

Episode 5

Interests, Additional Information, and Referees

Slide 1: Mini-series: Own your CV. Brought to you by the UCT Careers Service. Episode 5: Interests, Additional Information, and Referees

Slide 2: In this episode, you will learn about additional activities not yet covered in this series, interests and hobbies, as well as referees.

Slide 3: Let's talk about additional information you might include on your CV.

Slide 4: You can also use the heading "Additional information" as a catchall for items that don't fit elsewhere.

For example:

- Participated in four Two Oceans half marathons
- First Aid Certificate
- Driver's License

But leave out this section if you have nothing substantial to add

Slide 5: It is important to state from the onset that you do not have to put Hobbies and Interests in your CV. However, if this is done well with appropriate information, it could give a prospective employer a glimpse of you in other contexts, and could be a conversation starter at the interview.

Slide 6: Sometimes hobbies and interests may not be relevant or helpful to include. For example, watching series might be your favourite activity, but might not be relevant or helpful in your application. Avoid including activities that are common and not substantiated for example walking, reading, socialising and so on. If you cannot give more detail, leave this section out.

Slide 7: Only include interests and hobbies if they are unusual or relevant to your application. For example, if you are applying to a non-profit organisation involved in supporting women who experienced gender-based violence, you could state "interest in being involved in social justice issues" under interests or if you are applying to a global organisation that prioritises sustainability, you could include "Member of environmental lobby group aiming to reduce carbon emissions worldwide"

Slide 8: What about referees?

Slide 9: Referees are important to include in your CV. Most organisations WILL contact your referees if you are shortlisted. However, they won't be contacted if you are not shortlisted. Prospective employers want to have a clear picture of who you are and your capabilities. It is important to use people that can positively testify about your character from the context of their dealings with you. They will contact referees to ask about whether you are suited to what you have applied for and to verify what you have claimed on your CV.

Slides 10: Referees should not be your fellow students or family members – especially parents. Choose someone who is in a position of authority who knows you well. As a university student, you can use your tutors, thesis or project supervisors and in other contexts, line managers or work supervisors.

If you have worked in a family business, don't use your parents or family members as referees. Instead, you could use someone you have worked with or under in the business who is not a family member. You can also use a client to testify about your service offering and your character.

Slide 11: It is better not to put "Referees on request" on your CV. This adds an additional step for those recruiting. If you are shortlisted, they will need to go back to you for this information, causing delays in the process.

Don't attach reference letters or testimonial letters written by your past employers. Most organisations have specific questions that they want to ask your referees which might not be covered by your letter.

Use no more than three referees, but be guided by what is requested in an application.

You must contact your referees and request permission to use them. Inform them of each application you are making, and send them a copy of your CV. And lastly, check whether their contact details have changed if you haven't updated your CV for a while.

Slide 12: Include your referee's name, job title, name of organisation, email address and telephone number. Try to put all this information on one line to save space as demonstrated in the example below.

Slide 13: Mini-series: Own your CV. Brought to you by the UCT Careers Service. Tune into our last episode of this series where we'll discuss how software can be used to scan CVs in the recruiting process.