You hold in your hands a very powerful resource to help you achieve your career goals. The Career Development Centre (CDC) team has crafted a comprehensive guide covering all of the key topics you will need to help prepare you for the successful transition from student to professional.

The Career Development Centre team is committed to graduate outcomes and the student experience. In our work with students we witness Bondies achieving extraordinary career goals and outcomes. You are responsible for your career path and the CDC team, along with Bond University academic and general staff are here to support you in this process.

I encourage you to make the most of your time here at Bond University. Get involved in the broad range of opportunities including internships and work experience, student leadership, clubs and societies or mentoring, and reflect on what you learn from them. Make sure you visit us early and often, and commit yourself to your studies.

In the words of Dr Seuss: “You have brains in your head, and feet in your shoes, you can steer yourself in any direction you choose.”

We look forward to working with you.

Kirsty Mitchell
General Manager Career Development Centre
Bond University prides itself on its commitment to the student experience and graduate outcomes. We have invested significantly in the Career Development Centre to assist students to achieve their career goals and indeed bring their ambition to life.

This Job Search Guide provides you with an exceptional resource that will equip you with all of the career skills that you will need throughout your studies as you move into the professional world and as an alumnus.

I encourage you to make the most of your time here at Bond University and we welcome your contributions in both the Bond and broader community.

I wish you all the best in this adventure.

Professor Tim Brailsford
Vice-Chancellor and President
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| A FINAL WORD | 119 |
THE NEW SKILLS SET REQUIRED FOR EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

Great Collaborators and Orchestrators
Ability to span all continents in a 24/7 mindset, orchestrating supply chains and collaborating with all relevant members in an organisation.

Great Synthesizers
Ability to create new products and services by combining ideas that have not been thought of as meshing well together to form successful new streams of business.

Great Explainers
Ability to explain complexity simply and the opportunities it translates to for the individual.

Great Leveragers
Ability to leverage all business systems, such as IT, in order to work harder and smarter.

Great Adapters – Versatilists
Neither specialists nor generalists - they have the capacity to adapt well to their changing circumstances and possess a depth in their skills which they are consistently refining.

A PERSON WHO HAS...

• The ability to learn how to learn
  Be committed to continuously learning! Develop and refine your sense of curiosity. What you know today will be out of date tomorrow. Knowledge is the new competitive advantage.

• Passion and curiosity
  IQ still matters but Curiosity Quotient (CQ) and Passion Quotient (PQ) matter too. Curious and passionate = self education and self motivation.

• Interacted with and managed other people
  People skills including interpersonal skills and communication skills will become paramount.

• Developed the right brain
  Exercising your right brain has become increasingly more important. Develop your big picture, creative and artistic self!

The following short extract is taken from the Swinburne University Postgraduate Program in Career Development. Author: Nigel Phillips at www.careerlifecollege.com.au
OUR MISSION

To provide students with a five star quality service that is effective in supporting them to achieve their goals through giving students the skills to:

- Manage their lifelong career journey
- Create successful job search strategies
- Successfully transition from education to the workplace

We will do this by:

- Providing career advice and counselling
- Supporting students through events, resources and consultations
- Providing a service tailored to student needs
- Providing ongoing support to students and alumni
- Expanding student and academic engagement
- Building relationships with employers - nationally and internationally
- Developing the alumni network to create student opportunities
- Providing an excellent employer service

In this Job Search Guide you will be provided with:

- A tool box to help you create and define a career strategy; it is your resource to explore and discover opportunities in the world of work.
- A compass to navigate, direct and guide you to resources to further research occupations, industries, employers and internships of interest.
- A sounding board to clarify, probe and ask further questions through making personalised appointments with an Employment Services Specialist at the Career Development Centre.
- A solid foundation to mark your entry into the workforce as well as a guide that you can always come back to reflect upon and make changes as planned and unplanned events occur in your life.

Importance of this guide:
A degree is no longer enough to ensure a great career – you need a lot more. The Job Search Guide is intended to help you maximise your time at Bond University.

For a full listing on all the careers services offered across the university, our team and resources go to www.bond.edu.au/cdc.
“The lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure and transitions in order to move towards a personally determined and evolving future.” (Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners, CICA, 2006)

“A career is a multi-faceted, complex, personal process that extends over a lifetime and is influenced by dynamic personal, interpersonal, societal, economic and environmental factors.” (Patton & McMahon, 2006)
# WHAT HAS CHANGED WITH THE WORLD OF WORK?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Globalisation</th>
<th>Globalised market place and increased competition in business.</th>
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<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>Communication Technology</td>
<td>Greater access to knowledge, easy and cheap overseas communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demographic Shifts</td>
<td>Older workers encouraged to stay in the workforce, aging population, increased participation of women in the workforce, baby boomers retiring.</td>
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Information from:


Previously a career was characterised by:
- A focus on technical skills
- A job for life
- Permanent employment
- Single qualification

Now career is characterised by:
- Diverse jobs throughout a lifetime
- Varied working arrangements such as contract and project
- Multiple qualifications
- A focus from technical skills to employability skills and attributes
- Constant labour market variations

This means:
- The world of careers is no longer linear; having a job for life in the traditional sense has changed. Now there may be many career changes throughout one’s life.
- Individuals need to be empowered to develop a career strategy and manage their careers.
- Increased self management when challenges arise.
- Knowing your strengths and limitations.
- Confidence to follow dreams and create opportunities.
- Individuals are willing to seek help from others.
- Individuals are willing to support others in their career journey.

The truth is that the world of work has changed but the way people think about careers hasn’t.

At the Bond University Career Development Centre we facilitate the career development of students by empowering and supporting them in designing and creating their careers through a strategic employment strategy.
PART 2: CAREER PLANNING: KEY AREAS DEFINED

THE THREE STAGES OF CAREER PLANNING

The Career Development Centre (CDC) at Bond University is here for students during each step of the career planning process. An overview is provided of areas covered in each of the steps below, however these are not limited. Career planning is a process that is unique to each student and the CDC provides a personalised approach to suit each student’s needs.

1. EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES
   (Self assessment)
   - What am I interested in / curious about and why?
   - What am I good at? Determine interests, skills and values.
   - What do I want in a job? What is important? What are my expectations?
   - Determine preferences.

2. DISCOVER OPTIONS
   (Information gathering)
   - Occupations
   - Employers
   - Industries
   - Employment trends
   - Sectors

3. DEVELOP A STRATEGY
   (Career strategy)
   - Start defining an employment strategy.
   - Explore options further through internships, work experience and voluntary work.
   - What additional skills, attributes and knowledge will I need to succeed?
   - Assistance with resume, cover letter and applications.
   - Begin your proactive marketing strategy.

NACE reports on the use of careers services linked to job offers:
“A 2010 student survey report demonstrates a strong link between the use of careers services and a student’s ability to get a job offer. In addition, results showed that the more frequently a student used the services, the increased likelihood of receiving a job offer. Results also showed that 71 per cent of students with job offers had utilised the careers service where 29 per cent of students with job offers had not used any careers service.”
STEP 1: EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

WHERE DO I START?

When we are studying at university, it’s all about grades, assignments and exams. The pressure to strive for the best can be carried with us from the very beginning, but often intensifies when we think about our careers. Most of the time we don’t know what we can do with our degrees and more often than not we feel that we should already have this covered.

Career planning starts with taking a step back and reflecting on your skills, abilities and values. It is so easy to see things as a two sided coin - success or failure. What about thinking more creatively and broadly about the different ways you can contribute and how your contribution is unique? Each one of us has diverse talents to offer and we excel in different working environments so it’s not about success or failure. It’s about exploring the talents you have and ultimately translating them into marketable skills when sitting in front of an employer for an interview.

When you start reflecting on your interests and the way in which you can contribute, you have just started the first step of career planning. Become a possibilitarian! A possibilitarian is someone who has a sense of curiosity and sees prospects in every undertaking. There is so much opportunity and we are only limited by our fears and internal constraints. Embrace every situation as an opportunity. Develop relationships with people and share their stories. You will be amazed at what you learn and what prospects arise both in the present and the future. The irony is that nowadays careers are rarely a linear process. They are more often than not shaped by random and lucky events that occur in your day-to-day life. Make use of these events, talk to people - you never know what opportunities may arise.

The earlier you start to develop a career strategy the more you will expand your employment options. It’s easy and usually very natural to jump into job searching first, usually towards the end of study. However, the most effective searches start with careful preparation and planning from the start of your degree. This is where you will develop a refined employment focus. In this section, we will present the ways in which you can prepare for a successful job search.

“Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming after all, is a form of planning.”
- Gloria Steinem
SELF EXPLORATION

Career planning begins with branding yourself. Branding yourself begins with knowing who you are as an individual - your strengths, interests, values, motivations, skills as well as areas of limitations. This is valuable to analyse whether you are choosing a career for the first time or the tenth time.

You can be likened to a product on offer for an employer. Before you start selling a product you need to know its features, its benefits and how it’s differentiated from other products. If you don't, the customer will have a tough time determining why they should invest their money.

How well do you know your product?
Evaluate yourself:
• Identify your skills, interests and values
• Understand what motivates you
• Gain awareness of who you are - what you do well, not so well and what you might like to do in the future.

Evaluating yourself in this way allows you to identify what's important to you and what you are naturally curious about so you are able to better match yourself to an occupation where:
• You will be able to use your talents
• You will be able to further develop your skills
• Your values align with those of the company and there is a genuine ‘fit’
• Your employability skills match the role and ‘fit’ with the organisation as a whole
• You will be able to translate and communicate your skills confidently to a prospective employer in an interview.

Conducting a self assessment will help identify your skills, interests, values and preferences as well as to gain awareness about yourself. This may help you choose or refine a major, further study or career. You can use these assessment tools periodically or in general prior to an appointment with the career development centre.

“You have to work at creating your own culture.”
- Mitch Albom
SELF ASSESSMENT IDENTIFY SKILLS, INTERESTS AND VALUES

Check out www.authentichappiness.com to complete a strengths test.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

WHAT AM I INTERESTED IN / CURIOUS ABOUT AND WHY?
When you were a child, asking ‘why’ came spontaneously! The world was filled with wonder, excitement and potential with every moment.

Redevelop your sense of curiosity! Here, you want to not only state what you are interested in, which can sometimes be clear cut but why you are interested in it. The ‘why’ tells you the underlying motive and says a lot about you as an individual. Keep asking yourself ‘why’ until you have exhausted all reasons for your interest.

WHAT AM I GOOD AT AND WHY?
Here you want to explore your core strengths, talents and abilities. List them with a brief description about why they are an asset. It’s important not to compare yourself with others in this activity. You want to identify what’s great about you and what your unique talents are.

WHAT DO I WANT IN A ROLE?
Here explore what is important to you in your working life. This question prompts you to start thinking about your employment preferences which may include the types of tasks you would like to perform, the working conditions, the location you would like to work in and also to consider the type of environment you best contribute in.

IF I HAVE WORKED BEFORE, WHAT DO I WANT LESS OF?
If you have worked previously, it may be more suitable for you to identify what you don’t want in a role as you have the benefit of hindsight.
**CAREER MAPPING**

**Putting it into action:**
Career mapping, like a mind map, is a great tool to visualise your thoughts and find focus.

| You will need: | A big piece of butcher’s paper.  
|               | Pens or markers. |
| Useful for:   | People who have many ideas to pursue but are unsure which one to focus on.  
|               | Being creative as well as visually organised by placing ideas from your past, present and future all on one page.  
|               | Determine if a relationship or pattern starts occurring which may influence your decisions. |
| How:          | Place the main idea (you) in the centre of the map.  
|               | Write ideas that branch off from you and look for a correlation between the ideas.  
|               | Connect all your ideas in some way that is meaningful to you, for example, using lines or arrows.  
|               | Write ideas down quickly, don’t think about them too much, you can always fill in the gaps later. |
HAVE YOU WORDLE’D?
You can also undertake this exercise online through Wordle. Wordle enables you to build word clouds with the data you input. The words that appear more frequently in the text are then displayed prominently in the word clouds. In this case, it would be a reoccurring pattern of interests. You may be surprised what you see! Go to: www.wordle.net.
STEP 2: DISCOVER OPTIONS

RESEARCH

Once you have identified your interests, skills, values and what is important to you in a job, you can start exploring options to match these interests. This section is about initiating strategies for employment through learning more about the career that interests you. This may include exploring:

- Industries
- Occupations
- Employers
- Employment trends

Once you have gathered some information about these areas, we encourage you to undertake some informational interviewing. This means pre-screening those industries, occupations and employers you have explored before you decide it’s definitely what you want to do. The process of informational interviewing is talking to someone who is in a job you think you would love to do. It requires asking them about their story so you can get a feel for the job from someone on the inside. This is a great way to explore and clarify your career goals!

There are many resources at your disposal to make an informed decision. Here are a few ways to get you started.

Which scenario relates to you? Refer to the corresponding box on the following pages for ideas on what to do!

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<td>Box One: Research Industries</td>
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<td>I know what I’m good at and where my strengths lie but I’m not sure which positions would use these skills.</td>
<td>Box Two: Research Occupations</td>
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<td>I have an idea of the type of position I am suited to and the industry I would like to work in, but how do I find out more about the employers?</td>
<td>Box Three: Research Employers</td>
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<td>I want to work for a specific employment sector, such as government with an additional focused interest within that area. It’s a niche area, so where do I start?</td>
<td>Box Four: Research Niche Sectors</td>
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### BOX ONE
**RESEARCH INDUSTRIES**

**QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:**
- What positions are available in this industry?
- What tasks would I be performing in a role?
- Can I use my core skills and knowledge in the role?
- Am I interested in the role?
- Are there any other specifics about the role? For example, is it internationally based?

**OPTIONS TO INVESTIGATE:**
- Read about the industry online to gather information about career paths.
- Speak with faculty staff who are in these areas of interest to gain additional insight into the positions and potential duties.
- Research positions advertised in this field.

**WHERE TO INVESTIGATE:**
- **scout.bond.edu.au**
  Your employment portal.
- **www.myfuture.edu.au**
  A great tool to source position overviews. Go to ‘Industries’ and ‘Occupations’.
- **www.graduateopportunities.com**
  View professional associations relevant to your industry and become a member.

---

### BOX TWO
**RESEARCH OCCUPATIONS**

**QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:**
- Which organisations have occupations that would use my skills?
- What division within the organisation are these positions held?
- Do I need specific qualifications?
- Would I enjoy this role?
- Is there room for advancement?

**OPTIONS TO INVESTIGATE:**
- Research organisations through CareerHub and Graduate Opportunities ‘Online A - Z’ of Employers to identify disciplines organisations are recruiting for.
- Be strategic. Organisations have many departments where you may find your optimal role.
- Conduct information interviews with people who are already in a similar role to gain insight and understanding.

**WHERE TO INVESTIGATE:**
- **scout.bond.edu.au**
  Check company profiles.
- **www.graduateopportunities.com**
  View the various graduate career guides. Specifically, which organisations recruit for various graduate disciplines.
- **www.myfuture.edu.au**
  Go to ‘the facts’ and check occupations.
**BOX THREE
RESEARCH EMPLOYERS**

**QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:**
- What does the organisation do?
- What is the organisation’s vision and mission?
- What type of culture does it promote?
- Are there opportunities for advancement?
- What types of positions are there?
- What are the future trends?

**OPTIONS TO INVESTIGATE:**
- Research websites of the top five employers that interest you, taking particular note of how the organisation is described and careers opportunities.
- What do other people say? Look for articles about the organisation; undertake some information interviewing and talk to people who may know about the organisation (for example, faculty staff).

**WHERE TO INVESTIGATE:**
scout.bond.edu.au

www.graduateopportunities.com
Look at the A - Z of employers who are recruiting.

**Employer presentations**
Attend employer presentations at Bond University to learn more about the organisation, the types of areas they specialise in and the type of people they are looking for.

**Research company profiles**

“To find your own way is to follow your bliss. This involves analysis, watching yourself and seeing where the real deep bliss is - not the quick little excitement, but the real deep, life-filling bliss.”
- Joseph Campbell
BOX FOUR
RESEARCH NICHE SECTORS

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:
• Who are the companies in this industry?
• What types of roles do the companies recruit for?
• What are the employment trends of this sector?
• How does recruitment take place within this sector?
• Is there an opportunity for advancement?

OPTIONS TO INVESTIGATE:
• Use CareerHub to start researching and developing lists of potential organisations. This is found in the ‘Websites > Career Planning’ link which has a range of links to start exploring.
• Use Vault to explore emerging employment trends for new industries.
• Talk to faculty staff and academic staff who are professionals in their field for further insight.
• Undertake information interviewing with professionals in organisations who you have identified as being a potential opportunity.

WHERE TO INVESTIGATE:
scout.bond.edu.au

www.myfuture.edu.au
Go to 'the facts' and view labour market information and patterns of work.

The Vault (Accessed on CareerHub)
Go to specific sector and industry information.

Journals and Publications
Scout journals and publications relevant to these sectors and organisations within them, to gain information.

Professional Associations
Become a member of a relevant professional association. This could extend your pool of opportunity to a wider global network of choice.
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

WHY DO IT?
Informational interviewing is a valuable tool in career planning. By speaking with people from different organisations and in different roles you are able to explore whether a career path does or does not interest you and how best to start planning for your dream job. Further, it cements the information gathering you have undertaken so far and assists you in the next step - practical experience. Informational interviewing is as close as you are going to get to trying the job on from the inside out other than through undertaking work experience or an internship. So, come and see us at the Career Development Centre to assist you in how to plan for an information interview.

Informational interviewing can be a relatively informal conversation where someone is willing to impart their knowledge about an occupation, industry or work setting. However, informational interviewing is not:
- Solely seen as a networking opportunity. It can be the premise to further foster a potential business relationship in the future.
- A job interview. It’s about finding out information for you to base a decision on in the future. You can mention skills or experiences that led you to this field but stop there.
- Researching potential job opportunities. Information interviewing is not job searching; do not break your relationship with your new contact by ‘hitting them up’ for a job. If during your interview you become aware of a position vacant, wait until the following day before acting on this. If you are lucky enough to be offered an internship or even a suitable job - congratulations!

BENEFITS OF INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING
Informational interviewing is a vital part of your job search and networking efforts, however, there are additional benefits as well:
- You can discover more about the career options you are interested in.
- You are able to expand your contacts.
- It gives you practice and increases confidence in interview skills.
- You are getting information first hand that is relevant to YOU.
- It may help you identify your professional strengths and weaknesses and what areas you will need to focus on developing.
- You can learn of career paths and options undertaken by others who have achieved success.

WHERE TO START?
Identify people to interview via the following channels:

- **Bond University**
  - Initially, informational interviewing may sound like quite a daunting task to undertake. It’s natural to feel nervous! Why not start with people you know? Even if the person is not in your field of interest they may be able to lead you to them. Start with people who you know on campus including your lecturers and tutors as they have knowledge and experience in their related field. This will also help build your confidence levels and become more fluent with what you want to know and how to ask it, assisting you to stay on track during the interview.
  - The services at the CDC will enable you to research specific employers through CareerHub where you can look at company profiles, check online guides with insider information through Vault, or just generally browse the employers list.
  - There are various careers events held on campus throughout each semester. Events are held during graduate season in particular, where employers come on campus to present information sessions about their organisation and what they potentially look for when they are recruiting new staff. Leverage your opportunities here!

**Top Tip:**
When you graduate, register as an alumnus with the Bond University Network Portal located on the Alumni link of the Bond University website. This will provide an opportunity for you to connect with a global network of fellow Bond alumni.
Research
• Consider the information gathering you have undertaken so far and collate your findings together to identify an organisation to approach and possibly an individual setting. You may be able to identify some staff names through the company website or through calling organisations directly. Generally people are welcoming of students seeking career information and are happy to be of assistance. When collating the information consider how you align yourself with the organisation’s vision, mission statement and culture and how it compares to your own.
• Read newspapers or online articles that feature the organisation you have identified.
• Identify some relevant professional associations where you may be able to identify contacts and gain insight into your chosen industry.
Check out [www.graduateopportunities.com](http://www.graduateopportunities.com) and go to the ‘Professional Associations’ tab.

Networking
• Attend events hosted by professional associations and become involved with them.

“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.”
-Walt Disney

Face to face or by phone
Here are some examples of a possible script to apply when calling a company of interest. Remember to make it personal to your situation.

> Script 1: The Cold Call
Hi, my name is Joe Blogs and I am a student at Bond University studying International Relations. I was able to get your contact details through your website. As part of my career planning efforts I have been researching occupations of interest and although I’m not currently looking for a job, I’m most interested in exploring work as a _______________. As you are in the line of work I am interested in I would like to find out as much as I can about this area. Would it be possible to schedule a 10 to 15 minute appointment with you to ask a few questions and gain insights into the profession?

> Script 2: The Cold Call with Referral
Hi, my name is Joe Blogs and I am a student at Bond University, studying Film and Television. Your contact details were passed on to me through _______________ who recommended I contact you. I am interested in the possibility of working as a _______________ when I graduate and I would like to find out as much as I can about the industry before I commit to this path. As you are in this line of work, I was wondering if you would be willing to give me 10 to 15 minutes of your time to gain your advice on what I may expect in this field.

> Script 3: The Cold Call with Contact at a Seminar / Conference
Hi, my name is Jane Doe and I am currently studying Business at Bond University specialising in Finance. I heard you speak recently at an event at Bond University hosted by the Faculty of Business and your presentation on _______________ was very insightful. Although I am not currently looking for a job I have become very interested in the finance field. With this in mind, I was hoping to find out as much as I can about this area and was wondering if it would be possible to schedule 10 to 15 minutes with you to ask you some questions and get advice on how best to prepare to enter into this field?

By email or letter
If you would prefer to write an email or letter to ask for an informational interview note that they must be brief. Focus on introducing yourself, the purpose for writing and requesting information not a job. You should include two to four brief paragraphs and include:
• An introduction of yourself and how you got the person’s contact details.
• A summary statement of who you are why you are contacting the person.
• A request for an opportunity to meet, being specific about the information you would like to gain from the meeting.
• The close: Thank the person in advance for taking the time to assist you and a commitment to further action (for example, when you will follow up the correspondence).
Below are some examples of emails requesting an informational interview:

Sample 1

To: 
Cc: 
Subject: We met at the Bond University Careers Fair.

Dear Mr Jones,

I am a student at Bond University studying a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Accounting. I met with you briefly at the Bond University Careers Fair in March where you generously gave me your card and suggested I contact you.

Although I am not currently seeking employment I am very interested to learn more about the area of accounting. I am specifically interested in the types of skills I may need to refine during my final year if I would like to specialise in the financial trade sector being based in the Asia-Pacific region.

I would greatly appreciate 10 to 15 minutes of your time to ask you some questions about your role as Senior Trade Finance Manager for ABC as well as other types of work in this field. I would be pleased to hear about your experiences and any insights you could offer about entering into this industry.

Thank you for your consideration. I will contact you next week to follow up from this email, but can be contacted on 07 5512 3456.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe
Dear Ms Smith,

I recently spoke with Tamara Doe, who suggested I contact you. I am a student at Bond University studying a Master of Forensic Science and I am speaking with a number of researchers pursuing forensic engineering careers. Tamara mentioned you could share some valuable insight into the industry.

I am specifically interested in focusing on failure analysis in forensic investigations and Tamara mentioned your area of work is similar to my interest.

Would it be possible for us to meet for perhaps 20 minutes? I would appreciate hearing about your experience and insight, especially with your current work at ABC.

Kind regards,
Samantha Dean
Dear Anne,

My name is Rebecca Cummings and I am a student at Bond University studying a Bachelor of Communication.

I came across your name in the Alumni Network Portal. I read with interest your profile and expertise, particularly your experience in foreign correspondence which is an area I am interested to explore.

I am interested to learn more about your role as a reporter for XYZ News, and would greatly appreciate 15 minutes of your time to share your insights and experiences. Would you be available at any time on Monday, July 12 or Wednesday, July 14? Please let me know if any of those dates work for you, and if so, what time is most suitable.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Cummings
### SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABOUT THE JOB</th>
<th>ABOUT THE COMPANY</th>
<th>ABOUT YOUR CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a typical week like for you?</td>
<td>Does the company encourage and support professional development?</td>
<td>How did you get into this field?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What skills and experience are required to fulfil your role and how can they help you excel?</td>
<td>Does the company promote from within?</td>
<td>If you could go back in your career and do one thing differently, what would it be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you prioritise your work load?</td>
<td>What is the culture of the company?</td>
<td>Can you recommend any professional bodies that I should be researching or joining?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What other employment opportunities can this role lead to?</td>
<td>Are you satisfied with the level of support offered by upper management?</td>
<td>Are there any other people you think I could benefit from talking to?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you enjoy about your job?</td>
<td>What management style does this company operate with?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What qualities and personality traits are important for this role?</td>
<td>Does this company offer work experience, internships or other programs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Are there many opportunities for graduates?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How do I apply for positions within this company?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AFTER YOUR MEETING

It is imperative that you thank your contact for their time and the valuable information they provided you with. This can be done via email, letter or card.

You have now made a new networking contact. Keep in contact via short emails on your progress or sharing of useful information.

Below is an example of a thank you email.

Dear Mr. Jones,

I appreciate you meeting with me yesterday. Your advice was most helpful in clarifying my questions on public relations careers within the not-for-profit sector.

It was helpful to hear that an entry level position often requires some practical experience in public relations, so I have contacted the Public Relations Institute of Australia regarding membership and I have decided to approach a local community organisation to take on a voluntary role as Campaign Team Member for their annual fundraising event.

Again, thank you very much for your help. I sincerely appreciate your time and advice.

Kind regards,
Clara Dean
STEP 3: DEVELOP A STRATEGY

SUMMARY

So far, this Job Search Guide has provided the tools for you to:

• Explore possibilities through self reflection and identifying your interests, skills and values. This means knowing what makes you, you!
• Discover options through information gathering, finding out about industries, occupations, organisations and sectors to find a match with you – a shoe that looks like it might fit.

THE NEXT STEP

Trying the shoe on! This means developing an employment strategy to reach your goals and includes planning to undertake internships, work experience and voluntary work. Your underlying goal is to commence cultivating business relationships. Read on to find out how this works as a two way street.

BUILDING YOUR PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

Employers want to see a graduate who has had the opportunity to develop a diverse skill set through becoming involved in various activities while studying at university. For an employer, past behaviour predicts future performance. Therefore, your previous behaviour is evidence for them. The more they see of the behaviour to help confirm or disregard their decision, the more or less the gap of risk becomes. Close the gap! Start your career planning early – at the start of your degree.

Our advice to you is to personalise each approach, make it easy for the employer to make a decision by translating your skills well. We call this developing a portfolio of evidence of your skill set through:

• Demonstrating passion and enthusiasm towards this industry by becoming involved in it.
• Possessing excellent employability skills and understanding how they add value for an employer.
• Being an active participant within society in general.

This demonstrates you are genuinely committed about entering into a particular field.

In today’s business environment employers not only look for the technical and specialised knowledge a degree gives you, they look for a range activities and experiences that have developed your skill set over time. They are interested in the extracurricular activities you undertake, the work experience or internships you undertake, your part-time / casual job that might be helping you get through university study, any international exposure and strong grades. Sound like a lot? With careful planning, you can build a portfolio of evidence over the time you are here at Bond University with a career development plan unique to you. We have provided some further insights into each of these areas and how to start maximising your opportunities.
EMPLOYERS TELL US WHAT THEY LOOK FOR!

- **QUALITY DEGREE**
  - Strong academic performance

- **RELATED EXPERIENCE / EMPLOYMENT**
  - Internships
  - Work experience
  - Volunteering experience (building skills, confidence and networks)

- **TRANSFERABLE EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**
  - Part-time employment (building skills, confidence and networks)

- **BROADER ENGAGEMENT**
  - Extra-curricular involvement
  - Community involvement
  - Team and leadership involvement (developing team skills, confidence, networks, resilience)

- **INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**
  - International focus and travel
  - Languages (developing flexibility, adaptability and global orientation)
QUALITY DEGREE

A degree is the start of your career. Employers recruit graduates because they have the following skills:
1. A specialised level of technical knowledge and ability.
2. The ability to learn and apply new information to produce outcomes (assessments) repeatedly for a duration. This translates to a skill that is refined and further developed over time.
3. And, most importantly, problem solving methodology. The ability to problem solve and formulate creative solutions repeatedly over time.

Employers want to see strong academic performance throughout your study. Your portfolio is seen as a holistic picture of you as an individual and a degree is not the only measure employers use to determine whether you are a suitable applicant. However, in a competitive market, where there are many graduates competing for the same jobs, it is important you maximise every opportunity to excel with your grades throughout your time at Bond. This may not only increase your options when you graduate but also assist you when applying for competitive internships or work experience opportunities.

At Bond University, you will have the opportunity to develop a broader set of transferable skills gained through your particular degree that prospective organisations value. These may include:
• Ability to achieve multiple and competing deadlines
• Ability to complete projects
• Ability to manage stress and pressure
• Ability to work in a multicultural environment
• Communication and interpersonal skills
• Negotiation and mediation skills
• Persistence and determination
• Project management experience
• Research skills
• Team work and group project experience
• Time management and organisational skills

Feel free to state these skills as your strengths when writing your resume, however make sure you further refine and expand on them to personalise them and truly make them your strength. For example, communication and interpersonal skills by themselves are broad and general skills which every person may possess. The key is answering how this skill is a unique strength for you. For example, you may have the ability to:
• Build rapport quickly
• Listen in order to identify possible solutions to problems
• Mediate
• Negotiate

Show your prospective employers you have thought about how broad skills can become your unique contributions, and how they are relevant to the organisation’s needs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Bond University has unique graduate attributes. They are:
• Knowledge and Critical Thinking
• Leadership, Initiative and Teamwork
• Communication Skills
• Responsibility

These attributes dictate the standards for teaching and learning at Bond University and link back to key employability skills. For further information, go to bond.edu.au/graduate-attributes
RELATED EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Related employment experience can be undertaken in a variety of ways and is most commonly referred to as work experience. Work experience can incorporate a variety of programs both formal and informal, paid or unpaid, that provide you with the opportunity to gain practical experience in your field of study. In this section we will cover different types of work experience, providing insights into each area, the benefits of work experience, how best to prepare for your search at Bond University (given the unique three semester study schedule) and how best to prepare an application.

Employers look for related industry experience when they recruit students as it provides evidence that you are genuinely motivated and enthusiastic to commence your career in a particular industry. It is also an opportunity for you to sell the key skills you have developed as part of your experience.

COMMON TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Internship
  • An internship is a supervised learning program for students looking to gain hands-on work experience in a related occupational area with a certain organisation.
  • Internships can last from several weeks to several months and they can be either full-time or part-time.
  • An internship can earn you credit at Bond University, depending on the internship with each faculty and if there is an assessment component required to be completed by the student.
  • Internship opportunities are made available for students to apply for at various times throughout the year. However, if you are interested in applying for an internship through Bond University make sure you know which semester it is offered in.
  • Every organisation has different requirements as to when students are entitled to apply for the internship program, ranging from the second last year of study to the final two semesters. So knowing when you become eligible to apply is important.

Vacation employment
  • Vacation employment may be offered in the summer or winter months and is generally a formal program that can be either part-time or full-time designed to provide you with practical experience in an industry related to your studies.
  • Applications open for vacation employment at various times throughout the year, some sooner than others. Become familiar when organisations are offering these opportunities. You may find that applications open in March for a vacation position commencing in December.
  • Eligibility requirements vary from each organisation. Research ahead so you know what you need to do!

Work experience
  • Work experience is an informal program which allows students to gain practical experience within their chosen occupational area.
  • While some internships at Bond University can be for credit, work experience is not for credit.
  • Work experience is another way for students to gain practical experience in a related field and may be an additional option for those students who have been unsuccessful for an internship or don't have the flexibility within their degree to take on an extra subject.
  • Due to the informal nature of work experience, it can be undertaken at any time throughout your study.

Clerkship
  • A clerkship is a formal program designed for students to gain practical work experience in the law field. It is undertaken by students in their penultimate year and due to Bond’s unique three-semesters-per-year study schedule and the competitive nature of clerkships, it is highly encouraged to start planning early if you are interested in one.
  • A clerkship, like an internship, gives students the opportunity to gain valuable skills and to get a glimpse of the organisation, its culture and feel from the inside out.
  • Clerkships are available at distinct times throughout the year and this varies from state to state.
  • The Faculty of Law Graduate Development Office has a wide variety of services designed to assist you with planning your legal career. Make sure you get a copy of the Law Student Association’s career guide to see how they specifically assist you.
Community / voluntary involvement
- Voluntary involvement is an additional way to gain employment experience. It offers a flexible alternative from the more formal program and a great way to network within the community.
- Volunteering Gold Coast offers a wide range of positions that can be either for weekend voluntary work or throughout the week. For more information visit https://www.volunteeringgc.org.au/
- Volunteering can be undertaken at any time throughout your study.
- Volunteering is discussed in greater depth further in the Job Search Guide.

Paid employment
- Paid employment in a related field, whether it is your ideal position, or less so, may provide an excellent foundation to build your career and an opportunity to learn simply by being exposed to the environment. Utilise each opportunity if you are lucky enough to secure paid employment in your desired field.

“University study must be able to transcend in a practical sense and for this reason, doing an internship is invaluable. Some things cannot be learned from a text book and by immersing yourself in a workplace you discover new skills”
- Jenni Graham, Bond University alumna
THE BENEFITS OF RELATED EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE
An obligation-free road test!
You can see what professionals in your field really get up to and confirm whether this industry is genuinely for you.

Gain industry experience
Although having related employment experience is no guarantee of a job, it is seen as highly desirable by organisations if you have undertaken some related experience. Graduate Careers Australia states that students who have undertaken work experience significantly increase their chances of success with securing a graduate position.

Make valuable contacts in the industry
Think about opportunities to gain a great reference, mentor or colleague.

Demonstrate your strengths and abilities
In a sense, this is not just a road test for you, but a road test for your employer to scout potential part-time workers and graduate employees. It also makes you more marketable.

Become more competitive in the graduate recruitment process
Not only will your resume stand out, you will also have the opportunity to undergo interviews and gain a deeper industry understanding over your competition. Most organisations will recruit successful interns over candidates they have just met.

Increase your academic performance
A practical hands on approach to complement your study may cultivate your academic performance and success.

Increase your confidence and skills
By being exposed in the industry and consolidating your knowledge, your confidence is given a boost and you have the opportunity to gain practical relevant skills.

For internship application resources refer to:

- Page 64 of the Job Search Guide
- CareerHub
- The Vault Guide to Resumes and Cover Letters

Top tips to start your search:
Searching for an internship or work experience opportunity is similar to searching for a job - it's about knowing what you would like to do and where you would like to do it, as well as working with the time constraints of when these opportunities become available. It's about identifying the organisations you would like to intern for through information gathering, developing a resume and application to suit, interviewing for the opportunity and following up thereafter.
**TIPS FOR COMMENCING SEARCH**

**Start early!**
Each work experience opportunity will have different application opening and closing dates throughout the year. It is important to determine when your desired opportunity becomes available and what your eligibility requirements will be from visas to grades.

**Consult with faculty careers specialists**
Make an appointment to see your faculty specialist in internship opportunities. They will be able to tell you more about the opportunities, the application procedure, and what the organisation looks for in their candidates.

If you are successful, it is equally important to talk to your faculty staff about the opportunity including start and end dates.

**Be proactive**
Start identifying organisations to approach directly if there are no internships advertised as you may be able to create your own opportunity! Feel free to make an appointment with the CDC to assist you with a strategy to approach employers with an expression of interest.

**Be prepared – do your research!**
Undertake some information gathering before you start. Complete a self assessment to explore some possible matches. Then you can cement your interest and cultivate some fantastic business relationships!

**Use a variety of options to search for internship opportunities:**
- CareerHub: Employers advertise internships here at particular times in the year – keep a look out!
- If you are a Study Abroad student, or an Australian student seeking an international internship visit [http://www.internships.com.au/](http://www.internships.com.au/).
  This is a fee for service organisation with specialised consultants to assist.
- Visit [www.graduateopportunities.com](http://www.graduateopportunities.com) around midyear for vacation work opportunities and internships being advertised. Look at the websites of your employers of choice and see if there are internship opportunities listed. If not, come and see us to assist you in contacting them directly to enquire about internship opportunities.
- Network! Start with your faculty contacts, especially academic staff here on campus to find out about potential opportunities.

**Prepare for the selection process early**
- Become familiar with the application process. Generally it may involve:
  - A cover letter stating why you are interested
  - A resume outlining your key skills and experience (see below for tips)
  - An assessment centre activity
  - An interview focusing on your employability skills and your knowledge of the organisation.
- Start developing a resume to suit the internship opportunity you are applying for.
- Have a look at some cover letters and start developing a template for yourself.
- Start preparing for interviews by having a look in CareerHub and become familiar with commonly asked questions.

**Build relationships**
Get involved with the Bond network. Meet with your academic staff, join student associations and make personal connections. You may be able to get in contact with alumni who have undertaken a similar internship and faculty staff are always supportive of students showing an interest and initiative.
COMMON MYTHS ABOUT INTERNSHIPS, WORK EXPERIENCE AND CLERKSHIPS

I'm only going to be filing and making coffee.
Although your duties and responsibilities will be determined by the firm, contrary to popular belief, internships actually provide hands-on experience with current projects, pressing deadlines and issues within an organisation. Employers usually treat interns as possible future employees and want to provide a positive first experience.

There may however be some mundane tasks you are required to undertake. But beware of your response - show enthusiasm regardless if you are disheartened or uninterested as this is also counted towards building a picture of you and you only get one opportunity!

They are way too competitive - I probably won't get in.
Yes, internships and clerkships are competitive. Does this mean you don't even bother applying? No! Each faculty at Bond has a dedicated specialist to assist you in the internship process. There are also many resources available at the CDC which you can use for your search and application process.

I need a real job and I don't see how internships or work experience can get me there.
Be strategic here. What do you want to get out of the internship? Internships allow you to gain experience and skills that are critical to attracting future employers. So whether you are seeking specific skills to develop, relationships to call on in the future, employability skills that the organisation looks for or even just to make a positive first impression, these are ALL ways in which internships can assist you to really kick-start your career.

I am restricted to secure an internship / clerkship where I can stay with someone I know.
Some internship programs offer assistance with living arrangements or even offer living arrangements as part of the program. Make an appointment with your faculty employment specialist to ask about accommodation, specifically where previous students have stayed.

The organisation that I'm interested in, doesn't have an internship program.
There are many organisations that don’t have formal internship programs. Consider approaching the organisation to create one yourself. Make an appointment with the CDC or specialised faculty staff to assist you with this.

I haven't seen many internships on offer.
You don't know the hidden market! There are loads of internship opportunities. Half are not actively advertised. Check out the Vault online for the ‘Vault Guide to Internships.’ Have a look on CareerHub for international internship guides. Talk to your faculty staff about opportunities - they are in contact with leading organisations. Make an appointment with the CDC to assist you in the planning process.

“My experience with Bond’s internship program was incredibly beneficial and ultimately landed me a job at my dream company, MTV. I highly recommend each and every student to complete an internship as the experience they will acquire is invaluable, and it could get them one step closer to their dream position.”
- Daisy McKenzie-McHarg, MTV Overdrive Content Coordinator and Bond University alumna
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

• You can undertake more than one internship.
• Find out closing dates for applications well in advance.
• Internships and/or work experience do not guarantee an offer of employment upon completion.
• If you want to undertake an internship through Bond University:
  - Internship applications close 4pm on Friday of Week 6 in each semester
  - Prerequisite subjects will need to be completed
  - You must obtain approval for your internship from your academic supervisor
  - There are both national and international internship opportunities
• If you are seeking work experience, start developing a list of employers to approach and see a faculty specialist to initiate the process.

“Working with Austrade enabled me to obtain valuable experience working at an overseas post. I was able to gain valuable insights into how the Australian Government promotes Australian businesses overseas.”
- Nikhil Wahi, Bond University alumnus
MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

Ok, you’ve secured an internship or work experience. What next? Here are some tips to get the most out of your experience:

1. First impressions are lasting impressions. It’s important for you to make a positive first impression and continue to cultivate it! Dress appropriately, communicate confidently and behave professionally.

2. When you commence your internship, take the opportunity to ask lots of questions about life in this particular role.

3. Talk to your supervisor about your expectations with the internship and meet regularly with them to gain feedback on performance and provide any advice for current tasks.

4. Be observant. Get to know the culture of the organisation and the type of people who work there. What are their similar characteristics? What are the expectations of behaviour? Which values are important? Remember to ask questions!

5. Keep in mind that your employability skills are being silently assessed. Focus on those particular skills the employer may wish to see. This may include communication skills demonstrated through written and verbal methods, using professional language at all times and arriving at work on time, every time, displaying effective time management skills.

6. Establish positive relationships with your co-workers. There is no such thing as an unimportant person. Each individual is a potential fountain of knowledge or advice.

7. Be positive throughout your internship so people can say you are easy to work with. This means accepting tasks happily, even if you feel they are beneath you. This translates to a willingness to be a part of the team and a ‘can do’ attitude.

8. Make use of unexpected offers! If you have an opportunity to attend an event or conference – go! It will add to your experience and you don’t know who you might meet there.

9. When you leave, enquire about the employer acting as a referee for you and make sure you stay in contact.

10. Always send a thank you card.

VOLUNTEERING – AND HOW IT CAN BOOST YOUR CAREER

Volunteering, like an internship, work experience or clerkship is another great opportunity for you to gain practical experience in a field you are interested in. It is also a great opportunity to give something back to your local community and demonstrate to prospective employers you are socially aware and have an active interest in local charities and events.

Additional benefits of volunteering include:

- An excellent opportunity to develop skills and experience in a related industry. This can include team skills, leadership and adaptability.
- The opportunity to road test whether a particular industry is right for you before you commit to a career path.
- An opportunity to practice marketing yourself.
- Gain some experience in a low pressure situation before you commence applying for positions.
- A supportive learning environment. People generally appreciate you giving up your time free of charge for their cause.
- Great networking opportunities. You will have the opportunity to meet a lot of really different people from a variety of backgrounds. Learn from everyone you can and consider asking some people to be your mentors. Remember this can be a great avenue to build professional contacts.

“I undertook an internship with Pulse Communications (Ogilvy PR Worldwide) during my undergraduate studies and am extremely happy that I did! Not only did it provide me with an opportunity to put my theoretical knowledge into practice and grow professionally, but it also fostered my own personal growth. The beauty of an effective internship is that it provides a rare and unique opportunity to gain industry understanding - and no matter how good a text book may be, nothing compares to this ‘hands on’ experience. So get out there and give it all you’ve got.”

- Fabia Lonnquist, Bond University alumnus
How does Bond support my efforts to volunteer?
Bond University works closely with Volunteering Gold Coast and Volunteering Queensland to provide Bond students with substantial and relevant volunteering placements. This opportunity is also open for international students to gain Australian work experience or develop their English language skills. Insurance and ongoing support is offered by each organisation. Please visit the below websites for further information or make an appointment with the CDC.

- Volunteering Gold Coast: www.volunteeringgc.com.au
- Volunteering Queensland: www.volunteeringqueensland.org.au

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS
Becoming a member of a professional association is a great way to begin immersing yourself in your industry. Think about what you would like to achieve prior to committing to a membership. Here are some suggestions:

- Become involved and participate in events and activities. These events may give you the opportunity to meet people in the industry you would like to position yourself with when you graduate.
- Find out up to date information about industry trends and employment outlooks on your chosen area of interest. This will help you make an informed decision before embarking on an internship.

“Professional associations are a great resource for networking with members of your own profession, trade or job title. Their members are employees, managers and executives who are working in the very same corporations, small companies and organisations to which you are applying. What better time to meet your prospective employer than when they’re ‘off-duty’ and you’re on a more equal footing?”
- Joe Turner, Quintessential Careers

TRANSFERABLE EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE
You may be thinking twice about including your retail or hospitality job on your resume - how it could possibly add value to your application when your focus is somewhere completely unrelated? The truth is, prospective employers are aware you will not have significant technical experience in your chosen field. They are, however, much more interested to learn the types of employability skills you have developed through undertaking those seemingly unrelated tasks in your casual employment.

We encourage you to place your previous jobs on your resume, being mindful of how the duties undertaken could add value to you as a candidate for a prospective employment opportunity.
FINDING PART-TIME OR CASUAL EMPLOYMENT
The Gold Coast labour market explained

• The main industries on the Gold Coast include hospitality, retail, tourism and business services.
• All of these areas value language skills that international students and workers can offer, particularly in tourism and hospitality.
• Main employers are large hotels, large retail stores, tour companies, call centres, local restaurants, smaller hotels.
• Common job vacancies include waiter / waitress, bar person, customer service assistant, sales assistant, kitchen hand, call centre operator, cleaner, delivery person.
• Main job search resources include the Gold Coast Bulletin and www.seek.com.au.
• For resume guidelines refer to Part 3 of the Job Search Guide.

Where to look?

› Scout
Go to scout.bond.edu.au to register with Scout. Click on ‘New Registration – Bond Student’. Complete details and create a password and username (use your Bond email username and password).

› Job Search Websites
Visit: www.jobsearch.com.au. This site will give you advertised positions from the following websites:
• CareerOne – Newspaper vacancies Australia wide
• My Career
• Government websites

› Other Websites
• CareerOne – www.careerone.com.au
• MyCareer – www.mycareer.com.au

› Cold Canvassing
If you are looking for casual hospitality or retail work, hit the pavement! Some employers don’t advertise for casual or part-time employment opportunities as they rely on responses to advertising they place on their windows or walk-in enquiries. Drop in and introduce yourself, give the employer a copy of your resume and thank them for their time. You never know where this may lead. Remember only 15 to 20 per cent of positions are advertised.

Add your career profile to CareerOne, Seek and My Career which will job search for you. Simply set up your search criteria including:
• Type of positions, salary range, key words
• Graduate positions
• Full-time, part-time and casual positions
Getting involved in a range of broader activities provides you with employability skills that can make the difference in deciding whether an organisation chooses to interview or even recruit you. This can especially be the case if there is more than one candidate, each with very similar skills, attributes and experience. For you, this translates to exploring the many activities on offer both on and off campus while studying. It’s a great opportunity to become involved, network and develop a variety of skills and personal attributes that prospective employers will immediately assess as valuable.

Here are some examples of where and how you can develop valuable employability skills throughout your time at Bond. Visit the Bond website and view the ‘Life at Bond’ section for lists and dates of events and activities.

Activities could include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOND ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Club memberships and involvement</td>
<td>Voluntary work projects Come and see the CDC to find out how you can get involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 40 social and cultural clubs on campus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting activities / clubs</td>
<td>Professional associations Check out the list on <a href="http://www.graduateopportunities.com">www.graduateopportunities.com</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20 sporting clubs on campus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student events</td>
<td>Sporting clubs and activities Become involved in sporting activities within the Gold Coast community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From dedicated weekly events to end of semester events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring / tutoring</td>
<td>Attending relevant seminars / workshops Check your emails to keep up to date with offers and opportunities both locally and interstate for your industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student learning support assistance.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in faculty events</td>
<td>General community involvement Look at the Gold Coast City Council website to see what’s happening locally in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various events from quiz nights, to presentations with key note speakers relevant to your study path.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SAMPLE LIST OF SKILLS DEVELOPED IN BROADER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Leadership skills
- Directing a team
- Managing a project
- Supervising people
- Teaching a skill

Team building skills
- Applying team attributes and skills for a problem solving methodology
- Working in a collaborative and constructive manner
- Sharing duties and responsibilities
- Dealing with conflict, apathy and negativity
- Constructive disagreement

Self managing skills
- The ability to multi-task and prioritise tasks and workload
- The ability to take accountability and initiative
- Self awareness of limitations, strengths and opportunities
- Resilience in uncertainty

Communication skills
- The ability to communicate clearly and confidently
- Negotiating and persuading skills
- Mediation skills
- The ability to develop and present an argument

Creative skills
- Conceptualising ideas
- Designing and developing skills
- Shaping an outcome
- Customised solutions

Top Tip:
You will find that as well as becoming part of a social network, meeting new people, making new friends and generally having fun, the extras provide a strategic way in which to subtly network. This is the beauty of career planning. It is often shaped by random events that lead to fantastic career opportunities in the future.
INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Employers want to see an international focus from prospective candidates as this demonstrates how well students can adapt themselves to a new role in a new organisation. It can also show how students integrate themselves within the organisation in the global arena. Don’t worry if you haven’t travelled extensively or don’t speak three languages - you can translate these abilities in other ways, the primary example is being a Bond student! Being a Bond student places you in the perfect global environment. We have many diverse cultures all in one place giving you the opportunity to work, socialise and network with from all around the world. The abilities this may translate to include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WILLINGNESS TO ADAPT</th>
<th>FLEXIBILITY</th>
<th>RESILIENCE</th>
<th>CULTURAL AWARENESS</th>
<th>INTERPERSONAL SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MANAGE CHANGE WELL</td>
<td>IMAGINATION / CREATIVITY</td>
<td>PERCEPTIVE</td>
<td>RESPONSIVE</td>
<td>OPENNESS TO NEW IDEAS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Willingness to adapt, flexibility, resilience, cultural awareness, interpersonal skills, manage change well, imagination / creativity, perceptive, responsive, openness to new ideas.
To help you identify these opportunities, below you will find a general snapshot of career events held on campus throughout the year. These are designed to maximise your opportunities and develop employable traits. Check CareerHub for specific events occurring each semester and get involved!

NETWORKING
Networking occurs when you interact or engage in informal communication with others for mutual assistance and support. This can include friends, family, previous co-workers, business associates, university alumni or potential employers (to name a few). Your objective is to subtly let the person you are talking to know who you are, what you are seeking and what skills you can offer. Networking comes easier to some than others. Regardless of your skill level, it is a skill that if practiced regularly, can be mastered. It really comes down to talking to people, finding some common ground and developing your contacts.

Why network?
The benefits of networking are numerous. It can be used to open the conversation with future employers, gain new colleagues and gain an outstanding reputation in a particular field. You can develop a far deeper (and often more realistic) perspective of an industry than glossy firm produced brochures and theoretical textbooks. In essence, networking provides the opportunity to cut through the traditional processes of recruitment and get straight to the decision maker’s ear. Much of your value to an organisation is your ability to network. Don’t forget that networking is a two way process. You are also there to provide assistance to others. A good deed will be remembered, so always offer what you can to potential contacts.

What stops us from networking?
The list is endless: it’s uncomfortable; you don’t know anyone else, everyone already knows everyone making you an outsider, you won’t enjoy it or get what you want, you don’t want to appear conceited or self-important, you just want to make an appearance and leave, people won’t like you and so on. Sometimes we even feel that our lives are too ordinary or boring to share. Excuses. Excuses. Excuses.

Consider this: for every event you miss out on, you are missing out on potential opportunities and network practice that your fellow graduate competitors are gaining. If you are serious about building your dream career, then you need to overcome these common fears, get out there, and promote your product. We promise it gets easier with practice.

The CDC’s Four Step Strategy to Networking

> Phase 1: Preparation
Preparation is vital for any networking function. Set clear objectives as to what you want to get out of the networking function:
• How many people do you want to meet, how many business cards do you want to gather, how do you want to be perceived (your ‘brand’) and what is the key message you want to get across?
• Read relevant journals, research the industry and specific roles you are interested in.
• Read the Australian Financial Review (or a similar business orientated news publications) everyday.
• Join an industry association and see if they offer daily news updates to your email.
• Compile a list of conversation starters and also some one-liners that introduce yourself, and get your new colleagues talking about themselves. Practise your one-liners in a mirror. Remember that although you are trying to sell yourself, one of the best ways to establish rapport is a subtle form of flattery. Provide an opportunity for others to talk about themselves.

Keep in mind that a potential networking opportunity can arise at anytime, anywhere, any place. In a sense, this is why it is vital to be constantly on top of the industry you are interested in. If a chance conversation occurs at a friend’s BBQ, during a game of sport, or on a plane - you want to have the right message ready to send.

> Phase 2: Enter the room and start building rapport
Like a Hollywood star, you need to have an entrance strategy that achieves your objectives. Do not think of yourself as a guest, but as an accomplished professional whom people are excited about and want to meet. Some people find visualisation quite useful. So you enter the room and the fun begins. There are many strategies you can use to enter into a conversation, or create one yourself:
• Pick your first chat buddies - There are a variety of ways you can do this. Some people look for the person standing on their own and possibly looking a little lonely. It’s likely they will be grateful for the assistance. Alternatively, you might like to pick the people in a large group.
• Make yourself known - If you have researched beforehand as to whom you want to meet, locate your target. Walk straight up to the person on their own, shake their hands and introduce yourself. Prepare three great opening lines you can use in any occasion - these could be a compliment or a comment regarding the host / guests / VIP, the venue and surroundings such as the weather, work, sports, traffic, parking or travel arrangements. Do not discuss religion, politics, share too much personal information, share confidential information or give strong opinions.
• Remember the name - Nothing will bring you greater brownie points than remembering the name of the person. If you have difficulty remembering names, try this simple memorisation technique: when they introduce themselves, look your new colleague straight in the eye and say “Hi (their name), it’s a pleasure to meet you.”
Phase 3: Keep the ball rolling

One of the tougher situations is the conversation that goes nowhere. You exchange introductory pleasantries and then the conversation grinds to an embarrassing halt. Fear not; we believe that with adequate preparation, this phase can be overcome.

Once you are over the pleasantries, start to discuss deeper topics. This could include:

- Industry or occupation talk
- Current events (not including politics and religion)
- Use leading statements to gather more information
- Ask questions about their organisation and the business landscape they are facing
- Some interesting things about yourself – such as interests / hobbies, professional information, travel, funny (appropriate and relevant) stories and experiences, trivia or pop
- Culture, ensuring you use it appropriately
- Offer to introduce this person to a new group of people

Always ask open rather than closed questions. This encourages something more than a one word answer. For example – ask ‘how were your holidays?’ rather than ‘were your holidays good?’. Remember that if you move to a new group of people, it’s not a bad thing to recycle conversation topics. Just make sure that your previous networking partner has not followed you across. You could refer to your previous conversation, ‘Marcus and myself were just talking about issue X. What is your perspective?’. A word of warning: sometimes it is tempting to tell a white lie, or falsely represent your position to boost your self confidence in a room of impressive people. If found out, your credibility might be at stake. This defeats the entire purpose of networking.

Phase 4: Exiting with style

Remember that networking is about meeting many people, not just meeting one person and clinging to them all night. This is still a wasted opportunity. Exits are often more daunting than entrances. It’s time to move on if an undue amount of time has passed, you have messed up or the group is dwindling. Some suggested strategies generally revolve around being honest:

- State that you are sorry, but there is someone you have to say hi to / introduce yourself to before you leave tonight.
- Let them know that it was terrific to meet them and (if appropriate) you would love to catch up or keep in contact to discuss a certain issue further. Get their business card and shake their hand.
- If you feel rude, offer to introduce them to someone else in the room that you know or even see if they would like to come and introduce themselves to your target as well.

Top Tip:

Check out the Vault Guide to ‘Schmoozing’.

So, you have survived the networking event and you have the business card. Do you see this new contact as a useful ongoing relationship? Even if you don’t, the most random meetings can lead to the most extraordinary opportunities later. You need to consolidate the relationship. Immediately after the event, write on the back of business cards: three things you learnt about this person, and the key three things you discussed. File this away, and next time you see them, you have an immediate point for rapport. People will be flattered you remembered. Seriously think about developing a database (a simple excel spreadsheet will do nicely) for all your information and recording your contact with this person. Send a brief consolidation email stating that it was great to meet them and that you would like to stay in touch. Keep the email very brief as people do not want to feel they are being badgered. But it may be a great idea to try and include one personalised thing that came out of the meeting, for example ‘hope you enjoy your upcoming break in Thailand’.
REFINING THE STRATEGY
- Eating and drinking - Normally these events will involve food and drink of some description. Remember to eat and drink in moderation. Some people are exceptionally messy eaters, hence they eat before they get to the event so they are not tempted. Think carefully about the image you are sending out.
- Think about your dress - Make it appropriate according to the occasion. It is always better to be overdressed rather than underdressed.

SOME THINGS TO AVOID WHEN NETWORKING
The following may be seen as unprofessional:
- Disclose too much personal information. If you are going to talk about your personal life, keep it light and positive.
- Use networking events as an excuse to ask someone out on a date. Networking is not speed dating.
- Be overtly opinionated.
- Invade anyone’s personal space. The only appropriate contact is a firm handshake.
- Swear or use inappropriate language.
- Flirt as a form of conversational style.
- Give one word answers.
SUMMARY

PUTTING THEORY INTO ACTION
In this section we have provided ideas for you to start developing an employment strategy through the various activities listed.

We have examined what employers tell us they look for in prospective graduates and how this translates to skills and attributes you may either wish to refine, develop or demonstrate.

We have shown how you can become involved through:
- Related employment experience where you can road test your career through practical experience, developing new skills and cultivating business relationships.
- Volunteering where you have the chance to gain practical experience while also contributing to the local community.
- Various activities on and off campus.
- The value of networking.

MAKING AN INFORMED DECISION ABOUT YOUR CAREER
We have also demonstrated how you can identify, refine and develop your skills through:
- An unrelated employment field, that is, your casual and part-time position throughout study and how these skills are beneficial to prospective employers.
- An international focus and what attributes employers may be looking for.
- Volunteering, work experience and an internship or clerkship through identifying what you may like to do and the diverse duties and responsibilities associated with the role.
- The various careers clinics presented on campus help you to learn more about the recruitment process and how to start branding yourself.

All this adds up to being able to translate your skills at interview with self assurance.

You may still be asking yourself at this point, how do all these things fit into the BIG picture? Well, it depends on what your goal is! Refer to the diagram on the following page.

“If you always put a limit on everything you do, physical or anything else, it will spread into your work and into your life. There are no limits. There are only plateaus, and you must not stay there, you must go beyond them.”
- Bruce Lee
WHEN I GRADUATE...

WHEN I GRADUATE, I WANT...

A graduate program in Australia

You need to know about graduate season! See the following section for information.

An international graduate program

Start looking into international graduate guides. Come and see us at the CDC to make an appointment.

To secure a graduate job

You need to know how to apply for positions to give you the best possible chance to nail the job! (See the next section)

To undertake more study

Thinking about postgraduate studies? Come and see us at the CDC to find out how your choice can maximise your career opportunities.

I really don’t know...

Don’t worry if you don’t know yet! Have a look through the various options and see which ones strike your interest. Then come and make an appointment with us at the CDC to talk about ideas.

We are experts in careers and employment strategy even if you don’t know what you want yet!
GRADUATE SEASON

Graduate Recruitment Season occurs each year starting around the first week of March and ending in early April. During this time organisations are actively seeking graduates for positions commencing the following year. It follows a specific application process that may include selection criteria, psychological and psychometric testing, assessment centres as well as the traditional resume application letter and interview process.

GRADUATE JOBS VS. GRADUATE PROGRAMS

A graduate program is usually offered by Commonwealth and State Government as well as large private sector companies. Programs offered are often one to two years in duration and provide you with specific training, support and professional development in various areas within the organisations. These programs are highly competitive, but an excellent opportunity for you to experience various areas within your organisation of choice.

A graduate job is a position that is advertised through online or print media calling for expressions of interest. It does not offer formal training as you would expect from a typical graduate program. These positions become available on an as needed basis and can be specified as a graduate position in the advertisement or throughout the description in the advertisement.

WHEN TO APPLY FOR A GRADUATE PROGRAM

Graduate recruitment season for most graduate programs occurs between March and April so if you are graduating at any time throughout that year you could apply for a graduate position. If you were successful, you would be commencing between January and March the following year. Recruitment occurs 12 months in advance of commencement, sometimes even earlier with law graduate programs.

OPENING AND CLOSING DATES FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Opening and closing dates for graduate programs differ widely across organisations and they may change from year to year. A list of participating organisations can be viewed at www.graduateopportunities.com.au. Here you will find opening and closing dates. Additionally you should research employers of choice and locate this information on individual company websites.

Something to think about: Due to Bond's three-semester-per-year study schedule, there may be a gap from when you graduate to when the graduate position commences. Think about how this may impact you and what you might like to do during these free months.

WHAT EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN GRADUATES

Employers will look at a number of areas and skill sets when hiring a graduate. These may include employability skills such as time management and organisation, oral and written communication skills, team work, problem solving skills, research, literacy and numeracy, analytical thinking and the ability to apply knowledge, technical skills, academic performance, cultural fit with the organisation as well as motivation, enthusiasm and willingness to learn. What an employer is specifically looking for will depend on the role you are applying to.

BOND UNIVERSITY CAREERS FAIR

The Careers Fair is an annual event that occurs during graduate season at Bond University. It is an opportunity for students to meet a diverse range of organisations that come on campus to provide students with information about their programs. The programs are predominantly graduate recruitment programs targeted at students who expect to graduate within that year with a view to commence with the organisation the following year. They may also showcase their internship, work experience and cadetship opportunities. For students, this is a key opportunity to meet desired employers of choice, ask questions and stand out as a possible candidate. We bring the networking opportunities to you!

In order to prepare for this annual event, we have put together suggested activities to undertake before, during and after the Careers Fair.
Before the Careers Fair
• Review the list of employers attending the Careers Fair (available from the CDC)
• Research the organisations that you are interested in to gain some background on what they do and what they look for in graduates.
Most of this information is available from their website. Directories of graduate opportunities have links to company websites and graduate programs, try not to ask basic questions that reveal you haven’t done your homework. Some graduate directories include:
  • www.graduateopportunities.com
  • gradaustralia.com.au
  • www.graduatecareers.com.au
• Prepare your resume to take with you to the fair. For assistance contact the CDC team.
• Prepare a list of questions to ask organisations.
• Plan how you will introduce yourself to the organisational representatives attending the fair to make a positive first impression. Develop your two minute elevator pitch – your name, degree, details and what appeals to you about the industry and company.

At the Careers Fair
• Act as if you are going to an interview, not a careers fair – dress, attitude, presentation and practice.
• It is important to make a positive first impression – be confident, smile, make eye contact, offer a firm handshake and ask good questions.
• Take a notepad and pen so you can take notes.
• Make your conversations with employers worthwhile and short - don't ask irrelevant questions. Be aware that other students also want to talk with them. If you have any follow up questions, perhaps ask for a business card. Listen to what the representative says, especially for information that could be of assistance to you when you are writing your applications.
• When you have finished your conversation, thank them and shake their hand. Ask if you can leave a copy of your resume and request a business card (if they do not have them then make a note of their name and position for future reference).
• Show interest in the companies attending, don't just go around collecting freebies!

After the Careers Fair
• Read through the information you have collected and decide which organisations and programs to apply for.
• Make a note of any closing dates and schedule them into your diary so you don't miss out.
• Initiate further contact with employers as follow up - if they gave you a card, send a brief email thanking them for their time.
• If you need any help with your graduate applications, book an appointment with the CDC Team.

Questions to ask
• How many graduates is your company looking to recruit?
• How is the graduate program structured?
• What are some stepping stones or voluntary experience I could do to enhance my career with your organisation?
• What are some of the typical career paths?
  • Is professional development / career advancement supported within the organisation? If so, how is this structured?
  • What personal qualities and skills / knowledge is your organisation seeking?
  • Where are vacancies in your organisation listed?
  • What is your recruitment process?
• What attracted you to work for this organisation?
• What differentiates this organisation from others?
• What do you see are the benefits and challenges of working for this organisation?

Top Tip:
Manage your time effectively at the Careers Fair. There is a two hour window of opportunity, but if you arrive in the last half hour you may not get to talk to all the employers you were hoping to.
EMPLOYER PRESENTATIONS ON CAMPUS
Employer presentations can be hosted throughout the year at Bond University by various faculties. As part of graduate season, employer presentations are hosted by the CDC which provides students the chance to meet some of the recruitment team and possibly alumni now working for these organisations.

Presentations may focus on graduate programs and information about the organisation. This is one of the few opportunities students have to:
• Discover more about the organisation and culture first hand before deciding to apply.
• Have a better understanding through the insights of past successful students on how they applied for the position, the struggles they faced and decisions they made.
• Personally meet some of the recruitment team and commence a networking strategy.
• Ask questions.
• Make an impression!

For employers, it is an opportunity to see the talent on offer at Bond University and they may be silently appraising your suitability.

General structure of employer presentations
• Presentation
• Question and answer session
• Informal networking opportunity over food and beverages

How to prepare for employer presentations
Refer to the suggested activities in the Bond University Careers Fair section, before, during and after. In addition, ask questions!

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The recruitment and selection process for a graduate program is involved and requires your time and attention. There are a few different recruitment selection tools that are used by companies, each designed to be able to get a well-rounded and non-biased view of the applicant and to also ensure recruiters bring forth the best possible candidates to the organisation. Yes, it can be stressful! The process is competitive but it has to be to ensure organisations select the best applicants. If you are interested in applying for a graduate program, allow yourself time to apply for the position and give your application the time it deserves. You will be rewarded for it.

1. RESEARCH
Company research is one of the most important steps in starting your graduate recruitment journey. Ensuring you research and apply only to your employers of choice will save you a lot of time. Remember you do not want to get to the final stages of the recruitment process and then start asking yourself if you really want to work for a particular company.

To get started, visit www.graduateopportunities.com to see the company list from A - Z. You can do this at any time of the year, so review some organisations and get a mental outline of some preferred organisations and the tertiary disciplines they are seeking.

Once you have identified the organisations find out the opening and closing dates of the programs you are interested in and set a timeline of completing these applications.

2. APPLICATIONS
For each position you apply for you will need to complete an application. This is completed online and you may have the opportunity to save and return to complete your application. Some companies allow you to upload documents and some will require you to re-type the information. Be sure you leave enough time to complete high quality applications and if you are uploading documents, remember to submit them in PDF format.

Your application may require:

An application letter
Application letters are an opportunity for you to introduce yourself, sell your skills and support this with evidence. It is also a key opportunity to sell your enthusiasm and interest for the role, so make use of it. Finally, it is a call to action. The letter should be kept to approximately one page and should clearly indicate why you should be considered for the role.

Your resume
A resume is a sales tool that you use to show you can do the job. It is also used to get you to interview stage. It is not a comprehensive list of everything you have ever done nor are you telling a story, narrative style. It should be presented in a clear concise, professional manner and should sell your skills and attributes relevant to what the employer is looking for.

Academic transcript
You can request a copy of your Academic Transcript by downloading the appropriate forms from bond.edu.au/transcripts-letters

Selection criteria
Selection criteria are usually presented as a series of questions similar to what you would expect to see in an exam. It enables you to tailor a targeted response to uniform scenarios, backed up by supporting evidence. This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your skills and to provide examples and evidence of this to substantiate your claims. Think of who, what, where, when, why and how as you are answering each question. Before answering each question consider what the employer is asking you.

For an in depth look at how to write winning selection criteria, refer to the resumes, cover letters and interview section in Part 3 of the Job Search Guide.
3. TESTING
Psychological and psychometric testing is becoming a very common tool used in the recruitment process. It can be administered online, with pen and paper or on computer at the organisation. Although testing may seem a daunting process, it is important that you answer questions honestly and accurately. You do not know what the employer is looking for so do not try and guess the right responses. The following are some links that you may like to look at so you can research and practice different tests, by doing this you will know what to expect and the experience will be easier. Sometimes these tests are designed so that you will not be able to finish in the time frame allowed – this doesn’t mean you have failed! Here are some common psychometric testing websites:

- www.ets.org
- www.morrisby.com
- www.kaptest.com
- www.psychometric-success.com
- www.shldirect.com

4. ASSESSMENT CENTRE
Once you have submitted an application and undertaken some testing, if there is a potential match for the organisation you may be invited to participate in an Assessment Centre.

An Assessment Centre is when an organisation organises a group of potential employees to engage in a set of activities. This is an excellent opportunity for you to demonstrate your suitability to the role. The following are some activities you may be expected to undertake:

- Case studies
- Individual exercises
- Group work
- Role play
- Presentations
- Problem solve
- Individual interview
- Group interview

For each activity, consider what the employer is looking for. Confidence, motivation and enthusiasm are important but employers may also be looking for candidates who:

- Develop rapport with other group members
- Contribute to group discussions
- Communicate effectively
- Demonstrate ability to think laterally
- Use analytical and problem solving skills
- Strategically influence others
- Display leadership and initiative skills

But above all remember to be yourself!
5. INTERVIEWS
If you have participated in assessment centre activities and you are successful, you may be asked to attend some formal interviews. Be prepared to undertake up to three interviews. This may include a phone interview, a face-to-face panel interview and a final interview. The success of each interview will determine whether you continue the recruitment process or you don’t. For this reason it is imperative that you are prepared and have some idea of what to expect.

When answering each question it is important that you think about what you are being asked. In your answer, focus on the skill/s in each question and provide substantial evidence to support what you are saying. This evidence can be taken from but is not limited to:

- Bond experiences
- Employment experience
- Extracurricular activities
- Internships
- University studies
- Volunteering

We understand that applying for a graduate program can be an intense process, particularly if you are applying for multiple programs and each organisation may be looking at various competencies and skills to assess the candidates. We are here to help at this time. Sometimes all you may need is an additional sounding board to bounce or reflect ideas. Feel free to arrange an appointment to come and see us if you would like us to review your application, if you aren’t sure what the employer is really asking or you just need five minutes to take a breath!

**Top Tip:**
Book an appointment with the Career Development Centre as early as possible – Graduate season is a busy time and we want to give you dedicated attention so you aren’t left feeling stressed at the last minute.
GRADUATE JOBS

You may be drawn to securing a graduate job instead of a graduate program. A graduate job is an entry level position for new graduates that organisations may have on offer that aren’t a specific program with specialised training but still offer a great opportunity to enter into an industry.

At this point, we would like to encourage you to use a combination of both the traditional methods of job search through advertisements, but especially utilising what we have shared with you throughout this guide. A great online tool to use is www.myfuture.edu.au which allows you to get an overview of an occupation you are interested in including facts about the trends of work, salaries and where to look for those types of jobs.

Once you have identified some possibilities, you can start looking at some employment websites such as https://www.seek.com.au/. Seek is a great resource and it’s also a good way to find employment demand for your occupation of choice, the employers in the field, as well as attitudes and skills that employers are looking for. This will give you additional scope to refine your employment strategy and what you need to do to enter into the industry of your choice.

It would be most beneficial for you to identify a ‘top five’ organisations to be a part of and then work on a networking strategy to approach them. The best news is, you can do this by undertaking the variety of activities listed in the previous section of this Job Search Guide and it doesn’t have to be a daunting process, it can be exciting!

Top Tip:
Don’t use a shot gun approach – capitalise on your current networks and build it from there!

The following is a list of employment websites that may be of use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seek</th>
<th>My Future</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Career</td>
<td>Job Hunters Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Careers</td>
<td>Career Guide Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Job Search</td>
<td>Grad Connection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career One</td>
<td>Graduate Opportunities</td>
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</table>
THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET

Did you know that only 30 per cent of jobs are advertised? The hidden job market is beneficial when looking at occupations that won’t be advertised in abundance online. This is aptly reflected in Richard Bolles’s (2010) ‘Upside Down Triangle’ model which demonstrates how organisations approach filling a vacancy and how jobseekers approach the job search process to secure a vacancy.

EMPLOYERS TEND TO START HERE

**Within:**
Promotion of an employee, hiring a former consultant for in-house or ‘temp’ full-time

**Proof:**
Recruiting an unknown candidate who brings proof of their skills

**Business Colleague or Friend:**
Recommendation made by a trusted friend / colleague

**Agencies:**
Selecting a recruitment agency to recruit

**Advertisement:**
Online media or newspapers

Resume

JOBSEEKERS TEND TO START HERE

As employers move down their preference list in the triangle, the greater their investment of time, money and risk of recruiting the most suitable candidate. Jobseekers are in competition with other applicants where supply far outweighs demand. Where would you start? Place yourself where the hidden job market abounds through a networking strategy and portfolio of evidence!
Here are some additional tools to use to help you perform company research to find out more about the hidden job market.

**NEWSPAPERS**
By ensuring you regularly read the newspaper, especially on particular days and in sections that are relevant, you will keep up to date with employment opportunities and labour market trends. Use this tool as a way of identifying possible employers and identifying what skills, experience and personal qualities these employers are looking for in recruits. Additionally, it will keep you informed of any business trends, social news and articles of relevance.

**PUBLICATIONS / JOURNALS**
Often articles are published that may give you additional information regarding business trends and company development. This may assist you in identifying employers of choice.

**YELLOW PAGES**
An up-to-date tool for locating employers in your chosen field, their contact details and locations of offices.

**COMPANY WEBSITES**
By accessing company websites you can generally locate information regarding the company and what they do, their culture and values, achievements and general information regarding the history of the company and its team. This will assist you in deciding whether you think you would fit in with that company.

**NETWORKING**
Letting people know what you are looking for is an ideal way to start networking. It will assist you in accessing the hidden job market and provide you with professional contacts that may assist you now or in the future.

Identify events, functions and other networking opportunities that will enable you to meet and mingle with the right people.

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**
Consider joining a professional association related to your area of study. This will provide you with the opportunity to not only participate in activities, but will also enable you to find out the up to date information in your chosen area of interest and make contacts that may be able to assist you with the transition from education to employment.

**INTERNET**
By researching company websites, you will be able to access information regarding products, growth prospects, culture and values, achievements, organisational structure, graduate opportunities, personal growth and development opportunities. Additional resources include annual reports, company newsletters, trade magazines and product catalogues.

**INFORMATION INTERVIEWING**
Is a fabulous tool often used to enable you to obtain the most up to date information in your chosen occupation regarding required skills, qualifications, experience and general career advice. Additionally, it provides you with new professional contacts that may assist you with career development.
FURTHER STUDY

Bond University offers diverse opportunities in postgraduate study. You may be considering postgraduate study for a number of reasons, having established that it will most assuredly benefit your career.

There are different types of postgraduate study available and it is worthwhile to mention these so you are aware of which qualification may be most beneficial if you are deciding whether to pursue further study.

COURSEWORK

Graduate Certificate
A graduate certificate can be completed in one semester or over one year in a part-time capacity. It usually encompasses four subjects. It can be completed with an undergraduate degree or if you possess suitable related work experience, which is determined by the university. You may also be eligible to enrol. Graduate certificates are an opportunity to assess whether a particular specialisation or focus is for you.

Graduate Diploma
This can be continued from a graduate certificate and can include an additional four subjects to complete in one semester (full-time). Alternatively, it can be completed in two semesters full-time (eight months) or in a part-time capacity. It is a higher level qualification than the graduate certificate and has the same prerequisites. A successful achievement in a graduate diploma will credit towards a master’s degree without having to complete honours with a bachelor degree.

Masters by Coursework
Master’s degrees are available in wide range of disciplines. It requires a relevant undergraduate qualification or alternatively, relevant work experience to be assessed by the university. In some masters by coursework qualifications, a research component may be included.

Professional Doctorate
While a professional doctorate has an equivalent education level to a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), the PhD qualification is usually undertaken with the intention to enter into a career in academia. A professional doctorate undertaken as coursework is for those people who are generally seeking to pursue professional careers in the industry. A thesis is required for examination by experts in the same field.

RESEARCH

Masters by Research
Masters by Research is a qualification completed wholly through a research project with a supervisor whose interests and expertise are aligned with the project. This involves a thesis which is examined upon completion.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
A PhD qualification is the highest degree a university bestows. Similarly to the Masters by Research, a thesis is completed and submitted to be examined by a specialist in the same field, who further decides if the qualification is creditable and if the student has contributed something new in the field. This process can be carried out over a four year period.
TOP TIPS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDY

Establish your goals before you commence study and be specific about what you wish to achieve. This will assist you to get through the stressful times.

• Commence developing an employment strategy early to maximise your opportunities upon graduation.
• See postgraduate study as a fundamental part of the greater whole of your career plan.
• Create networks while studying. Utilise the wealth of expertise and knowledge the academic staff possess in your faculty – their insights are invaluable. This may also help to re-establish contacts or remain connected with people from your previous student life or employment history.
• Think of ways to use your study or research to engage with industry and build relationships.
• Make an appointment with the CDC to discuss your ideas about postgraduate study or for assistance to refine a strategy. Postgraduate studies is about maximising your employment opportunities but often when one becomes specialised in something, particularly if there is little industry experience, there may be the overqualified and under-experienced situation.
• Challenge yourself periodically throughout study to stop and reflect. Are you enjoying the course? Have you achieved your goals to date? Have there been any unplanned changes affecting your study? Are your interests, skills and values still aligned with the study?
• Start identifying and compiling a list of skills you are refining and have developed to date, expanding on where you have had the opportunity to do so. When you are ready to commence job searching you will have a comprehensive key skills list to pick the most relevant skills to display.

GRADUATE SITES
Below are some useful graduate websites you may like to visit:
• www.graduateopportunities.com
• www.graduatecareers.com.au
• www.gradconnection.com.au

Scout
Scout is a place where Bond students and graduates can explore employment opportunities, upcoming events and careers resources such as fact sheets, links and FAQs. Current students can login using your current student username and password.
https://scout.bond.edu.au/

BOND UNIVERSITY CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
The Career Development Centre provides a range of services to students to assist in all aspects of employment and career development.

The Career Development Centre is located in the Accommodation Centre, Level 1, Building 9. Email cdc@bond.edu.au or phone 07 5595 3388 to make an appointment.
www.bond.edu.au/career-development
BEGINNING YOUR CAREER AS A NEW GRADUATE

Entering the workforce for the first time in your chosen field of interest can be a daunting yet exhilarating transition which can take some time to adjust to. Here, we have summarised and provided tips on some common concerns new graduates face upon entry into the world of work.

The first few months will be an opportunity to learn about your new surroundings as well as commence your role with the diverse duties and tasks it may entail. You may be incredibly busy and fatigued at the end of the day but feel like you have achieved little. Take this as an opportunity to learn and acquaint yourself intimately with the organisation.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE
Each organisation has its own unique blueprint. There are distinctive sets of values, norms and etiquette. As a new member of the team it is up to you to become aware and be consistent with the way in which tasks are carried out, how the flow of communication is initiated and interpreted, the appropriate dress code, and various policies such as internet usage or the way in which absence is reported. This can be a great deal to learn in a short amount of time, in particular as people will be observing how well you conform and transition.

TIPS:
- Use your initiative! Read and familiarise yourself with the company intranet including induction information, policies and procedures and annual reports. This may give you a head start and direct you to specific information you could need on short notice in the future.
- Learn about the office equipment and software used. Perhaps there is training provided here but ask questions and find out.
- Manage your time effectively. Start planning a work schedule which allows you to prioritise tasks. This will change over time but it allows you to settle into a routine more effectively.
- Ask questions! Don't be afraid to ask for advice from your supervisor whether it is about approaching a problem or performance related topic.
- Communicate well. Get to know the staff around you and communicate in an approachable and friendly manner. When opportunities come your way, put your hand up! You will gain experience more rapidly.
- Admit your mistakes. You will make mistakes - some will be small and others not so small! Admitting your lack of knowledge is ok and far more appropriate than bluffing your way through.
- Find a mentor. Mentors can be invaluable, especially when you are first embarking on your career journey.
- Continue networking. You will be in contact with many stakeholders both in similar and diverse industries. Continue to cultivate these relationships.

Once you have settled into your role you can start to think about professional development and how you might able to maximise your contribution in driving the organisation forward.

FROM PROFESSIONAL TO BEYOND

CAREER PLANNING WHILE IN THE WORKFORCE
Lifelong learning begins now! Whether you have just entered the workforce for the first time as a new graduate or a graduate re-entering the workforce, give yourself the opportunity to keep developing your career. Through this Job Search Guide, you have the tools to do so!

Review your experiences periodically, stop and reflect on what you have achieved, what you would still like to achieve and areas for further development. Be candid with yourself, in particular take time to think about specific areas for professional development. Have you taken the time to record your accomplishments? They will be crucial for you to discuss when you move into your next role as they impact on the contribution you have made in the past.

Over time, you might need assistance with specific career development planning such as a particular goal or a ‘where to from here?’ questions. Feel free to access the services of the Career Development Centre at Bond University or if you have a mentor, ask for assistance. It can take time to develop a strategy but the great news is that you would have had the opportunity to develop a varied contact base which you may wish to call upon!
WORK / LIFE BALANCE

There is a lot of encouraging talk surrounding the topic of work / life balance. However, will you have the opportunity to put it into practice? Can you balance your work commitments and leisure activities successfully?

Work / life balance starts as early as being a student at university, where prospective employers may wish to see that you can manage your time effectively between various tasks. It may be evidenced by the extracurricular activities you are involved in and that you have the ability to integrate yourself well if you are an international student. Practice it here!

There have been distinctive changes in the Australian labour market that have impacted the way in which business is conducted. There has been an increase in organisations outsourcing and off-shoring due to globalisation and technology. At grass roots level, this has impacted the nature of the workforce to become more flexible. Hence, there has been a shift in the perception of leisure and how free time is spent. You may find in the future that in some way this will impact you even though at present you may be expecting to work long hours and possibly additional hours to establish yourself within an organisation.

It is important to note work / life balance is not about being able to ‘switch off’ when you leave work as rarely do people ‘leave’ work at work in today’s technology age. You may still log into the network from home, correspond on your phone, or need to take or make calls internationally where time zones impact. It is more about compartmentalising the time you have and making time to undertake the activities you love. The good news is that in Australia people are changing to incorporate leisure actively into their lives and we encourage you to develop a balanced lifestyle!

LIFELONG SUPPORT FOR ALUMNI

As a Bond University student, you can become a member of the alumni network when you graduate which entitles you to lifelong careers services from the Bond University Career Development Centre. This may be in relation to career development, exploring options internationally or application and resume assistance.

We do encourage you to stay in contact and in fact, many alumni return willingly to offer tips and support for current students who are graduating. This is a great networking opportunity and one of the unique features of Bond University that simply comes with the territory. You are part of a greater community, so we encourage you to use all the services that are available to you!

Once you graduate you can register in the Alumni Network Portal and start exploring different Bond chapters locally or internationally and see some alumni profiles of people with similar degrees. This is a great opportunity to network with your fellow Bond students and a great way to remain involved through attending various events and networking functions hosted by the University.

Did you know that in Australia in 2010, 76.2 per cent of bachelor degree graduates were in full-time employment four months after completing their degrees?
- Graduate Careers Australia, GradFiles
WHAT IS IT?
Your portfolio is a professional way to display your key achievements and professional development in a logical and easy to follow format. It visually showcases your experience and offers evidence to support your claim of a particular skill set. It shows an employer what you have and can do. However, it is not a time capsule of everything you have ever completed and achieved since your primary school years.

YOUR PORTFOLIO SHOULD INCLUDE:
1. A professional resume clearly outlining your skills and suitability to the position applying for.
2. A copy of your degree, including your academic transcript.
3. Letters of reference (recent).
4. Relevant samples of work developed during your degree (tailored to the role you are applying for) such as a mock business plan.
5. Certificates - recent and relevant to the role you are applying for.
6. Eligibility to work in Australia.

CONCLUDING TOP TIPS!
• You are the active agent in your career. This means embracing your life! Drive your decisions and become accountable for the outcomes.
• Commence career planning, being aware that changes do occur. Think about how you may respond to transitions.
• Cultivate strong business relationships with colleagues including your ability to listen, collaborate, learn and be ethical in the tasks you undertake.
• Refine your written and verbal communication skills in order to have a command of the English language in a business context.
• Ensure you have the ability to take initiative and responsibility for your own work as well as monitor your work.
• Become resilient in an uncertain and volatile employment market.

Food for Thought
In a recent article, BNET talks about why job hoppers make the best employees:
• Job hoppers have more intellectually rewarding careers. If you change job frequently you will be constantly challenged with steep learning curves that do not plateau. You have the opportunity to learn more about work and people and this is a useful skill.
• Job hoppers have more stable careers with the onset of the just-in-time workforce, outsourcing and off shoring stability is fast disappearing. You can create career stability through networking, which you will need to do as efficiently as possible.
• Job hoppers are high performers if you have the knowledge that you will not be in the same role indefinitely, you will ensure you do your best – develop key skills and achievements as you will need to place them on your resume to help you get the next job.
• Job hoppers are loyal and great team players and collaborators as this is all they have in a short term capacity. Job hoppers build lasting business relationships with every person so they can help each other out in the future for opportunities.
• Job hoppers are more emotionally mature as it takes a strong sense of self concept to know what you want to do next and choose your path. It involves a commitment to give up career complacency and embrace a challenging learning curve throughout your career. Don’t settle for complacency and downplay self knowledge.
RESUMES

Whether you are seeking a graduate role, an international role or general employment in your field when you graduate you will need to know how to write a winning resume and cover letter, what employers look for in selection criteria and what to say in an interview to help you get that job.

In this section we will be looking at the recruitment and selection process and how you can maximise your chance of success.

RESUME / CURRICULUM VITAE
What are they? A sales tool. What’s their purpose? To get you to interview stage.

In its basic form, resumes are a formal document used to outline your skills, experience and qualifications for prospective employers. However, resumes do so much more if crafted strategically! They emphasise the results of your experiences through specific skills developed that directly match the prospective employer’s needs.

The challenge: You have approximately three pages to put it all on paper, while the employer spends about 10 to 20 seconds looking over it and making a decision about whether or not to pursue an interview.

Resume Development Tips
> Analyse the job description and advertisement.
Whether the description is detailed or general, take it apart, highlighting the key skills and criteria employers are seeking. Write them down on one column and on the left provide examples of where you have used that attribute and / or skills.

> Create a list of core strengths
Undertaking the self assessment in the first section of this guide has multiple benefits. In this case, the benefit is with resume development. Here’s how:
  • Answer the “what am I good at” question and create a list of core strengths which you can place on your resume.
  • Complete the accomplishment exercise and create a list of tasks you have enjoyed doing and did well.

> What is the immediate benefit for the employer?
Be strategic about what you place on your resume. In each instance think about the value an employer will perceive from seeing a particular skill or statement.

> Use descriptive phrases
Here, use verbs to describe experiences to highlight your key skills. We have a list of suggestions further on in this guide – feel free to use them.

> Keep a master copy
It may be useful to start with a master copy, which outlines everything you have ever done. From here, you can pick and choose what to include in your resume to tailor it effectively for the prospective employer. It will also help you to recall key skills developed and examples of where you have used these skills in the past.

> You’ve got the skills!
Frame your experience to suit the particular skills and attributes that are desirable for that role, even though you may have unrelated employment experience.
WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR RESUME
You will find that resumes differ everywhere you go and therefore there are many different opinions on what should and shouldn’t be included and where it should be included. It is important to note the following: a resume’s primary goal is to sell your skills effectively so you get to interview stage. There may be a number of different ways to do this. In fact, your resume should be modified for each position you apply for whether it be an internship, graduate role or casual / part-time employment.

Here, we have provided a general guide on what to include and how best to outline it with a view of the most common applications we see at the Career Development Centre: internship, graduate / professional and casual employment. Each differs slightly as employers seek distinct criteria from each and will use different selection methods to assess your suitability. Please come and see us at the CDC to assist you in tailoring a resume specific for you.

Internship Resume:
• The purpose of your application is to not only show you are dedicated and committed but how you are the best candidate and how you will take maximum advantage of the opportunity.
• Be clear on what you hope to gain from the internship – what are the types of skills you are hoping to refine? What is the area of specialisation you wish to learn more about?
• A prospective employer will want to know why you are interested in applying to their organisation. Here, they would like to see you have researched their business and they may wish to silently assess what you know.

Graduate / Professional Position
• For graduate positions the employer wants to see a comprehensive view of you. They understand you may not possess a significant professional history, yet they need to assess your skills to determine your suitability for the role. These skills can be found in the activities you have undertaken in the past from your education, extracurricular involvement, leadership roles, travel / languages and interests.
• If you are applying for a professional position and you have an existing professional background, the focus of your resume would be on showcasing the skills you have refined through the results and achievements of your activities in previous roles. Leadership and extracurricular activities would not be the most relevant here.

Casual / Part-time Employment
• When applying for casual employment your resume focuses on key abilities and skills relevant to the position. For example, the focus would not only be on key employability skills such as excellent time management but on what types of experience you have had in your past casual roles. Examples may include retail experience, customer service, whether you possess a Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificate, and so on.
• The focus is more on employment history and tangible skills than education, extracurricular involvement and leadership roles so showcase these first.

“As the economy gets tougher, employers expect more from candidates before they hire them. This means more is expected from your resume to make the cut these days... Most resumes lack a sense of urgency. They don’t answer the all-important question ‘what’s in it for the employer?”’

Resume Advice, Four Tips to Power-up Your Resume, Joe Turner, Vault.
## THE PARTS OF A RESUME

### CONTACT DETAILS

**What to include:**
- Your name, phone number and email address.
- Your address is optional.
- This can be displayed in a header so you have more space to focus on your skills on the first page (ensure your email address and voicemail message is professional).

**Avoid:**
- Birth date, marital status or place of birth.
- Religious beliefs and health.
- Family details.
- Political affiliations.

### OBJECTIVE / PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT

**What to include:**
- A short statement, linking your key strengths, skills and experience to what the employer is looking for.
- Focus on what you can offer the employer and be clear about the type of job you are seeking.
- If applying for an internship the objective should focus on acquiring skills and further training that will enable you to gain a position within that industry in the future.

**Avoid:**
- Long drawn out sentences or a lofty mission statement of hopes, dreams and desired perks.

### DEMONSTRATED SKILLS

**What to include:**
- Top core strengths relevant to what the employer is looking for.
- Go back to the “what am I good at” question on page 12.
- Short, descriptive sentences focusing on your employability skills. Your goal is for the employer to read on!
- If applying for an internship, what are the types of skills that you have that will take advantage of this opportunity?

**Avoid:**
- General statements like “interpersonal skills, communication, organised” this is too broad and does not describe how this is a key skill.
- Computer applications or driver’s license – these can be included further on. Sell only those skills most relevant to the position and how you will add value because of them.
## EDUCATION

**What to include:**
- This is presented in reverse chronological order (most recent, working back) and should clearly outline dates, course, institution and any academic achievements.
- Include any areas of specialisation or majors as well as academic achievements.
- For an internship application you may be requested to list relevant subjects completed.

**Avoid:**
- Further qualifications and training. For example, Certificate II in Administration, Senior First Aid Certificate - this can be included in a separate heading 'Further Training'.
- If you have a lot of professional experience, you don’t need to include your secondary schooling in this section.
- Do not include your primary school history.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE INCLUDING
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY INTERNSHIPS WORK EXPERIENCE CLERKS

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE INCLUDING
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY INTERNSHIPS WORK EXPERIENCE CLERKS

**What to include:**
- This is presented in reverse chronological order and should outline key duties, responsibilities and skills gained.
- Use bullet points.
- The focus is on relevant skills developed as well as any specific accomplishments or projects you assisted with.
- This could relate to either the unrelated or related employment experience section in the mythical perfect graduate as the focus is on key skills.

**Avoid:**
- Long paragraphs of a role overview and progression, an employer won't have time to read it.
- Very vague descriptions about your duties where the employer is left guessing how you contributed.

## LEADERSHIP ROLES

**What to include:**
- Any roles you have held that will demonstrate your ability to lead, guide, organise, plan, support and use independent judgement.
- If applying for a casual position, be strategic about whether to include leadership roles.

**Avoid:**
- Examples dating back many years.
- Examples that do not clearly highlight key leadership skills.
### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

**What to include:**
- Any community involvement, sporting memberships, on and off campus activities.
- Active involvement in professional memberships, Bond club memberships.
- Focus on hidden benefits for the employer.
- If applying for casual employment be strategic about whether to include this section. What value is the employer going to place on the information?

**Avoid:**
- Activities that date back many years.

### COMPUTER APPLICATION SKILLS

**What to include:**
- Computer skills that are relevant to the position, listing whether you possess intermediate or advanced skills.
- If you possess a specific software skill that would be used in that position.
- If applying for casual employment for a position seeking particular software skills, place them under your Demonstrated Skills heading so they are visible immediately.

**Avoid:**
- Computer application skills that you are only familiar with.

### LANGUAGES

**What to include:**
- Any additional languages you are proficient in.
- Travel can be included in this area as an accompaniment.
- If applying for casual employment be strategic about whether to include this heading.

**Avoid:**
- A paragraph about your travels where the employer is left guessing how this may be useful for them.
### REFEREES

**What to include:**
- People from your past employment, work experience, and even study who will vouch for you and provide examples of the desired attributes and behaviour to prospective employers.
- Choose a person who knows you well so you have the best possible chance.
- Provide a name, title, organisation and contact details - phone and email.
- If a person has agreed to be your referee give them a courtesy call, especially if it’s been a while, and confirm their contact details and if they are still happy for you to list them as a referee. If you are in the process of applying for a position, let them know they may be contacted.

**Avoid:**
- Family members or friends as primary referees.
- People who haven’t been contacted to be a referee from your past employment.

### INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

**What to include:**
- If you don’t possess a wide base of experience, you may wish to include your interests. If being strategic, they may offer some value to a prospective employer or say something about you as a person - a particular attribute that the employer is seeking.
- If the role involves working with a large team, you would include team based interests. If your role is more autonomous, perhaps you can include examples of team based and individual activities.
- Include sporting activities and other items which can indicate you have an interest in what is happening locally and globally.
- If applying for a casual position be strategic about whether to include this heading.

**Avoid:**
- Mentioning activities such as shopping, the movies and socialising, which doesn’t immediately translate to the attributes an employer may be looking for.

### POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Come and see us at the CDC to personalise where to place this section.

### RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

**What to include:**
- Describe relevant research projects, published articles, papers or books and conferences.

**Avoid:**
- Long paragraphs - keep it to a brief summary and outcome.
# Resume Do’s and Don’ts

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<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DON’T</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify your key strengths and skills you have to offer that are relevant to the specific role and highlight these attributes when composing your work and education histories. Draw upon all relevant experience: paid and unpaid.</td>
<td>Use a Wizard template. Although tempting, your resume won’t stand out and furthermore, an employer may think you haven’t personalised it for the role they have on offer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remember the ‘what’s in it for me?’ rule: What is the immediate benefit an employer will gain from this information?</td>
<td>Include any potentially discriminatory information such as date of birth, religion or marital status.</td>
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<td>Modify your resume for each position you apply for to reflect relevant knowledge, skills and attributes for the role.</td>
<td>Include routine tasks such as faxing or photocopying.</td>
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<td>Use action verbs to describe your experience, for example: created, managed, evaluated.</td>
<td>Lie. By all means, you need to present yourself in the best light, but be prepared to talk about (sometimes in depth) what you place on your resume. Be honest about your skills!</td>
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<td>Keep the information ‘to the point’ as employers don’t have time to read through large amounts of text. Keep your resume at about two to three pages.</td>
<td>Place exact dates for your employment - months and years are fine.</td>
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<td>Make your resume visually appealing in a way that is suitable for the job or industry in question. For example, ensure it is creative for creative industries and clean and professional for corporate roles.</td>
<td>Use long sentences and paragraphs - less is more.</td>
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<td>Get feedback from people you trust to ensure there are no grammatical errors - re check!</td>
<td>Write ‘responsibilities and duties included’ under each item in your employment history. An employer will assume they are tasks from your previous role.</td>
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<td>Use readable and common fonts for example: Arial, Tahoma, Calibri.</td>
<td>State your reason for leaving previous employment. It isn’t open for discussion yet - get to the interview first before discussing.</td>
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<td>Bullet point your duties.</td>
<td>Place a photo of yourself in the top corner of your resume. In some cultures this is a requirement but it is not needed in Australia.</td>
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<td>Email or make an appointment with the CDC to review your resume before you send it.</td>
<td>Cram information in your resume where it’s difficult to distinguish one heading from another. Keep it neat and clean, so it is easy to read.</td>
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"The best work is not what is most difficult for you; it is what you do best.”
- John-Paul Sarte
# Action Verb List for Resumes and Letters

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<th>Administrative</th>
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*Note: The list includes verbs that can be used to describe one’s skills and responsibilities in a professional setting.*
OBJECTIVE
I am seeking a challenging graduate opportunity in the field of Human Resource Management where I can transfer key strengths in client communication, recruitment and selection that I have developed throughout my tertiary studies and professional employment.

DEMONSTRATED SKILLS
• In depth knowledge in all aspects of Human Resource Management with a focus on recruitment and selection
• Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to relate well with people from diverse backgrounds
• High level organisation, administration and planning skills
• Advanced research, analysis, reporting and presentation skills
• Ability to meet targets in a fast paced commercial environment

EDUCATION
2010 – 2011  Bachelor of Business Management – Major: Management
Bond University, Gold Coast
• Grade Point Average 3.2 (1-4 Scale)
• Dean’s List for Academic Excellence; Semester 2, 2010 and Semester 3, 2011
2009  Victorian Certificate of Education
Willow Vale Secondary College, Melbourne
• Tertiary Entrance Rank 78%
• Principal’s Award for Community Service

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY
2011  Internship - Human Resources Department
Gold Coast City Council, Robina
• Undertook all aspects of research, analysis and reporting for recruitment audit
• Liaised with Human Resources Staff and Department Managers
• Participated in Human Resources Strategic Planning Day
• Use of internal databases and systems
2010 – Present Food and Beverage Restaurant
ABC Restaurant, Gold Coast
- Provision of a high level of client service within a fast paced environment
- Management of bookings, seating guests and handling enquiries
- Training and supervising new staff
- Oversee restaurant sections during peak trading periods
- Cash handling, accounts and open and closing procedures
- All aspects of food and beverage service
- Work collaboratively within a team environment

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2010 – Present Volunteer The Aged Care Facility, Ashmore
- Conduct weekly visits with elderly residents
- Participating in centre events including Christmas and Easter activities

FURTHER TRAINING/MEMBERSHIPS

2010 – Present Student Member, Australian Human Resources Institute
2009 Senior First Aid Certificate, St John’s Ambulance
2009 Workplace Health and Safety Officer
2007 Introduction to Hospitality Management Certificate

COMPUTER APPLICATION SKILLS

- Advanced: MS Word, Outlook and Publisher
- Typing Speed of 85 WPM with 90% accuracy
- Intermediate: MS Excel, PowerPoint and Project

REFEREES

Mr Daniel Cullen
Owner ABC Restaurant
07 5564 2345
danielcullen@abcrestaurant.com.au

Mrs Kay Matthews
Manager, Human Resources, GCCC
07 5599 2222
kmatthews@goldcoast.com.au
CHECKLIST - RESUMES

☐ Have you had your resume critiqued by an expert? Come and make an appointment with the CDC to have your resume reviewed.
☐ Is your resume layout easy to read with appropriate headings, font and bullet points to summarise and describe experiences?
☐ Have you checked your spelling and grammar, particularly noting slight differences between countries, for example ‘organise’ and ‘organize’.
☐ Are your contact details easily displayed on each page?
☐ Is your information, particularly your demonstrated skills, listed in order of importance and relevance to the role?
☐ Have you been able to incorporate action verbs for most phrases?
☐ Are your experiences reflected truthfully in your resume?
☐ Is your resume at an appropriate length? (No more than 2 - 3 pages)
☐ Will an employer be able to see that you have made the effort to personalise your resume for their position?
☐ Ask yourself and whoever is critiquing your resume, if you (they) were the employer would you (they) call for an interview?

Top tip:
For international students or Australian students seeking to place themselves internationally resume layouts and expectations differ from country to country. Log into CareerHub and look at Going Global for resume samples and tips in the country guides provided.
WRITING A COVER LETTER

A cover letter sells the enthusiasm of your application. It always (unless specified) accompanies your resume or curriculum vitae. Its purpose is to introduce you and outline how you meet the criteria in the job advertisement and summarise how you are the best matched candidate for the role.

You have ample opportunity to sell your enthusiasm throughout the letter including:

- Your interest for the role - show you have researched the position, for example through mentioning your current employment goal and possibly long term interests, even thinking about the training on offer as well as progression and how this aligns well with your professional goals.
- Your interest in the organisation - demonstrate you have researched the organisation, you know a little about their culture and their current business for example any recent business development activities such as mergers and acquisitions or a move into the global market.

A cover letter may also expand on your resume where sometimes you would like to add more but can’t. However, the employer will probably spend less than 30 seconds reading your covering letter so it is a fine balance of putting too much versus too little information.

Grab the attention of the employer immediately by including the key skills and experience that match the job requirements, show the employer what’s in it for them by indicating what benefit they will gain from employing you. Remember, you are the product on offer, so show the employer you have branded yourself effectively to be placed in their market.

BEFORE WRITING A COVER LETTER

- Analyse the job description, especially attributes the employer is seeking. Highlight these skills in the advertisement and jot down some brief examples of where you have used them.
- Know the employer! Are there any particular areas where you align your skills / abilities specifically to meet the organisation’s needs? Demonstrate in your cover letter how you are a suitable fit.
- Critique your background including study, experience, group projects, internships / work experience, community involvement and travel in relation to the tasks and duties of the role. How can they best be utilised and transferred to your cover letter?

Vault states: “The ‘why’ is the mitochondria, the powerhouse, the nucleus of your letter. You could have done basic administrative duties for an office or participated in a university club or society. Perhaps you helped organise a local event. Mention it. List any awards or honours you may have. Show your employer that you are not only an excellent candidate for the job, but the best candidate for the job. This is the essence of the ‘why’ – why you are the best.”
COVER LETTER FORMATTING

Date

Recipient’s name, title and organisation address

Dear (Use recipient’s name here and only “To whom it may concern” as a last resort)

Paragraph 1: Introduction
• What position you are applying for including reference numbers.
• Why you are interested in applying for the position – be specific!
• Where you located the advertisement.
• Sell enthusiasm in the introduction without being overzealous.

Paragraph 2: ‘Why you?’
• Address the criteria in the advertisement, responding to each key requirement by identifying the skills, attributes or particular knowledge you have that matches the position.
• Provide evidence through these examples of how and why you would be an asset to the company.
• Include experiences that are most relevant for the role, even if it’s not the most recent. Interlace your recent experience throughout this section where you can identify specific skills that would also be an asset for the organisation.

Paragraph 3: ‘What’s in it for me?’
• In this section you can reiterate your enthusiasm for the role and opportunity by providing some evidence of knowledge of the company and how your goals align with what they are offering.
• Incorporate any key attributes that may be seen as a benefit for the employer.

Paragraph 4: Close
• This section is about a call to action welcoming the opportunity of an interview to further discuss the application.
• Reiterate your interest in the position and your desire to know more.
• Formally state you have attached all requested documentation including a resume / CV or selection criteria and note your contact details.
COVER LETTER TRAPS

Using the cover letter as a summary of your resume.
A cover letter is an entirely unique document that not only complements the formal document of a resume but is the key to establishing rapport through your written communication skills. Your cover letter needs to include meaningful information that does not review your resume.

Feeble and long winded introductions.
You have one opportunity to grab the interest of the reader and this is it. Have an opening statement that separates you from the other applicants and doesn't cause confusion about what you're applying for.

Using cover letter templates.
Personalise each cover letter and show the employer you have taken the time and effort to consider how their opportunity aligns with your career path. By all means, have a look at some cover letter samples but only to model yours on.

Rambling.
Don't talk at length about your experiences without explaining their relevance to the position as it demonstrates a lack of focus and leaves the employer guessing how you match their role.

Self focused rather than employer focused.
Remember, it's not about explaining what the employer can do for you! Focus on translating your experiences to the skills the employer is seeking.

Grammatical errors.
Proof read and spell check your document, especially if you are claiming to have attention to detail. Being careless with details, even if otherwise more than qualified may be the cause of a no-go.

Going over one page.
There is a skill involved with developing a cover letter and displaying how you meet the employer's requirements all on one page! Don't force the employer to go over the page in a hunt for your skills. Being able to place all your information on one page (unless an employer expressly states you can use more than one page) conveys professionalism as well as your ability to be concise in how you sell your skills.
Sales / Marketing Administrator Graduate Position

Rewarding and fun working environment - Great Culture
Suburban Location - Parking Available
Diverse role with a Leading PR Firm - ABC LTD

Our client is searching for a graduate administration / marketing administrator to provide assistance to an established and successful sales team.

Your role will be to assist in driving our client's branding and recognition, helping to coordinate all advertising / marketing material and provide support to the sales staff for all forms of brochures, personalised marketing and print / online media. You will liaise with advertising agencies and media outlets, ensuring a high level of professional and dynamic advertising content are presented to the market place.

Our preferred candidate will have:
• Some exposure in an advertising environment
• Refined communication skills, with the ability to handle multiple tasks and deadlines.
• Exposure to preparing a high level of custom brochure and marketing paraphernalia for a sales team.
• Energy to maintain and improve an industry success story.
• A positive, outgoing personality that will add energy to our client's sales team.
• Some experience in producing IM's and marketing submissions, together with a high level of English and grammar skills.

You will have a strong desire to be a part of a successful team. This is your opportunity to become a part of the success story – offering an excellent working environment, a fun, vibrant and rewarding culture with good remuneration.

Please submit an application letter and resume outlining how you meet the requirements to ABC Ltd, 60 Exhibition Drive, Sydney NSW 2000.

For further information contact Kent on 02 5555 5555.
Dear Kent,

I wish to express my interest and enthusiasm for the position of Sales / Marketing Administrator – Graduate position as advertised on the Seek website. I see this as a key opportunity to be entering into the field of my professional interest and transfer the marketing, advertising and human resource knowledge and skills gained throughout study in a role that focuses on my specialisation.

As you will see from the attached resume, I have undertaken work experience in the advertising field where I had the opportunity to be a part of a current advertising project, particularly the creative brief where I participated in conceptualising ideas. I participated in client meetings and worked with a group of ten people. The highlight was when I was chosen to present findings to management. This gave me an opportunity to use my strong communication, administrative and organisational skills as well as being exposed to an environment where there are multiple deadlines.

Throughout my time at university I have had the opportunity to further cement my enthusiasm for this field by being an active member of the Business Students’ Association where I was responsible for marketing various events on campus. In addition to this, I am a volunteer tourism ambassador for the Gold Coast, providing information on local community events to visitors and advertising the Gold Coast.

I envisage being part of a vibrant and dynamic organisation and ABC’s success story incorporates a fresh challenge where I can further develop my advertising and marketing skills whilst working in a fast paced environment with a diverse team of people.

Please find attached a copy of my resume outlining my skills and experience. I look forward to discussing this opportunity further and am available to interview at your earliest convenience. I can be reached on 0410 123 456.

Yours faithfully,

Chelsea Fraser
ADDITIONAL TYPES OF COVER LETTERS

INTERNSHIP COVER LETTER
In a cover letter for an internship opportunity, although your goal is still to get to interview stage, the process is a little different. Here, the primary difference lies in the level of experience. In cover letters where you are applying for positions, you express how the experience in your resume reflects what the employer is looking for. However, in an internship cover letter, you are more than likely undertaking study and seeking some relevant experience. It is about displaying your passion in the field, identifying and showing how your attributes are most suited and what you hope to gain from the internship experience.

What do I include?
Layout may be as follows:

- Introduction: What you are applying for and why – sell enthusiasm here.
- "Why you": Attributes to offer and your knowledge of the organisation, how this internship fits in with your overall career goal and why you are excited about it.
- Close: Commit to further action.

Additional tips
- Keep the cover letter brief, no more than one page and remember to include the person's name in the introduction.

PROSPECTING / EXPRESSION OF INTEREST COVER LETTER
If you would like to enquire about possible openings in your field, planning is the key here! The goal is the same, but this is a little more challenging as you need to establish a connection immediately with the reader where there isn't a direct link from an open position or mutual acquaintance.

What do I include?
The layout may be as follows:

- Introduction: Establish why you are specifically interested in this company and explain why you have chosen to target them.
- "Why you": A little about you including what you are studying and anticipated graduation date, matching specific skills and attributes in a short and concise manner.
- Close: Commit to further action. Acknowledge if you are unsure about current staffing plans but state you are interested in learning more about potential opportunities.

Additional tips
- The reader is most certainly busy and not expecting a prospecting letter so keep the letter short. The aim is just to get the attention of the reader. If there are a lot of paragraphs, the reader may not even read past the first sentence.
- Find out exactly who to address the letter to and be as specific as possible with the type of position that interests you and commit to further action in your letter.
MUTUAL ACQUAINTANCE COVER LETTER
This could potentially be a great opportunity if you orchestrate it well. A mutual acquaintance letter or referral letter can either be a letter written in response to a job vacancy that you came to know of through your friends or network or a general referral by a friend or contact for an expression of interest for possible opportunities.

What do I include?
A suggested layout may be:
• Introduction: Prominently include referral name and their role here to maximise interest and create a connection. State why you are interested in the organisation or what position you are applying for. When talking about the organisation, state how your study or previous experience can match. This provides a lead in to the next paragraph.
• ‘Why you’: Draw attention to relevant skills and show when / how you have used them and how this will be an asset to the organisation.
• Close: Reiterate how your skills have built on the experience you possess and how you could contribute to the organisation. Commit to action and follow up.

Additional tips
• Ensure you have the correct name and role of the person reading your letter from your contact.
• Keep the cover letter to one page.
• Follow up!

FINAL TIPS FOR COVER LETTERS
• Use action verbs to describe your experiences.
• Make it personal! Know the name of the person who will be reading your application.
• Market your unique contribution.
• Have something to say about the organisation.
• Check spelling and grammar.
• Don’t be afraid to follow up.

“The secret of joy in work is contained in one word – excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it.”
- Pearl Buck
KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

If you are applying for government positions (and even private vacancies) you will come across selection criteria. Selection criteria can be very difficult to do – we recommend you attempt a draft then book an appointment to review with one of our team at the Career Development Centre.

Selection criteria are developed from the job description and are questions posed to the candidate where the goal is to display specific knowledge, skills, abilities and particular attributes the role requires. It is an opportunity to provide evidence of where you have used a particular skill/s and how this makes you a capable candidate. The great thing about selection criteria is that there are usually multiple roles you have had and skills you have used in one given experience – capitalise on that! For example, a common criterion that is relevant to many roles is: “Well developed oral and written communication skills.” In this example, you may have had much experience you wish to evidence in different settings – study, work or community involvement, each with its own role, formal or informal.

In saying this, the process of applying and answering selection criteria is none the less challenging, lengthy and tedious as you do need to dedicate time to ensure that the answer is meaningful and relevant with the space you have. Here, we will provide you with some tips on how to approach answering criteria and a little background.

HOW TO APPROACH ANSWERING SELECTION CRITERIA

AN EXAM METHODOLOGY
Selection criteria can be approached with an exam methodology – that is a problem solving methodology. Just as in an exam, where you are asked to answer a question you need to present your case in a well thought out response. In relation to selection criteria, ask yourself:

- What does the employer want to know?
- Are the criteria asking for an example of a skill, knowledge, qualification or experience?
- How many skills have I used in this one question?
- Where have I used this before in the past? Was it an informal or formal role?
- Is my example the best possible example for this criterion?

THINK REPORT LAYOUT
The formation of the selection criteria can take that of a report style layout. It needs to be structured, with an introduction, middle and end using clear language to answer the question. You can use dot points in your answer for ease of clarification for the reader. Place your name, position title and vacancy number and page number on each page as a header or footer and avoid using fancy fonts to highlight headings.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER
Your answers to the selection criteria are a sample of your behaviour. The panel will make an assumption on your suitability for the role based on the information presented. The goal is to be able to guide the reader through your thinking and presentation of evidence, thus linking the answer effectively rather than just stating the situation and the corresponding skills as listed in the criteria assuming this is self evident for the employer.

It’s like completing an algebra problem. If you only present the answer, even though it may be right, you are not showing how you worked out the problem to come to that conclusion and it’s not primarily what the assessors want to see. The assessors are much more interested to see your ability to break the problem down and link your evidence to the answer. It is the same with selection criteria.
### SIX STEPS TO WRITING WINNING SELECTION CRITERIA

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<th>STEP 1</th>
<th>Heading and opening statement</th>
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<td>Here, start with the title of the position and your name. For example:</td>
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<td>STATEMENT ADDRESSING THE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE POSITION OF PROJECT MANAGER</td>
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<th>STEP 2</th>
<th>Subheadings</th>
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<td>If there are both essential and desirable criteria, use these as main headings. Beneath these headings list each criterion as it appears in the selection criteria document.</td>
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<th>STEP 3</th>
<th>Identify what the organisation is looking for</th>
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<td>Analyse each criterion and use markers for future reference. For example, highlight key skills and underline skills or attributes that deserve to be broken down further into specific facets. For example, communication skills can include meanings such as verbal, non verbal, negotiating, mediating, persuading and listening.</td>
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<th>STEP 4</th>
<th>Match the criterion to your skills set</th>
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<td>For each skill set as highlighted in step 3, brainstorm where you have used these skills from past experience to evidence your claims. Your experience does not need to be only work related it can be gathered from a variety of places including:</td>
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<td>• Study</td>
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<td>• Community involvement</td>
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<td>• Work experience / Internships / Clerkships</td>
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<td>• Research and publications</td>
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<td>• On campus activities</td>
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<td>Things to consider here are that even though you may not have experience with a particular task, you may have performed similar work but in a different environment. For example:</td>
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<td>• Working in a voluntary capacity for Youth on the Street may give you transferable communication skills that relates to marketing and advertising to the youth.</td>
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<td>• Working as a food and beverage attendant in the hospitality industry may give you transferable skills in prioritising tasks, organisational skills, customer service and working in a fast paced environment that relates to being able to self manage in a corporate environment.</td>
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**STEP 5**  
Expand on step 4 - provide evidence that supports what you say  
In this step you will need to elaborate on the skills you have brainstormed in Step 4. This means being very specific with the skills in order to support your statement and convincingly demonstrate you meet the criterion.

Use an introductory sentence, asserting the skill.
- For example: “I possess a high level of skill in...”

Support the statement by indicating relevant skills and experience through describing your most predominant responsibilities.
- For example: “In my role of..., I have...”

Indicate the extent of your experience if you have had a lot of it. This can be a number of years experience, amount of money saved for the organisation, number of staff supervised, or number of people catered for in an event.
- For example: “As team leader of McDonald’s I was responsible for the day to day work of 10 staff which involved...”

Provide details for the above statement with what was involved in you undertaking a particular task thus guiding the reader through your actions and specific relevant skills that are linked back to the criteria.

Where you are able, further support this statement with evidence, showing how you successfully meet the criterion.
- For example: “A report I wrote about _______________ was well received by the ____________ and circulated as a discussion paper.”

Mention any qualifications or training you have to further support your statement, especially if you don't have a lot of experience.
- For example: “I have completed an advanced course in MS Excel in order to...”

**STEP 6**  
Critique your work  
Have someone look over the answers to the criteria. Feel free to make an appointment with the Career Development Centre to do so.

Things to look out for include:

Have you used positive and specific language?
- For example: “I developed, formatted and presented a PowerPoint presentation” rather than “I produced a PowerPoint presentation.”

Have you included an introduction acknowledging you meet the criterion?
- For example: “I possess refined time management and organisational skills gained throughout my career.”

Have you included specific background information, linking it with relevant examples from experience, avoiding unsupported claims about your abilities?
- For example: “I feel I have excellent interpersonal skills gained from experience, as my resume can substantiate, and I have no doubt about my ability to effectively communicate with all staff and management.” This statement is based on personal opinion and leaves the reader wondering how and where you have gained these skills. Merely saying you are ‘good’ at it doesn't prove you have it! An alternative may be to state: “I have excellent interpersonal skills gained from diverse group projects at university where I was working with people from different cultures. This experience allowed me to refine my communication skills and build relationships with people from diverse backgrounds.”

Have you addressed all aspects of the criterion?
- For example: “The ability to develop and manage administrative processes, and liaising with all staff to maintain a strong organisational awareness.” Here, you will need to provide evidence of your ability to meet all elements: processes, liaising with staff and how you will ensure a strong organisational awareness.

Finally, proof read for grammar and spelling.
THE LANGUAGE OF SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria use specific phrases and categories to glean appropriate information from candidates. It is beneficial to know the subtle yet significant differences in each of them. Here are some examples:

1. ‘A background in’
   - This category is used to identify your education and qualifications as well as areas of specialisation. For example, a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Criminology.

2. ‘Experience in’ / ‘Proven ability in’ / ‘Responsible for’
   - ‘Experience’: This is actual practical experience that relates to the criteria. It does not mean training or study in this area.
   - ‘Proven ability’: Means you need to substantiate any statements you make in relation to the skill and experience requested. Provide outcomes you have attained if possible.
   - ‘Responsible for’: This relates to the level of accountability you have possessed in the past. If you have had a high degree of responsibility in your past experience, write what you have achieved as part of these duties.

   - ‘Awareness of’: Here, the reader may be looking for a mere realisation with the subject, the least amount of familiarity about the situation at hand.
   - ‘Knowledge of’: Knowledge in this instance can be gained from practical experience as well as training and means more than just a familiarity or awareness.
   - ‘Understanding of’: This adds an additional element to ‘knowledge’ as it requires insight and comprehension of the situation / subject at hand and why it is significant. For example, “a sound understanding of the infrastructure development process” is different to possessing knowledge of it in the sense of how it was developed, who it affects and why it is important.
   - ‘Appreciation of’: If you are asked about having an appreciation of a subject matter or situation, it means you have a deep understanding and knowledge of the subject. This can be through practical experience as well as training. For example, it implies you know particular issues surrounding the subject / situation, you know why they exist and the impact they have and you also have ideas about how to address them for an ideal outcome.

4. ‘Capacity to’ / ‘Ability to’
   - ‘Capacity to’: This relates to being competent with a skill or possessing a qualification that relates to performing that task. For example, having a Responsible Service of Alcohol to be a bar attendant. It may not mean that you have had ample opportunity to demonstrate the skill, but it is a great opportunity to link in transferable skills.
   - ‘Ability to’: This means you have the know-how, and attitude to be able to undertake the task. It also means identifying and linking the appropriate skills desired (whether tangible or intangible) to this task. For example, if stating you have a “demonstrated ability to lead a multi-disciplinary team...” you would need to be able to show resource management skills with a focus on outcomes.
PUTTING IT INTO ACTION:

Consider the following two responses to the same criterion. Can you note the difference between the two? From what you have read so far about selection criteria, which answer best demonstrates the skills required? Why?

Example 1:
I often come across competing client priorities in my work. For example, most clients have deadlines for the procurement of items for their organisation and require advice regarding procurement options and legislative requirements within a certain timeframe so they can complete their procurement. In these instances I have to make a well informed decision as to the priority of clients based on their deadlines and the importance of the procurement. For example, on one occasion the Department of Defence required advice regarding the procurement of an item for an overseas operation. My task was to provide this advice however I also had three other clients who had submitted requests before the Department of Defence. While these other departments thought that I should attend to their queries first I assessed that the operational requirements of the Department of Defence was considered a higher priority than the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade requiring advice about the procurement of a new photocopier. Once I made a determination regarding client priority, I informed all clients of my turnaround time, explained the delays and higher priority issues that may affect the timeliness of advice. I continued to research and provide advice to the Department of Defence which resulted in a successful procurement for their overseas operation. In this instance, all four clients received the advice they required within an adequate timeframe and I received praise for the assistance I provided.

Example 2:
I currently work for the Department of X, whose mandate is to provide procurement information services to other Commonwealth agencies. My customer contact comes primarily via phone but I also spend approximately 20 per cent of my time meeting with customers face-to-face to provide training or more comprehensive advice that isn't as effectively delivered over the phone. My customer contact is high volume and the Department's charter stipulates strict turnaround times that are documented and measured.

I often come across competing client priorities in my work. For example, most clients have deadlines for the procurement of items for their organisation and require advice regarding procurement options and legislative requirements within a certain timeframe so they can complete their procurement. In these instances I have to make a well informed decision as to the priority of clients based on their deadlines and the importance of the procurement. For example, if the Department of Defence require advice regarding the procurement of an item for an overseas operation, this would be considered a higher priority than the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade requiring advice about the procurement of a new photocopier. Once I have made a determination regarding client priority, I inform them of my turnaround time, explain any delays or higher priority issues that may affect the timeliness of advice, and then make an appointment with them at a later date to discuss the issue either over the phone or in person.

As a customer care consultant I recognise the importance of my role in business partnering, as I have access to a large cross-section of staff and agencies. I use this exposure to gain an awareness of current issues of importance and arising issues, and communicate this knowledge to my business unit so that we can prepare for effective future service delivery. When communicating with customers I focus on listening to their needs, and respond appropriately. I believe strongly in educating myself in the business of my customers, as I believe this individual approach assists in developing appropriate solutions, and I demonstrate to the customer that their needs are important and that they come first.

While partnering with current customers, I also form networks with potential customers. I believe this represents a tremendous opportunity to form solid working relationships, improve the image of my organisation, and present as an organisation with a high customer service focus. By discovering untapped areas, needs, and opportunities to deliver our products and services, not only are our image and perceived effectiveness improved, but outputs and deliverables across the organisation are maximised. I have had incredible success in this area of partnering and have high levels of customer satisfaction as measured by feedback surveys. I would be happy to provide copies of these surveys for your perusal at an interview.

(Taken from: “Why the STAR method doesn’t work anymore - Vanessa Jordan”)


SELECTION CRITERIA FAQ'S

Why are selection criteria so tough to answer and how do I know what the employer is really asking?
Selection criteria can send a lot of people into a panic when first reading them. There may be a few reasons for this. The position description is filled with complex language that generally people are not accustomed to seeing on a day to day basis and people lack experience in addressing the selection criteria. The position description can also be daunting to process as they can be quite lengthy. So, before you have even started to answer the criteria there could be an elevated level of anxiety.

Selection criteria require you to answer in a specialised writing style and this requires specific knowledge of what you have on offer, the specific skills, knowledge and attributes you can bring to the role and link as evidence in response to the criteria. (This is another example, where self assessments are very useful to undertake.) The example you use should tell a story that has a beginning, middle and end.

At first glance, you may not know what the employer is asking, but break down the question into manageable parts. Look back over the categories of questions to use as a guide. The position description is also a wealth of information, comb over it carefully and pick up any clues. Organisations provide ample information generally so you have as much detail as possible to link with your response. Always think in the back of your mind, your role is to demonstrate your suitability to the role rather than believe it is self evident from your resume.

Essential Vs Desirable criteria: Are they equally important?
Yes! Although you may be tempted not to elaborate on the desirable criteria, do so! Treat it the same as an essential criteria. Use it as a point of differentiation. It could be the deciding factor between you and another applicant, especially if the panel sees you haven’t just skimmed over the question. A well thought out response here can make all the difference and it is great practice!

Do I have to provide situational examples for each criterion and how far back can I go?
Yes! Guiding the reader through your thoughts on a related situational example is a necessity if you want to maximise your chances of getting to interview stage. Talk about the context of the situation, what you specifically did, the skills you have used and what the outcome was. This makes it easier for the panel to evaluate your application.

We recommend describing situations that are as recent as possible. This means being aware when providing examples that date back some time especially if it was the only time you have used that skill or knowledge as the panel may ask the question whether you even have the skill. An example that reflects this in particular is computer applications, such as MS Office where updates and changes occur rapidly.

Should my examples be from a position that is very closely related to the position I am applying for?
If you possess experience that is closely related to the position, then yes. However, more often than not, applicants don’t have experience that is related. In these instances, you can draw on the experience you do possess and utilise your transferable skills. This is the challenge. You want to provide examples where the panel can see a direct link with the skills, knowledge or attributes needed even if the experience is from a completely different field.

If there are applicants who possess related experience, they may be considered more highly if they have effectively demonstrated they have the skills but not necessarily. The employers are also looking for organisational fit so where you can, let some of your personality steal a glance through your application too.

How long should the answers be for each criterion?
If you are applying for a government position, it may stipulate the length in the position description, either through word count or pages per selection criteria. However, in general every person has a different opinion which can make it very ambiguous. A rule of thumb is to write between half to one page in length but ultimately you need to write enough information to convince the panel you have the skills, attributes and knowledge - it's up to you how you do this.

How do I best answer the criterion where there are two or more questions within that criterion?
If you have a double or even triple barrel question in one criterion it will have multiple elements. A little bit of planning here will help. Break down the categories first and brainstorm examples where you have used these skills. You may wish to bullet point them separately making it easier for the reader to identify.

What should I do if I can't answer a question?
There is always one criterion in the document that makes you feel particularly doomed. You may not have all the experience asked for however, answer it to the best of your ability. Don’t skip the question. It’s just like an exam question; if you missed it, zero marks. Here, try to link similar and related experience while remaining genuine and remember that an unanswered criterion is worth nothing!
What is ‘weighting’ of criteria?
In government positions the selection panel decides on a rating of each criterion according the level of time needed to be dedicated to each requirement from core functions of a role to functions that may be more infrequent. However, each criterion is important. You won’t be told the weighting break down but if you look through the position description in the functions you will get a feel for what is important. Use this as a guide.

Should I prepare myself before answering selection criteria?
Yes! This is especially the case if you have little experience with writing selection criteria. People have the tendency to under-sell themselves as they aren’t sure about the selection process and even their own skills and how best to present them throughout the application. We encourage you to undertake a self assessment - start analysing yourself, research the position and the organisation you are applying to, utilise the services of the Career Development Centre especially throughout graduate recruitment season. Maximise your opportunities by planning here!

SUMMARY AND FURTHER TIPS
• Show, don’t just tell! Simply telling the employer you have the required skill/s will not get you the job. You need to show them what you can do by providing evidence of how you developed the skill and how you have applied it in the workplace, at university, or in any other activities.
• Build a hierarchy of evidence, starting with the strongest proof, work experience, then your university / educational qualifications and then other involvement such as community activities.
• Check and double check for correct spelling, grammar and consistent use of tense. Re-state each criterion then address the question in bullet point form for ease of reading and assessment by the panel.
• Use skill based language when talking about what action you took. For example, “As president of the law student association I: established... coordinated... delegated... initiated... enhanced.” / “To solve this problem I: investigated... analysed... clarified”
• Don’t feel pressured to provide the perfect response. Focus more on a genuine and authentic response connected to your experience and skills and why you want to work for the organisation.
• Don’t copy and paste previous selection criteria responses even though they can be similar across the organisations – always personalise your answers.
• Most selection criteria are online now so type your response in Word and then cut and paste into the online forms.
• Don’t leave them to the last minute, selection criteria can be tricky and often need time to perfect. We recommend you to review your application in advance, draft and edit. Finally, have someone proof read it and then submit.
ALL ABOUT INTERVIEWS

The interview stage is probably one of the most overwhelming stages of the selection process as you are finally face to face with people whether it is in an assessment centre situation, panel or a one on one interview. It can be filled with nervous energy, excitement and adrenalin. However, if you have prepared well, you can maximise your adrenalin for a purpose – channel it into your interview!

For the employer, hiring the right person is part of the interview process. Hiring mistakes cost organisations time and money. In fact, according to one governmental study in the United States, the cost of miss-hires of professionals was two to three times their annual salaries. It is more imperative than ever, that organisations recruit the right person for the role.

Interviews need to demonstrate validity and reliability. This means having one stand alone interview to make an assessment will probably not give the most accurate picture of the depth of your skills, abilities and attributes. What does this mean for you? Even though there are multiple selection tools used in a sometimes very long and nerve racking process you can rest assured that the process is aimed to be fair to you. This is a great opportunity for you, as the best interviewees not only prepare for general interview questions but also prepare for the different types of interviews they may be faced with.

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

The most typical type of interview techniques that organisations employ are the traditional interview, behavioural interview and situational interview techniques. The organisation may use these techniques in a phone screen setting, panel setting, sequential setting, stress setting and one-on-one setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Interview Techniques</th>
<th>Behavioural Interview Techniques</th>
<th>Situational Interview Techniques</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• One of the most common techniques used for decades.</td>
<td>• Behavioural interviewing techniques are designed to assess the interviewee’s past behaviour to predict their future performance.</td>
<td>• Situational interviews involve questions surrounding a case scenario which could be based on a real life, event or current situation. It may also be hypothetical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on academic performance, resume, experience and personal interaction with the employer.</td>
<td>• The focus is on situation specific information to bring to light the skills used to demonstrate the candidate has the skills and demonstrate the candidate can use these skills in a similar situation in the future.</td>
<td>• The focus is on what the candidate ‘would do’ if faced with this situation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Often use leading questions by the employer which makes it clear for the interviewee to prepare an answer the employer is looking for.</td>
<td>• The interview is focused on what the interviewee ‘did do’ in a past situation for a problem / resolution approach.</td>
<td>• Situational interviewing is designed to probe for job related skills especially more of the interviewee’s analytical skills and how problems are handled with short notice and minimal preparation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The interviewee’s skills aren’t assessed using this technique, although the education, experience and qualifications are evaluated.</td>
<td>• Common questions may start, “Tell me about a time where...”</td>
<td>• Common questions may start with “How would you handle...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Common questions focus on goal setting, how you would describe yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, and why you chose this career.</td>
<td>• Interviewee’s are encouraged to use the STARR approach to answer the questions (Situation, Task, Action, Result, Reflect).</td>
<td>• Interviewees are encouraged to review past work experiences, focusing on the problem resolution.</td>
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These interview techniques are used throughout an interview. The situational interview for example, is becoming increasingly more common amongst interviewers. This enhances the effectiveness of an interview from what an applicant ‘did do’ in a behavioural style question to what an applicant ‘would do’ in a hypothetical situational question.

So far we have discussed the common interview techniques used. Now we move on to the different types of interview settings where these techniques are used by organisations.
YOU ARE PRESENTING A CASE
If you give yourself time to plan and prepare early for any interview, you have the key! Think of it like a case. You need to build this case so you have a sufficient portfolio of evidence in order to present it to management.

The prescreen interview is the first interview in a range of interviews you may be facing if you are successful at each stage. Interviews are used to further confirm, clarify and probe your skills and abilities as the employer already thinks you may be able to do the job based on your application. A typical outline for interviews in the recruitment and selection process for graduate positions includes:

1. **Pre-Screening Interview**
   Usually encompassing a phone interview or quick face-to-face interview.

2. **Psychometric Testing**
   This can be undertaken online prior to being successful for an assessment centre or as part of the assessment centre activities.

3. **Assessment Centre / Group Interviews**
   A diverse range of activities from presentations to group activities all assessing specific skills and attributes relevant to the position and organisation.

4. **Individual Interview**
   There are different interview techniques and styles depending on the role you are applying for.

5. **Final Interview**
   Involves individual interviews with primary decision makers of the organisation.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

THE PHONE INTERVIEW / PRE-SCREENING INTERVIEW
Often the first verbal contact you will have with the employer, the phone interview is used as a starting point to explore your suitability and capability for the job. It is also used as a pre-screening tool. These are often completed by the human resource department, graduate recruitment team or a third party where set questions are asked. The idea of a phone interview is to further reduce the pool of applicants. The questions are generally centred around why you are interested in the role and what you know about the organisation. Even if these questions are broad and seemingly straightforward to answer don't fall into the trap of not preparing!

Maximising your phone interview opportunity
- Organise a time with the interviewer where you will be able to be in a space where you can dedicate all your attention to the interview and there are no background noises.
- Make a list of your skills and accomplishments with examples of situations where you have used them especially looking at the job description to identify the relevant skills.
- Research the organisation, especially demonstrating how your skills and attributes fit - make notes.
- Ensure you have a copy of the application you sent, especially your resume.
- Articulate what you say, which can be more challenging over the phone than in person. Be sure to listen to the question, ask for clarification if you're not sure what the interviewer is asking and speak clearly and carefully when you respond. Avoid saying “um, er, ah” as these words are particularly noticeable over the phone.
- Body language matters! Show your enthusiasm by smiling as it will change the tone of your voice. Project a positive image throughout your interview, by also verbally expressing your enthusiasm.
- Have a glass of water ready if you have a dry throat or you feel a cough coming on.
- Have the organisation’s browser open so you can refer to it for specific company information if it comes up throughout your interview.
- This does require some multi-tasking and may not work for everyone.
- Have some questions prepared to ask the interviewer.
- Have your calendar in front of you if you are invited to attend another interview.
- Jot down notes throughout the interview - you won't remember everything!
- Follow up! Ask for the interviewer’s email address and send a thank you note.
THE ASSESSMENT CENTRE INTERVIEW
Assessment centres are just as much part of the interview process as a one-on-one interview! The interviewers are looking for specific behaviours in a simulated organisational environment.

Assessment centres are primarily used in the graduate recruitment process and are especially useful for organisations to see demonstrable skills where candidates (especially graduates) do not have extensive professional experience to ascertain particular skills and also to use in conjunction with other selection tools to eliminate potential bias against candidates.

THE CASE STUDY

Snapshot
• A case study may be completed individually or in a group.
• You may be given a business situation and asked to make decisions and recommendations about what should be done, and report or present your findings to management.
• The case studies can be quite descriptive and in-depth. There may be contradictory, ambiguous or even irrelevant information which you need to filter before you start developing a strategy.

Competencies Assessed
• Analytical ability and thinking logically about a problem, issues or data.
• Planning ability which includes the ability to organise the situation into manageable parts.
• Strategy development skills including proposing solutions.
• The ability to make decisions.
• Presenting skills.

Top Tips
• The subject matter here is generally not important - it may even be completely unrealistic, so you will not be tested on your knowledge, even if it’s right! The employer wants to know your ability to analyse a complex problem and your thinking behind the solutions.
• Ask yourself lots of questions about the subject matter, identify issues from here and even discern the potential broader issues involved for the organisation.
• Consider facts and trends of the industry and use these as part of your strategic thinking - are there correlations?
• At some point you will need to make some decisions. You will probably not always have all the information needed to do this. However, if you are making assumptions based on certain data, say so and talk about your reasoning behind the assumptions.

THE ROLE PLAY

Snapshot
• Role plays are commonly used in assessment centres as they can be applicable to a range of roles and people from a supervisor to general management. Here, the prospective employer can see how well you exhibit the required behaviours of a role and how you relate with other people in the process.
• The scenario given for role plays will often reflect a typical day on the job which could further involve a stressful or awkward situation requiring you to think quickly to solve the problem.

Competencies Assessed
• Your ability to problem solve and manage conflict on the spot.
• Verbal communication skills.
• Decision making skills.
• Planning and adaptability.
• Mentoring and coaching.
• Customer focus.

Top Tips
• The key purpose of role plays is to see what competencies you display through your behaviour which matches the role. So doing well in this exercise means knowing as much as you can about the position so you can display these behaviours throughout your role play.
• You will more than likely be placed on the spot with a scenario. Typically you will have a small amount of time to read the brief and a certain amount of time to conduct the exchange, usually around 20 to 30 minutes. This time doesn’t allow you to explore issues in depth so a little bit of planning while reading will assist greatly.
• Focus on coming to the main issue quickly as this will be a reflection of your planning and analytical abilities to the assessors.
• Keep control of the dialogue and know the conclusion you wish to reach as this will assist the line of communication and the types of questions you ask.
THE GROUP ACTIVITY

Snapshot
• Group exercises are commonly used for a number of reasons. They can kick off the assessment centre activities as they are a nice icebreaker and can settle nerves, or alternatively it can be a gruelling few hours or even days with little to no one-on-one contact with the interviewers.
• There are different types of group exercises as part of the group interview process including discussion topics, role playing, and presenting and you may be required to do any number of these.
• You may be presented with a fictitious scenario (generally survival and creative type situations) where you work together in a team to resolve the issues.
• Group activities allow the organisation to see how you behave in a team dynamic and identify dominant and loud behaviour to shy and introverted behaviour.
• It’s not about solving the problem by yourself in the speediest manner, it’s about teamwork

Competencies Assessed
• Team skills
  • Listening to your team members.
  • How you communicate with your team members to come to a solution.
  • The way in which you acknowledge and remain respectful of other team members’ ideas.
• Leadership skills
  • The way in which you facilitate discussion for example, in relation to solving a problem.
  • How you encourage others to join in and share their ideas especially if you can see that they are quiet.
  • If the group goes off the track, demonstrate leadership by bringing the group back on track.
• Problem solving skills in a collaborative manner
  • You don’t have to have the ‘golden ticket’ of solutions, you just need to be able to explain your reasoning behind what you decide and you need to do this in a collaborative manner.
• Interpersonal and communication skills
  • Use active body language! Make eye-contact with all members, smile and have a positive, friendly and approachable attitude.
  • Use language that is appropriate for the group setting in an assessment centre.

Top Tip
• A common trap people fall into is thinking that in order to display leadership skills effectively you need to be directing the group. This can end up in you believing your ideas are the best ones, not listening to other group members or being dismissive of their ideas by your body language. To the organisation observing it can come across as being dominant. Instead, demonstrate your leadership skills through being collaborative, involving everyone, and asking questions about other peoples’ ideas and lines of thinking.
• Prepare before the day! Think about previous teams you’ve worked in or discussions you’ve had in a class situation. What types of positive behaviour did you display when faced with problems? What was the process you followed to complete projects in group assignments?
• On the day, read and go over the instructions, make notes of ideas and solutions to discuss with the group as well as your thought process behind them.
• There can be a heightened sense of anxiety in these environments as there are many things that are happening at the same time.
• The assessors are observing you, you need to be conscious about the behaviour you are exhibiting (verbal and non-verbal) and you have a scenario that needs to be resolved. There are some things to be aware of, things you wouldn’t normally do but pressure and nerves may get the better of you! These may include:
  1. Talking over the top of people.
  2. Not contributing.
  3. Cutting people off mid sentence.
  4. Talking to half the group.
  5. Having a different conversation with someone next to you.
  6. Not listening. The assessor will note this! Acknowledge your team members.
  7. Presenting an idea and not following through with a line of thought.
  8. Finally, be yourself and see this as a wonderful opportunity to learn and gain experience!
**THE IN-TRAY EXERCISE**

**Snapshot**
- In-tray exercises are a simulated business activity where you assume a role of an employee who is required to go through the imaginary contents of an in-tray.
- The items in the in-tray will vary depending on the role you are applying for, for example if you are applying for a management role, items may be centred around team building, coaching, current issues facing the organisation and motivation.
- In-trays can take the shape of various formats, but a typical example is where you are given 12 to 24 in-tray items which you need to prioritise and action. This can be followed by answering a series of multiple choice questions (around 15 to 30) or an interview with an assessor where you are expected to justify your decisions.
- In addition to this, you are provided with details such as your role responsibilities, organisation information, a list of staff you report to, key employees that you interact with and a calendar for the next two to three months.

**Competencies Assessed**
- Ability to organise and prioritise work load.
- Analytical skills.
- Written communication skills.
- Delegation skills.
- Use of independent judgement.
- A typical outline can include: identify key issues, set priorities, anticipate problems, explore issues, suggest options, make recommendations, and provide reasons.

**Top Tips**
- Practice before the day! An in-tray exercise can be overwhelming as you are presented with a great deal of material you need to sort through under a strict time frame and this may mean you miss a significant hidden issue. With practice, you can see which in-tray items you find challenging and how best to respond to the issues.
- The in-tray exercise may be something completely unexpected and unrelated to the position you are applying for. The topic in this case is not the most important aspect. You will be assessed on how you handle, prioritise and organise complex information and make decisions based on this information.
- Try to place yourself in the prescribed role, rather than just completing the exercise and state the reasons behind the decisions made in a clear manner. Don't assume the assessors will know this.
- Be aware of your time frame, but do not allow it to overwhelm you. The assessors want to see how you respond to major issues more than being able to complete the whole exercise in the time prescribed.
- For more information go to www.psychometric-success.com.
## THE PRESENTATION

### Snapshot
- Presentations are an excellent opportunity to display your employability skills and a chance to really differentiate you from the competition.
- Here, you may be asked to prepare a short talk to present to a panel. You may be given the topic in advance so you can prepare but usually you will be asked to present on the day.
- The subject matter is not paramount here, you may be given a topic in relation to recent news or the organisation and industry or it can be something arbitrary like chocolate. The organisation is not assessing your knowledge of the topic, they will be looking at your ability to improvise and communicate in a persuasive manner.
- Leverage this opportunity! You are not in a group situation so you don't need to consider other team members and you have significant control in the way you drive the presentation. Show your enthusiasm for the position and how you can add value beyond the scope of the role throughout your presentation by the way in which you communicate and how you have planned the presentation.
- If you are given a topic to present on the day, typically you have approximately 30 minutes to prepare and 10 to 20 minutes to present.

### Competencies Assessed
- Interpersonal skills, especially the ability to communicate your message in a clear and persuasive manner. Maximise this through a three step approach:
  1. Organise the material effectively
  2. Think about how you will present this information
  3. Be prepared to handle questions
- How well you cope with tight timeframes and your ability to improvise with limited time for preparation.

### Top Tips
- Introduce yourself and the subject matter clearly.
- Show your enthusiasm for the subject and demonstrate your interest, this can be infectious and can capture your audience immediately, especially if they have seen many presentations throughout that day.
- Make eye contact with the audience; ensure your gaze reaches all the assessors! Don’t speak to the floor, or into your notes, or to the back of the audience.
- Keep things structured logically and allocate some practice time as part of your preparation.
- Ensure all equipment and visual aids are working prior to presenting.
- Have a clock near you, where you can see the time and stick to the timeframe given.
- Prepare for questions.
# THE INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

## Snapshot
- There are a variety of individual exercises, all designed to assess your skills and abilities.
- Exercises may involve a written task that challenges you to think through a problem or write about a particular topic that is related to the position.
- Interviews are a common form of individual exercise, either one on one or in a panel situation. It may also involve the ‘in-tray’ exercise.

## Competencies Assessed
- Your ability to write quickly and logically, expressing your ideas in a clear format.
- Technical skills.
- Decision making skills.
- Comprehension of information.
- Planning and organisation skills.
- The way in which you handle complex information.

## Top Tips
- You may be in a room with a group of people but undertaking the exercise individually. This can be nerve racking! Don’t be put off by others who work more quickly than you or differently to you. This is based on your individual skills and abilities and how you will contribute them to this exercise. Don’t use other people as a guide!
- Some organisations want to know why you have made a particular decision, so annotate items if you need to.
THE PSYCHOMETRIC TEST

Snapshot

• Psychometric testing is commonly used in conjunction with other selection tools as it gives the prospective employer insight into the way in which you handle stress, how you relate with other people, the type of work you enjoy and if you will be able to manage the demands of the position.
• There are two types of broad psychometric tests: personality and interest tests, and aptitude and ability tests.
• Personality tests measure the way in which you interact with people and are designed to quantify feelings, thoughts and behaviours. It is also significant in providing insight into your enthusiasm and motivation.
• Ability tests measure your capability to undertake activities and tasks and are designed to assess your logical reasoning. Aptitude and ability tests may include verbal ability, numeric ability, abstract reasoning, spatial reasoning, and mechanical reasoning.

Competencies Assessed

This may vary depending on the position you are applying for:
• Verbal Ability Tests are used to assess spelling, grammar, sentence completion, analogies, word groups and critical reasoning, useful for positions which require interpreting and making decisions on reading complex information and data.
• Numeric Ability Tests are used to assess arithmetic, number sequences and data interpretation.
• Abstract Reasoning Tests are used where there is a high degree of problem solving, analysing complex data, developing strategies, and performing non-routine tasks.
• Spatial Reasoning Tests are used to indicate your ability to visualise and manipulate two and three dimensional shapes and patterns common for architecture, maths and science industries.
• Mechanical Reasoning Tests are used to measure your direct knowledge of mechanical concepts such as levers, pulleys, springs, shop arithmetic and basic electric circuits.
• Personality and Interest Tests provide insight into motivation, and whether you will fit into the organisation in relation to personality and work style.

Top Tips

• Prepare before the day by undertaking some practice tests as this will have multiple benefits. It will minimise the stress and nervousness on the day and it will give you an idea of your optimum pace to answer the questions. Keep to this pace while answering the questions on the day.
• Don’t panic mid way through if you realise you aren’t going to finish. Some tests are designed not to be finished and you may do yourself a disservice if you deviate from your pace. However, don’t spend additional time on questions you know you will struggle with. Guess the answers here and move on to the questions you are more comfortable with.
• If you do realise you will finish the test before the fixed time, don’t spend additional time on the questions - stick to your optimum pace and give yourself the opportunity to come back to questions you are unsure of.
• Don’t be conscious of other people around you and the pace they are travelling. There is nothing to gain from knowing if they are ahead of you and this can affect your confidence levels.
• Listen carefully to the instructions on the day and if something doesn’t make sense, ask. If you are using a PC or laptop, ensure it is working.
• If you aren’t sure about a question and you’re running short on time, guess the answer. If time constraints aren’t an issue then mark the question to come back to at the end.
THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

Snapshot
- The assessment centre session may end with an individual interview where you may be asked about the day’s events, and your feedback and reactions.
- It may be a five minute interview or it may be a more in depth chat about the activities you have undertaken throughout that day. It could be the first time you are talking face to face with a person from the organisation discussing the events of the day.
- The individual interview as part of the assessment centre activities is not the in depth interview you will have if you are successful for the next stage of the recruitment process.

Competencies Assessed
- You may not be assessed on core competencies or skills as much as you might be assessed on your reflections from the day and providing feedback on the experience.
- It is an opportunity for the organisation to meet you one-on-one. They may assess your verbal and non verbal body language and the way you present.

Top Tips
- Treat this like a formal interview! The introductions and questions could be quite informal, however don’t make the mistake of becoming too ‘comfortable’ as the recruiters are assessing you constantly throughout this process.
- Be prepared for a possible one-on-one meet and greet / feedback session and think about what you might say in relation to the day’s events, especially reflecting on the activities and the way in which you contributed.
- Be prepared to answer formal questions with examples of past experiences. When undertaking this, think about the particular skills that the recruiters were looking for throughout the activities. Bring this together with additional examples to cement the recruiters view. You may be able to do this especially for an activity you feel you didn’t perform optimally.
THE PANEL INTERVIEW

Panel interviews are very common in the recruitment process for the following reasons:

• It reduces the possibility of bias occurring as you have multiple team members discussing the candidate's responses and contributing to a fair and valid picture.
• It is considered to be more time efficient for employers as there could be a number of different decision makers in different departments who can all interview the candidate at the same time, rather than organising several interviews.
• It gives the organisation a chance to see how well the candidate performs in a stressful environment responding to a diverse range of people.

What to expect

Panel interviews can be stressful as you are facing multiple decision makers rather than just one or two. It is almost impossible to use the interpersonal techniques for developing a relationship that you would use in a one-on-one interview.

Most panel interviews occur in the conference room of the organisation where there can be a variety of people present. It is designed to be uncomfortable and the interview in nature is more rigorous and detailed as you are facing questions from different experts. The panel is made up from a mix of relevant specialists. For example, human resources, technical experts and department and/or regional managers could make up the panel. It can vary from two to eight people.

Panel interviews are highly organised with a structured set of questions. Once the introductions have happened the group will get straight to the subject at hand. Questions will be asked that will try to draw out what type of person you are and each panel member will have a role to play. For example, human resources will be asking questions that relate to organisational fit including culture and people. Technical experts will be determining whether you have the required technical skills for the role and department managers will be asking questions in relation to your ability to perform in the job and the core attributes and skills you will bring to the position.

In closing the panel interview, you will have the opportunity to ask questions. Make sure you do!

Panel interview success tips

• Prepare for panel interviews as you would for a one on one interview in relation to the skills the organisation is seeking and examples of where you have used them. Research the company and formulate questions to ask.
• Remember the names of the people on the panel and use them throughout the interview. Write the names down with your notes in order of where they are seated.
• Make eye contact with each individual on the panel. This can be challenging if there are many people on the panel but try to meet each person's gaze in a focused manner, especially the person who asked the question.
• You will probably feel wildly uncomfortable and 'out numbered'. Don't allow your nerves to overwhelm you as the environment has been set like this for a reason - to assess how you handle pressure. Stay positive, take measured breaths and remain calm. Remember the company wouldn't have invited you to interview if they didn't think you were a possible candidate.
• Take note of each person's concerns or specific questions which you could possibly incorporate into your thank you letter. Alternatively, you could use this to comment on at the end of the interview. This may be a differentiating factor from other candidates and demonstrates your ability to be attentive and focused.
THE STRESS INTERVIEW

All interviews by nature are stressful, however in a stress interview it is elevated to a new level. Stress interviews are commonly used in industries where your role requires you to thrive in an environment of significant pressure such as sales, customer service and public relations.

Managing pressure and high demands of a fluctuating and possibly changing environment is the core competency the interviewers want to assess. It may be through this type of interview they get to see how you react when placed under significant stress. Here are some examples of interviewer stress tactics:

- You could be kept waiting at reception for long periods of time before the interviewer greets you. This has been known to be up to one hour!
- When attempting to establish rapport or answer questions, you may be faced with long silences or cold stares.
- Interviewers may intimidate, interrupt or behave uninterested in what you say, for example saying, “I’m not sure why I am interviewing you.”
- Interviewers may challenge your statements and disagree with what you say.
- Interviewers could play ‘good cop, bad cop’.
- You may be asked to do something unexpected, for example, “sell me the painting on the wall” or “tell me about your best MacGyver moment?”
- The interviewer may ask the same question several times throughout the interview, pretending not to have understood your answer or that they have previously asked that question.

In all the above examples, interviewers could have painful questions with an aggressive interview attitude where miscommunication appears to be in abundance with body language leaving you think you have made a big mistake. However, rest assured it is designed to see whether you have the grit to withstand the stresses of the role.

What you may be feeling:

- Angry and affronted with what the interviewers are saying.
- Elevated levels of anxiety.
- Everything you have prepared for has just lost all meaning and clarity.
- Pressure, lack of control and flustered.
- Unable to gauge what the interviewers are looking for in their questioning.
- Your self confidence levels may be dwindling rapidly.

What you need to do:

- Unless you have been through many stress interviews and you are feeling fantastically confident, if you step into the interview without being prepared, it is too late! You have a good chance of succumbing to the tactics of the interviewers and losing control of the interview. You may not necessarily be told, ‘this will be a stress interview’, but act pre-emptively none the less. Contact the organisation in advance to find out who will be interviewing you, what their roles are and prepare! If you prepare, you may be pleasantly surprised if it doesn’t go that way.
- Detach yourself emotionally, don’t make it personal and remain calm. Make a distinction contextually as an individual who needs to assert their relevant skills as a match. Remember, the interviewer doesn’t hate you. This is a test to see whether you have what it takes to succeed. Demonstrate through the way you behave, that you are able to handle pressure.
- The aim of the stress interview is to throw you off course and push various buttons to see your reactions. Remain focused on the interview and the questions (even if they baffle you) so you can maintain control without allowing yourself to feel like you have lost the interview. Use body language that hides your nerves: use folded hands on the table; make eye contact with all individuals – even if there is a person who gets up constantly to move around seeming utterly disinterested.
- The interviewers can’t assess your confidence unless you show them you have it! Yes, easier said than done in these circumstances, however, again, you wouldn’t be at the interview if the interviewers didn’t believe you were capable of fulfilling the role. Have the confidence to show them what you can bring to the company and believe in yourself.
- Don’t rush into a response to the questions asked. Clarify the questions, sometimes the interviewer is expecting you to probe further. It can also buy you some time. Focus on the quality of your response, not necessarily the right answer. If you answer the question with a story, don’t lose the point.
- You may find that stress interviews are hidden under the banner of panel interviews. More often than not, you will find that on a panel interview there will be a person playing ‘bad cop.’ In each scenario, use your judgement and assess the situation early on. Ask yourself if this is a stress test or if this is the organisational culture of the company. This is as much an opportunity for you to see whether you are suited to the organisation and role as it is for the interviewers assessing your capabilities.
• **THE SEQUENTIAL INTERVIEW**

Sequential interviews are a series of individual interviews held consecutively with key decision makers in the recruitment process. It may be over the course of one day or over a period of a few months. It’s a panel line up with the one on one factor. For you, this means you have the opportunity to establish rapport and find a common ground throughout the interview as well as learn more about the position and the organisation as you undertake more interviews. For the people interviewing, it means they can be asking questions relevant to their area of expertise.

**Tips for Sequential Interviews**

- You may be asked the same or similar questions a number of times and you need to treat each interview as a new interview. Answer each question fully, even if you feel you are repeating your response - the interviewer has not heard it!
- Don’t feel like you should not provide the same example to support your response for the same question. Again, the interviewer has not heard that example. However, if you can provide diverse examples do so. You are building a great portfolio of evidence in your ability to perform in the role when all the interviewers will deliberate after the interviews as to who is most suitable.
- Establish rapport with each interviewer. Treat each interviewer with the same respect and degree of importance.
- Try to find out a little about the next interviewer before moving on. For example, “does Mr Brown feel the same way about the creative aspect as you do?” This will help to establish some common ground initially at the next interview.
- As you gain more insight into the organisation through the interviews, demonstrate that knowledge to display your familiarity with the organisation.
- Remain positive and enthusiastic throughout all interviews, even though you may be exhausted by the end!

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• **THE VIDEO CONFERENCE INTERVIEW**

You may find you are invited to participate in a video interview. Organisations use video conferencing to accelerate the interview process where you may be applying for a job interstate or internationally. Here, recruiters can complete first round interviews and save on transportation costs and time required to schedule one-on-one interviews. First round interviews also give the organisation a chance to select the most suitable candidates for the next stage where you may be invited for an interview at the organisation.

**Video Conferencing Success Tips**

- Treat the video interview the same as a face to face interview. Dress appropriately and prepare beforehand! Although it appears to be more daunting initially as you are talking into a microphone facing a camera, you will find it is not much more different than a face to face interview. You won't be interviewed from home. The interview will be in a professional environment, either at a branch of the organisation or at a recruiter’s office which has video conferencing. The same rules apply.
- When you dress for a video interview, be aware of what you choose to wear. Stick with neutral tones for suit attire as stripes and other patterns may distort with movement on the camera and be a possible distraction for the interviewers.
- Prior to the interview, ensure the organisation has everything they need from you such as your resume. Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early, so that you can become comfortable with your surroundings and receive assistance from the site contact on the process. This is especially important, even if you are familiar with how the technology is operated. The contact will show you how to adjust the camera and the volume.
- Be aware of noise. The microphones are sensitive, and the shuffling of papers or tapping of a pen will be audible.
- Ensure you can see yourself in the panel on the monitor. This is important, as you can gauge where you need to be situated to maintain that frame and keep your movement to a minimum preventing an out of focus frame. It is also useful to know how the recruiters will see you so you can make some last minute touch ups if needed!
- Body language is significant here, as every movement is accentuated on the monitor and the recruiters will be reading your body language the minute the interview starts. Look at where the camera is positioned and address the interviewers here, rather than looking directly at the monitor. Speak clearly and concisely, and remember to smile!
- There may be delays in sound. If this is the case, don’t immediately jump in to answer the question, allow some time to ensure the interviewer has finished speaking. When you respond, become aware of how long you are speaking and get to your point promptly.
- In the rare event of technical problems, don’t panic! Calmly advise the interviewers that you are having problems, advising them of what you can / can’t see or hear and let them know you will ask for assistance from the on-site contact.
- The interview process is the same for a face to face interview and you will be asked the same type of questions. This also means taking the opportunity to have questions prepared for the interviewers at the end of your interview.
PRACTISE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

THE TRADITIONAL INTERVIEW

• Tell me about yourself.
• Where do you see yourself in five years time?
• Why are you interested in this position?
• What are your strengths?
• What are your weaknesses?
• How do you handle leadership?
• How do you manage conflict?
• How do you handle unplanned change?
• What are your biggest accomplishments?
• Why did you leave your last job?
• Besides your education, what other areas of preparation do you have for this position?
• What is most important to you in a job?
• Why do you feel you are qualified for this job?

THE BEHAVIOURAL INTERVIEW

Communication

• Tell me about a time when you have had to use persuasive communication skills to convince someone to see things your way.
• Describe a time when you had to present complex information. How did you convey your message?
• How have you used your written communication skills to improve workplace communication?

Team work

• When you have worked on a team project, have you ever dealt with a strong disagreement among team members or a member who didn’t do their part? What happened and how did you handle it?
• Describe a team experience you found rewarding. What were the core positive team dynamics?
• Give an example of where you have worked effectively with people to accomplish an important result.

Problem solving

• Describe a time where you have facilitated a trouble shooting approach to a problem in your work place.
• Tell us about a success you’ve had with an especially difficult team member.
• Tell us about a time you did something completely different from the plan / assignment. Why?

Initiative

• Give us an example of a time you have developed new ideas to improve work practices.
• Tell us about a time you have gone beyond the scope of your duties to get a job done. How did you feel about doing that?
• What motivates and excites you?

Leadership

• Describe your leadership style and provide an example of where you have successfully led a group.
• In group projects, how did you go about engaging people to participate? What was the result?
• Tell us about a time where you have influenced the outcome of a decision by taking a leadership role?

Planning and organising

• How do you go about developing, setting and achieving goals?
• Tell us about a time where your plan was upset by unforeseen circumstances. What did you do?
• What have you done to be effective with your organisation and planning?

Self management

• Describe a time where you were faced with issues that tested your coping skills.
• Can you recall a time you were less than pleased with your performance. Why and what did you learn from this experience?

Learning

• How do you evaluate success?
• Tell us about a time where you have contributed to the learning environment through sharing knowledge and experiences.

Interpersonal skills

• Give an example of a time where you have had to use your assertiveness skills. What was the outcome? How did you feel?
• Tell us about the most frustrating individual you have ever worked with and how you managed to work with them.


THE SITUATIONAL INTERVIEW

Communication
• Who would you talk to and what would you say if you found out that a staff member was divulging highly confidential information to an outside party?
• You work closely with a staff member who is consistently making mistakes that are affecting customers and your own ability to complete set tasks. How do you handle this?

Teamwork
• How would you deal with a team member whom you seem to be unable to build a successful working relationship?
• There are two team members who have a long running feud with each other. In this instance, they are affecting the morale of the greater team and keeping everybody from completing the task. What would you do?

Problem solving
• When do you believe it would be appropriate to bring in the manager when handling a disgruntled customer?
• You have been assigned to handle an audit in a new department of your organisation. No one in this area has any experience of an audit. How would you go about initiating the audit?

Initiative
• What would you do if you strongly believed in a recommendation made in a meeting with management but most of your co-workers disagreed with your idea?
• You have been elected as team leader for a new project. How would you go about forming a cohesive and productive team?

Planning and organising
• You are working on a project where the priorities have suddenly changed. What do you do?
• In this role, you provide support to two managers. You are working on a large project for one manager with a deadline when the other manager approaches you with another project stating it must be completed immediately. It is not possible to complete both projects with the deadlines provided. How will you manage the conflicting demands on your time?
• You realise you are not on track to meet your key performance indicators for the quarter and you have failed to meet the KPI’s for the previous two quarters. You suspect that your manager is not happy with you but hasn’t approached you to date. What do you do?

Self management
• How would you go about defining a vision for your team / role and developing steps to achieve it?
• You are in a position for the government where there are constant legislative changes that dictate the way in which you carry out your tasks. How do you go about keeping up to date with all the changes as well as continue to perform in your own role?

Interpersonal skills
• You are speaking with an important international client whose second language is English. They have a strong accent and are asking a lot of questions very quickly. You have difficulty in understanding what they are saying. What do you do?
• The manager requests you to train new staff in a particular process. How do you go about planning and delivering the training?

Employers talk about the most common detrimental mistakes candidates make through a job interview. Melissa Lourenc from BNET tells us...

• 51% of recruitment managers cited dressing inappropriately as the most detrimental mistake a candidate can make in an interview.
• 49% of recruitment managers cited speaking negatively about a current or previous employer was the second biggest no-no.
• Appearing disinterested came in third at 48%.
• 44% of recruitment managers stated appearing arrogant was a fundamental interview mistake.
• Not providing well thought out responses was at 30%.
• Lastly, 29% of recruitment managers cited not asking meaningful questions impacted the interviewee’s success.
HOW TO ANSWER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Answering interview questions can be challenging, however you can use the STARR model as a very general guide to provide enough detail so the interviewers aren’t left feeling unsure about whether you do possess a particular skill. This is particularly the case with behavioural questions.

Situation: Provide some background information on the example, giving it some context.

Task: Outline the relevant duties, responsibilities and tasks that were related to this situation.

Action: Provide detailed examples of the actions you took in this situation, thus giving concrete details about the relevant skills the employer is seeking.

Result: Explain the outcome especially outlining the achievements and positive effects of your actions for the organisation.

Reflect: You may wish to contribute an additional reflection. It could be about what you learnt from this situation or how it made you feel.

THE PECULIAR AND THE WONDERFUL – BE READY!

In the ever changing labour market and in particular the current global arena where competition is intense, employers seek to bring the best talent on board. There has been a definitive shift from the importance placed on seeking individuals with the best technical skills to that of recruiting candidates with highly developed soft skills that lends itself to all that it means to be working in the global marketplace.

This ‘new’ workplace requires individuals who are resilient. Why? The market today is unpredictable and volatile. Organisations have moved from a hierarchical structure to a more flattened structure where there is an emphasis placed on outsourcing staff and a mix of temporary staff and the ‘just in time’ workforce. For you, this means being able to demonstrate you possess the employability skills to be able to integrate, be productive, creative and add value to an organisation in uncertain times.

In light of this change to a focus on soft skills, you may come across some very interesting interview questions that will challenge you. They may be entirely spontaneous and will require you to think quickly on your feet. They are the odd-ball questions!

Here, we have provided a top 25 oddball interview questions to start you thinking. The key to answering these questions lie in defining the soft skills the employer is seeking and translating this back to the interviewer through your answer.
### THE TOP 25 ODDBALL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Taken from www.glassdoor.com blog

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ASKED BY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What was your best MacGyver moment?</td>
<td>Schlumberger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How many tennis balls are in this room and why?</td>
<td>Yahoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If you were a brick in a wall, which brick would you be and why?</td>
<td>Nestle, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How would you move Mount Fuji?</td>
<td>Microsoft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If two cars are traveling in a two lap race on a track of any length, one going 60mph and the other going 30mph, how fast will the slower car have to go to finish at the same time?</td>
<td>Morgan Stanley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Are your parents disappointed with your career aspirations?</td>
<td>Fisher Investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Tell me how you would determine how many house painters there are in the United States?</td>
<td>Acquity Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What should it cost to rent Central Park for commercial purposes?</td>
<td>Bain &amp; Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. If I put you in a sealed room with a phone that had no dial tone, how would you fix it?</td>
<td>Apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. If you could be any animal, what would you be and why?</td>
<td>Pacific Sunwear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How many hair salons are there in Japan?</td>
<td>Boston Consulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. If both a taxi and a limo were priced the exact same, which one would you choose?</td>
<td>Best Buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How would you measure nine minutes using only a four minute and seven minute hourglass?</td>
<td>Bank of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. What are five uncommon uses of a brick, not including building, layering, or a paper-weight?</td>
<td>Kaplan High Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. What is the probability of throwing 11 and over with two dices?</td>
<td>American Airlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. What is your favourite food?</td>
<td>Apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Say you are dead - what do you think your eulogy would say about you?</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Given a dictionary of words, how do you calculate the anagrams for a new word?</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. How many light bulbs are in this building?</td>
<td>Monitor Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Given a square grid of numbers, considering all the numbers at the boundary as one layer and numbers just inside as another layer and so on, how would you rotate each of the layers of the numbers by a given amount?</td>
<td>Microsoft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. How would you sell me eggnog in Florida in the summer?</td>
<td>Expedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Develop an algorithm for finding the shortest distance between two words in a document. After the phone interview is over, take a few hours to develop a working example in C++ and send it to the manager?</td>
<td>Google</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Given a fleet of 50 trucks, each with a full fuel tank and a range of 100 miles, how far can you deliver a payload? You can transfer the payload from truck to truck, and you can transfer fuel from truck to truck. Extend your answer for number of trucks.</td>
<td>Palantir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. You are in a room with three switches which correspond to three bulbs in another room and you don’t know which switch corresponds to which bulb. You can only enter the room with the bulbs once. You cannot use any external equipment (power supplies, resistors, etc.). How do you find out which bulb corresponds to which switch?</td>
<td>Goldman Sachs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. If you saw someone steal a quarter. Would you report it?</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMON DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

Tell me about yourself?
This is a tricky open ended question where you may assume the employer wants to know all your life history. Another interviewee, a little confused but not wanting to answer the question incorrectly may venture ‘what do you want to know?’

The truth is the interviewer wants a quick snapshot of who are; two to three minutes at most. If asked this question, in your mind substitute it with ‘what makes me a better candidate?’

This question can be more related to a traditional technique type question where your answer can include a quick overview of education, work history and future career aspirations. You can also touch on your early years but it is not an invitation to talk about everything in the hopes that you will cover something the interviewer wants to hear.

Throughout answering this question:
• Sell your enthusiasm and motivation for the employment opportunity at the start. The employer wants to know you are genuinely interested about their opportunity and it is okay to show your enthusiasm.
• Talk about what you have done to prepare yourself to be the best possible candidate for the role.
• Provide a few examples as evidence. For example: ‘I am especially excited about this human resource role as I have specialised in human resource management at university exploring... This is also supported by my strong academic performance in...’

Why should we hire you?
This is a great open ended question and a free invitation to sell your skills to the interviewer. Use this opportunity! It is one of the more obvious questions where you can boast freely about your strengths and demonstrate why and how they add value for the employer. In fact, the employer is waiting for it!

Many people are unsure how to answer this question. Answers like “Because I am a hard and loyal worker,” and “Because I enjoy working with people” are lost opportunities to make a memorable mark! Instead:
• Talk about your relevant core strengths, mentioning specific accomplishments from your resume and experiences.
• State how this combination of skills makes you valuable. For example: ‘My ability to prioritise tasks and manage my time effectively, especially when I was balancing university studies along with part-time employment and community involvement, make me a valuable candidate as I can ensure multiple deadlines are met and tasks are completed in a timely manner.’
• When you answer this question include your ability, experience and energy.

What do you know about our organisation?
This question is your chance to demonstrate that you are genuinely interested in the position and organisation. Why? Because if people have a natural interest in an area, such as a hobby, they are also naturally curious about it – they want to learn more so they can become good at it. Employers want to know that you are interested in their business and this is one way to find out.

This is also an opportunity to sell your enthusiasm at the same time. When answering this question think about:
• Products, services, revenues, reputation, goals, history, people and philosophy of the organisation. You can also add recent major news items such as mergers and / or acquisitions that will impact the organisation and this also shows you keep yourself up to date with what is happening globally.
• While going through the areas of most interest, provide some reasons. Don’t just say ‘it's one of the most prestigious organisations to work for. That is a very vague statement. Instead, talk about an article you read recently about the organisation where you were inspired by the comments made by the CED for the future vision of the organisation and current changes occurring in a particular department that you are interested in. Further go on to state how this may align with your career goals.
How has your education prepared you for your career?
This can be a challenging question! Again, very open ended so you can answer it with as much scope as you dare! When answering this question you need to provide examples for the interviewer so they can make the connection immediately and align the required competencies to their organisation.

Here, the types of examples you can include are:
• Soft skills gained throughout study - call upon solid examples that directly translate to the workplace. If you are applying for a position in an international organisation you can talk about the group projects undertaken where you have worked with people from diverse cultures, overcoming language barriers, group conflict, different time schedules and culturally different ways of studying to gain an excellent academic grade.
• The knowledge gained from your degree, particular insight into the area of your specialisation and the types of skills that it has equipped you with - If you studied entrepreneurship and one of your projects was to create a business plan and present it to a panel, you can talk about key industry knowledge you have gained such as exposure to cash flow documents, sales forecasting or taking on a leadership role within your group.
• You may wish to mention any internship or work experience undertaken as part of your education to work in a particular field and how this has cultivated your career path to lead to this particular role.

What important trends do you see in our industry?
Unprepared interviewees beware! This is one area that you can't pass off as knowing. The only way to answer this question effectively is to research prior to the interview. You may wish to talk about a particular trend that has significant meaning for you such as economic decisions that may impact your career progression. Outline two to three trends. Here are some ideas you can adapt to your industry. Approaching it like a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) may help.
• Technology
• Economy
• Labour market trends - local, interstate, international
• Regulatory standards

Are you a team player?
Who wouldn't say ‘yes’ to this question? This is a tricky seemingly closed ended question, but the interviewer does not merely want to hear a ‘yes’ answer. They are interested in you to saying a little more, explaining how, when and where. Again, this is an opportunity to provide concrete examples so the employer knows without a doubt you are an exceptional team player.

Think about the different areas in your life so far where you have worked with a team to refine your team skills. Pick a combination of examples from university projects, team sports, employment history and community involvement which give a mix of different contexts. Pick some really tough situational experiences you have come through and identify what you have gained from the experience.

This question may be used as a lead for subsequent team related questions. If you do go on to describe a most challenging team situation, be prepared, as you may be probed further! For example, you may be asked how you felt about a particular result or outcome, or if you would do things differently next time and why.

What is your greatest weakness?
The good news is that everybody has weaknesses. The reality is that rarely do people know how to talk about them in an interview context. The age old adage of picking a weakness that is really a strength has somewhat been misused over time and therefore, not recommended by these cliché examples:
• I’m a perfectionist
• I take on too much work
• I can’t think of any
• My biggest weakness is my biggest strength
• I work overtime to ensure I meet deadlines

The truth is the interviewer is seeking an honest answer and responding with one of the above examples can be deceiving. Interviewers, with hundreds of interviews behind them, have heard the same answers over and over and you can actually be disadvantaging yourself as it shows you lack insight to identify areas for improvement and how you can overcome these personal challenges.
None the less, you still need to approach answering this question in a strategic manner. Here are some tips:

**Use your common sense!**

- Don’t mention a big weakness core to the role. Your goal is to present yourself as best as you can, without telling the interviewer multiple areas you lack skills in. For example, you are interviewing for a project manager role and you state you have difficulty in getting people to come on board with your ideas.
- Come prepared to answer a few weaknesses, but mention only one initially unless asked to provide examples of more.

You can approach answering the weakness question through the following ways:

- Provide an example where you have overcome or are currently overcoming the weakness. Here, it’s all about admitting you aren’t particularly strong in an area, but this is what you are doing to work towards becoming better at it. Some examples include:
  - ‘I am shy in front of people and incredibly nervous when presenting to a group, so I have commenced a course in public speaking.’
  - ‘I tend to be a little quiet at work, so it appears I am aloof, but once people get to know me they see me as discreet and loyal.’
  - ‘In the past I have had challenges with prioritising my time. However, I have taken steps to overcome this with a pocket planner where I place all activities and accompanying priorities. This has helped me to plan more effectively.’
- Provide an example of a weakness less crucial to the role. For example:
  - If you are being interviewed for a highly creative, big picture type of position, perhaps in strategic management, state your weakness is lack of attention to detail. This may not impact the role in a big way.

**Additional tips include:**

- Be positive about your weakness – present it in the best light possible by demonstrating your honesty, self awareness and desire to improve.
- Be prepared, so you can keep the answer brief and factual rather than in a state of nervousness, saying too much.
- If one of your weaknesses is genuinely one of the cliché examples, then think about changing the perception of the interviewer. For example, if you are overly meticulous with your tasks hindering your ability to complete them in a timely manner, highlight that you like to see things completed to the highest possible standard, but you are getting better at being less fussy thus working more quickly.
- If your primary weakness is lack of experience in the role, demonstrate your skills are transferable. Provide concrete examples of how your current skills can be transferred to a new context.

**Tell us about a time you have failed**

A very challenging question! Along with a good dose of humility, this answer requires you to know yourself and think of a time where a work related situation or any situation that could be transferable to the role didn’t go as planned. Answering this type of question is challenging as it appears it’s asking you to do the opposite of what the interview is about showcasing the best part of your attributes and skills.

However, within the layers of this question, there are specific skills and abilities the employer is seeking.

- The employer is seeking an honest response. They understand that everyone makes mistakes, so ensure you prepare for this question with a ‘real’ failure.
- The employer is interested in seeing how you took responsibility and accountability for your failure, what you learned from it and how you will prevent it from happening again.

Answering this truthfully with a real learning experience, translates to demonstrating initiative and awareness of who you are. The employer may also recognise someone who is looking to improve and this demonstrates a desire to learn.

“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that don’t work.”

- Thomas A. Edison
What accomplishment are you most proud of?
This is your opportunity to shine. A well thought out response will make the difference, particularly relating it to the position at hand. Choose a professional accomplishment that demonstrates the core skills the organisation is seeking.
- Be sure to provide evidence. Use the STARR analogy (page 16) as a guide to enable you to do this more effectively.
- Use an accomplishment that best demonstrates a variety of attributes and skills, such as time management skills, interpersonal skills and team skills.
- If you have little professional experience refer to an accomplishment at university or in a community involvement role where you can demonstrate the core skills.

What are you salary expectations
Salary expectations may be evaluated throughout the interview and this means the employer is deciding whether they can afford you. The employer needs to know what your range is and this means you need to know what the market rate is. Don’t respond with, ‘What are you prepared to offer?’ or ‘Salary is not the most important factor for me,’ as these answers will not help the employer. At worst, the employer may think they are unable to afford you and at best, the will think you haven’t made the effort to look into the market rates.

Here are some tips:
- Research industry specific salary guides. Have a look at:
  - www.gradsonline.com.au
- The initial question of salary expectation is a general indicator only, it is not the final negotiation so with this in mind, have a figure ready that is a $5,000 range and competitive with the market rate.
- For example, state that ‘without knowing the full package on offer, I am comfortable with something in the range of $50,000 - $55,000.’ This will provide some flexibility for the employer if figure is too high, but they have an excellent package negating some of the loss in income.
- If you provide a figure that is too low, employers may question your experience for the role.
- If the employer is persistent in identifying a specific figure, then ask them the range they have in mind. Always ask questions.
QUESTIONS FOR THE EMPLOYER

Always come prepared with questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview. This is an excellent way to demonstrate your interest in the position and show you have taken the time to learn about the company. Don’t ask questions that you can find the answers to on the organisation’s website but reveal how you have used additional sources such as journal articles, newspaper articles, and company annual reports to formulate your questions.

Here is a sample of questions to ask:
• What is the next step in the recruitment process? This will give you an idea of when to possibly follow up but will also give you a timeline.
• What is one the biggest challenges facing the organisation today?
• How are employees evaluated?
• Is there a training program for new employees?
• How would you describe this organisation’s management style?
• What is the career progression for this position?
• Do you provide any professional development or mentoring?
• What would a typical day in this role entail?
• May I have your business card(s)? This will give you a point of contact to follow up but also write a thank you letter post interview.

POST INTERVIEW

Every interview is an opportunity to reflect, learn and practice for the next interview opportunity.

Reflect upon the following:
• How did you feel the interview progressed?
• Did you feel more at ease at the end of the interview with the interviewer?
• How did you highlight your key accomplishments? Did you translate them to what the organisation is seeking in their staff?
• Did your body language express your enthusiasm? Did you make eye contact with the interviewer and did you smile?
• Did you feel you made yourself stand out?
• Were there difficult questions and did you feel you answered these well?
• Do you recall points you made that interested the interviewer or prompted them to probe further?

Thank you letter

It is highly encouraged to send a thank you letter or email within 48 hours of the interview. Send it to the primary interviewer and if you have additional contact details include these representatives in your email. It is an opportunity to follow up and indicates what you particularly enjoyed about the interview. If you didn’t have the opportunity to obtain a business card, send the letter in the mail.

A thank you letter also demonstrates that you understand business etiquette and it is an opportunity to highlight the positive comments you made in the interview in relation to your skills and strengths. You may also wish to mention additional points of interest the interviewer made about the organisation, current projects and the types of skills and attributes they are seeking in prospective staff.
Dear Mr. Brown,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on Monday to discuss your opening for the role of Graduate Marketing Officer. I found the interview informative and I was particularly interested in HRM’s strategic marketing plans to enter into China within the next 12 months.

I found the tour of HRM’s offices most beneficial, and I was impressed by the noticeable commitment and energy of the staff and see that HRM’s philosophy aligns well with my current goals.

The experience has further confirmed my interest in HRM and possessing a combined business and marketing degree along with the ability to speak fluent Mandarin would be well placed for the role of Marketing Officer.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Toni Chan

33 King St
Tallebudgera, QLD
Australia
A NOTE ON NERVES

We have talked at length about interviews and linked it briefly to what you may expect and how you may be feeling at the different interview stages. At this point, (as you may be feeling exceptionally overwhelmed with the sheer volume of interview information and feeling ever more daunted) we would like to summarise some key tips to harness your nervous energy!

THINK ACCOMPLISHMENTS!
Identify five relevant things you want the employer to know about you by the end of the interview.

BUILD RAPPORT IN THE FIRST FIVE SECONDS
Set the tone of the interview in the introductions! First impressions count and can also help to set you at ease. When the employer comes into the waiting room and calls your name:

• Make eye contact, hold eye contact and smile.
• Walk with confidence to the interviewer.
• Extend your hand for a firm hand shake.
• Re-introduce yourself: “Hello, I’m (name) pleased to meet you.”

YOU ARE INTERVIEWING TOO!
Interviewing is a two way street. The employer needs to assess whether you are a suitable fit with their organisation and you can assess whether you can see yourself working in the organisation. Think about the following before you go to an interview.

1. What impression does the interviewer make on you throughout the interview?
2. Can the interviewer be viewed as a resource to learn more about the organisation and position you are applying for?
3. While waiting, take into consideration details about the reception area. How do the staff you see communicate with each other? Does the area feel comfortable to you?
4. If you are taken on a tour, what is the pace like within the departments? How are the desks and offices situated? Is it open plan or closed offices and how does that sit with you?

SUMMARY
Prior to interview remember the four R’s.

RE-EXAMINE THE POSITION DESCRIPTION
Find out as much information as you can in the position description about the duties and responsibilities, the reporting relationships, and the recruitment and selection process. Don’t limit yourself to the organisation position description if it appears unclear. Check the Vault employer guides that can be downloaded for free in CareerHub.
RESEARCH THE EMPLOYER
Prepare for the interview effectively through learning about the organisation, its vision, culture, products and services, as well as current issues the organisation is facing. Glean your information not only from the company website, but from various resources such as:

- CareerHub company profiles
- Employer information sessions on campus
- Journal articles
- Networking with alumni
- Newspaper articles
- Vault online careers library guide

Utilising a variety of resources will also assist you to formulate thoughtful questions at an interview.

REVIEW EXPERIENCES
When you review your experience, consider the below and define your skills and accomplishments that could directly transfer to the position:

1. Qualifications
2. Paid employment (related or unrelated)
3. Work experience
4. Internships
5. Volunteer experience and community involvement
6. Class projects
7. Study including area of specialisation
8. Interests and hobbies
9. On and off campus involvement
10. Professional memberships

REHEARSE
When you have analysed and reviewed the above points think about potential questions you may be asked. Use the practise list and challenge yourself with some difficult questions. Below are some ways you can rehearse. This is also encouraged to build confidence in your response.

- Make an appointment for a mock interview with the Career Development Centre where we can provide feedback on your responses as well as your body language, presentation and style. You may also wish to do this with family and friends.
- Practice in front of a mirror. Responding out loud will give you a chance to see yourself at the same time.
- You may wish to film and record your responses so you can review yourself critically after the exercise.
- The National Interview Challenge is an additional way to become involved and gain great interview practice. Talk to the CDC to find out more.

Now you try... Would YOU give YOU a job?

Imagine yourself as a business owner looking for staff your own age to employ. For you, what would make a good employee? What skills and attitudes would you want your staff to possess?

If you were interviewing people like your friends, what would you ask them? How would you decide who to recruit when you know they will be the face of your business at the frontline assisting to drive your business forward?

Keep in mind that when you employ staff, you will be paying them money, money that comes from your bottom line, so you need to make sure you recruit the right person the first time around to ensure the continuity of your business.

So truthfully now... would YOU give YOU a job at your business?! What skills do you need to refine further?

If the answer is YES, you just need to convince the other recruiters out there you have what it takes. If the answer is NO, start building a portfolio of evidence and close the skills gaps!

Always put yourself in the prospective employer’s shoes as this will help you prepare yourself in the most effective manner.
HOW DO I EVALUATE AN OFFER?

Whether you have applied for graduate positions or general positions, now or in the future, you will find yourself in a position of evaluating employment offers.

Firstly, congratulations on your successful offer of employment! You have a return on investment of your hard work and preparation.

If you are in a position where you have applied for multiple graduate roles or multiple general roles, accepting and declining offers becomes quite strategic and somewhat delicate. In this section we will discuss how to evaluate an offer, whether to negotiate with an organisation, and how to accept and decline offers.

In the process of evaluating an offer there are a number of areas to take into consideration. However, start with deciding if the offer meets with your expectations and original criteria. This is a great way to link your self assessment you have undertaken in the initial career planning phase and helps you to stop and reflect for a moment before making a decision.

Below are some suggestions to help you start evaluating.

RE-VISIT THE SELF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES
List or highlight the criteria that are still important to you from the initial self-assessment activities undertaken including skills, interests, values and your expectations of employment. Take into consideration the following:

Desired Tasks
How your core strengths link in with your interests. For example:
- Interests - analysing complex data
- Strength - attention to detail, excellent written and communication skills

Desired Work Conditions
Think about the type of work environment where you would be most productive but also enjoy. For example:
- Do you prefer structure with well set out tasks and duties?
- Do you prefer a high degree of flexibility where you manage your own tasks and time?

Desired Work Locations
Think about where you see yourself working, for example:
- A government organisation
- Internationally
- Rural

Tangible and Intangible Benefits
Does the offer match the intangible benefits you desired? For example:
- Salary and financial rewards
- The opportunity to advance
- The opportunity for training and personal development

And finally, cross-reference your offer with how well it meets your criteria.
- How many of your ‘must have’ criteria are met in the offer? If there are only one or two elements offered will the position offer you what you are looking for?
- Are you interested in the tasks and duties listed in the position description and do you want to know more about them?
- Are the work conditions suited to what you are looking for and what is important to you in a position?
- What is the culture of the organisation? Do you see yourself fitting into the organisation from what you have researched and observed?
- Does the financial package offered match your financial needs?
COMMON SCENARIOS: CAN I AND HOW DO I?

EVALUATING AN OFFER
With a company that is not your first choice
Do not feel under pressure to give an answer immediately. Thank the employer and re-confirm your interest, but ask them for some time to explore the offer in greater detail. You may also wish to ask them to put the details of the offer in writing.

If this offer is a second or third choice option and you are interested in pursuing your first choice, contact the organisation of your first choice as soon as possible and let them know you have an offer of employment. Ask them at what stage they are in the recruitment and selection process for your desired role and the status of your application. If this organisation is sincerely interested in you they may be able to hasten the recruitment process so as not to potentially lose you to another employer.

If this offer is not your first choice, but you do not have any active applications at present, you need to decide if you should accept the offer or continue your job search. A tough decision! We encourage you to come and make an appointment with the CDC as well as seek advice from people within the industry, especially from the information interviewing you have undertaken to help you make your decision.

When you need more time to make a decision
It is okay to ask for more time but be prepared to explain why and how much time you will need. At this stage, employers may be constrained with deadlines for offers so they may not be able to give you additional time. In this instance, be prepared to make a decision if extra time is not an option.

Here are some sample scripts to ask the employer for more time.
- “Thank you for the opportunity of this offer of employment with ... It is a significant decision, and I would like to request some more time to consider the offer.”
- “I am excited about the opportunity to work with... However, I have a previously scheduled interview and it is important to me to keep this commitment. I would like to have more time in order for me to make the best decision.”

Where you want to accept the position but continue applying for other jobs for a better offer
This depends on your personal ethics. The reality is you may have applied for a few graduate programs, each with clear preferences. You may be faced with making this decision at some point in your graduate recruitment process. Just as organisations seek the best candidate from a pool of many, they also know their applicants may have a range of options and preferences. There are many second and third round offers taking place for this reason.

If you are in this position, come and talk with one of the team at the CDC to assist you as there are many scenarios!

NEGOTIATING AN OFFER
With multiple organisations where you have received offers
Before you commence this strategy, come and see at the CDC to further discuss how or if to commence negotiations. This strategy is most successful if you have researched effectively. That is you know the organisations are competitors in the same industry with similar market rates. In this instance, a strategy may be to state you have received a higher offer from an organisation and encourage the current organisation to match it. However, this is commonly undertaken when you have significant marketable experience, thus having something of value to bargain with. It is not recommended to start negotiating with graduate offers as chances are, they already have set packages with a common market rate across the industry.

A tip! Never state you have received a higher offer when you haven't, no matter how tempting it may be. An organisation may know their competitors quite well.
For a higher salary

When deciding to negotiate for a higher salary, come and make an appointment with the CDC. Again, the strategy is most successful when you have something of value to bargain with. For a graduate program the packages are set at the market rate and there may be little difference from one organisation in a similar industry to the next.

However, some organisations expect you to negotiate, not necessarily for more money, but additional benefits as part of the package on offer and may have deliberately offered a lower sum initially, anticipating that you would respond with a counter offer. This may be more prevalent in executive roles where negotiating finer details are more commonplace especially when bargaining for valuable talent.

For further research on salary, have a look at the following links to prepare yourself more effectively


WHAT ARE THE OVERALL BENEFITS?

When evaluating the offer and / or employment contract, take into consideration all the benefits on offer. Are you satisfied with all / most of the points? Would you be satisfied for a longer period of time? Think about:

- Annual leave entitlements
- Bonus systems for meeting key performance indicators
- Career progression
- Carer’s leave entitlements
- Further education opportunities and study assistance
- Maternity leave
- Paternal leave
- Personal development / training
- Relocation assistance
- Sick leave entitlements
- Superannuation contributions

ACCEPTING A JOB OFFER

Are you ready to accept an offer? Here’s how:

- Contact the employer and advise them of your decision. Follow up, with a letter or email that confirms your offer in writing before signing the contract.
- If you have further applications pending, contact the organisations and let them know you have accepted an offer and wish to withdraw your application.
- Send your referees a thank you card. Your referees will remember this when you are undertaking future job search.
Joe Bloggs  
20 Star Avenue, Robina, QLD 4226 Australia  
Email: jbloggs@hotmail.com Ph: 0412 123 456  

20th September, 2010  

Nicole Smith  
ABC Bank  
830 Money Parade  
Brisbane, QLD 4000  

Dear Nicole,  

I am delighted to confirm my acceptance of the Graduate Program with ABC Bank and look forward to commencing the role on the 10th February 2012.  

As per our telephone conversation on the 18th September, I understand the salary package will be ___ per annum including superannuation and the ABC Bank will assist with the cost of relocation. Thank you for sending the employment contract and associated forms. I will complete all documentation and post them as soon as possible.  

I would once again like to express my appreciation for your offer and my excitement about joining the team at ABC Bank. I look forward to commencing training in February.  

Sincerely,  
Joe Bloggs
DECLINING A JOB OFFER

Some would say it’s an ideal situation to have many offers made to you, but often this can be a very stressful time and a big decision to make.

Once you have accepted what you consider to be the best offer, the CDC has compiled a list of guidelines for rejecting offers gracefully:

The Format
You can reject the offer in a number of ways. You can reject it over the phone, via email or a formal letter. If you are going to opt for a phone call, we recommend you follow this up with a letter. As many recruitment programs today are based completely online, email is perfectly acceptable.

Be prompt to say no
This is courteous to the organisation that was so kind as to offer you a job. Although they will likely be disappointed that they will not gain your services, they will appreciate the advance warning, such that they can make alternate plans and offers.

Show your gratitude and be humble
Your communication should be polite, firm and exceptionally grateful for the opportunity. Let the Human Resource Manager know how impressed you were by the organisation and make a sincere specific compliment about the firm. A lot of time, effort and money has been spent on the recruitment process and it is imperative that you acknowledge this effort when you decline an offer. If you have contact details, thank each person that you came in contact with and who interviewed you.

Be gracious as to why you turned the offer down
Cite that you have chosen another option which you feel ‘better suits your career objectives’ or ‘for personal reasons’. Firms will often email you back asking which firm you ended up choosing, requesting feedback on their application process. Although you can certainly give some meaningful feedback, do not criticise the organisation.

Do not burn your bridges
This is a classic mistake made by many candidates. Remember, you do not know who you may eventually work for during your career. You must aim to maintain a positive, strong relationship with any potential employer. The best possible outcome is to gain your interviewers as future contacts in the industry - even if you don’t end up working for them. Leave the door open for further communication saying, ‘I hope that our paths cross again in the future.’
Joe Bloggs
20 Star Avenue, Robina, QLD 4226 Australia
Email: jbloggs@hotmail.com Ph: 0412 123 456

20th September, 2010

Nicole Smith
ABC Bank
830 Money Parade
Brisbane, QLD 4000

Dear Nicole,

Thank you very much for your telephone call and letter offering me the graduate position with ABC Bank. While I believe in ABC Bank’s vision for growth and appreciate the opportunity of the program you offer I have had another offer which I believe aligns more closely to my long term aspirations. After much careful deliberation, as discussed over the telephone, I have decided not to accept your offer.

I sincerely appreciate the time and effort placed in considering me for the position and the courtesy and hospitality extended to me by all the staff. It was a pleasure meeting you and I wish ABC Bank every continued success.

Best Regards,
Joe Bloggs
“Action and reaction, ebb and flow, trial and error, change - this is the rhythm of living. Out of our over-confidence, fear; out of our fear, clearer vision, fresh hope. And out of hope, progress.”
- Bruce Barton

A FINAL WORD

Change in our society today is constant. So it is also with the world of careers and all this embraces - a dynamic concept. There will always be an array of variables impacting choices, decisions and pathways. Some will be clear cut and others may be unpredictable and even somewhat shaped by chance. The important thing to note is that there is no right or wrong here and you certainly don’t need to have all the answers. The concept of ‘a job for life’ has changed and therefore study pathways leading to definitive careers in a linear fashion is no longer what it used to be. Now, where you position yourself in the world of work for the first time may not be where your career life comes to a close.

Our biggest encouragement to you is to start managing your career early through the tools provided in this Job Search Guide combined with the wealth of resources and support offered to you by the faculties at Bond University. This will enable you to explore the world of work and yourself before embarking on either a graduate pathway or career change as well as assist you to identify, develop or refine core employability skills which will always be beneficial to you and prospective employers in the future!

Whatever opportunities present themselves either by planned or unplanned events rest assured we are here to support you not only as a student but also beyond your time as a student at Bond University. The team at the Career Development Centre personally wishes you every success on your career.