

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

DEVELOPING AN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY



“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

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:

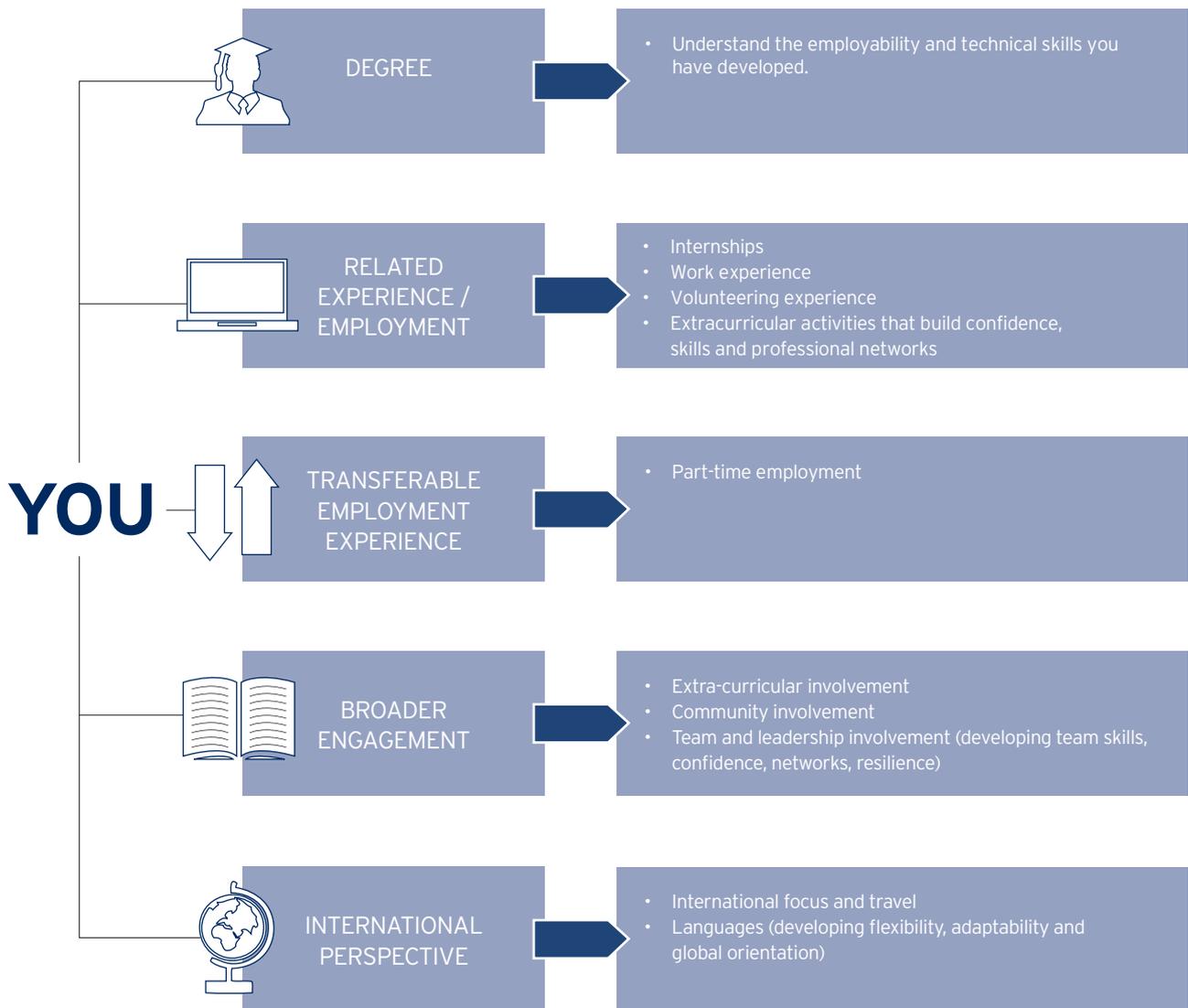
- Demonstrating passion and enthusiasm towards this industry by becoming involved in it.
- Possessing excellent employability skills and understanding how they add value for an employer.
- Being an active participant within society in general.

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!





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



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-semester-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.
- Career Development Centre 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 www.volunteeringgc.com.au.
- Volunteering can be undertaken at any time throughout your study.

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.

Apply for the Industry Experience Program (IEP):

Each semester, IEP opens for eligible students to apply in Scout. Students are then assessed through two stages - an assessment centre and 1:1 interview with an industry team member. From there the industry team will work on a suitable placement that aligns with a student's study area and interests. The career counsellors will support students through this process with resume reviews, interview practice and advice on Australian workplace practices.

For work experience or internship application advice please contact the Career Development Centre and book an appointment with one of our Employment Services Specialists - cdc@bond.edu.au or drop in to see us!

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 Employment Services Specialist

Make an appointment to see your Employment Services 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:

- Scout: bond.edu.au/scout: 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 www.australianinternships.com.au. This is a fee for service organisation with specialised consultants to assist.
- Visit 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)
 - Online testing
 - Digital Interview
 - 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 Scout 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! 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 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 Scout: bond.edu.au/scout for internships. 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.



"From the get go the CDC was there to make sure I was in the best position to achieve my goals. This included refining my CV and being involved in individual and group interview processes. The CDC contacted multiple businesses to ensure that I had every opportunity to be placed with the best company for what I wanted to achieve."

- Lachlan, Bachelor of Property

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

- You can undertake more than one internship.
- Internship or work experience opportunity.
- Find out closing dates for applications well in advance.
- Internships and / or work experience through the CDC do not guarantee an offer of employment upon completion.
- If you want to undertake an internship through Bond University:
 - Internship applications close on Friday of Week 4 in each semester
 - Prerequisite subjects will need to be completed
 - You must obtain approval for your internship from your academic supervisor
 - There are international internship opportunities
 - Apply via Scout: Go to "My Profile" and select the application for "Industry Experience Program"
 - Applications open in Week 1 and close in Week 4 each semester
 - Eligibility criteria is available via Scout
 - For an internship for credit - eligibility criteria apply



"This experience helped me build a CV that has proven to be appeal to prospective employers and also provided a fresh perspective to my studies. It allowed me to put some of what I was learning into practice, solidifying learnings from lectures and tutorials."

- Jack, Juris Doctor

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.



"Through my internship, I learned about Australian working culture, one that is very different from the culture back home."

Hashpreet, Master of Criminology

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.

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.

Where to look?

> Scout - You online Careers and Employment portal at Bond go to bond.edu.au/scout.

> Additional resources can be found at bond.edu.au/cdc

§ Seek - www.seek.com.au

• 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





BROADER ENGAGEMENT

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:

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

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.

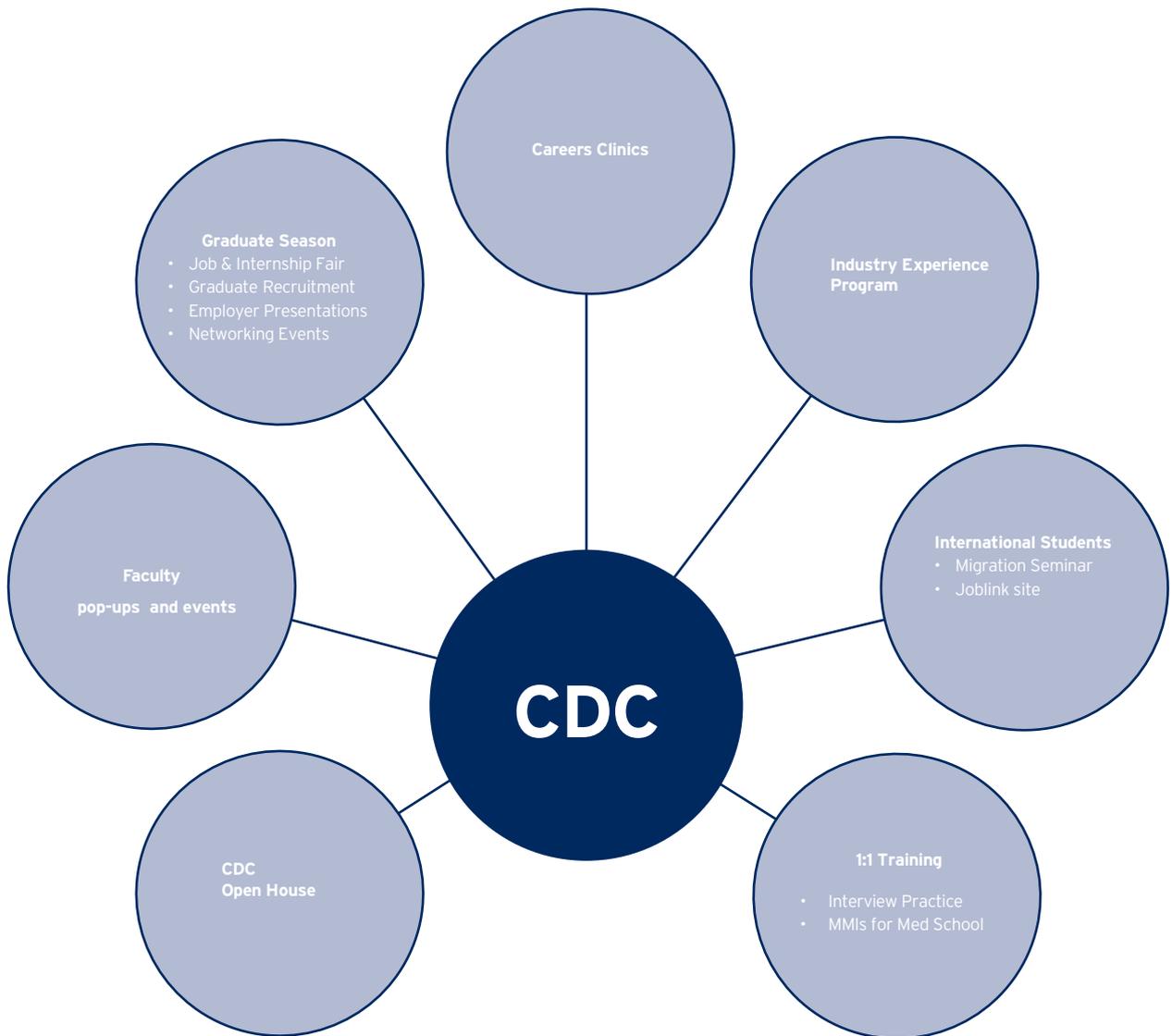


INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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:

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 employability skills. Check Scout: bond.edu.au/scout for specific events occurring each semester and get involved!



For a schedule of all careers topics, go to bond.edu.au/scout.

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:
Connect on LinkedIn.

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 under dressed.

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