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Turning an attachment or internship into real CV content

Most attachments and internships in Kenya end with a certificate and a vague line on a CV. This guide shows you how to convert what you actually did — the tasks, the numbers, the problems you solved — into specific CV entries, LinkedIn content, and interview answers that get you shortlisted for formal employment.

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Free to read and share. General information, not legal or financial advice.

WHAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO

- Extract concrete, measurable evidence from any attachment or internship — even one that felt routine or junior
- Write CV bullet points that describe results, not just duties, using the standard format Kenyan recruiters and ATS systems expect
- Build at least two portfolio or reference assets from your attachment before you leave the placement
- Answer competency interview questions at organisations such as KCB, Safaricom, or the civil service using structured examples from your internship
- Update your LinkedIn profile with internship content that makes you findable for entry-level roles

Who this is for: Kenyan graduates and school-leavers who have completed or are currently on an attachment or internship and want to turn that experience into documents that get them shortlisted for their first formal job.

What recruiters actually look for — and why most internship CV lines fail

The gap between what you did and what you wrote

When a recruiter at a firm like Deloitte East Africa or a government agency running a competitive intake looks at your CV, they are not reading it to understand your life. They are scanning it for evidence that you have already done something close to what the job requires. That scan takes between six and thirty seconds on a first pass. If your internship entry reads *"Worked in the finance department and assisted with various tasks,"* it provides zero evidence. It does not survive the scan.

The problem is not that your attachment was uneventful. The problem is that most interns describe their role — what the department does — rather than their contribution — what changed or got done because they were there. A role description is the employer's job

advertisement from six months ago. A contribution description is evidence that you can perform. Recruiters want the second thing, and almost every first-time CV writer hands them the first.

Before you write a single word, you need to shift your frame. You are not trying to summarise your attachment. You are trying to give a busy hiring manager a reason to put your CV in the yes pile. That means your CV line must answer three questions: what did you do, how much or how often, and what happened as a result? If your line does not answer all three, it will be rewritten in this guide until it does.

How the Kenyan job market actually uses your internship entry

In Kenya, attachments are often arranged through a university's industrial attachment office, through the Kenya Industrial Training Institute (KITI), or directly by students contacting companies. The host organisation may issue a standard letter confirming you attended. That letter is not the same as a reference, and a reference is not the same as a usable CV entry. You need all three, and they serve different purposes.

Many Kenyan employers — particularly in banking, FMCG, telecoms, and the public sector — now use applicant tracking systems (ATS), including Taleo and Greenhouse, or they advertise through platforms like BrighterMonday, Fuzu, or MyJobMag and collect applications through a built-in form. These systems filter CVs by keywords before a human sees them. If the job advertisement mentions "data reconciliation" and your CV says "office work," you are filtered out automatically. This means the specific language you use in your internship bullet points is not just a style choice — it is the difference between your application being seen and not being seen.

For public sector jobs, including those advertised by the Public Service Commission of Kenya (PSC), applications often require you to fill a prescribed form (form PSC 2 or similar). You will be asked to list previous employment and internships in fixed fields with word limits. If you have not already converted your internship into precise, structured entries, you will struggle to fill those fields accurately under time pressure, often on a shared computer in a cybercafé with metered time.

Extracting the raw material before you leave your placement

The exit interview with yourself — do this in your last week

In your final week at the placement, set aside forty-five minutes — on a matatu, during lunch, or in the evening — and work through the following questions in writing on your phone or a notebook. Do not rely on memory a month later; specific details fade fast.

First: what did you do repeatedly? List every task you performed more than three times. Do not filter for importance — write them all. Second: what did you produce? Name every document, report, spreadsheet, filing system, social media post, event, or physical output that exists because of your work. Third: what numbers are attached to any of it? How many invoices did you process per week? How many customers did you serve? How many entries did you key into the system? How many files did you organise? How many calls did you handle in a day? Fourth: what was broken or delayed before you started working on something, and what was the state of it when you left? Fifth: what did your supervisor ask you to do that was outside your original brief — because that shows you were trusted with something extra.

Write rough answers to all five questions before you leave the building on your last day. These raw notes are your raw material. Everything that follows in this guide is the process of turning those notes into CV content, portfolio assets, and interview answers.

Getting the reference and letter before you leave

Do not wait until you are job-hunting to request your reference. On your second-to-last day, speak to your direct supervisor — the person who assigned you tasks, not necessarily the HR manager. Say exactly this: *"I have really appreciated this placement. Before I leave, would you be willing to write a short reference letter for me, and could I also list you as a professional reference for future job applications?"* Ask for the letter on official letterhead, signed, with the supervisor's name, title, phone number, and email address. An undated letter or one with no contact details is nearly useless — recruiters who want to verify it will have no way to do so.

Also request a copy of any work you produced that is not confidential. If you helped design a brochure, ask for a PDF. If you built a spreadsheet template, ask whether you can keep a copy

with the sensitive data removed. If you supported an event, ask for a photograph. These become your portfolio. Even one piece of concrete output is more persuasive in an interview than a description of what you did.

If the organisation uses WhatsApp for internal communication — which is common in Kenyan SMEs and NGOs — save any messages where your supervisor or a colleague praised your work or gave you a specific task. A screenshot of a WhatsApp message saying "*Great job on the stock count, you finished three days early*" is informal evidence, but it can prompt a useful anecdote in an interview.

Writing the CV entries — the exact format and the words that work

The bullet point formula Kenyan recruiters respond to

Every internship bullet point should follow this structure: **Action verb + specific task + scale or frequency + result or context**. The action verb must be in past tense and must be precise. "Assisted" is the weakest verb in any intern's vocabulary — it tells the reader you were in the room. Replace it with the verb that describes what your hands actually did: reconciled, processed, drafted, analysed, filed, updated, scheduled, compiled, trained, responded, prepared, translated, counted, entered, monitored.

Write no more than four bullet points per internship role. Quality over quantity matters here. A recruiter who sees eight bullets will skim and retain none. A recruiter who sees three sharp bullets will read all three. Each bullet should be one sentence, no longer than two lines on a phone screen, and should contain at least one number if at all possible. If you genuinely cannot find a number, use a qualifier: daily, weekly, independently, across three departments, within a team of twelve.

Here is the structure applied to a role title and employer. Your entry should look like this:

Finance Attachment Intern — Equity Bank Kenya Limited, Nairobi (June-August 2023)

- Reconciled daily till balances for six teller stations, identifying and correcting posting errors before end-of-day reports were submitted to the branch manager.
- Processed an average of forty customer account update forms per day using Flexcube, maintaining a zero-rejection rate across eight weeks.
- Prepared a weekly petty cash summary report presented to the branch accountant every Friday, reducing preparation time from two hours to forty-five minutes by building a reusable Excel template.

Notice what those bullets do not say: they do not say "assisted the finance team" or "gained experience in banking operations." They say what happened. If a recruiter reads those three lines, they know you can use a core banking system, you are numerically accurate, and you improved a process. That is three pieces of evidence in eight seconds.

Translating common but vague attachment tasks into strong entries

Many Kenyan attachments involve tasks that feel too junior or generic to write about: photocopying, filing, reception cover, data entry, tea rounds. The instinct is to hide these. Do not. The instinct is wrong. The task is not the point — the scale, the reliability, and the accuracy are the point. A student who managed the physical filing system for a department with four hundred client files and zero misfiled documents has done something genuinely useful. Write it that way.

Data entry is the most common example. *"Did data entry"* is worthless. *"Entered 1,200 beneficiary records into the ODK database over six weeks, cross-checking names against the original paper forms and flagging eighteen duplicate entries for the M&E officer"* is a completely different claim. It shows volume, accuracy, system knowledge, and initiative. All of those came from the same desk job. The difference is that the second version was written by someone who asked themselves: how much, how accurately, and what did I notice that others might have missed?

Comparison: weak vs. strong CV entry

Weak entry

Strong entry

Assisted the marketing department with social media and other tasks.	Drafted and scheduled 24 Instagram posts over six weeks for the company's product launch, contributing to a follower increase of approximately 400 during the campaign period.
Worked in the HR department and helped with recruitment.	Screened 80+ CVs against a shortlisting rubric provided by the HR manager, producing a ranked shortlist of 15 candidates for interviewer review within the three-day deadline.
Gained experience in customer service during my attachment.	Handled customer service at the front desk independently on Wednesdays and Fridays, resolving an average of 30 walk-in queries per session and escalating complex complaints to the branch manager using the company's written escalation procedure.

What to put in the role title and dates

If your attachment letter names a specific department — Finance Attachment Intern, ICT Intern, HR Attachment — use that. If your letter just says "Attachment Student," add the department yourself: *Attachment Student (Finance Department)*. Always include the organisation's full legal or trading name as it appears on your letter — not an abbreviation you invented. Include the month and year of start and end. If your attachment was only four weeks, include it anyway; a short placement that is described specifically is more persuasive than a long one described vaguely.

Beyond the CV — building interview answers and LinkedIn content from the same material

Turning your internship notes into STAR interview answers

Most competitive Kenyan employers — including the civil service under the PSC, commercial banks, telecoms companies, and large NGOs — use competency-based interviews. The interviewer will ask you something like: "*Tell me about a time you had to meet a tight deadline*" or "*Give me an example of when you identified a problem and took action.*" Your internship is your primary source of answers to these questions, especially if this is your first job application.

Use the STAR structure to prepare your answers: **Situation** (one sentence of context), **Task** (what you were responsible for), **Action** (exactly what you did, step by step, in the first person), **Result** (what happened, ideally with a number or a concrete outcome). The most important part is Action — most candidates rush through it. Interviewers are specifically trained to probe the Action section because that is where they find out whether you actually did the thing or just observed it.

Prepare three STAR answers from your internship material. Choose examples that between them demonstrate: working under pressure or to a deadline, working with other people or resolving a disagreement, and identifying an error or improvement without being told to. These three themes cover the majority of competency questions you will face in a first interview.

Worked example: STAR answer from an attachment

Part	What to say
Situation	"During my attachment at Jubilee Insurance, the department received a large batch of physical claim forms at the end of the month — around 300 forms in two days — because of a backlog from the branch offices."
Task	"My supervisor asked me to log all the forms into the tracking spreadsheet within three working days so the team could begin processing without delay."
Action	"I created a simple checklist to batch the forms by claim type first, which meant I wasn't switching between spreadsheet columns constantly. I stayed an extra hour on the first evening to get through the backlog early. I also flagged five forms that were missing a required signature before they entered the system, which would have caused them to be rejected later."
Result	"I completed the logging in two days rather than three. My supervisor mentioned the flagged forms specifically when she wrote my reference letter, because catching those early saved the team from having to process rejections."

Updating your LinkedIn profile with internship content

If you do not have a LinkedIn account, create one using any working email address — Gmail is fine. Access it from your phone at [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com) using mobile data; the mobile site is usable on 3G. Creating an account costs nothing and takes fifteen minutes. Once you are logged in, go to your profile and select "Add profile section," then "Work Experience," then fill in the fields using the same structured bullet points you wrote for your CV.

In the "Description" field for your internship entry, paste your three or four CV bullet points. LinkedIn indexes these for search, so if a recruiter at a company searches for "Flexcube" or "ODK" or "petty cash" and you have those words in your description, your profile will appear in results. This is exactly the same logic as ATS keyword filtering on job platforms, and the same specific language serves both purposes.

After you add the experience, write one post on LinkedIn — not an announcement that you have finished your attachment, but a short professional observation about something you learned or observed. Keep it under 200 words. Describe a real task or a real process you encountered and what you found interesting or challenging about it. Tag the organisation if it has a LinkedIn page. This kind of post positions you as someone who is thinking about their field, and it sometimes leads to profile visits from recruiters. Do not post if you have nothing specific to say — a generic "I'm grateful for this opportunity" post adds nothing and may look naive to a recruiter reading it.

USABLE ARTEFACT — CV BULLET POINT BUILDER: FILL IN THE BLANKS

Use this template to draft each bullet point. Fill in each bracket with your specific detail. Delete the brackets when you are done.

Template A (task with volume and outcome):

[Action verb in past tense] + [specific task] + [number, frequency, or scale] + [result, accuracy, or impact].

Example using template A:

Reconciled daily petty cash records for a team of eight, processing an average of 35 receipts per day and maintaining zero discrepancies across six weeks of the attachment.

Template B (task with problem identified):

[Action verb] + [specific task] + [what you noticed or flagged] + [what happened as a result].

Example using template B:

Reviewed 150 supplier invoices for completeness before filing, identifying 12 that lacked the required LPO reference number and returning them to the procurement officer before they reached the accounts payable queue.

Template C (process improvement):

[Action verb] + [existing process or problem] + [what you changed or built] + [time or effort saved].

Example using template C:

Built a reusable Excel template for the weekly attendance report, reducing the data entry time from 90 minutes to 20 minutes per session for the HR assistant.

Weak verbs to replace: assisted, helped, supported, worked on, was involved in, participated in.

Strong verbs to use: prepared, reconciled, drafted, processed, compiled, analysed, scheduled, updated, entered, monitored, coordinated, reviewed, trained, responded,

resolved, designed, built, flagged, screened, calculated.

USABLE ARTEFACT — SEVEN-DAY CHECKLIST: CONVERT YOUR ATTACHMENT INTO CV CONTENT

1. **Day 1 — Extraction:** Spend 45 minutes answering the five exit questions (what did you do repeatedly, what did you produce, what numbers are attached, what improved, what were you trusted with extra). Write raw notes on your phone or paper. Do not edit yet.
2. **Day 2 — Reference:** Contact your internship supervisor by phone or WhatsApp. Ask directly: "Would you be able to write me a short reference letter on letterhead, and may I list you as a professional referee?" Confirm their full name, title, direct phone number, and email address.
3. **Day 3 — Draft bullet points:** Using the bullet point builder above, draft three to four CV lines from your raw notes. Apply Template A, B, or C to each one. Do not use the words "assisted" or "helped." Read each line and ask: does it contain a number or qualifier, and does it say what happened?
4. **Day 4 — Role title and dates:** Confirm the exact name of the organisation as it appears on your attachment letter. Write your role title. Write the start and end month and year. Add this block to your CV above or below your education section, depending on which is stronger.
5. **Day 5 — LinkedIn:** Log into LinkedIn on your phone. Add the internship under Work Experience. Paste your bullet points into the Description field. Check that your headline (the line under your name) says something specific — for example, "Finance graduate | Attachment experience in bank reconciliation and Flexcube" — rather than "Student."
6. **Day 6 — STAR answers:** Choose one situation from your attachment that involved a deadline, a mistake you caught, or working with another person. Write out the four STAR parts in full sentences. Read it aloud once to hear whether the Action section is detailed enough.
7. **Day 7 — Application test:** Find one real job advertisement on

BrighterMonday, Fuzu, or MyJobMag that you are qualified to apply for. Read the required skills list. Check whether your CV bullet points contain the same words the advertisement uses. Where they do not but the experience matches, rewrite the bullet to use the advertisement's language without changing the meaning. Then apply.

PROVENANCE & ATTRIBUTION

Portions of this material were AI-drafted and reviewed by a SmartNet editor before publication.