of a test for the role of Human Resource Director at the Public Service Commission. Again, you will see the kind of technical knowledge required for such a role. Indeed, these questions appear to be very good examples of the questions you might be asked in interview or in a written test for any Human Resources role in ANY company. So, if you are thinking of a career in Human Resources, you should do research until you feel confident answering the questions in this example test.

The third example is for the post of Head of Department in Research and Environmental Planning & Development. These questions are rather more advanced, as you would expect for someone applying to be Head of

Department. You might consider which questions you think you would be able to answer (perhaps the more general ones e.g. about the challenges facing Rwanda). These questions might appear in a written test for a more junior role in relation to Environmental Planning & Development. So if this is an area that interests you, you should conduct some research to identify how you might answer questions such as this. Looking at these questions, you might decide if you have not yet got a lot of experience in a job, that you should focus your efforts on applying for positions lower than Head of Department. If, on the other hand, you are comfortable answering such questions, you can be confident in applying.

The last example test is for the Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Development Agency. This is an interesting example of a written test for the post of accountant. If you are thinking of applying for jobs in accountancy then study these questions, and do some research so that you are confident of how you might answer such questions.

Appendix 2: Self Assessment

There is one further element which you may encounter in the process of applying for jobs – namely what is called ‘Psychometric Testing’. This is very different to the written test we have been discussing before. The purpose of Psychometric Testing is NOT to test your knowledge or understanding, but rather for the employer to gain an understanding of what you are like. This is designed to determine how you might fit into a team. We have included the test here so that you can see what one looks like and think about how might go about answering it. You could take the opportunity to look up any words that you do not understand on an Internet dictionary (this can be done very easily by typing into Google: DEFINE followed by the word in inverted commas (“word”).

Some of the statements are reasonably neutral while others do have a negative suggestion about them, and you should avoid indicating that these apply to you e.g. you should disagree with ‘I am overwhelmed by the responsibilities of my position’.

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

We are very privileged to be able to include an example of the document that an employer uses to assess people they are interviewing. Our thanks to the genocide survivors group SURF for allowing us to include this.

Do note that this guide is included to give you a sense of things from the perspective of the employer. The last page of this section shows the sheet that interviewers use to score the person they have just interviewed, giving them a mark in each of ten areas. The marks are then added up by the employer, and when they have interviewed everyone, the highest scoring person gets the job.

You can see for each of the 'Generic Competence' areas, what the interviewer is looking for, in great detail. Whilst these requirements obviously apply to this specific job, there are many skills which apply to any job you might apply to. Read through and identify where you are strong (and therefore what you should ensure you talk about at interview), and identify where you are currently less strong (and make a plan to strengthen your skills in these areas).