



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Business & Economics

**STUDENT
EMPLOYABILITY
& ENRICHMENT**

CAREERS COMPENDIUM 2016



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Welcome to the Careers Compendium!

In the Compendium you will find advice and information on all the key areas related to preparing yourself for employment as a graduate.

Career preparation is a journey and one you will need to commence in your first semester to ensure you are in a competitive position. Whether you are applying for casual employment, internships, vacation programs, volunteer work or professional employment, many aspects of the process are similar and require considerable preparation.

The Careers Compendium index will guide you through the different sections so you can quickly skip to the section you need. You will gain maximum advantage, however, if you work through the Compendium. These are the sections:

- Career Self Assessments
- The View from Industry
- Gain Experience and Contacts
- Where to Find Jobs
- Applying for Positions
- CVs, Cover Letters and Key Selection Criteria
- Psychometric Testing
- Interview Skills

The Compendium is designed to be used alongside other services of the Melbourne Careers Centre (MCC). Both of these provide valuable information on programs and opportunities designed to complement your degree study and add to your employability and the value you derive from your degree at the University of Melbourne.

We hope you find the Compendium useful. We value your feedback so please let us know if there is other information you'd like to see included.

Wishing you all the best for your career journey

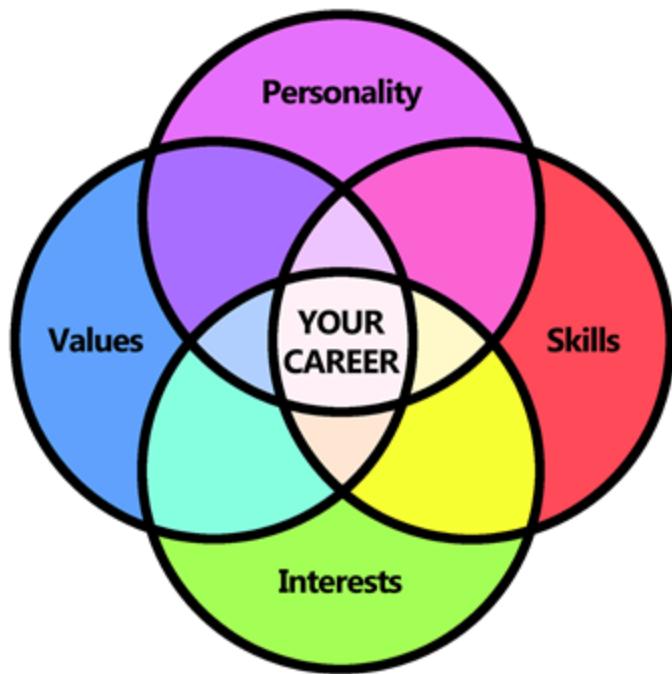


Clare Harper

Manager, Student Employability & Enrichment

Section A:

Career Self Assessments



Transferable Skills and Attributes

When employers recruit, they look for much more than just the content of your degree. They recruit people who will be part of their workforce, who is able to get on and work with other staff, remain motivated if things get tough and who will be happy doing the work – so someone who is happy in their role. This means that in interviews and through other forms of pre-employment testing, they will seek to find out more about you and whether you are the right fit and have the skills that will lead to success.

This section of the Careers Compendium has been designed to help you focus on the skills, values and attributes you have, that make up you, the individual.

One of the key things employers talk about is transferable skills, also as soft skills or employability skills. These are the skills that, in addition to your degree, generally predict your success in the workplace. Most employers will look for evidence of these in your CV and will also ask you questions about your skills in these areas in an interview or via questions on application forms. It is vital you have thought about them and how you can demonstrate evidence.

More details of these skills can be found in the second section of the Careers Compendium in the document entitled *The Skills Employers are Looking For*. Below is a grid of these skills and a self-assessment grid which will enable you to see how strong or weak your experience is in these areas.

How you can enhance your transferable skills

Broaden your experience is the best advice. The best way to broaden your experience is by undertaking vacation work or an internship but these can be difficult to find. But don't worry – there are numerous other options that you can take part in that will build these skills. Take an active part in student societies, try to find a part time job, do some volunteer work, be a Faculty Buddy, and apply for a Business Practicum. And of course make the most of your time in class by being actively engaged in group work, problem solving and discussion. Here's how you can develop your skills:

Communication – part time work in retail, volunteer at a high school homework club, join the University of Melbourne Toastmasters Club

Teamwork – join a sporting team, take part in an internship as part of your course, apply for a position on the committee of a student society

Problem solving – travel independently in another country (many of you have already done this!), do some part time work or volunteer, work on a group project

Initiative and Enterprise – try new things, suggest possible improvements to systems or processes in your part time job, start a new club that interests you

Planning and Organising – get involved in organising an event with a student society or with a volunteer organisation, reflect on the planning you have done to get to here!

Self-Management – includes being able to manage stress in pressure situations, having goals and confidence in your ideas – all of which will be enhanced the more experience outside of study you have.

Learning and technology – you can hopefully demonstrate via your study and by the way you can quickly pick up new information in a range of situations.

Complete the grids below and see where you might need to do some additional activities. Think of some examples you could give if asked by an employer to describe your skills in each of these areas. Evidence is always the key!

Below the skills grid is the attributes grid. Attributes are descriptions of character and personality and the ones below are those that employers most frequently mention as being important.

Enjoy the first part of your self-assessment!

Rate your skills and attributes; and provide evidence of them

- Rate your skills from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) according to each of the elements of the skills.
- Use examples to substantiate your rating. Focus on your work, study and extra-curricular experience.

SKILLS	Self-Assessment 1-5 scale; 1 weakest, 5 strongest	Example from previous experience
Communication		
Team work		
Problem Solving		
Initiative and enterprise		
Planning and organising		
Learning		
Technology		
Self-Management		

ATTRIBUTES	1-5 scale; 1 weakest, 5 strongest	Example from previous experience
Loyalty		
Commitment		
Honesty and Integrity		
Common sense		
Positive self-esteem		
A sense of humour		
Ability to deal with pressure		

Interests

Consider your interests

To get you started on thinking about your interests, here are some ideas. Ask yourself:

Do I like...	Yes	No	What I like about this	What I don't like about this
Managing people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Managing projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Managing budgets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Coming up with new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Working on discrete tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Working as part of a team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Working on my own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Planning events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Graphic design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Competitor analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Developing strategic initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Building computer software	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Financial modeling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Meeting deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Serving clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Negotiating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Persuading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Working with numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other activities of interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Now that you've made a start, think about whether there are other work-related tasks and responsibilities that interest you. Make your own list here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Overall, the things I enjoy are (you may not have 10):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Overall, the things I DO NOT enjoy are (you may not have 10):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Values

Consider your values

Use the table below to consider the values important to you. Rate each value high, medium or low, depending on whether you believe it is important to you. Remember there is no right or wrong answer.

Value	Importance / Ranking		
	High	Medium	Low
Altruism – helping others			
Aesthetics – caring about beauty and harmony			
Creativity – developing new ideas, strategies and things			
Competition – opportunity to compete against other people			
Intellectual stimulation – ability to take on new learning and development opportunities and be challenged intellectually			
Independence – ability to make your own decisions and do things the way you want			
Integrity – working in a way which is consistent with your morals			
Associates – working with colleagues you enjoy and admire			
Variety - having a variety of tasks that keep you interested			
Lifestyle – working to accommodate a balanced lifestyle			
Prestige – becoming well known and respected			
Work environment – a physically pleasant work environment; a commute that suits			
Management – being in charge of particular tasks/projects/staff			
Power – being in a position of influence			
Financial reward – having the money to live the lifestyle you want			
Security – employment and financial security			
Routine – working each day on repetitious tasks			

James Cook University - Careers and Employment – Planning Your Next Career Move

Greenhaus, J, Gerard A Callanan, Veronica M Godshalk **Career Management** Thomson South-Western, Third edition, 2008.

Note that this table above does not provide an exhaustive list of values. For a more comprehensive list see:

<http://www.wit.org.au/images/Linked%20Documents/Career%20Values.pdf>

My top 3 values are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Careers Tests

Careers Tests – Find out more about who you are!

Vocational tests are a great way to find out more about yourself and how you compare with others in the population. They can tell you more about your interests, values, skills and motivations and suggest the types of workplaces you could find the greatest satisfaction and match with your skills and personality.

Following is a list of online tests and resources that you might find useful to complete.

A few comments about use of tests:

- The population that a test is normed on may determine its value in relation to your background, i.e. if a test has been developed and/or normed on an Australian population, it will be most valid and reliable for students who have grown up in Australia.
- Some online tests require students to register with some personal information. This is requested for ‘research purposes’ i.e. the group making the tests available is providing results to the test developer adding to their norming data. A win-win really!

Adult Directions

<http://www.cascaid.co.uk/adultdirections/>

Adult Directions helps students make decisions about their career direction and includes a series of questionnaires about your work preferences, skills and interests. We recommend that you speak to staff about the results generated by Adult Directions. It should take you about 30 minutes to complete (*Opens in new window*). Log in details for first time users of Adult Directions are available in this [Careers Online FAQ](#). (*Opens in new window*) **Unimelb username and password required.**

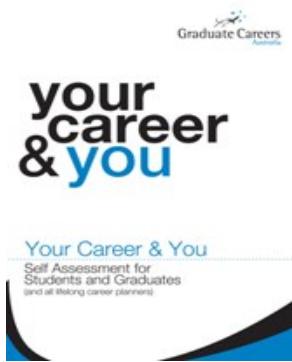
- Go to http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/knowing_yourself
- Launch Adult Directions

The initial menu is divided into the following options:

- Find careers based on what I like;
- Find careers based on what I'm good at;
- Look for my own career idea;
- Start my career planning; and
- See information on work, training and education.

Your Career & You

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/723229/YourCareerYou-2012_web.pdf



Produced by Graduate Careers Australia, this soft copy booklet can be downloaded.

It covers personal goals, values & attitudes, interests, personal attributes and skills. It also encourages students to complete the self-assessment profile after undertaking their audit.

OTHER TESTS OF WORK PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

Significant numbers of large employers use various tests to differentiate between candidates for recruitment and selection purposes. As an indicator of abilities, personality and preferences; psychometric tests can help employers find the best match of individual to occupation and working environment. As a recruitment and selection tool, these tests can be applied at the early stages of selection to screen-out candidates who are likely to be unsuitable for the job.

They provide the employer with an insight into:

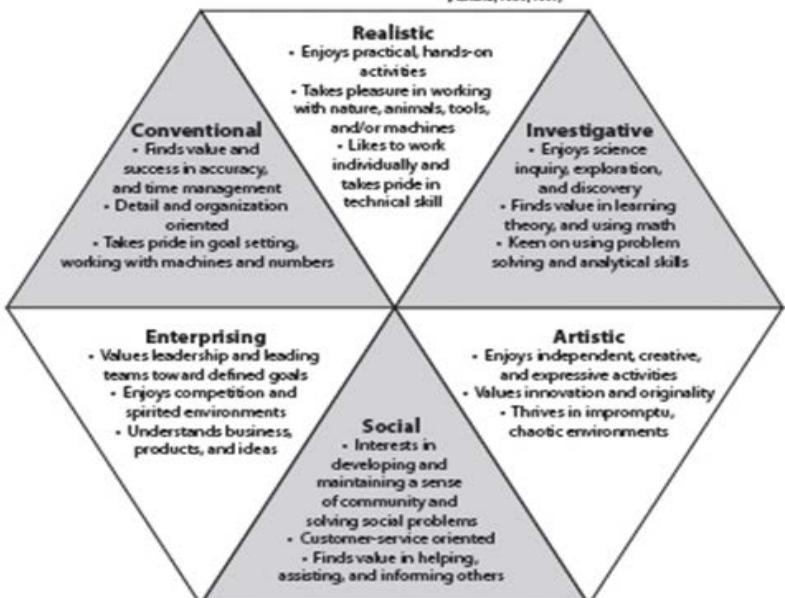
- Whether candidates will be able to cope with the intellectual demands of the job;
- How they work with other people;
- Their preferred style of communication; and
- Their motivation.

The main types of tests used in occupational settings are:

- General intelligence, abilities and aptitude tests (including reasoning abilities);
- Motivation, attitude and/or work-related belief scales;
- Personality inventories; and
- Occupational interests inventories (used more by us).

Holland Personality Types

(Holland, 1959, 1997)



Holland – Occupational Personality Types

Work satisfaction or dissatisfaction can generally be predicted by two elements – ability and key work interests: Interests are the things that we enjoy doing, whatever the industry or the job title. A key career planning tool is to identify these core interests and endeavour to match your job to them.

Career interests also generally reflect certain components of personality (e.g. artistic people tend to be more free spirited whereas enterprising people are often very ambitious and driven). You're likely to find jobs that suit your ability and personality are much more rewarding than those that don't.

John Holland developed a theory and a test inventory of interest based around six personality types (reflecting work environments). His theory postulates that people and work environments can be loosely classified into six different groups (see hexagon).

Most people and most jobs, are best represented by some combination of two or three of the Holland interest areas.

To take the free test, go to:

<http://personality-testing.info/tests/RIASEC.php>
<http://www.123test.com/career-test/>



Strong Interest Inventory



Based on the Holland types, the Strong Interest Inventory Profile assists students to find a career suited to their interests and personality by **comparing their interests to those of thousands of individuals** already working in various occupations and career fields. Holland categories are expanded to include more specific scales.

This is probably the most specific, career interest inventory available that is valid, reliable and has been widely normed on Australian populations.

The test is available via cpp.com and the cost is \$9.95.

A free online test can be taken at:

<https://www.livecareer.com/career-test>

Other Career-related tests

A range of career skills

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_CDV.htm

Personality and aptitude test

<http://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/3503>

Work values test

<http://www.123test.com/work-values-test/>

Career Interest Profiler

<http://quintcareers.testingroom.com/> (free short reports)

Personality Index

Career Values Scale

Strengths Finder

<http://freestrengthstest.workuno.com/free-strengths-test.html>

MyFuture Mini Career Explorer

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au/MiniCareerExplorer/index.html> (dart board)

Mind Tools:

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_CDV.htm

PERSONALITY TESTS

Most employers recognise that personality (which can include work style and attitude) is of great importance in success at work. The principle behind these tests is that it is possible to quantify personality by asking candidates about feelings, thoughts and behaviour in a variety of situations both at work and outside of work.

Personality will determine whether a candidate is right for the organisation and the job. In particular, does the candidate have the appropriate motivation for the type of work and are they the right fit for the organisation? An organisation's success is largely determined by its people so it's vital that staff members are motivated and work well together.

How is Personality Measured?

Psychologists define personality as the particular pattern of behaviour and thinking that prevails across time and contexts, and differentiates one person from another. These patterns of behaviour are linked to individual personality traits such as friendliness, dependability, conscientiousness and ambitiousness and it is these that personality tests focus on.

The 5 Trait Model or the Big 5

The 5 Trait model identifies five aspects of personality that are referred to as the 5-factors. Each describes the frequency or intensity of a person's feelings, thoughts, or behaviours relative to other people. **All five personality traits exist on a continuum and it is important to ignore the positive or negative associations that these words have in everyday language** as, for example, agreeableness may not be an asset in roles requiring tough decisions.

These 5 traits/factors are:



1. Extraversion – Where one gains energy

Extraversion is the act, state, or habit of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gratification from what is outside the self. Extraverts tend to enjoy human interactions and be enthusiastic, talkative, assertive, and gregarious. Extraverts are energised and thrive on being around other people. People who score high on this factor like to work in co-operation with others. People who score low on this factor draw their energy internally. Introverts tend to *prefer* solitary activities over social ones and prefer to work alone. It does not mean they are necessarily shy.

2. Agreeableness - One's level of orientation towards other people

Agreeableness reflects individual differences in co-operation and social harmony. Those who score high on this factor are usually co-operative, concerned with the well-being of others and can be submissive. People who score low on this factor may be challenging, competitive, sometimes even argumentative. People who score high on this dimension tend to believe that most people are honest, decent, and trustworthy. People scoring *low* on agreeableness report being lower in empathy and are generally less concerned with others' well-being which means they are less likely to go out of their way to help others. Low agreeableness is often characterised by scepticism about other people's motives, resulting in suspicion and unfriendliness. They are also more likely to compete than to cooperate.

3. Conscientiousness - How "structured" one is

People who score high on this factor are usually productive and disciplined and are defined as being thorough and careful. It implies a desire to do a task well and "single tasking". People who score low on this factor are often less structured, less productive and less focussed, but can be more flexible, inventive, and capable of multitasking.

4. Neuroticism - Tendency to worry

Individuals who score high on neuroticism are more likely than the average to experience such feelings as anxiety, anger, guilt, envy and depressed mood. They are sensitive and respond poorly to many stressors, are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult and problematic. People who score low on this factor are usually calm, relaxed and rational. They may sometimes be perceived as lazy and incapable of taking things seriously.

5. Openness to Experience - Tendency to be speculative and imaginative

Openness involves active imagination, intellectual curiosity, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings and preference for variety. People who score high on this factor are curious and sometimes unrealistic. People who score low on this factor are down-to-earth and practical. They tend to be less aware of feelings and sometimes obstructive of change.

<http://personality-testing.info/tests/BIG5.php>

In addition to the 5 Factors, there are numerous other tests including:

- 16PF (16 Personality Factors) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/16PF_Questionnaire
- NEO http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revised_NEO_Personality_Inventory



Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The (MBTI) assessment is a psychometric questionnaire designed to **measure psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions**. The underlying assumption of the MBTI is that we all have specific preferences in the way we interpret our experiences and these preferences underlie our interests, needs, values, and motivation.

The MBTI measures four preferences and you end up with a four letter code representing one letter of each of the four preferences.

Extraversion / Introversion (E/I) – Where do you prefer to direct your energy?

- If you prefer to direct your energy to deal with people, things and situations, i.e. the outer world", then your preference is for Extraversion (E). People who prefer extraversion draw energy from action: they tend to act, then reflect, then act further.
- If you prefer to direct your energy to deal with ideas, information, explanations or beliefs, i.e. the inner world then your preference is for Introversion (I). Those who prefer introversion expend energy through action: they prefer to reflect, then act, then reflect again.

Sensing / Perceiving (S/P) - How do you perceive or take in information?

- If you prefer to deal with facts and what you know, to have clarity, or to describe what you see, then your preference is for **Sensing** (S). Ss favour clear, tangible data and information that fits with their direct here-and-now experience.
- If you prefer to deal with ideas, look into the unknown, to generate new possibilities or anticipate what isn't obvious, then your preference is for **Intuition** (N). Those who prefer **Intuition** are drawn to information that is more abstract, conceptual, big-picture, and represents imaginative possibilities for the future.

Thinking / Feeling (T/F) - How do you form judgements and make decisions?

- If you prefer to decide on the basis of objective logic, using an analytic and detached approach, your preference is for **Thinking** (T). Ts have a natural preference with an emphasis on tasks and results to be accomplished.

- If you prefer to decide based on your values and/or personal beliefs, on the basis of what you believe is important or what you or others care about, your preference is for **Feeling (F)**. Fs make decisions paying particular attention to the impact of decisions and actions on other people.

Judging / Perceiving (J/P) - How do you prefer to organise your life?

- If you prefer your life to be planned, stable and organised then your preference is for **Judging (J)** (not to be confused with 'Judgmental', which is unrelated). J's style is oriented towards closure, organisation, planning.
- If you prefer to go with the flow, maintaining flexibility and responding to things as they arise, then your preference is for **Perception (P)**. Ps tend to have a more open, adaptable, flexible style of relating to the things and people. The drive is to experience the outside world rather than order it.

A description of each of the four combinations of Types can be found at:

<http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/the-16-mbti-types.asp>

These can be categorised in several ways including:

- ⌘ In-Charge: ESTJ, ENTJ, ESTP, ENFJ
- ⌘ Behind-the-Scenes: ISFJ, INTP, ISFP, INFP
- ⌘ Chart-the-Course: ISTJ, INTJ, ISTP, INFJ
- ⌘ Get-things-Going: ESFJ, ENTP, ESFP, ENFP

You can do a free online Myers Briggs Type Indicator test at the sites below. Be aware that these are not the official test but they are quite reliable.

<http://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>

<http://www.celebritytypes.com/test.php> Quite reliable, despite the name

<http://www.myersbriggstest.info/> Good descriptions of each of the 4 letter codes



Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey)

The Keirsey is the most widely used personality instrument in the world. It is a free self-assessed, 70 question personality instrument that helps individuals discover their personality type and how they are similar to and different from others. Like the MBTI, Keirsey measures preferences not skills. We can all do things that are not our preference, we just don't prefer to.



<http://www.keirsey.com/sorter/register.aspx>

According to Keirsey Temperament Theory, there are four basic temperament groups which describe human behaviour. They overlap with Myers Briggs types namely:

SP (sensing, perceiving) = Artisan

SJ (sensing, judging) = Guardian

NT (intuitive, thinking) = Rational

NF (intuitive, feeling) = Idealist

These four temperaments can be further subdivided into what is referred to as Character Types:

ARTISAN	GUARDIAN	RATIONAL	IDEALIST
Promoter (ESTP)	Supervisor (ESTJ)	Fieldmarshall (ENTJ)	Teacher (ENFJ)
Crafter (ISTP)	Inspector (ISTJ)	Mastermind (INTJ)	Counsellor (INFJ)
Performer (ESFP)	Provider (ESFJ)	Inventor (ENTP)	Champion (ENFP)
Composer (ISFP)	Protector (ISFJ)	Architect (INTP)	Healer (INFP)

Career Anchors Test

A career anchor is that one element in your self-concept that you will not give up, even in the face of difficult choice. Edgar Schein explores how personality, motivation and values affect career choices and preferences, through the metaphor of an anchor, which pulls people towards specific role types in their work life. Schein identifies eight different anchor types:

1. **Technical Expertise** – prefer to specialise in their skill, tend to pursue excellence and enjoy being challenged in this area.
2. **Managerial** – a generalist who doesn't like to be restricted by a specialisation. Enjoy leadership and achievement.
3. **Autonomy/Independence** – dislike being bound by rules. Often work for themselves as they dislike the organisation of a workplace.
4. **Security/Stability** - dislike personal risk and hence are usually loyal and reliable workers.
5. **Entrepreneurial/Creativity** – like creating new things, be it products or organisations. Value success as it's linked to them as creators and financial reward is often a key component.
6. **Service/Dedication to a cause** – driven more by how they can help people than by using their talents or abilities. Dedication and service within the role are often considered the more important component of work.
7. **Pure challenge** – seek constant stimulation in the form of difficult problems to tackle.
8. **Lifestyle** – whole pattern of living are the primary focus – the needs of self, family and career (which may include interests or hobbies) are considered as a whole.

Your type or types will become clearer as you gain experience, and your career and self-knowledge develop. It may be hard to identify an overall anchor without being forced into a difficult choice between two types, as most of us do not fall neatly into a single category but combine two or three. Anchors can also change over the work lifespan, for example, as family considerations become more important.

There are a range of other values tests including the following:

Motivation and Needs Test

<http://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/2153>

DISC Personality test

<http://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test>

Self Esteem Scale

<http://personality-testing.info/tests/RSE.php>



Section B:

The View From Employers



The Skills Employers Want

As noted in **Section A of the Careers Compendium**, employers are looking for more than your degree – they also expect you to have developed a range of skills. Section A also included some ideas for further developing your skills in each of the areas.

In this section, you'll learn what employers actually mean when they talk about these skills. It's not enough to say you have good communication skills; you have to understand what this means in practice and therefore how you can go about demonstrating these in your CV and interviews.

The skills listed below were compiled in an Australian government document which surveyed a range of industries about the skills they required. We have added to these to provide examples of what you as a graduate have to offer an employer.

Skill	Components
Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in English • Listening, understanding and speaking clearly • Demonstrating assertiveness • Establishing relationships and using networks • Reading independently for understanding • Writing appropriately to the needs of the audience • Delivering verbal messages to convey a range of information to different audiences • Persuading and negotiating effectively • Sharing information and proposing ideas • Demonstrating empathy and tact • Understanding the needs of customers/clients • Speaking/writing in languages other than English
Teamwork Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working effectively as both an individual and as a member of a team • Working with people of different age, gender, race, religion, political persuasion and seniority • Identifying the strengths of team members • Clarifying team roles and performing agreed tasks • Collaborating and contributing to team results • Recognising own strengths and limitations • Understanding how to define a role as part of a team • Resolving differences of opinion • Giving and receiving constructive feedback • Demonstrating leadership, coaching and motivating others, as appropriate
Problem solving Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing facts and testing assumptions • Defining the problem and contributing factors



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing practical, creative or innovative solutions as appropriate• Showing initiative in identifying and solving problems• Testing assumptions, taking into account the context of data/circumstances• Implementing and monitoring solutions• Evaluating processes and outcomes• Solving problems independently and in teams• Applying a range of strategies to problem solving• Making realistic decisions and action plans, and incorporating contingencies• Applying a range of problem solving strategies across a different areas• Using mathematical skills to solve problems (including budgeting and financial management)
Initiative and Enterprise Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adapting to new situations• Being creative, initiating ideas and innovative solutions• Identifying opportunities not obvious to others• Assessing the competitive advantage and/or commercial viability of ideas• Translating ideas into action• Using a range of business communication methods• Developing a strategic, creative, long-term vision including short and medium term goals
Planning and Organising Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing time and priorities (setting timelines, coordinating tasks for self and others)• Developing a vision and a pro-active plan to accompany it• Establishing workable systems to track and monitor work flows and deadlines• Collecting, analysing and organising information• Understanding basic business systems and their relationships• Being resourceful, taking initiative and making decisions• Establishing evaluation criteria and participating in continuous improvement and planning processes• Establishing clear and attainable project goals and deliverables• Planning the use of resources including time, people, materials and financial management• Allocating people and other resources to tasks including settling deadlines• Adapting resources allocation to cope with contingencies
Self-management Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having a personal vision and goals• Having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and vision• Demonstrating enthusiasm for ongoing learning• Able to work under pressure and demonstrate resilience• Evaluating and monitoring own performance• Taking responsibility for own learning and career

Learning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being open to new ideas and techniques • Being willing to learn in any setting – on or off the job • Having enthusiasm for ongoing learning and being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills • Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change • Contributing to the learning community at the workplace • Using a range of mediums to learn (mentoring, peer support, networking, courses etc.) • Applying learning to both technical issues e.g. products, and people issues (e.g. Interpersonal)
Technology Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a range of commonly used workplace IT skills • Using IT to organise data • Being willing to learn new IT skills • Having the occupational health and safety knowledge to apply technology • Applying IT as a management tool

Adapted from the Australian Government – Employability Skills Framework (2002)

And don't forget that employers are also looking for a range of **personal attributes**. These include:

- **Honesty and integrity** – high standard of ethics and strong moral principles. Particularly important in professions involving large amounts of money, personal information or security issues.
- **Enthusiasm** – energy and passion and keenness to do the work. Very important in a workplace.
- **Reliability** – dependable, able to be trusted, consistent. This can be in relation to being on time, getting things done in a timely way and to a high standard and doing what you say you will do.
- **Personal presentation** – how you dress, speak, your facial expression, how you shake hands and act at social functions. (More on this in the Business Etiquette section of the Compendium).
- **Common-sense** – good judgment in practical matters, wisdom or insight. A hard one to define but people with common-sense tend to develop good solutions to everyday matters and make sensible decisions.
- **Adaptability** – the ability to change to fit changed circumstances. Because workplaces change rapidly with developments in technology, international markets or budget issues, employers need people who can adapt to change and go with it in a positive way.
- **Loyalty** – having and showing attachment and support for someone or something. Employers are seeking employees who will be loyal to the company in relation to ethics and honesty but it can also imply a desire for employees to stay with the company and particularly not to move to a competitor organisation. In today's global marketplace, with so much change, this is becoming increasingly difficult for both employer and employee to expect!
- **Commitment** – usually about a sense of responsibility and duty to complete the work that needs to be done to a high standard.
- **Positive self-esteem** – valuing ourselves and appreciating our value to the wider world. We should see ourselves as being worthy, capable and confident. Positive self-esteem comes across in the way you interact, express your views and form relationships. It is vital for taking charge of our lives and realising our potential.

See also the topic *Interview Questions* in Section H of this Compendium.

Make a Good Impression

The First Impression Counts

The first contact you make with a potential employer, recruiter or careers practitioner will strongly influence the flavour of the ongoing interaction you will have with that person. It is vital that you make the BEST first impression you can.

When communicating with those who could impact your career, you want to be seen as:

- Professional
- Intelligent
- Capable
- Polite and easy to work with

Therefore you must ensure that your communication, whether written or verbal, showcases your skills and abilities.

Steps to Making a Great Fist Impression – in Writing

Make sure you meet the selection criteria

- Read the position description and application criteria and instructions carefully.
- Apply only if you can identify a good match between the requirements and your skill set.

Customise your application to the role being advertised

- In your application documents, demonstrate how your skills and experience match those listed in the advertisement.
- If the role is being advertised by a recruitment company, ensure that your cover letter does not include a phrase such as: "I would like the opportunity to work for your company". Instead use a phrase such as: "I would like the opportunity to work for xxx company". If the advertisement does not identify the company that the position is within but does describe an industry, discuss your interest and knowledge of that industry in the cover letter.

Ensure accuracy in your application documents

- Follow the application instructions carefully, making sure that you attach all the documents requested.
- Address the cover letter or email to the person advertising the role. For example, if you were submitting an application to Peter Elliott, make sure you address them appropriately eg. Dear Mr Elliott or Dear Peter Elliott. If you don't know the gender of the recruiter, don't include the title (but try looking on linkedin.com first).
- Double check your application letter and CV and have someone else read over them (as you stop seeing mistakes once you have read it a number of times). Use a spell and grammar check.

Be professional in your communication with recruiters

- Do not use SMS language (eg '4' instead of 'for'), instant message chat language or emotion symbols such as ☺ in emails or cover letter to recruiters. This makes you appear unprofessional and inappropriate.
- Send your application from an email account that clearly identifies you and is professional. Choose something like eileen.woo@gmail.com or eileen.woo35@gmail.com. Avoid addresses such as hotbabe@hotmail.com

Follow up

- When following up with recruiters over the phone, ensure that you ask for the right person.
- Introduce yourself using the name used in your application and make sure you let the person know which position you applied for (using the reference number if provided) and when you applied
- Speak clearly and confidently. Thank the person for their time, even if you have been unsuccessful. Get any feedback you can.

Style Guide

For different occasions and dress codes

When deciding what to wear, it is crucial that you consider the context in which you will be interacting. If attending a job interview for a casual waiting role at a café, for example, you should dress in clothing similar to what the staff wear, but slightly more formal, to show that you're interested and serious about the job application. For job interviews in professional roles (e.g. accountant, engineer, administrator), it is important to dress professionally, regardless of whether you have been told it's a formal interview or a 'casual coffee catch-up'. Be aware that if you are applying for a position in the creative industries (e.g. music), it may be appropriate to dress slightly more informally (i.e. a business suit is not likely required if the job involves being creative), but you should be careful to look smartly dressed in a way that shows your creative flair (e.g. through the use of colour or interesting jewellery). The best way to find out what to wear is to pay attention to the attire of people in similar environments, and ensure you are dressed slightly more formally. If you are uncertain, ask someone you know who works in a similar role or organisation, or attend a careers express [drop-in session](#).

WOMEN	Professional Attire	Examples
Suits, Jackets, Skirts, Pants, Dresses	Colour: black, grey, navy blue, suits must match or be complimentary Fabric: lightweight wool, mixed fabric Pattern: subtle, tweed or pin stripe Length: skirts and dresses not go above knee NO: revealing necklines shirt, mini skirt, any skirts/dresses/pants that are too tight	
Tops, Blouses, Shirts	Colour: white, ivory, cream, grey , blue Fabric: silk, silk blend, cotton, synthetic Collars: high, with notches, sharp points NO: chiffon or see-through materials, metallic or bright colours	
Shoes, Heels	Closed toes pumps, heels up to 5cm NO: platforms, open-toed, heels over 5cm	
Accessories	Jewellery: simple and small piece, gold, silver, pearl or diamond Bag: small to medium simple bag NO: dangling, large jewellery	
<p>Professional attire is the dress code typified by a conservative suit. You need to wear professional attire for an interview, professional functions, recruiting events or any events where you will be formally evaluated.</p>		

WOMEN
Professional Casual
Examples

Suits, Jackets, Skirts, Pants, Dresses

Colour: charcoal grey, navy blue, black, green, red, yellow, white
Fabric: linen, silk, cotton
Sweater, cardigan
NO: jeans



Tops, Blouses, Shirts

Colour: black, brown, purple, coral, blue
Fabric: cashmere, cotton, silk
Collars: soft round points

Shoes, Heels Pumps, sandals, ballerinas

Accessories

Scarves: silk, poly blend
No: multiple pieces of jewellery

Professional casual is less formal than business attire, but doesn't mean casual. For the less formal situations, such as a careers fair or information session, students may choose to wear professional casual, preferably with jacket or blazer.


WOMEN
Smart Casual
Examples

Jackets, Skirts, Pants

Nice slacks, dark denim acceptable
Mid-length dress or skirt
NO: jeans with wash out or holes, sportswear



Tops, Blouses, Shirts

Collared or dressy top, blazer or cardigan as optional
NO: t-shirts with slogans or big logo

Shoes Sandals, ballerina flats
NO: flip-flop

Accessories Clutch or shoulder bag
NO: Large tote bag

Smart casual is a combination of business casual and business attire, where you can combine them into a "savvy" ensemble. For less formal occasions, such as extracurricular activity with the employer. Try not to dress too formally or too casually.



Shopping Guide

\$	Target, TEMT, H & M
\$\$	MNG, Ben Sherman, Basque (at Myer), Zara, Portmans, Oxford, Cue, Ojay, Witchery, Country Road, David Lawrence, ASOS (online), The Iconic (online)
\$\$\$	Marcs, Saba, Ted Baker, Calvin Klein, Hugo Boss, Net-A-Porter (online), Shopbop (online)
General Tips	Try on a variety of colours, patterns and cuts, with lower and higher priced suits, so you can feel the comfort of the suit. If it doesn't fit, don't buy it, even if it's on sale. Never sacrifice fit for colour, fabric or price.

MEN	Professional Attire	Examples
Suits, Jackets, Pants	Colour: black, grey, navy blue, charcoal Fabric: wool, or lightweight wool Length: pants long enough to cover socks Pattern: solid or subtle pinstripes NO: sloppy or oversized pants	 
Shirts	Colour: white, light blue Fabric: cotton, cotton mix Collars: high, stand up, sharp points Sleeves: long sleeves with buttons or cufflinks NO: un-tucked shirts	
Shoes	Leather, black or brown colour lace-ups, shined and in good repair	
Accessories	Tie: ties reach the belt line, preferably silk, solid, stripe or small pattern with the colour matching your suit Belt: leather belt with small buckles Socks: dark solid colours, matching your pants Watch: gold/stainless steel metal band or leather band watch A leather portfolio or notebook holder. NO: suitcase or backpack	
Professional attire is the dress code typified by a conservative suit. You need to wear business attire for an interview, professional functions, recruiting events or any events where you will be formally evaluated.		



MEN

Professional Casual

Examples

Suits, Jackets, Pants
Colour: charcoal grey, light grey, tan,
Fabric: cotton, wool
NO: denim or easy to wrinkle material, white athletic socks



Shirts
Colour: black, brown, blue, ivory, dark colour – plain, checked , striped
Fabric: , cotton, mix, silk
NO: t-shirts

Shoes
Leather, oxfords
NO: athletic shoes, flip-flop, boots

Accessories **NO:** plastic, bright colour sports watch

Professional casual is less formal than professional attire, but doesn't mean casual. For the less formal situations, such as a careers fair or information session, students may choose to wear professional casual attire, preferably with a jacket or blazer.



MEN

Smart Casual

Examples

Jackets, Pants Sport coat, khakis, casual pants or dark denim
Jackets or blazer as optional
NO: Sportswear, shorts



Shirts Polo shirt or casual shirt
NO: t-shirts with slogans and large logos

Shoes Closed toe, deck shoes
NO: Sneakers

Accessories Dark socks
NO: white sports socks

Smart casual is a combination of business casual and business attire, where you can combine them into a “savvy” ensemble. For less formal occasions, such as extracurricular activity with the employer. Try not to dress too formally or too casually.



Smart/Casual

Shopping Guide

\$	Target, H & M
\$\$	Ben Sherman, Gazman, Roger David, Van Heusen, YD, Zara, Oxford, Witchery, Country Road, ASOS (online), The Iconic (online)
\$\$\$	Marcs, Saba, Ted Baker, Calvin Klein, Hugo Boss
General Tips	Try on a variety of colours, patterns and cuts, with lower and higher priced suits, so you can feel the comfort of the suit. If it doesn't fit, don't buy it, even if it's on sale. Never sacrifice fit for colour, fabric or price.

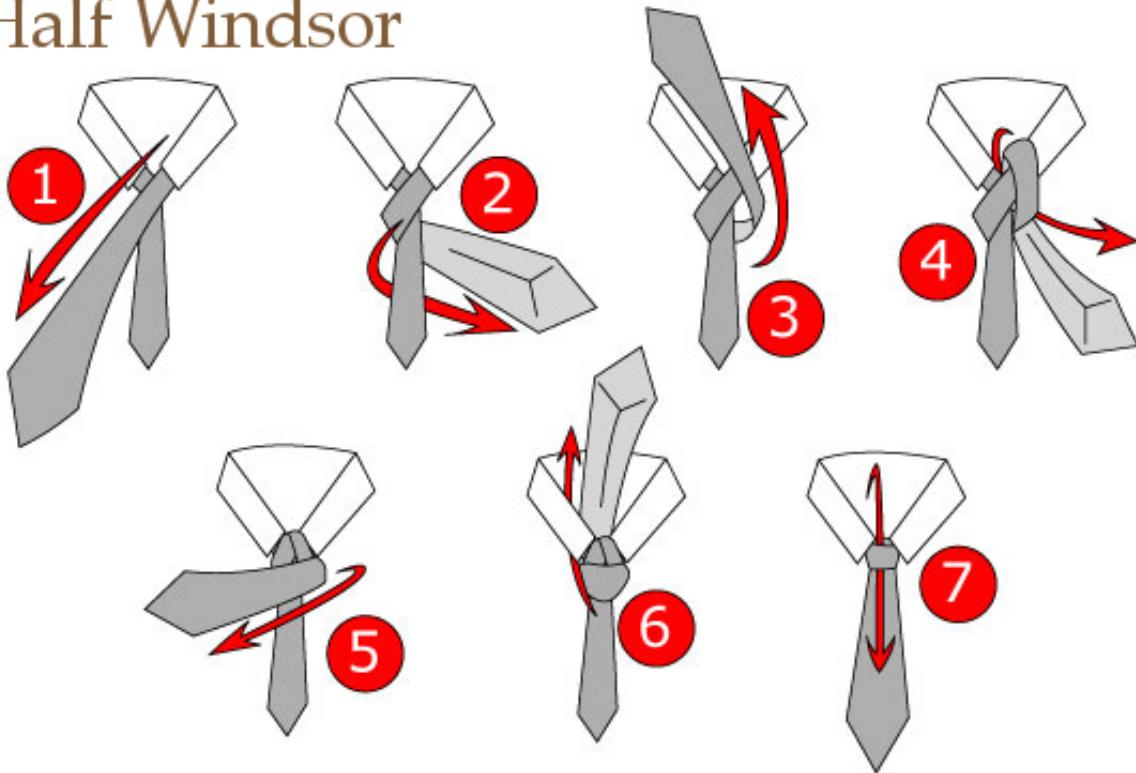
Grooming Guide

Hair	Clean and neatly maintained, coloured hair should be not too bright Women – preferably tie your hair up if long hair Men – get your hair trimmed and your facial hair shaven and trimmed very short. No too much hair gel and sculpting
Shoes and bags	Polished and in good condition, also, make sure the bag or portfolio you will carry to the interview is clean
Nails	Clean, trimmed to even length, neatly manicured Women – no extreme colours or length
Teeth	Well-brushed teeth and fresh breath, no gum or candy in your mouth
Cosmetics	Makeup should be conservative, natural and look polished. Overly bright colours should be avoided
Perfume/Cologne	Use very little or not at all, definitely not overpowering
Tattoos and piercings	Cover all tattoos and remove all facial and body piercings

Instructions on how to Tie a Tie

Step 1	Cross the wide end over the other end
Step 2	Bring the wide end underneath the narrow end from left to right
Step 3	Bring the wide end over to the centre
Step 4	Bring the wide end under the knot to the left
Step 5	Take the wide end out of the shirt from left to right
Step 6	Bring the wide end under the knot to the centre region
Step 7	Bring the wide end down and pass the loop in front. Ensure that the knot is tightened To finish, use one hand to pull the narrow end down gently and use the other hand to move the knot up until it reaches the centre of the collar

Half Windsor



Source: <http://www.totieatie.com/halfWindsor.asp>

Other Resources

WOMEN

- <http://www.pinterest.com/aucareercenter/dress-for-success-women/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/semstatecdc/business-casual-women/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/masaldenizz/smart-casual-business-women/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/acemyinterview/job-interview-attire-for-women/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/shaun71/scarf-tying-101/>
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LYAEz777AU \(25 ways to wear scarf\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LYAEz777AU)

MEN

- <http://www.pinterest.com/aucareercenter/dress-for-success-men/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/semstatecdc/business-casual-men/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/fabuliss/men-s-smart-casual-style/>
- <http://www.pinterest.com/careeroptions/interview-attire-men/>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Tie-a-Tie>
- <http://www.theage.com.au/executive-style/management/50-rules-for-doing-business-in-australia-20131024-2w3v6.html>

Professional Etiquette

Overview

Professional etiquette is all about how you present yourself in a professional setting to ensure you act appropriately, do not offend anyone and make a good impression. How well you understand this will be tested even before you have been employed as employers assess how you interact on the telephone, in interviews and in a social setting. So here are some key rules for getting it right.

Meeting someone for the first time

For a professional meeting such as an interview or networking function, a firm handshake is expected. Practise this until you feel comfortable with it. You should also smile, make good eye contact and have some small talk ready to start the conversation off on a good note.

Proper Introduction, Conversation Skills and Small Talk

At a networking function, if you arrive and don't know anyone, take the initiative to introduce yourself (using your first and last name) and provide some brief information about yourself (your elevator pitch). Remember that making good eye contact and having a friendly smile and a good firm handshake will show that you are polite, confident and approachable, and will also set the foundation for a future professional relationship.

Maintain eye contact and make an effort to listen to what others are saying. Take the time to ask questions and show an interest in the other person's thoughts. Use verbal prompts, which are brief comments that let the person know you are paying attention, such as "oh", "I see", or "okay". During the conversation, avoid informal terms such as "anyways", "yeah", "you guys", and repetitive phrases such as "you know" and "stuff like that". Conversations are all about making connection. You just need to be sincere, show empathy and be willing to listen.

If possible, do some research about the people you are going to meet and look them up on LinkedIn. Keep yourself updated with news sites, daily newspapers, magazines and TV news. Read about the latest events, sports, music and movies, which are great small talk topics to get a conversation going.

Professional Meeting

Be punctual. It shows that you value other people's time. Send your apology to the chair if you anticipate a delay. If you are heading the meeting, make introductions if not everyone knows each other. Have a strong agenda, which will help you to keep you on track during the meeting.

Keep your phone off the table, and make sure it's on vibrate or turned off. Do not take calls, text or check e-mail during the meeting, which shows disrespect. Ask questions during the designated question period, do not interrupt someone while they are speaking or asking a question.

Professional Dinning

Dining with someone you don't know well in a professional environment can be tricky. The most important thing to remember, according to career coach Barbara Pachter, is that you are not there for the food, you are there for business.

Arrive early at the restaurant - about five minutes before the scheduled time. Wait until your host sits or invites you to do so. Try to sit across from whoever you want to interact with most on the table.

If the table is set properly, your bread or salad or any other food dish, will be placed to the left of your dinner plate. A glass or drink will be placed to the right of the dinner plate. Your fork goes to the left; while your knife and spoon go to the right. Once you are seated, the napkin goes on your lap. If you need to leave for any reason, place it loosely folded on your chair.

Each course should have its own utensils - they may all already be in front of you or may be placed in front of you as the dishes are served. If the utensils are there at the beginning of the meal, a good general rule is to start with utensils on the outside and work your way in as the meal goes on.

The largest fork is generally the entrée fork. The salad fork is smaller. The largest spoon is usually the soup spoon which has a rounded end. If you are having a fish course, you may see the fish knife and fork as part of the place setting. The utensils above the plate are the dessert fork and spoon, although these may sometimes be placed on either side of the plate or brought in with the dessert.

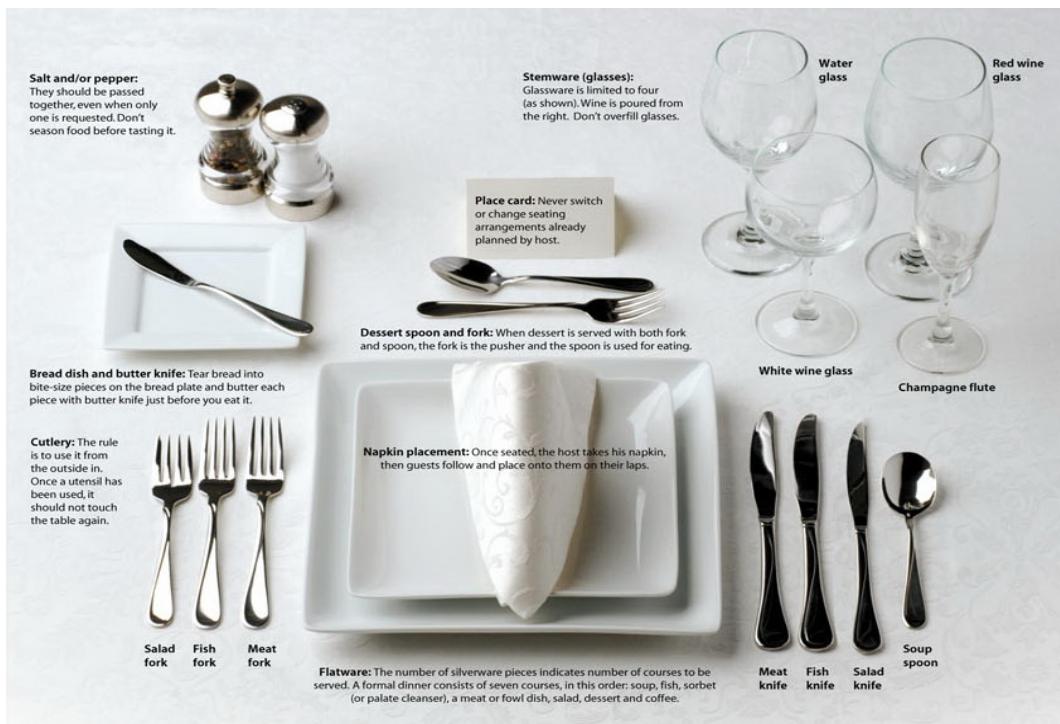


Image Source from Dinning Etiquette 101

Keep your mobile phone in the pocket or handbag, or turn it off, and DO NOT check your phone or text under the table. While you are eating, sit up straight and don't lean on the table. Keep your hands above the table and elbows off the table. Don't talk with your mouth full.

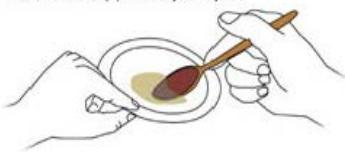
Order something easy to eat, avoid anything unfamiliar, messy (such as spaghetti) or too expensive. Avoid ordering alcoholic beverages even if other people do so. Start eating when everyone on your table is served. Always break the bread with your hands, not the knife. Cut your food and take small bites. Never reach across people, but rather ask for something to be passed to you. Ask the person on your left if they'd like something before passing it to your right. If you are having the soup, the motion of the spoon should be away from you. If having dessert, the motion of the spoon is towards you.

EATING SOUP

When eating soup, tilt the spoon away from you.



To get the last bit of soup from the bottom of the bowl, tilt the soup plate away from you.



HOLDING UTENSILS

Knives and forks are held in a relaxed manner.



CUTTING MEATS

When holding the meat knife, place your index finger about an inch down from the handle to help press down firmly. Hold the fork in your left hand, prongs down. Cut only enough food for each mouthful.



PROPOSING A TOAST

The custom of clinking glasses originally was used to drive away evil spirits. If you clink, do so with care, especially with fine crystal. For the most part, simply raise your glass in the direction of the person being toasted. Toasts should be long enough to cover the subject but short enough to be amusing — about a minute.

It may be a nice idea to toast people in their native tongue:

Salud (SA lud): Spanish

Slainte (SLANT tay): Irish

L'chaim (leh KHY yim): Yiddish

Prosit (PRO sit): German

Kanpai (KAHN pi): Japanese

Santé (SAN tay): French/Québec



Image Source from Dinning Etiquette 101

Once you have used your knife, never place it back on the table. Place it diagonally to the right of your plate (unless you are left-handed) or across the top of your plate. Place your knife and fork in the rest position (knife on top of plate, fork across middle of plate) to let the waiter know you are resting. Use the finished position (fork below the knife, diagonally across the plate) to indicate that you have finished eating. Always say "please" and "thank you" to waiting staff.

RESTING POSITION

When you take a break from the table, your knife and fork should be crossed in one of the positions shown.

When stepping away from the table, leave your napkin loosely on the chair.



FINISHED POSITION

The dessert spoon should be resting on the saucer and not the cup.

At the end of the meal, the knife and fork should be at the 11 o'clock position.

Wait for the host to loosely place his/her napkin to the left of his/her place setting when the meal is finished.



SOURCES: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Etiquette* by Mary Mitchell; Sun-Sentinel file photos

Staff photography/Susan Stocker

rkwok@sun-sentinel.com Staff graphic/Renee Kwok

Image Source from Dinning Etiquette 101

Professional Email and Telephone Etiquette

With much professional work done online today, the way you conduct yourself online is as important as how you appear in person.

Choose a good subject line, letting the reader know that you are addressing a professional issue. Use a professional email address - “smileyface@ ...” or “always17@...” are not appropriate address for professional use. Make sure your email address confers you name, for example use jack.smith@... so the receipt knows who sent the email.

Make your email easy to read by putting the most important information at the top, and organise the content with bullets and short paragraphs. Always check your email for spelling and grammatical errors before you send it off. Use real words and complete sentences: no smileys, slang or abbreviations. Use a signature block, including your phone number and a physical address where people can contact you directly.

When answering the phone, give a greeting and your name: “Good Morning, this is Sue Lee speaking.” If you are meeting with someone in a professional capacity, try not to answer the phone during the meeting. If you are expecting an important call, warn the person in advance. For the times when you are unable to answer the phone, ensure the voice mail on your phone is professional, clear and audible without music or other noise in the background.

Australian Culture and Asian Culture

Straightforwardness and equality are valued in Australian culture. Stick to the facts and figures and avoid a lot of emotional influence techniques, emotions and feelings. Australians do not need to have long standing personal relationships with people in order to do business and they take work seriously, even if their approach seems relaxed. Communications in Australia are direct and good-humoured. Australians will generally let you know without hesitation if they do not like something that you say. Bargaining is not a common component of professional interactions and negotiations tend to be minimal.

In contrast, professional etiquette in Asia is quite different. Shaking hands (but not too firmly) and bowing are common in Asia. In Japan, avoid eye contact while shaking hands. As is the case in most of Asia, exchanging business cards is the most common way to make connections. Business cards are given and received with both hands.

Establishing relationships, (for the Chinese, Guanxi) and networking, are important in most Asian countries. Asian people believe that developing strong long-term relationship shows your commitment to doing business. Drinking as a part of professional dining is common in some Asian countries, such as China, Japan and South Korea. Remember to limit your intake but you do need to show appreciation if your host proposes a toast to you. Most Asian people are indirect communicators so much is communicated through tone of voice and body language. Asian people usually don't say “no”, which is considered rude. Instead you should use phrases like “maybe next time” or “it's under consideration”.

If in doubt, do some research about the culture to gain insight into customs and avoid inappropriate behaviour.

Student and Work Visas

Working while studying

- If you entered Australia on a student visa and you intend to work, be sure to check:
 - When you are allowed to start working;
 - How many hours per fortnight you are allowed to work; and
 - Whether there are different regulations during semester and vacation time.
- If you will be working in Australia for the first time, it is also advisable to find out about:
 - Your work rights; and
 - Taxation obligations.

Working after graduation

- Applying for temporary residency or permanent residency

Where can I find information?

Student Support Services at The University of Melbourne

The University's Student Support Services division provides information and advice to international students in regard to:

- Renewing your student visa;
- Changing your visa type;
- Extending your stay in Australia; and
- Working whilst studying.

To register for a migration information session:

<http://services.unimelb.edu.au/international/visas/migration-advice>

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Conditions for working while studying:

http://www.immi.gov.au/students/students/working_while_studying/conditions.htm

The Australian Tax Office

You must apply for a Tax File Number before you start working and complete a tax return each year. Learn about what you can claim from the tax return.

<http://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/>

Fair Work Australia

International students – Know your workplace rights:

<http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employment/international-students/pages/default.aspx>

Resources

Your responsibilities when working:

<http://services.unimelb.edu.au/international/life-and-study/working-while-studying>

Section C:

Gain Experience & Contacts



Finding a Casual Job

What is a casual job?

Casual employment is a temporary arrangement which involves working variable hours each week, depending on the employer's needs and your availability. Casual jobs can provide an opportunity to gain experience, support yourself financially, try out an occupation of interest and develop your professional network. Casual jobs should be included in your CV, as they show your commitment to a job, reliability in committing to regular work, interest in an occupation or industry and your ability to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

If you intend to work casually, it is important to be aware of your rights and responsibilities. Casual work differs from more permanent forms of work in that:

- There is no guarantee you will receive shifts in any given week;
- You will be paid by the hour and entitled to a loading of approximately 25 per cent on top of the award rate; and
- In return for the pay loading, you will not be entitled to annual leave, sick leave or public holiday pay.

It is nevertheless similar to permanent jobs, in that:

- If you earn a minimum of \$450 per month, you will be entitled to superannuation of at least 9.25 per cent; and
- Some of Fair Work Australia's National Employment Standards apply including a minimum wage, minimum hours per shift and community service leave:

www.fairwork.gov.au/Employee-entitlements/national-employment-standards

Common casual jobs for students

Casual job opportunities are most readily available in occupations requiring lower level skills, which means you don't necessarily need a lot of experience to apply. Casual jobs in highly skilled occupations also exist, but are harder to find. If you don't have any work experience, consider beginning with a semi-skilled job, before progressing to a skilled or highly skilled job. Here are some ideas:

Semi-skilled	Skilled	Highly skilled
Café worker	Personal assistant	University demonstrator
Telemarketer	Hotel service manager	Private music tutor
Fast food cook	Sales assistant	Marketing coordinator
Cleaner	Call centre worker	Private language tutor
Kitchen hand	Bank teller	Project administrator
Hotel porter	Bookkeeper	ICT helpdesk officer
Checkout operator	Data entry operator	
Shelf filler	Retail supervisor	
Cinema ticket seller	Payroll officer	
Courier driver	Library assistant	
Fast food delivery driver	Receptionist	

When considering which sort of casual job to apply for, think about how it will look on your CV and what it will demonstrate to a future employer. Will it show that you are aware of the Australian workplace culture; indicate your interest in a particular industry; or show that you can apply your discipline-based skills and knowledge in the workplace?

How can I find a casual job?

Finding a casual job is different to finding a more permanent job in some ways, in that it's possible to express your interest in person. Of course, casual jobs are also advertised online, and many positions are filled via personal networks.

In person

Casual jobs are often advertised in shop and restaurant windows. This means you can approach the staff and ask how to apply. If you do this, make sure you are well prepared, by dressing smartly and knowing how you will introduce yourself. You may also wish to prepare some brief questions to ask (be conscious that the staff will likely be busy and not have much time to answer). Also, be ready to either provide a CV on the spot, or follow up via e-mail within a day or so. Be aware that you may be asked if you'd like to be interviewed right then and there, so preparation is the key.



Online

Many casual jobs are advertised online, in particular those at a professional level. The following websites provide a starting point:

- Careers Online: <https://careersonline.unimelb.edu.au/>
- Seek: www.seek.com.au
- MyCareer: www.mycareer.com.au

You can also search individual organisations' websites for jobs.

Networking

Networking is key to finding a casual job. Many employers seeking casual staff recruit informally, via their own networks and those of their staff. Refer to the *Networking* topic in Section C of this compendium.

Which organisations seek casual employees?

A range of organisations seek casual staff. Some of the larger employers are listed below; however, there are many, many more. Do your own internet search to find an employer close to your home.

Supermarkets	Other retailers	Banking/Insurance	IT retailers	Hospitality	Hotels
Aldi	Myer	ANZ	Apple	Boost Juice	Best Western
Coles	Big W	Bupa	JB Hifi	Grill'd	Ibis
Foodworks	Kmart	HCF	Good Guys	Salsas	Quest
IGA	Target	Medibank Private	Dick Smith	Subway	Travelodge
NQR	David Jones	NAB	Officeworks		
Woolworths	Bunnings	Westpac			

Resources

For further information on casual employment rights and responsibilities, refer to:

- Fair Work Australia: <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employment/casual-full-time-and-part-time-work/pages/casual-employees.aspx>; and
- Australian Taxation Office: <https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/super/getting-started/employees/> (in regard to superannuation entitlements).

The Value of Student Societies

What are Student Societies?

Student Societies are university student run clubs. They cover a wide range of topics and interest areas and are a great way to meet new friends, explore an area of interest and gain some great skills. And employers really value your involvement in clubs and societies!

There are close to 200 student clubs and societies at The University of Melbourne and you can find a list at <http://umsu.unimelb.edu.au/jump-in/clubs/clubs-listing/>. The focus of the clubs includes community service, culture, music, politics/activism, special interest, spiritual and course related. If you have a burning interest in something for which there is no club, you can even start one yourself.

What are the benefits of joining?

It's always a plus if an employer sees on your CV that you have been involved in a student club or society. It shows interest in your career or other areas and suggests you are involved in more than just study (because employers are looking for well-rounded employees). But make sure you ARE involved. Just listing something on your CV isn't enough. You need to be involved and actively attend events and, ideally, take on a leadership role such as secretary or treasurer. No need to feel you are not qualified to take on such a role. Everyone feels like that! You learn as you go and you'll have some great information to add to your CV that will really impress employers. Questions about skills, knowledge and contacts you have gained via student society involvement will also regularly come up in interviews.

Joining a club or society will also expand your social network. This is particularly the case if you join a non-course related club, as you will meet other group members from across the University. Depending on the club's focus, you may also gain valuable experience in areas such as organising functions, debating, tutoring or helping, consulting, seeking sponsorship and a wide range of other skills.

Many course related clubs and societies run employment focussed events where you have the chance to meet employers, and hear information about an industry or organisation. These events really assist with your career planning and focus. Make sure to capitalise on any clubs and societies experience on your CV. Spell out what you did, what you achieved and, as always, quantify any information where possible.

Vacation Work and Internships

Vacation work and internships are a great way of gaining some professional experience relevant to your degree. Both involve working with an employer (in the private, government or not for profit sectors) for a period of time, usually at least six weeks. Your work may involve completing a specific project or working on the everyday business of the organisation. Some larger organisations have a rotation program to give you a sense of the different departments.

The benefits of vacation work/internships

Any work experience will give you new skills and knowledge, but course related work is particularly valuable. It provides the opportunity to apply the knowledge you have gained through your degree, broadens your workplace skills and provides you with knowledge about a particular organisation or industry. You may well also find that your coursework has much more meaning as a result of the experience you can now attach it to! Such career related work experience also assists your pathway to graduate employment. As a result of your experience you will have more to highlight on your CV and more to talk about in the interview. Just make sure you are clear about how best to maximise it in your job applications!

In addition, some employers (particularly the major graduate recruiters) use the vacation work recruitment process as a key component of their graduate recruitment process. In other words, if you are successful at gaining vacation work with an organisation and the placement goes well for both sides, it can often lead on to a graduate position.

What kinds of organisations offer vacation work/internships?

Dates for applications to these programs differ between organisations. Most open around mid-year, however some open in March (for vacation work at the end of that year!). A wide range of organisations offer vacation work and internships, including large corporations and government departments. Do a web search of *vacation employment au* and your discipline and see what comes up. You may also want to look for internships or vacation work that is more general. Remember that ANY employment experience is valuable so don't narrow your search too much.

Many organisations will accept vacation students or interns but do not necessarily advertise for them. This means you will need to approach them individually with your CV and a tailored cover letter explaining your interest in working with them and what skills and knowledge you could bring to the organisation. This will require some research!

How can I find an internship/vacation work?

- Make sure you look regularly at Careers Online, as the employers who advertise here actively target University of Melbourne students
- Attend Careers Fairs and on campus employer presentations to learn more about the options on offer
- Explore the websites of all organisations you are particularly interested in working for to see if they offer vacation work or internship opportunities
- Read publications such as the Australian Financial Review to keep abreast of which companies are doing what. Company relocations and expansions, for example, can often signal new opportunities
- Consider searching for internships and vacation work overseas, particularly in your home country if you have family or contacts who may be able to assist you with researching possible options
- A range of directories are published annually and include details on organisations and the opportunities they offer to students. The key ones are: [Grad Connection](#) and Unigrad
- Ask around among other students – if they have been successful at gaining an internship or vacation work, how did they go about it? What do they think made them successful at gaining the internship?
- Read Job Search Strategies to locate advertised and non-advertised placements within Australia

Maximising the value of your vacation work/internship

It's a great opportunity – maximise it!

- Before you commence, find out as much as you can about the organisation and its priorities, its culture and the people who work there. You will feel much more confident when you commence.
- Establishing a good relationship with your supervisor is vital. You will generally be set specific goals on commencement and make sure that getting these done is your priority. If in doubt, don't be afraid to ask! It's much better to feel a little foolish (even if you are probably not – everyone has questions, especially in the initial stages of finding your feet).
- Keep good notes about what you have completed, achieved and learned (weekly) and write up a summary you can take to your meetings with your supervisor. This should include any issues you have struggled with and also what you have done that you feel proud of.
- Keep your eyes and ears open, as there will be a lot of new information to take in. The role you are there to perform is only one part of what you have to learn. Issues such as how the photocopier works, where you go to get stationery, and even how the kitchen and coffee breaks work are all highly important issues!
- Reflect on the knowledge about the organisation and the industry you are gaining, which will be much broader than just the project you are working on.
- Always start with your best foot forward and be on time. Every day. Regular lateness is a career derailler and WILL be noticed even if nothing is said. Likewise, a tidy desk suggests an organised person. We are not all wired to be tidy but you can force yourself into better habits. Allocate the final 15 minutes of your day to tidy your papers,neaten your desk and write your 'To do' list for tomorrow.
- Be friendly and pleasant to everyone you meet. Try to find out what people's roles are and how they fit in the organisation. Avoid office politics – they are a no win, especially for someone who is there for a limited time.
- Take part in staff meetings if you can. Don't be afraid to ask questions if there are things that you don't understand. If you feel confident to contribute, that's great! People will notice an insightful comment or observation.
- Leave time to write up a report (even if only one page) prior to the end of your placement to give to your supervisor with your name on the bottom of the page. It's a nice 'rounding off' and shows you have reflected on your placement.
- Send a short note or card to your supervisor the following week thanking them for their assistance and reiterating the value you gained from the placement
- Update your CV– otherwise you will forget! Include the experience, skills and knowledge you gained.

Things to watch out for

A number of organisations offer internships on a 'for payment' basis (i.e. you pay to do the internship). We advise caution before committing to such schemes. Make an appointment with a Careers Consultant to discuss before you go ahead.

If you are undertaking an internship with a private company in Australia and the internship is not a part of a for credit subject, you should be paid, as this will ensure you are covered by WorkCover in the case of an accident. Only internships that are part of a for-credit subject are covered by the University's insurance.

Volunteering

What is volunteering?

Volunteering involves freely giving your time to a non-profit organisation in order to contribute to society. Volunteers can be found in non-profit organisations such as community organisations, environmental groups and public hospitals. Volunteers differ from employees in that they do not receive payment for their contribution; however, there are many other benefits to volunteering.

The benefits of volunteering

By becoming a volunteer, you can gain valuable experience, which may assist you to determine whether a particular industry or occupation is of interest for your future career; develop your professional network; and if you are an international student, gain knowledge of Australian workplace culture and enhance your command of English. Volunteering is also a great way to develop friendships and make a positive contribution to the community.

Choosing where to volunteer

In seeking voluntary work, there are a number of issues to consider to ensure your placement will be of benefit to you and the organisation. These include:

- Organisational mission: Does it fit with your values?
- Type of experience: is it relevant to your goals?
- Volunteer support: will appropriate guidance and training be provided?
- Insurance: Is it provided by the organisation?
- Time commitment: does it fit in with your other responsibilities?
- Location: is the commute realistic in the longer term?

Where can I volunteer?

There are a number of ways to find voluntary work. If you know what type of role interests you, you can search via the following websites:

- **Careers Online:** <https://careersonline.unimelb.edu.au/>
- **Go Volunteer:** <http://govolunteer.com.au/>
- **Volunteering Victoria:** <http://volunteeringvictoria.org.au/>
- **Pro Bono Australia:** <http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au/volunteering-melbourne>
- **Seek volunteering:** <http://volunteer.com.au/>

If you're not sure about the types of voluntary work available in your local area, you may be interested in making an appointment with your local council's volunteer resource centre. The following municipalities provide this service:

- **Boroondara:** <http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/our-city/international-students/volunteering>
- **Darebin:** <http://divrs.org.au/>
- **Glen Eira:** <http://www.cige.org.au/volunteering.htm>
- **Moreland:** <http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/community-care/volunteering/moreland-volunteer/>
- **Port Phillip:** <http://www.portphilip.vic.gov.au/volunteers.htm>
- **Stonnington:** <http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Live/Community-Directory/Volunteering-in-the-Community>
- **Yarra:** <http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/community/volunteering/>



Look at the webpages of other local councils to see where you may be able to volunteer

University (on-campus)

University clubs and societies committees: <http://union.unimelb.edu.au/clubs>

Your rights and responsibilities as a volunteer

Worksafe Victoria specifies that *as a volunteer you have the right to feel healthy and safe at work*. This means your work environment should be free from physical (e.g. injury) and psychological risks (e.g. discrimination). It should be clean, secure and well-lit.

When you begin a volunteer role, the organisation should provide you with:

- A volunteer position description;
- An induction session that includes information to help you be safe at work;
- Training, where appropriate; and
- Volunteer insurance.

For further information, refer to [WorkSafe Victoria](#) website or call 1800 136 089.

As a volunteer, it is your responsibility to:

- Be reliable;
- Carry out the responsibilities outlined in the volunteer position description;
- Act in a professional manner; and
- Undertake training, where appropriate.

Finally, whilst volunteering provides the opportunity to gain valuable experience that may help you secure work in the future, Fair Work Ombudsman specifies that there should be no expectation on the part of the employer or volunteer that the voluntary work arrangement will lead to employment.

For more information on your rights and responsibilities as a volunteer, refer to the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) or [Fair Work Australia](#) website. If you intend to volunteer abroad, the Australian Government's [Smart Traveller](#) website provides some helpful tips.

Resources

[Volunteering Australia](#) provides information sheets on a range of topics, including how to be an effective volunteer, background checks prior to commencing work and a volunteer rights checklist.

Organisations Seeking Volunteers

Organisations by interest area

Non-profit organisations in a range of areas seek volunteers. Here are some ideas:

Animals

- RSPCA Victoria: <http://www.rspcavic.org/volunteering/>
- World Wildlife Fund: http://www.wwf.org.au/about_us/work_with_wwf/volunteer/
- Zoos Victoria: <http://www.zoo.org.au/get-involved/volunteer-at-zoos-victoria>

Arts and culture

- Australian Centre for the Moving Image: <http://www.acmi.net.au/volunteer.htm>
- Melbourne Festival: <http://www.melbournefestival.com.au/about-us/volunteering.html>
- Museum Victoria: <http://museumvictoria.com.au/about/work-opportunities/volunteering/>
- National Trust: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/vic/volunteers>

Community

- Fare Share provides meals to the needy. Volunteer in the Abbotsford kitchen, in schools, in their market garden in Oakleigh, or in the Abbotsford warehouse: <http://fareshare.net.au/volunteers.php>
- Meals on Wheels Victoria: <http://www.mealsvictoria.org.au/volunteer.htm>
- Second Bite is an organisation that rescues un-needed fresh food and provides it to the needy: <http://secondbite.org/donate-time>
- The Smith Family: <http://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/>
- Brotherhood of St Laurence: <http://www.bsl.org.au/Volunteer>

Environment and International Development

- Conservation Volunteers: <http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/get-involved/volunteer>
- Landcare Australia: http://www.landcareonline.com.au/?page_id=79
- Australian Volunteers for International Development: <http://www.australianaidvolunteers.gov.au/volunteer>

Health

- St John's Ambulance: <http://www.stjohnvic.com.au/volunteers/>
- Cancer Council: <http://www.cancervic.org.au/how-you-can-help/volunteer>
- Royal Children's Hospital: <http://www.rch.org.au/volunteers/>
- Royal Melbourne Hospital: <http://www.rmh.mh.org.au/volunteer-service/w1/i1034992/>
- Royal Women's Hospital: <https://www.thewomens.org.au/support-us/ways-to-support-us/volunteer>

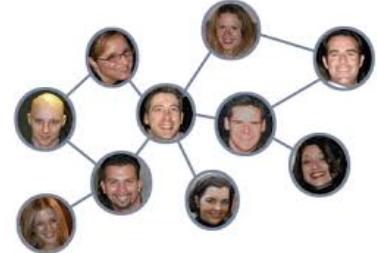
Sport

- Badminton Victoria: <http://www.dosomethingnearyou.com.au/opportunity/badminton-victoria-inc>
- Cricket Australia: <http://www.cricket.com.au/get-involved/volunteering>
- Helping Hoops: <http://www.helpinghoops.com.au/getinvolved/index.html>
- Tennis Victoria: <http://www.tennis.com.au/vic/clubs/resources/volunteers>

Networking

What is networking?

Networking is simply about making connections with people, something you do all the time in social settings. Professional networking is no different— it is about talking with people, finding out about them (what they do, what their career path has been) and them about you, looking for common interests and areas for potential collaboration and assisting each other. Staying in touch is also critical to being a good networker.



Essentially, networking involves developing relationships – the goal may be to share information, contacts or activities. By meeting new people and expanding your network you can find out information about career paths, programs, positions which may not have been advertised, trends within the industry and much more.

Tips for the new networker

In the early stages of your career, you may not have as much to offer in a networking relationship as someone further advanced in their career, but remember that every professional has to start somewhere so you will find people are usually happy to share their story. And of course, you also have a story, so be prepared to talk about your study, specific projects, travel, your home country, volunteer work and so on. Try to look for areas of common interest where you can contribute more to the conversation.

Information you want to give	How you can express it
Name	I haven't met you so far this evening. My name is ...
Who you are	<i>I will be completing the [course] at the University of Melbourne at the end of this year.</i>
What you do and what makes you good at it	<i>I am really interested in ... and I've also done</i>
Call to action	<i>I would love to hear more about the work you do at ...</i>

Starting the Conversation

Here are some other ways you can commence a conversation in a networking situation:

- ‘Did you enjoy the speaker tonight?’ After the person you are talking to has answered, share your own thoughts, for example, ‘I particularly enjoyed the section when the speaker explained...’
- ‘Where do you work and what is your role?’ Drill down and ask more specific questions, for example, ‘Are you working on a particular project at present?’ or ‘What are some of the biggest challenges in your role?’ or ‘What made you interested in this area?’
- ‘What did you study at University?’
- ‘How did you get into your current role? What has your career path been?’
- ‘I am interested in the ... sector. Do you have any advice or is there anything you know about this sector?’

If you have made a connection, follow up with an e-mail within a couple of days and, if possible, try to make a time to meet for a coffee at some point. Don’t be disappointed if this doesn’t always happen – people are busy, but it’s always worth a try.

The Value of a Business Card

A business card ensures that people remember you and can contact you easily to potentially send professional opportunities your way. Here is the networking card recommended by the Careers Centre. You can have business cards printed for a very low cost via companies such as www.vistaprint.com.au.

Example:

Jane Smith

Student, Master of Arts
The University of Melbourne
Phone: 0489 678 991
Email: jane.smith@student.unimelb.edu.au
LinkedIn: <http://au.linkedin.com/in/janesmith>

Career objective

To work at a professional services firm, engaging with clients to deliver comprehensive services and solutions to meet business needs.

Undergraduate Qualification:

Bachelor of Arts - The University of Shanghai, China

Where to network

Great places to start networking include student clubs and societies, professional associations, careers fairs and employer visits on campus. Part-time jobs, voluntary work and community groups are also a source of new networks so don't forget that you can still ask people about their careers even if you meet them in a different context such as a sporting club. Also check out www.meetup.com, which lists hundreds of interest groups in cities across the world. Melbourne has more than 500 groups listed and these include *Melbourne City Adventures*, *Newbies to Melbourne*, *Travellers and Adventurers in Melbourne* and groups around every interest imaginable.

Volunteering is another excellent way to expand your networking and develop your workplace skills. Your present social network may also generate professional opportunities so make sure you keep your friends and family aware of your evolving career interests.

A profile on www.linkedin.com

An online profile on linkedin.com (which is essentially a professional social media site) is also vital to good networking. For all the information you need on developing your LinkedIn profile, see the information about *LinkedIn* in Section C of this compendium.

Once you have developed your LinkedIn profile, you should join the *University of Melbourne Alumni Network* www.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/ and your faculty's LinkedIn network/s.

Also join groups that connect to your career interest area, for example, Australian Human Resources or Community Workers' groups. A list of Professional Associations relevant to your discipline can be found via the Careers Centre website: <http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/>

Maintaining your network

Once you have expanded your list of contacts, it's important to build and maintain solid relationships with these people. Networking works best when you can give back as much as you receive. Think about what you have to offer the person. For example, perhaps you've read an article you think might be of interest to the person, which you can send via e-mail.

Keep in contact with your referees and formal and informal mentors to ensure they know where you are and where your career is going. They might encounter opportunities through their networks that may be of interest to you.

Other great places to network

Industry expos, careers fairs, industry seminars and public lectures abound with industry decision makers and professionals you want to meet. Your professional association will host regular professional development events where you can meet other professionals with similar career interests, who will be at different stages of their career. Make the most of all available networking events, professional development opportunities, seminars and conferences.



LinkedIn Profile Checklist

PHOTO: It doesn't have to be fancy - just use your cellphone camera in front of a plain background. Wear a nice shirt and don't forget to smile!

HEADLINE: Tell people what you're excited about now and the cool things you want to do in the future.

SUMMARY: Describe what motivates you, what you're skilled at, and what's next.

EXPERIENCE: List the jobs you held, even if they were part-time, along with what you accomplished at each. Even include photos and videos from your work.

ORGANIZATIONS: Have you joined any clubs at school or outside? Be sure to describe what you did with each organization.

David Xiao
Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Analyst
San Francisco Bay Area | Financial Services

Previous: Berkley Ventures
Education: University of California, Berkley

[www.linkedin.com/in/davidxiao/](#)

Background

Summary

I'm a senior at Berkeley, starting to look for roles in the financial industry. As an economics major, I'm fascinated by the invisible forces that shape our world. Why does one company succeed and another fail? Is it possible to predict which idea will be the next big thing?

As such, I've taken lots of microeconomics coursework and have interned with a local venture capital firm. And now I'd like to put that experience to good use, analyzing tomorrow's up-and-coming companies.

Experience

Venture Capital Internship
Berkley Ventures

May 2013 – September 2013 (5 months) | Berkeley, CA

Conducted research on 20 startup companies and presented my findings to the fund's board, leading to a new \$1.5 million investment.

INTRODUCTION TO VENTURE CAPITAL

A presentation I gave to my classmates, based on what I learned at Berkley Ventures

Organizations

Berkeley A Capella
Lead Singer

March 2012 – Present

Schedule and perform at events for one of Berkeley's oldest a cappella groups, including last year's Cal-Stanford game.

[Continued >>](#)



EDUCATION: Starting with college, list all the educational experiences you've had - including summer programs.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & CAUSES: Even if you weren't paid for a job, be sure to list it. Admissions officers and employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE: Add at least 5 key skills - and then your connections can endorse you for the things you're best at.

HONORS & AWARDS: If you earned a prize in or out of school, don't be shy. Let the world know about it!

COURSES: List the classes that show off the skills and interests you're most excited about.

PROJECTS: Whether you led a team assignment in school or built an app on your own, talk about what you did and how you did it.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Ask managers, professors, or classmates who've worked with you closely to write a recommendation. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills.

Education

University of California, Berkeley
Economics, B.A.
2010 – 2014 (expected)



Volunteer Experience & Causes

Big Buddy
Skyline High School
September 2012 – May 2013 (9 months) | Education

Mentored an Oakland high school student through the college application process, helping him get into his dream school.

Skills & Expertise

Most endorsed for...

Economics



Start-ups



Due Diligence



Venture Capital



Management



Honors & Awards

The Achievement Award Program
UC Berkeley

Four-year scholarship awarded to community-minded students with a proven track record of academic success.

Courses

University of California, Berkeley

- Microeconomic Theory (Econ 101A)
- International Monetary Economics (1832)
- Public Economics (230A)

Projects

Venture Capital Financing in India

May 2013

For our International Monetary Economics course, Paul and I decided to study the emerging venture capital industry in India. By looking at data from the World Bank, we were able to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this nascent sector. And we developed a series of recommendations for overcoming these challenges, which we delivered to our professor in a final term paper.

5 team members



David Xiao
Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Anal...



Paul Smith
Student at UC Berkeley

Recommendations

Received (2) ▾

Venture Capital Internship
Berkeley Ventures

Tim Lee
Partner

David spent the summer with us at Berkeley Ventures and made an immediate impact. He showed us a brand new technique for firm analysis that he had just learned in school and came through with recommendations that opened our eyes to a unique set of opportunities.

We don't normally hire undergrads as interns but after working with David, we will again!

November 13, 2013, Tim managed

Want more LinkedIn tips for students? Check out students.linkedin.com



Section D:

Where to find jobs



Finding a Job: Some places to start

Start at the University

The University of Melbourne offers students looking for work (be it part-time, casual or graduate) a number of options to start your search. [Careers Online](#) advertises thousands of employment opportunities each year: www.careersonline.unimelb.edu.au. Also check out **Work On Campus** to search for jobs on campus: <https://students.unimelb.edu.au/future/work-on-campus>. You could also look for casual or part-time work in the **Student Union** (on the main campus) where there are a range of food outlets that often employ our students.

External online options

The biggest advertiser of employment vacancies is www.seek.com.au. Seek advertises vacancies in all Australian states and these include part-time, casual, graduate and volunteer positions. You can set up a job alert which will advise you when suitable jobs are advertised. You can also try www.indeed.com.au, www.jobsearch.gov.au, www.mycareer.com.au, www.careerone.com.au and www.jobseeker.com.au.

A number of websites focus on graduate roles specifically and these include www.graduateopportunities.com, www.unigrad.com.au and www.graduatejobs.com.au. If you are interested in a Government role, you can look at www.australia.gov.au/topics/employment-and-workplace/australian-government-jobs/graduate-programs. Graduate programs are also offered by state and local Governments.

You should also check whether your specific industry of interest has a website dedicated to roles in the relevant area; and jobs are also often advertised through professional associations.

LinkedIn

This ‘professional social media’ site is an important tool to utilise in your job search: www.linkedin.com. You can create a career profile, including similar details to those on your CV, and you can also join groups within your area of interest which will keep you in touch with industry information and employment and internship opportunities. You can also link to people you know or have met and seek endorsements for your skills and knowledge. Check here for additional information <http://university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students.html>.

On campus events

The University hosts a range of events where employers visit the campus. These include:

Careers Fairs - held in early March and attended mainly by large employers, the fairs are a great way to find out who is recruiting, the disciplines they are seeking and what they are looking for in graduates. You need to be prepared early as the recruiters are on campus in March to recruit graduates to start in January the following year! Please note that most of these employers require applicants to have permanent residency.

Employer information sessions – these are held throughout the year. They include general company information sessions, employer involvement in student society events and a range of other opportunities. Keep looking at CareersOnline.

Internships and Vacation Employment

Internships are not widely offered in Australia. There are, however, a number of sites that promote internships including <http://au.gradconnection.com/internships/> and <http://www.studentedge.com.au>. You can also sometimes find overseas internship opportunities in a range of companies and also government type roles (e.g. Australian consulates, the United Nations) and in not for profits. If the internship or vacation work is with a private company or government department in Australia, you should receive some form of payment, which is usually at least the minimum wage.

Internships are often part of the hidden job market, meaning that they are not advertised. Do a thorough web search using terms such as *internship* and *Australia* (or internationally if you prefer). Look up where students from other universities have interned. The options are limited only by your imagination so think about and compile a list of organisations that interest you and then contact them with a top class CV and letter explaining your interest in an internship or vacation work with them.

There are a number of companies that advertise internships in both Australia and overseas. Be aware that most of these require the student to pay them to organise the internship. Check carefully what is involved before accepting an internship you pay for. If in doubt, seek advice from a Careers Consultant.

Cold Calling

Many of the work opportunities our students find, whether part-time, casual, vacation or graduate, are not advertised. They represent the hidden job market and are the way a large proportion of students and graduates find work. Some employers offer only a small number of roles and do not want to advertise and attract potentially hundreds of applications they will have to sort through. They know that keen students will approach them so you need to develop this as one of your key job seeking strategies.

Networking

Like cold calling, networks will often be a source of information that can help you find work. People know other people and have information sources about possible vacant roles, a new company that may need staff in the future or they may be happy to mention you to someone they know as a potential good employee. Read the section on Networking for further ideas.

Volunteering

If you are interested in working with a not for profit organisation, volunteering is one of the best ways to be considered for a paid role. For more information, see the section on Volunteering.

Finding a Professional Job

What is a professional job?

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, professional jobs are those which involve *analytical, conceptual and creative tasks*, which are performed *through the application of theoretical knowledge and experience*. Most professional jobs require a bachelor degree or higher, involve highly skilled work and are often highly paid. The following occupational titles provide some examples of professional jobs:



How can I find a professional job?

Networking

Did you know that a large percentage of jobs are not advertised and many people find jobs through people they know? This means you need to develop and maintain your network throughout your working life. Think about who you know; and who may be able to give you information about the labour market and career options. In time, these people may even alert you to a job opportunity. People in your network include:

- Friends;
 - Family;
 - Fellow students at the university;
 - Fellow students in your previous course;
 - Colleagues at your part-time job;
 - Acquaintances at the gym and sporting activities;
 - Peers in university clubs and societies; and
 - Your professional mentor.

Remember never to ask for a job, but make it clear that you're looking for one.

LinkedIn

If you don't already have a LinkedIn profile, now is the time to prepare one, as you can find many professional jobs advertised here. To get started, take a look at these webpages:

https://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/530~/linkedin-learning-webinars

<https://university.linkedin.com/#videos>

Professional associations

By getting to know professionals in the field in which you wish to work, you will be able to learn more about the labour market climate and what employers are looking for. In time, the people you get to know may alert you to job opportunities or recommend you to their contacts. You can find a list of professional associations relevant to your discipline via the 'resources' link on CareersOnline.

Online

At the same time you are building up your network, it's important to use other job search methods, and in particular, online search engines such as:

- Careers Online: <https://careersonline.unimelb.edu.au/>
- Seek: seek.com.au
- My Career: mycareer.com.au
- Career One: careerone.com.au
- China Connections: www.chinaconnections.com.au/
- Graduate Opportunities: www.graduateopportunities.com
- Graduate Connection: gradconnection.com.au
- Lode: lode.com.au
- Unigrad: unigrad.com.au
- Federal Government Job Search: jobsearch.gov.au/Job/Search
- Victorian Government Careers: careers.vic.gov.au
- Australian Public Service Jobs (Federal Government) apsjobs.gov.au (Australian Citizenship)
- Local Government Jobs: <http://www.lgassist.com.au/>
- Ethical Jobs : www.ethicaljobs.com.au/
- Australian Council for International Development: acfid.asn.au/get-involved/sector-jobs

Job Fairs

Many organisations seek graduates via job fairs. These are hosted by the University; and by private and Government organisations:

- The University of Melbourne Graduate Careers Fair (March)
- The Big Meet <http://www.thebigmeet.com.au/> (March)
- Melbourne Career Expo <http://www.careerexpo.com.au/> (August)

Company/organisation websites

If you know which organisations you would be interested in working for, be sure to stay up to date with jobs advertised directly on their websites.

Newspapers

For a more traditional approach, you can also keep an eye out for jobs advertised in newspapers. Melbourne newspapers with job listings include:

- The Saturday Age
- The local Leader newspaper for jobs in SMEs and in your community; and
- The Melbourne Chinese Post.

Job Seeking in China

Deciding where to work

If you are an international student from China, you may have already decided you would like to return home after completing your studies; or you may be considering it as one of your options. As Chinese employers value face-to-face interaction and it's easier to find a job when you are in the country, it's important to make the most of your visits home. If you decide to leave your options open, make sure you are well prepared for employment in both China and Australia.

Preparing to return to China

In order to be prepared, it's important to stay up to date with labour market, industry and occupational information, and to develop and maintain your networks. Take some time to think about the following questions:

- In which industry would you like to work? Start by doing some industry research.
- Which occupations are of interest to you? Have a look at some job advertisements to find out employer requirements.
- Which organisations recruit graduates in your area of interest? Make a list and stay up to date via their websites and by contacting recruiters to ask questions.
- Against whom will you be competing? Many high-skill, high-wage jobs in China are highly sought after, so you will need to know how to differentiate yourself.
- What will you need to do whilst in Australia to stand out from other applicants when you return to China? Perhaps you need to try to participate in an internship, find a part-time job, improve your English, or undertake a leadership role in a university club?
- What is the timeline for applying for jobs? When will you need to have your application ready? Be sure to make an appointment for a CV review or careers consultation well ahead of time.
- Are your documents in order? Do you have copies of your qualifications and other certificates ready?
- Who can you talk to for more information about the labour market, recruitment practices and workplace culture? Ask your friends and family in China to keep you updated. Do they know someone who would be willing to give you some advice about applying for a job in your area of interest? Join our LinkedIn website to stay in touch with alumni who have previously returned home to work. You may also find that some of your friends and/or lecturers from your undergraduate class are on LinkedIn. Make sure to link with them!

Searching for a job in China

The most common job search methods in China are online and via networking.

Online

Have a look at some of the following websites¹:

- 51 Job: <http://www.51job.com/> (Chinese and English)
- China HR: <http://www.chinahr.com/> (Chinese and English)
- Cjol: <http://www.cjol.com> (Chinese and English)
- LabourNet: <http://labournet.com.cn/> (Government jobs; Nation-wide; Chinese)
- Shanghai HR Development Center: <http://www.shrc.com.cn/indexWebAction.action> (Government jobs; Shanghai; Chinese)

¹ This information has been adapted from the Going Global website.

- Zhejiang Human Resources: <http://www.zjrc.com/> (Government jobs; Zhejiang province; Chinese & English)
- South China Morning Post: <http://www.classifiedpost.com> (English)

Networking

Just like in Australia, many jobs in China can be found via the ‘hidden job market’. It’s important to develop and maintain a broad professional network, because whilst the people you know may not be able to offer you a job, they may be able to let you know about opportunities, recommend you to employers in their network and help to maintain your knowledge of the labour market. Remember that it’s ok to make it clear that you’re looking for a job, but you should never ask for a job directly. Refer to the Networking topic in Section C of this compendium for further information.



Chinese workplace culture

Even if you are a Chinese national intending to return to China for graduate employment, you may not have had the opportunity to gain experience in the workplace, so it’s important to find out about how best to present yourself when meeting with professionals, attending recruitment events and at interview. The basic guidelines are similar to those in Australia. For example:

- Arrange meetings ahead of time;
- Dress professionally and conservatively;
- Be on time;
- Use formal names and titles;
- Speak modestly about your achievements; and
- Present and receive business cards with both hands.

For detailed information on what to expect in the Chinese workplace, talk to your contacts in China, or ask the advice of Chinese Australians who have recently worked there.

Resources

The following video provides an insight into Chinese employer expectations:

- Your Chinese Career journey: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sP3v5pGkoGg>
- Going Global provides comprehensive information on the Chinese labour market and job search techniques. Log on via CareersOnline:
http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/preparing_for_next_steps

Section E:

Applying for positions



Understanding Job Advertisements

The structure of job advertisements

Job advertisements usually consist of five parts and provide information on the organisation, the role, conditions of employment, selection criteria and how to apply. Whilst small organisations may include all of this information in the advertisement, larger employers often publish an advertisement with an attached position description.

The organisation

- Provides background information about the organisation, including its size, location and structure; and in the case of large organisations, the function of the department in which the role is located.

The role

- Outlines the context of the work and major responsibilities.

Conditions of employment

- Outlines the type of appointment (e.g. full-time, fixed term), location, salary, superannuation and other benefits.

Selection criteria

- Indicates the knowledge, experience, skills and attributes sought, along with any special requirements, such as a willingness to work shifts or the possession of a drivers licence.

Application details

- Indicates how to apply, the documents required and to whom the application should be addressed.

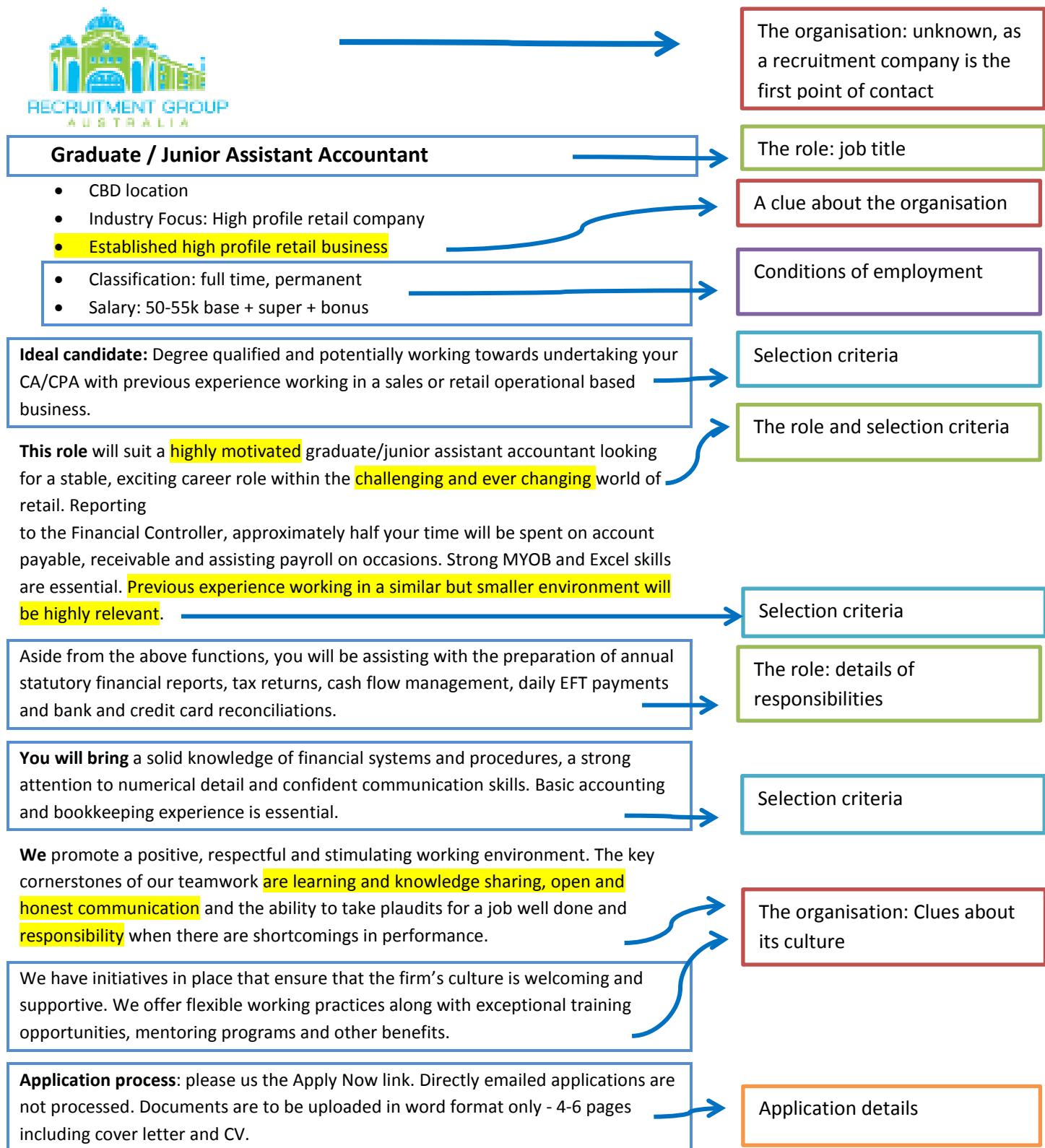
Pay attention to who is advertising the job

If you use commercial search engines such as seek.com, you may have noticed many jobs are advertised by recruitment agencies rather than the recruiting organisation. This means that you may not know who the employer is, and it will be more difficult to tailor your application. You will probably need to contact the agency to find out more about the organisation. In most cases, it is preferable to apply for jobs advertised directly by an employer.

If you intend to apply for more than one job at the same organisation, don't simply send the same application twice! At minimum, prepare a fresh cover letter that demonstrates what you have to offer to each position; and adapt your selection criteria to suit each role.

Analyse the advertisement and position description

A good way to understand the role is to highlight important information throughout the advertisement and position description. The example above should help you to understand the role and what the organisation is looking for.



Should I apply?

Before applying for any job, it is important to consider whether you would feel comfortable working for the organisation and whether you are genuinely interested in the role. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Does the organisation have a good reputation?
- Does the organisation and role fit with my values?
- Am I genuinely interested in the role?
- Do I fulfil at least 75 per cent of the selection criteria? You don't need to fulfil all of them!

If you're not sure about an aspect of the job, or whether you're the type of person they're looking for, consider contacting the organisation to ask for more information about the role. First ensure that you know what you'd like to ask and remember to be professional!

Application documents

Most job advertisements will ask you to e-mail a cover letter, your resume and a statement addressing the selection criteria. Be sure to understand what is required well before the application is due. For more information on writing application documents, refer to the following topics in Section F of this compendium:

- Writing a cover letter
- Resume writing
- Addressing selection criteria

To have these documents reviewed by one of our consultants, please attend a Careers Express drop-in session.

Writing Skills Statements

What are skill statements?

Skill statements are often called for in employment application documents. In most cases, you will need to include:

- A skills summary on your CV;
- Statements addressing the selection criteria in a separate document; and
- A cover letter that highlights the skills you offer relevant to the position.

How to write skill statements

Many students find it difficult to write skill statements and say that it feels a little unnatural. This tends to be because of the need to write about yourself in a self-promoting way, whilst at the same time being careful not to sound over-confident. If you take the easy option and simply include a list of skills, the recruiter has no reason to believe that you can actually perform the skills in the workplace. For this reason, it's important to structure skill statements carefully, showing both your level of competence and sufficient evidence of your claim. Writing skill statements takes practice and careful crafting, so make sure you allow enough time.

A formula to get you started

To make a start on writing your skill statements, think about what you have to offer an employer and make a list. It may be easier to ask a friend what they think your main skills are. Then try writing them into skill statements by using the following formula.

1. Indicate your level of competency

Use words such as those in the following list to describe the depth and breadth of your experience. Consider which terms denote entry level competence and which show that you have considerable experience; and choose the word most appropriate to you.

ability to...	excellent	intermediate	sound	well-developed
advanced	fluent	outstanding	strong	working knowledge of...
effective	high-level	proficient	very good	well versed in...

2. State the skill

Ensure you include only the skills that are relevant to the position and employer concerned. If you are applying for a role as a museum curator, it's unlikely the recruiter will be interested in your advanced knowledge of payroll systems. When presenting skills in a bullet-point list, it's also a good idea to order them according to their importance in the role for which you are applying.

analytical skills	customer service	organisational skills	time management
attention to detail	foreign language	problem solving	technical ²
communication	information technology	research	
critical thinking	leadership	teamwork	

² Technical skills can be occupation-, industry- or discipline-specific and include, for example, competence with particular software packages, scientific techniques, project management certification and budgetary management experience.

3. Choose an appropriate connecting statement

Try to use a connecting statement appropriate to the type of experience you are referring to.

...as demonstrated by...	...as required in the position of...	...as reflected by...
...gained through...	...developed via...	...learned via...
...acquired through...	...as confirmed by...	...illustrated by...

4. Provide evidence of the skill

You can draw on a range of experience for your evidence. This includes:

From your... work experience (e.g. part-time job; previous full-time experience)
internship (within or outside of your course)
voluntary work (e.g. Volunteer Retail Assistant at charity shop; City Ambassador, City of Melbourne)
academic life (e.g. group work, project work)
extra-curricular activities (e.g. position of responsibility, such as president of committee, tennis coach)
co-curricular activities (e.g. peer support program mentoring, international exchange)
interests (e.g. travel)

5. And finally, write your skill statements

Here are some examples of skill statements. Remember you can be creative and customise yours according to your experience and writing style.

- Excellent customer service skills, as demonstrated by experience as a waitress at China House Restaurant, Melbourne
- Well-developed IT skills, including advanced knowledge of MS Office suite; intermediate level AutoCad; and working knowledge of MYOB software
- Fluent in French, learned via 12-month exchange at HEC School of Engineering, Paris during 2012-2013
- Strong problem solving skills developed through two months' independent travel through the US

The next step

Once you've had a go at writing your skill statements, it's a good idea to put them aside for a couple of days, and then come back to edit them. Have you:

- Included the right type of skills for the position you're applying for?
- Used the right words to describe your skill level?
- Provided enough evidence so that someone who doesn't know you can believe what you've said?
- Varied your language so the skill statements aren't repetitive?
- Used varied examples?

Read each skill statement out loud to see how it sounds.

To have your application documents checked by one of our consultants, attend a Careers Express drop-in session.

Action Verbs

What are action verbs?

Action verbs are words you can use to describe your experience. They can help to articulate what you have done more precisely and give your resume a professional tone.

How to use action verbs

You can use action verbs in various application documents, including your CV/resume, cover letter, statement addressing selection criteria; and during the selection process, at interviews and in assessment centres.

Action verb lists

The following lists are categorised according to experience type.

Communication

address	communicate	discuss	influence	market	propose	specify
advertise	condense	draft	inform	moderate	publicise	suggest
advise	conduct	edit	instruct	motivate	publish	summarise
answer	confer	educate	interact	negotiate	reconcile	synthesise
apprise	consult	elicit	interpret	observe	recruit	teach
arbitrate	contact	enlist	interview	outline	refer	train
arrange	convey	explain	introduce	participate	reinforce	translate
articulate	convince	express	involve	persuade	report	write
assess	correspond	facilitate	join	plan	resolve	
author	debate	familiarise	judge	present	respond	
brief	define	formulate	lecture	project	schedule	
clarify	develop	handle	listen	promote	screen	
collaborate	direct	incorporate	liaise	proofread	solicit	

Leadership

accomplish	attract	delegate	examine	influence	originate	review
adapt	authorise	demonstrate	execute	initiate	overhaul	schedule
address	broaden	develop	expedite	inspire	oversee	secure
administer	budget	devise	explain	install	plan	select
advise	build	direct	facilitate	institute	preside	shape
affect	chair	disseminate	form	integrate	prioritise	spearhead
allocate	change	elect	generate	interview	produce	stage
amend	conclude	eliminate	guide	launch	program	start
analyse	conduct	emphasise	handle	lead	promote	strategise
appoint	consolidate	employ	head	manage	prompt	streamline
approve	control	encourage	hire	mentor	propose	strengthen
arbitrate	convert	enhance	host	merge	recommend	supervise
arrange	convince	enlarge	implement	moderate	recruit	taught
assemble	coordinate	enlist	improve	monitor	reorganise	terminate
assess	counsel	ensure	inaugurate	motivate	replace	train
assign	create	establish	incorporate	negotiate	respond	
attain	decide	evaluate	increase	organise	restore	

Organisation

approve	collect	execute	inspect	organise	reorganise	streamline
arrange	compile	explain	install	plan	reserve	strengthen
assemble	coordinate	file	log	prepare	respond	submit
catalogue	correspond	formalise	maintain	process	review	supply
categorise	develop	generate	monitor	provide	route	systematise
chart	disseminate	implement	obtain	purchase	schedule	update
classify	distribute	incorporate	operate	record	screen	validate
code	ensure	initiate	order	register	standardise	verify

Technical

accelerate	automate	consolidate	estimate	measure	qualify	specify
adapt	balance	control	evaluate	minimise	reconcile	survey
adjust	budget	correct	examine	monitor	record	systematise
administer	calculate	decrease	execute	net	redesign	tabulate
allocate	catalogue	define	forecast	organise	reduce	trace
analyse	centralise	design	formulate	plan	reorganise	translate
appraise	chart	determine	generate	prepare	research	write
approve	classify	develop	implement	process	research	
arrange	collect	devise	inspect	program	retrieve	
assess	compile	diagram	interface	project	screen	
audit	compute	dispatch	manage	promote	simplify	
augment	conserve	engineer	market	purchase	solve	

Academic and research (for research students)

achieve	compile	design	explore	interpret	program	search
acquire	compute	determine	extract	interview	prove	solve
adapt	conceive	develop	find	introduce	publish	specialise
address	conceptualise	devise	formalise	invent	purchase	stage
analyse	conclude	direct	formulate	investigate	rectify	standardise
apply	condense	discover	fortify	locate	refine	streamline
assess	conduct	distribute	frame	maintain	regulate	structure
assist	conserve	document	gather	measure	reorganise	study
author	construct	draft	generate	operate	repair	summarise
avail	contract	earn	identify	organise	replace	survey
build	contribute	edit	improve	overhaul	report	systematise
calculate	convert	engineer	improvise	perceive	research	teach
chart	create	enhance	inform	perform	restore	test
clarify	critique	estimate	innovate	pinpoint	restructure	translate
co-author	cultivate	evaluate	inspect	pioneer	revamp	tutor
collaborate	debug	examine	inspire	plan	review	upgrade
collect	define	experiment	install	present	revise	utilise
compare	demonstrate	explain	instruct	produce	revitalise	write

A note on verb tense

When writing application documents, tense matters! If the activity you are describing was in the past, use the past tense. If you are still doing it, use the present tense. Ensure that this is consistent throughout the document. For example:

Administrative Assistant

2011-2012

Jones and Jones Tax Accountants

- *Prepared* tax returns for individuals within strict time constraints
- *Provided* tailored advice on legal tax reduction strategies according to customer needs

Administrative Assistant

2011-present

Jones and Jones Tax Accountants

- *Prepare* tax returns for individuals within strict time constraints
- *Provide* tailored advice on legal tax reduction strategies according to customer needs

Section F:

Cover letters, CVs and key selection criteria



The screenshot shows a login form titled "Enter your University username and password to log in." It contains fields for "Username" and "Password", and a "Log in" button.

<https://myresume.careers.unimelb.edu.au/>

Writing a CV

What is a CV or Resume?

A CV or Resume details your skills and experience and forms the basis for your job application.

Different types of CVs

There is no ‘one size fits all’. Your CV content depends on your level of industry experience and the kinds of positions you are applying for. The most common types of CVs are:

Chronological	Functional	Hybrid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lists relevant positions and achievements in reverse chronological order – useful if you have a long and consistent work track record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lists key workplace skills and competencies – useful if your work history is brief or interrupted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful as it combines the best of both types

The hybrid can be very effective for recent graduates as it emphasises your skills, not your interrupted work history.

What's in a CV?

Your CV should contain the following information:

Contact Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full name (First name listed first, family name listed second) Telephone number Email contact details Postal address is optional
Career Objective (optional)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The career objective is a powerful introduction that is appropriate if you already have a strong work track record in your target industry but difficult for a recent graduate to present convincingly
Skills summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match this to the skills stated in the advertisement List your skills and how you have demonstrated these (refer to link)
Recent and relevant education qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tertiary education including undergraduate degree Secondary education where relevant
Work experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant work experience should be documented and focused on your achievements This can include non-professional roles that can demonstrate general workplace skills
Achievements and interests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document achievements which have not been listed previously Keep your achievements recent and relevant Extra-curricular activities can be included here
Referees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A list of recent and relevant referees who have consented to providing references for you They should be able to confirm your suitability for the role and comment on your skills and attributes

What's the focus?

Your CV should focus on your work-related or study achievements and your general workplace skills. In your skills summary you should also cover your proficiency in general workplace skills like communication, problem-solving and teamwork. Some of these will be listed in the employer's selection criteria and you should base your skills summary on them. Evidence of these general workplace skills is critical for the employer, as much of the hiring decision is based on how well the applicant will fit in to the organisation. Your degree shows your technical skills and in your resume you should demonstrate equal proficiency in the workplace skills.

Tailored to each job

Your CV is more powerful if it is tailored to each application. The most effective way to do this is to analyse the selection criteria for each position and ensure you have covered the main ones in your skills summary. You can develop your bank of skills statements to transfer into each resume for each application depending on the different selection criteria.

What does it look like?

Your CV should be no longer than two pages with neither too much 'white space' nor highly crammed text. If you have significant experience, three pages is acceptable in the Australian market. Use a common font like Arial – 10 point with 11 point for the headings. Avoid boxes and grids as scanning may alter the formatting. Use dot points consistently. Well-constructed one page CVs are becoming increasingly acceptable in all industry areas and are much more the norm in China, the US and some European countries. You can create your own pre-formatted CV on the Online CV:

<https://myresume.careers.unimelb.edu.au/>.

Type of language

Use strong, but not exaggerated verbs. 'Liaising with student club committee to coordinate social activities' is a stronger statement than 'involved in student club activities.' Everything on your resume must be true and preferably verifiable by documents or referee check.

Skills Summary

The skills summary lists the key skills the employer is seeking and how you have demonstrated these skills. It should draw on information provided in other parts of your CV and encourage the employer to read the rest of your application. It should focus on your employability (or soft) skills but may also cover some key technical skills the employer is seeking. Most information on your technical proficiency should be found in the body of the CV under work experience, internships or work placements.

The skills summary should focus on the key employability skills – **initiative and enterprise, communication, problem-solving, self-management, use of technology, teamwork, ongoing learning and planning and organisation.**

Tailor your skills summary to each application by deciding on the main skills the employer is seeking for that particular role as shown by the selection criteria e.g. '*... have strong analytical, problem-solving skills and work successfully in a dynamic team environment*' means that you should cover problem-solving and teamwork in your skills summary.

Skills Summary Examples

- Good problem-solving and analytical skills shown by developing an Executive Decision Support system in my business analyst role with XYZ Co
- Well-developed teamwork skills demonstrated by working on the Systems Development Project at EFG International

Example CVs

It's important to be aware that CVs vary according to discipline, occupation and industry. For sample resumes in your discipline, refer to the Melbourne Careers Centre website:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/applying_for_work/resumes

Different countries may have different requirements in relation to CVs so it is important to research these requirements to ensure you adhere to the customs. In some countries, it is appropriate to include a photograph or marital status, for example where in other cultures; this will not be well regarded.

One important convention to research prior to submitting an application is length of CV. In some countries such as China, the US and parts of Europe, a one page CV is the accepted custom.

Europass CV has been set-up by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. Its aim is to help people make their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood, enabling them to seek employment throughout Europe. For more information see 'Instructions for using the Europass curriculum vitae' on www.europass.cedefop.europa.eu.

Address Selection Criteria

Employers use selection criteria to obtain consistent information on job applicants so they can evaluate them on equal terms. For many public sector, university and not for profit organisations, you will be required to address selection criteria individually, in a separate document.

What do selection criteria look like?

You will find the selection criteria in the job advertisement or listed in the position description that you obtain from the employer. Often they are clearly listed but they are sometimes embedded in complex paragraphs like these criteria for a bank position:

Ideally, you will be tertiary qualified with a ‘can do’ attitude and have strong analytical, problem solving skills and work successfully in a dynamic team environment with strong discipline in adhering to timelines and delivering to expectations ...

To gain an understanding of what these phrases mean have a look at the section on **Understanding Job Advertisements**.

Addressing selection criteria – within the cover letter

First, isolate all the selection criteria – *tertiary qualified, practical, ambition to advance, analytical and problem solving skills, teamwork and meeting deadlines*. Then decide whether to address the main criteria in your cover letter or to develop a separate selection criteria document to cover them all. It might be helpful to check with the employer before you make this decision. Identify the employability skills the employer is seeking – **initiative, communication, problem solving, self-management, use of technology, teamwork, ongoing learning, planning and organisation**. Align the specific employability skills with the relevant selection criteria. Review your work roles (including those not specifically related to the position), volunteer roles or student experience for evidence you have the required skills.

Criterion	Skill	Evidence examples
Strong analytical, problem solving	Problem solving	Completing masters level assignments and projects Data analysis tasks in part-time job
Dynamic team environment	Teamwork	Contributing to finance group projects Working effectively with other staff to achieve results in high volume fast food job
Adhering to timelines	Self- management time management	Balancing part time work and assignment deadlines Maintaining customer flow as a bank teller

Now you can write a paragraph in your cover letter to show how you meet these selection criteria:

My problem solving skills are shown by completing my master’s degree assignments and complex projects to a high academic standard. I am an effective team member as demonstrated by my active contributions to group study projects where I have often taken a coordinating role. I have good self-management skills shown by successfully balancing study and part-time work as a bank teller with XYZ Bank, Carlton. In this role I maintain efficient and courteous customer flow while ensuring my administrative responsibilities are completed. My efficiency has been acknowledged by being named Employee of the Month twice in the last six months.

You may need a second paragraph to cover more criteria. Keep it brief though, as the aim of the letter is to get you the interview where you can elaborate on your skills more fully. When you’ve done all that you will have ‘addressed the selection criteria’.

Addressing selection criteria – a separate document

If you are writing a separate selection criteria document you will need to write a paragraph up to a third of a page per criterion, and can elaborate more fully by using the **STAR** approach – Situation, Task, Action, and Result.

Tailored to each application

Selection criteria for similar positions may differ substantially so it is important to tailor your application to each application.

Write an Effective Cover Letter

Your Personal Introduction to the Employer

The cover letter is generally the first document the employer sees and is your personal introduction. It should demonstrate that you are a good match for the job, encourage the employer to read your CV and, hopefully, offer you an interview. Your CV details your education, skills and experience – your cover letter should focus on the employer's needs and goals and show that you can help to achieve them.

Different Types of Cover Letters

Cover Letter that addresses Selection Criteria

- This cover letter is appropriate when there is no expectation or opportunity to submit a separate selection criteria document – often the case with online applications. This is the most suitable approach for most private sector job applications.
- Your letter should demonstrate that you meet the three or four most important selection criteria and indicate WHY you are interested in the role and the organisation.

Cover letter that accompanies a separate Selection Criteria document

- This is a useful approach when you have written a separate document addressing the selection criteria as is the case with most public sector applications.
- In your cover letter, instead of covering the selection criteria again, it is more useful to concentrate on the position responsibilities. This shows you understand the specifics of the job and will be able to do it. You must also indicate WHY you are interested in the role and the organisation.

Sample Cover Letter structure

Ms Jerri Lee
 Bourke St
 Docklands VIC 3050

18 June 2014

Mr Jan Doh
 HR Manager
 Ping and Pong Partners
 650 Collins St
 Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Mr Doh **or Dear Sir or Madam if you don't have their name**

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 5

Yours sincerely

Jerri Lee



Australian graduate employers are reported to receive between 25 and 129 applications *per vacancy*. That's a lot of applications for the employer to read. How can you ensure you sound a good enough match to the job to be one of the few invited to interview?

For more detail, see our *Generic Cover Letter* in this section of the Compendium.

Paragraph 1 - Introduction and why you are applying for the role

- An introduction stating why you are writing. 'I am applying for the position of (title of position and position number) as recently advertised (where it was advertised).' or, if you are cold calling the organisation "I am writing to express interest in a position in the Creative team at Ping Pong Consultants, should one become available in the near future'.

Paragraph 2 - What attracts you to the position?

- A brief description of your most recent relevant qualifications and the reason you are applying for the role (including why the organisation is of interest to you - be specific).

Paragraph 3 - Why they should consider you for the position?

- **Option 1:** Cover the three or four main selection criteria. Determine the main workplace skills indicated by the selection criteria and think of examples from previous work to illustrate briefly that you have each skill required. You can also find examples of the workplace skills such as teamwork, and problem solving in your university study experience, part time job or volunteer work.
- **Option 2:** If you have a separate selection criteria document then use this paragraph to cover the three or four most important requirements of the position set out in the duties and responsibilities section of the position description.

Paragraph 4 - Your understanding of the employer and the industry

- You should demonstrate that you understand the industry and specific business of the employer and that you have a general understanding of the organisation's current goals. Be as detailed as you can so the employer knows you have seriously investigated the industry and thought about the needs of the specific organisation.

Paragraph 5: Next steps

- Close your letter with an enthusiastic statement showing your motivation to be successful in the position. Refer the employer to your attached CV. Thank the employer for considering your application and offer to further discuss your application in person at a mutually convenient time. In this sentence you are asking for an interview. Provide your email address and telephone number at the end of the paragraph. End your letter with 'Yours sincerely' if you have their name and 'Yours faithfully' if you have written a Dear Sir or Madam letter.

Unless you need to address key selection criteria in the body of your cover letter, keep it to ONE PAGE. Approach the content of your cover letter from the employer's perspective and put yourself in their shoes. To do this you must base **each individual** letter on the selection criteria and position responsibilities which have been set out in the position description or advertisement. When you have included your understanding of the employer's organisation and how you match their needs, you will have presented a strong application.

NEVER SEND A GENERIC LETTER. Employers pick these out straight away and your application will end up in the 'no' pile. To ensure you progress to the next stage, a specific match between you and the job and you and the organisation must jump out from that page!

Refer also to *Addressing Selection Criteria* in this section of the compendium.

Cover Letter Template

Here is an example of what your cover letter should look like. Keep to one page and follow these guidelines for writing a letter either in reply to an advertised position or a prospecting approach.

Mr Frank Soh
85 New Street
Carlton VIC 3053

Date

Ms Janet Davidson
Recruitment Manager
Greencare
8 Groves Road
Richmond VIC 3121

Dear Ms Davidson (always try to find the person's name and title – if you can't write Dear Sir or Madam)

1. If you are responding to an advertisement:

Nominate the job for which you are applying, using the description given, the reference (if applicable) and the source and date of your information.

Mention any previous contact with the organisation, particularly if you have spoken to someone connected with the organisation regarding your application.

If you are initiating contact with the employer i.e. sending a cold or unsolicited letter

Express your interest in joining the organisation indicating the reason for your interest and perhaps nominating the area in which you wish to work. Again, mention any previous contact, especially if someone recommended that you apply.

2. Highlight the extent to which you match the requirements of the position and/or the organisation (i.e. skills, qualifications, experience, personal qualities, knowledge and perhaps values and interests), making reference to the attached CV.

Remember to project added value!

3. If you have not done so earlier in the letter, clearly and convincingly explain your interest in the organisation/area and any other reasons for applying.

4. Outline any additional points in your favour.

5. End with a positive statement summarising how you would be of benefit to the organisation. Request an appointment to discuss your application at interview.

If your letter is unsolicited, indicate that you will follow up this letter with a phone call in the next few weeks to further discuss your interest in the organisation.

Yours sincerely,
(Sign either manually if sending hard copy or with an electronic signature)
Frank Soh

Section G:

Psychometric Assessment & Testing

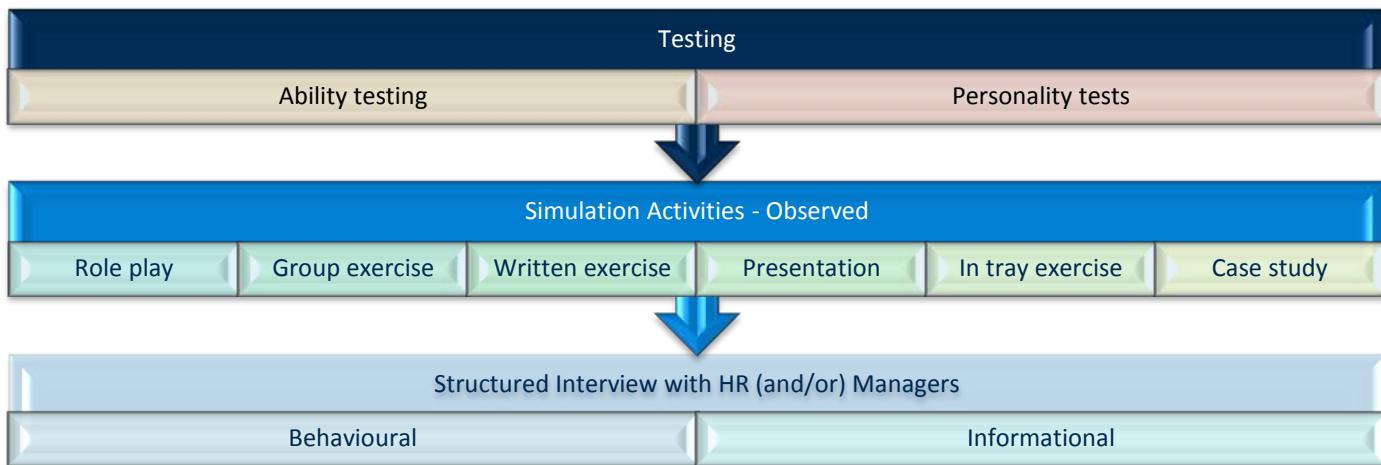


Assessment Centres

What is an Assessment Centre?

If you are applying for a graduate position with one of the large graduate recruiters and you progress past the first application stage, chances are you will be asked to attend some kind of Assessment Centre. The Assessment Centre usually takes place in the employer's office and comprises a selection of timed exercises and activities that measure you on competencies and behaviours essential to successfully performing the job. Often these exercises and activities simulate different aspects of the work environment. You will be assessed alongside other candidates with some group and some individual activities. Assessment Centres can take place over half, one or two days.

The Structure of Assessment Centres



More information on testing can be found in Section A of this Compendium.

Simulation Activities

Role play – these activities usually involve you being asked to take the role of a staff member in the organisation, and having to deal with a situation, such as explaining a problem to your boss or managing an angry customer. The aim is to see how you respond and can work through a problem or deal with a pressure situation.

Group exercise – with a group of other applicants (usually around 5 or 6) you will be given a problem to solve. This might involve working through a business issue and arriving at recommendations that you then present to assessors; coming up with a new product; or even constructing something e.g. using Lego blocks. The assessors will be looking for evidence of your teamwork skills, the contribution you make to the group, how you present your argument and your verbal presentation skills. You need to get involved in the discussion – they can only judge you on what they see. However, don't fall into the trap of trying to speak too much as you lose points for dominating. Listen, contribute, ask others what they think and be a good summariser. Above all – watch the clock and ensure your group leaves enough time to prepare and time your presentation.

Written exercise – these exercises test how you can write in a range of situations, usually closely aligned with the role you are applying for. Particularly if the job involves report writing or a lot of email communication, the employer will want to know that you can put together sentences that are grammatically accurate, have a logical flow and are clear and appropriate for a professional environment. You may be asked to review a case study and summarise the most relevant points to go to your senior manager or make a recommendation for a course of action. Make sure you map out a plan, get quickly to the point and read over your work.

Presentation – often at the start of an assessment centre you will be asked to introduce yourself to either the whole group or to those sitting at your table. You can certainly practise this prior – giving your name if people don't know it already, where you are from, and what you are studying. Try to inject some personality into this by including something memorable about yourself. You could also be called upon to make a short presentation on a subject of your choice or on a given topic. As part of a case study you may also be required to present your recommendation for a course of action or your findings from your table discussion. In this case you could be presenting to a panel of assessors who may question you about aspects of your findings. Speak clearly, confidently and sufficiently loudly and try to make eye contact with all of the assessors. You are allowed to smile too – assessors like to see a positive face.

In-tray exercises – How would you cope on the job with an in-tray full of urgent tasks and limited time? These exercises are designed to see how you deal with a work situation where you have requests, demands on your time and problems to overcome. They are testing your ability to process information quickly, analyse problems, make decisions, prioritise, take action and express yourself tactfully in a professional context. You may be given a pile of paper or an online list that will consist of items such as letters, phone messages and internal memos, and asked to prioritise the documents in order of importance, write notes or give verbal feedback about how you would proceed.

Case study – This is one of the most popular assessment centre tasks as it allows the employer to see you in action. Case studies are particularly popular in assessment centres for graduate jobs in management consulting, banking and financial services but they can be part of assessments in a range of organisations including government. They are typically based on real-life business scenarios and may be done either individually or as part of a group. You will be given information and time to examine the evidence before presenting your findings. Typically, you will be given too much information to read thoroughly so it is best to skim read rather than try to read every detail. Highlight key points for easy reference later. Case studies generally involve business scenarios and require you to make decisions and recommendations relating to company strategy, operations, marketing, product range and market share, management practices and a range of other factors.

Time is critical in case studies and is the area where most applicants struggle. You need to be clear about what you're being asked to do. Understand what the problem is and what your objectives are. Start by reading through the information and determining which parts of the information are relevant. Ensure you are clear about timeframes from the start and keep an eye on the time. Ensure someone is keeping the group informed about how time is going and make sure you allow sufficient time to prepare for the final presentation, what each team member's role will be and be realistic about how much information you can include. The final presentation should be relevant, clear and concise and should include a summary of your conclusions and recommendations. Do you divide up the tasks between you? Will everyone speak? Who'll keep time and take notes? The same rules apply as for group exercises – contribute but don't dominate, involve others and ask clarifying questions if given the opportunity to do so.

A range of resources are available on the web (including YouTube clips) covering case studies and assessment centres more broadly. Have a look at a few of the employer examples of their assessment centres (e.g. McKinsey & Co.). These will give you a good sense of what they are looking for.

Structured interviews with HR and/or Managers - More information on interviews can be found in the Interview Skills section of the Compendium but remember that you may be interviewed by a Partner or Senior Manager as part of the Assessment Centre. They will be most interested to know why you chose your course, what you know of their organisation and/or section and may also ask your opinion of or reflection on an issue of significance to the organisation. Doing some prior reading on the organisation's clients, issues it has recently faced and current activity will provide good preparation in this area.

Don't forget that at the Assessment Centre, **you are being assessed from the moment you arrive to the moment you leave** and this includes your interaction with the receptionist, how you interact at lunch or post AC drinks. Try to be professional yet friendly and enthusiastic at all times.

Recruitment Testing

Why do employers use testing?

As part of the recruitment process, many large employers use a range of tests to differentiate between candidates. They provide the employer with an insight into whether you will be able to cope with the intellectual demands of the job, how you work with other people, your preferred style of communication and a range of other measures. As an indicator of your abilities, personality and preferences; psychometric tests can help employers to find the best match of individual to occupation and working environment. As a recruitment and selection tool, these tests can be applied at the early stages of selection to screen-out candidates who are likely to be unsuitable for the job.

Psychometric testing is now used by over 80% of the Fortune 500 companies in the USA and by over 75% of the Times Top 100 companies in the UK. Figures in Australia are likely to be comparable.

What kind of testing do employers use?

The main types of tests used are:

- General intelligence, abilities and aptitude tests including your reasoning abilities
- Personality inventories
- Motivation, attitude and/or work-related belief scales including occupational interests

Most psychometric tests are performed online, although some remain as hard-copy questionnaires. See more at:

<http://www.psychometric-success.com/psychometric-tests/psychometric-tests-introduction.htm#sthash.B0w2kw8o.dpuf>



Can I prepare for the tests?

For the aptitude, intelligence and reasoning test, yes you can! And should! It is a definite advantage to familiarise yourself with the tests and do as many practice examples as you can. They are like any puzzle – the more you do them the better you get.

In the case of the personality tests, practice is really no benefit. They are seeking information about your interests, values, preferred style, motivation etc. and it's important to answer these questions honestly. Even if you can guess at what sorts of personality profile the organisation may be wanting, the tests contain items designed to uncover inconsistencies in patterns of answering. It is not wise to try to mould yourself into something you are not as neither you nor the organisation will end up happy.

Test examples in more detail

So what do the tests look like? What sorts of items will they include?

Personality tests

Most employers recognise that personality (including work style and attitude) is of great importance in success at work. The principle behind these tests is that it is possible to quantify personality by assessing candidates' feelings, thoughts and behaviour in a variety of situations both at work and outside of work. These are linked to individual personality traits such as friendliness, dependability, conscientiousness and ambitiousness and it is these that personality tests focus on. There are no right or wrong answers in personality tests!

Personality will determine whether a candidate is the best fit for the organisation and the job. In particular, does the candidate have the appropriate motivation for the type of work and are they the right fit for the organisation? An organisation's success is largely determined by its people so it's vital that staff are motivated and work well together.

Some personality test examples

Big 5 – many tests measure the so called '**Big 5**' personalit traits which are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience: <http://personality-testing.info/tests/BIG5.php>.

Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) – measures psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. The underlying assumption is that we all have specific preferences in the way we interpret our experiences and these preferences underlie our interests, needs, values, and motivation.

The MBTI measures 4 preferences which provide you with a four letter code representing one letter of each of the four preferences:

Extraversion/introversion (E/I) – Where do you prefer to direct your energy?

Sensing / Intuition (S/P) - How do you perceive or take in information?

Thinking/feeling (T/F) - How do you form judgements and make decisions?

Judging / perceiving (J/T) - How do you prefer to organise your life?

A description of each of the 4 combinations of Types can be found at:

<http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/the-16-mbti-types.asp>

You can do a free online Myers Briggs Type Indicator test at the sites below. Be aware that these are not the official test but they are quite reliable.

<http://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>

<http://www.celebritytypes.com/test.php> Quite reliable, despite the name

<http://www.myersbriggstest.info/> Good descriptions of each of the 4 letter codes

Other career-related tests

A range of career skills

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_CDV.htm

Career personality and aptitude test

<http://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/3503>

Work values test

<http://www.123test.com/work-values-test/>

Career Interest Profiler

<http://quintcareers.testingroom.com/> (free short reports)

Career Values Scale

Strengths Finder

<http://www.freestrengthsfinder.com/1-free-strengthsfinder-test.html>

MyFuture Mini Career Explorer

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au/MiniCareerExplorer/index.html> (dart board)

Mind Tools:

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_CDV.htm

Section H:

Interview Skills



Interviews – Preparation

You've been offered an interview – great news! For most people, interviews can be a daunting process. One of the best ways to feel more comfortable is to think about the questions you are likely to be asked and practise, practise, practise. You'll need to practise answering the questions aloud, as you will have to do in the interview. You should also log into our video interview practice program, *InterviewStream*, which is available at : fbe-unimelb.interviewstream.com. You should also consult the next topic, *Interview Questions* in this compendium.

When you get the call about the interview

Get into the habit of answering phone calls from unfamiliar numbers with a professional greeting. "Good morning this is Jerri speaking." Thank the person for calling and make sure that you note down all the relevant details including time, venue and what you need to bring. You should also try to find out who will be interviewing you (their name and title) and the format of the interview (i.e. will there be any activities or is it a straight question and answer type interview?). Also, be sure to get the name of the person calling you and their phone number should you need to contact them.



After you get off the phone

Book the interview time in your diary/phone – set a reminder for the day before the interview. Check the location of the interview on www.google.com/maps and if you need to get there by public transport check www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/.

Who should you talk to?

First of all, you'll need to contact your referees to advise them that you have the interview. Make sure to send them a copy of the position description and some of the key things you would like them to highlight if called. Depending on the industry they are in, they may also have some suggestions about an approach you could take in the interview or likely questions you may be asked.

Think about other people you know who may have some insights into the job, the organisation or even the interview panel. Knowing more about panel members can provide you with insight into what their specific interests in the role might be and how you might include examples likely to be of interest to them in your interview answers. LinkedIn will provide you with more detail about them too, if you both have an account (see Section C of this Compendium – *Networking and LinkedIn sample*).

In the days before the interview

<p>Review the research you have already conducted on the company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What interests you about working for this organisation and the division/area you have applied for? • What has been happening in the industry the organisation operates in for the last 6–12 months? • What skills and experience can you bring to the company? • What career paths are offered in the organisation? (Think a bit further than your first position) 	<p>Prepare for any interview requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your interview requires you to complete a case study, review case studies online and practise these case studies in a timed environment • Prepare any presentation materials and practise answering possible interview questions aloud. • Familiarise yourself with a group interview/exercise situation. • Read the newspapers from the last few weeks so that you are comfortable talking about current affairs. • If your interview requires you to prepare a presentation, practise in front of your family/friends, get their feedback and try to incorporate this into your presentation. 	<p>Review your application documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarise yourself with the achievements you highlighted in your CV, cover letter, online application and any other documentation you provided in your application. • Have a good understanding of what you said and what you may be asked to discuss in further detail (e.g. What were your specific duties/ responsibilities/ achievements in your part-time job? What are your strengths and weaknesses? Behavioural questions are based on the competencies specified in the job description).
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Telephone Interviews

Your first interview may be conducted over the telephone rather than in person. If you have prior warning, do all the same preparations as you would for an in person interview. Make sure you listen carefully and ask the interviewer to repeat the question if you do not understand what is being asked. You may also be asked to do a preliminary interview via a system similar to *InterviewStream*. The employer will instruct you to log on to a particular site and you will be asked questions that you will need to record your answers to via a camera on your computer. It's important that you are dressed appropriately and are in an appropriate setting with minimal noise in order to give the best impression. Again, prior practice will ensure you perform at your best.

Nerves are natural. Some level of nervousness is good as it gets the adrenaline pumping in your body which greatly assists you to think on your feet. Practise breathing deeply which has a calming effect and meditation can also enhance relaxation. The 'Mindfulness' app is excellent as are the (free) Breathe2Relax and Headspace apps. All apps are available for both iPhone and Android.

At some point before the interview you should consider the salary you think is equitable for the role you have applied for, particularly if one was not specified in the job advertisement. If you are required to negotiate, make sure you know what your "market value" is. You can review salary surveys by recruitment firms to find this out.

On the day

You will need to have familiarised yourself with the location of the interview. Make sure that you know which tram/bus/train you have to catch in order to be at the interview **at least 10 minutes early**. If you are driving, make sure you know where you can park and take into account traffic.

Professional Presentation

This is general advice based on corporate and public sector positions.

Advice for all students

- Wear a conservative well fitted suit or other appropriate attire (see Style Guide above); it is preferable to have a suit in a dark neutral colour that is clean and ironed.
- Make sure you have a shirt/blouse/top that is suitable to be worn under the suit and it is clean and ironed
- Your hair should be neat and not a distraction. Coloured hair should not be too bright and ensure it looks well maintained. If you have the opportunity to get your hair trimmed, do so.
- Clean and polish your shoes, also, make sure that any bags you will carry to the interview are clean
- Remove any body piercings (with the exception of earrings) that may be visible during the interview
- Deodorant should definitely be used but the use of perfume/cologne should be minimal - you do not want to overpower the interviewer.
- Bring a folder with you that contains a copy of your application and the position description.
- Make sure you remove headphones and sunglasses before you enter the building for the interview.
- Turn OFF your mobile phone.

Advice for male students

- Ties – it is best to avoid bright colours and overly complex patterns and DO NOT wear a tie with animals or Disney characters on it. Also, make sure you can tie the knot appropriately, refer to <http://www.tie-a-tie.net/> if you need assistance.
- Socks should be a dark colour and match your shoes.
- Cufflinks - make sure that they are suitable to be worn for the interview, avoid novelty cufflinks.
- Generally jewellery is not advisable unless it is a wedding ring or a watch.

Advice for female students

- Make sure that you have at least two pairs of pantyhose that match your outfit.
- Avoid low cut tops or dresses that may be distracting for the interviewers!
- Makeup should be natural/conservative, overly bright colours should be avoided.
- Nails should be well manicured and not long, remove any chipped or cracked nail polish, replace with a clear or natural coloured polish
- It is preferable that long hair is styled away from the face
- Keep accessories simple this includes jewellery, also make sure you remove headphones and sunglasses before you enter the building for the interview.

Interview questions

What on earth will they ask me?

If your interview is for a course related role, you can usually expect to be asked something relating to your technical area of expertise. You can also expect a number of more generic questions such as why you chose to study your particular course or subjects. Make sure you show that you had a plan and had considered your own interests and strengths and how they matched the course content and outcomes.

Because most employers are looking for the same transferable or soft skills (see the topic *The Skills Employers Want* in Section B of this compendium), you will usually be asked questions relating to these and employers generally use behavioural interviewing which assesses your past actions to predict how you will behave in the future. You are expected to give specific examples from different areas of your experience. Interviewers will ask for relevant examples (e.g. “Describe a time when you had to ...”) to elicit concrete examples of desired behaviours from your past.

The easiest way to answer is to use the STAR approach - Situation, Task, Action and Result.



Situation	Open with a brief description of the Situation and context of the example you have chosen (who, what, where, when, how).
Task	Explain the Task you had to complete highlighting any specific challenges or constraints (e.g. deadlines, costs, other issues) and what your role and responsibility was.
Action	What specific Action did you take to ensure the task was completed? This should highlight desirable qualities that you utilised (initiative, proactivity, determination, creative thinking, intelligence, dedication, leadership etc.) Use 'I' and 'we' statements to describe your contribution. Don't use 'we' too much - interviewers want to hear about what YOU did and contributed.
Result	Make sure to finish by summarising the result of your efforts, particularly what you accomplished. Include figures to quantify the result if possible but also mention points such as recognition of your effort or changes made as a result. If the result was not a good outcome (the employer will often ask about a situation where things didn't turn out well), be sure to describe what you learned from the experience and have since put into practice. In fact, it's always good to include what you learned.

Some common behavioural questions

Can you give me an example of a situation when ...

Tell me/us about a time when...

Describe a situation where...

The following are examples of behavioural questions from graduate employers (but you may be asked these kinds of questions even for part-time/casual roles and certainly for vacation work/internship roles).

Motivation

- Why did you apply for this position? (This is very often the first question you'll be asked.)
- Why is the area of (e.g. accounting) of such interest to you?
- What subject in your course have you found easiest/most enjoyable? Why?
- How do you spend your spare time? What are you involved in outside of study/work?
- Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it. (Use STAR)

Communication

- Can you tell us about a time you had to communicate with a rude or difficult person? What was the situation, what action did you take and what was the result? (use STAR)
- Can you describe a situation when your communication skills made a difference? (use STAR)
- Can you give us some examples of your different written communication skills?
- Tell us about a situation when you failed to communicate appropriately?(use STAR)

You will often be asked questions about things you have done that have NOT been successful. Don't worry that it will sound negative – the main thing is to be able to describe what you learned in the process.

Time Management

- Can you describe a time when you were under pressure to get a number of things done? What was the situation and what strategies did you use to get organised and achieve the required tasks? (use STAR)
- What are some of the ways that you keep organised and keep things on track?

Teamwork

- Give an example of when you were part of a team that wasn't performing? What was the situation, what action did you take and what was the result? (use STAR)
- Give us an example of when you had difficulty getting along with a team member. What made this person difficult to work with? How did you handle the situation? (use STAR)
- What makes a good team? (Hint – think about a range of teams e.g. university group projects, sporting, fundraising. What is the purpose of teams? What are the different roles? Google 'what makes an effective team?'

Initiative

Here they are trying to find out if you can act independently of being told or waiting for others to act and then follow. Do you see something that needs doing and do it rather than leaving it to someone else? Can you come up with new ideas or ways to do things better, faster, cheaper?

- Please give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead. (use STAR)

Time management

- Describe a time when you were under pressure. What strategies did you use to get organised and achieve the required task/s?
- What procedures or methods have you used to keep track of things that need your attention?

Persuasiveness

Can you influence others to see your point of view or to act to achieve what you are trying to achieve?

Can you move others around to your way of thinking? This is very important in relation to being able to get work done successfully, in getting access to resources or negotiating with customers, for example.



- Have you ever had to "sell" an idea to your classmates or co-workers? How did you do it? Did they accept your idea? (use STAR)
- Give me an example of when you persuaded someone over to your point of view. What strategy did you use and what was the outcome? (use STAR)

Decision making and problem solving

These are two skills that are vital as you progress to more senior positions but no matter what stage of your career, you will have to make decisions every day and solve a range of problems that will relate to your work, workplace communication, client dealings and so on.

- Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year (use STAR)
- How do you go about making decisions?
- Tell me about a time when you had to analyse information and make a recommendation. What kind of thought process did you go through? What was your reasoning behind your decision? (use STAR)

Creativity

Creativity is critical in a workplace to ensure innovation and keeping ahead of the competition. It can take many forms and may involve, for example, technical creativity, staff interaction, marketing ideas and IT solutions.

- Tell me about a problem that you've solved in a unique or unusual way (use STAR).

Strengths and Weaknesses

This common question is one of the toughest! The employer wants to hear your reflections on and how you present your strong and not so strong points (i.e. areas for improvement). Strong points are relatively easy but what do you say for the weaknesses? The interviewers are not looking for you to identify a **skill** you don't have, it's points about your **character** they are interested in. Try to be honest but don't make too much of any weakness and describe how you are working on it to improve.

Other possible questions

Depending on the role, you may also be asked about how you deal with pressure, project management skills, flexibility, how you deal with conflict and your accomplishments.

And to finish off....

The employer may ask you a very direct question such as 'Why should we offer you the role?' which is really just a summary of why you think you are the right person for them and why you think they are the right organisation for you. Make it a positive, enthusiastic summary!

'And do you have any questions to ask us?' Employers like to give you the chance to follow up with any questions you might have. Make sure you ask one or two that demonstrate you've thought about what the organisation does and how it does it, the industry and the competition. And don't forget to thank the interviewers for their time!

Interview Stream – Perfecting your Interview Skills

What is InterviewStream?

InterviewStream is an innovative system that enables you to enhance your interview skills and improve your chances of succeeding in a job interview. It is the leading practice interview system that allows students the opportunity to see and hear themselves online. Using a webcam, you are able to simulate job interviews by responding to pre-recorded interview questions and practise both verbal and non-verbal communication skills. The system allows you to select interview questions aligned to the profession you are hoping to enter. The real benefit of InterviewStream is its broad usability; it enables you to record your answers and view and assess your own performance – which is crucial for improving your interview skills.

InterviewStream provides you with a valuable opportunity to experience a simulated interview. By using this system, you will have a better understanding of your abilities and areas for improvements and will likely have a competitive advantage when it comes to succeeding in job interviews.

With over 1,500 tailored interview questions, you can create custom questions to help you practice, polish, and perfect your interviewing technique. You can save your recorded responses, and share them with friends and family to get feedback.

How InterviewStream Can Help Improve Your Interviewing Skills

InterviewStream focuses on four basic principles: preparation, practice, communication, and evaluation. To take full advantage, customise your interview by selecting from more than 1,500 questions or you can select the General Interview option.

Record an unlimited number of practice interviews. The interview is available shortly after recording. You can then store it for future viewing and analysis.

- Review the interview tips before you use start recording.
- E-mail the video to a mentor, friends or parents. Get their feedback!
- View and hear communication, articulation, and presentation skills.

Recommendations for obtaining a quality video that users can see and hear well to give feedback

- Sit at a table as if you were in an interview. Treat this practice session as a real interview.
- Speak up just as you would at an interview. Do not speak softly or mumble. Viewers of some of the videos have reported it is hard to hear students.
- Have plenty of light in your "interview room". Viewers of some of the videos have reported being barely able to see users and, thus, unable to give feedback on body language and facial expressions.
- View your video to be sure you can be heard, seen, and are answering the questions in an articulate manner. InterviewStream will only be helpful if you present yourself in the video as you would at a real interview.

Log on to InterviewStream and START practising!

Also check out our additional information topic '*InterviewStream Quick Use Start*' in the next section of the Careers Compendium.

How to Conduct a Practice Interview

fbe-unimelb.interviewstream.com



Login or Create a Free Account



The image shows the InterviewStream website's registration page. It features a header with the InterviewStream logo and navigation links for 'CREATE INTERVIEW SET', 'CONDUCT PRACTICE INTERVIEW', and 'WATCH & RECORD INTERVIEW'. Below the header is a section titled 'Watch your interview' with a video thumbnail. The main form is titled 'Registration' and contains fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Email Address', 'Password', and 'Confirm Password'. A 'Register' button is at the bottom.



Click 'Conduct Interview'



The image shows the User Dashboard and Message Center. The User Dashboard includes sections for 'Conduct Interview', 'Status Interviews', 'Interview Requests', 'Expert Tips', 'Schedule Interviews', and 'Tutorial'. The Message Center displays a welcome message and links for 'Helpful Resources' and 'Need More Help?'.



Choose Your Interview

[CHOOSE THIS INTERVIEW](#)

[Select Interview](#)

[Customize Your Own Interview?
CLICK HERE](#)

General Interview

[CHOOSE THIS INTERVIEW](#)

Sample Course

[CHOOSE THIS INTERVIEW](#)

Test Interview

[CHOOSE THIS INTERVIEW](#)

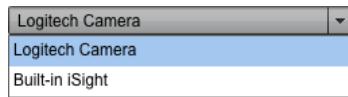
Questions

1. What are 2 - 3 weaknesses you need to improve? [Preview](#)
2. What are your strengths and weaknesses? [Preview](#)
3. What is your greatest strength? Weakness? [Preview](#)



Test Your Webcam/Microphone and Begin Interview

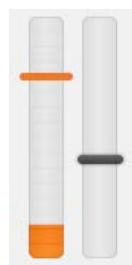
Allow Deny



Click 'Allow'



Choose Your Webcam and
click 'Next'



Speak Normally or Raise Mic
Level and click 'Next'



Proceed to My Interview

Click 'Proceed to My Interview'



Respond to Your Interview Questions

- 1) Interviewer asks 1st question
- 2) 3...2...1 countdown and webcam starts recording
- 3) Click anywhere with mouse to stop recording
- 4) Review, retry, or continue to the next question



Group Interviews

Most interviews you attend (either in person, over the phone or via Skype), will involve you being interviewed individually. Some employers, however, use group interviews to further inform their selection. These tend to be larger employers who recruit significant numbers of students and graduates to their programs. While many of the principles around group interviews are the same as for individual interviews, there are also many differences.

What is a group interview and how will I be assessed?

Group interviews involve you being assessed on your thinking, communication and behaviour in a group as opposed to individually. As is the case with all interviews, you will be being assessed from the minute you enter the building. This will include how you greet the receptionist, how you look (are you cool and calm, or flustered and rushing?) and of course your appearance in relation to clothes, hair, makeup, and so on.

Generally you will be assigned a group and there will be one or two assessors looking on. If the number is manageable, introduce yourself to the others in the group with a firm handshake and good eye contact. Try to remember names if you can (hopefully you will be given name badges). It may or may not be appropriate to introduce yourself to the assessor/s – you'll need to take the cue from them. Their role is to observe the way you interact with other candidates and how you perform in the activities.

You will then be given a range of things to do:

Give an individual presentation to the group

- You may be asked to introduce yourself and either say something about yourself or answer a particular question.
HINTS
- Speak clearly, sufficiently loudly and make good eye contact with the group
- Try to be memorable. The assessors will hear hundreds of answers so try to make them remember you by incorporating something dramatic, humourous or different in what you say.
- Watch out for *umms* or *likes* in your speech and monitor your body language for fidgeting
- Try to end on a confident, positive note rather than just fading away

Discuss a topic

- One of the most common activities is to give participants a topic to discuss as a group (eg what is the future of retail?)
HINTS
- Examiners can only assess you on what you say, not what you thought but didn't say
- If there is one person dominating, you still need to try to break into the discussion.
- A good strategy is to follow on from someone else by saying 'That's a really good point and I'm also thinking'
- If someone in the group is struggling to be heard, you will win points for bringing them in to the discussion (eg 'what do you think Sue?')
- Don't be a dominator. Say your piece but enable and encourage others to contribute

Solve a group problem

- For graduate roles, this will always be a component of the assessment. Problems can range from solving a business scenario to constructing something.
HINTS
- Listen to, or read carefully, the instructions you are given.
- Make a note of the time and how long you have to complete the task. Factor in time needed to prepare a presentation and rehearse speaking times
- Generally, someone assumes a leadership role quickly. This doesn't mean others should take a back seat. Put forward your ideas confidently
- Different stages of the group process call for different skills. Jump in and assume a leadership role even if it's at a later stage of the process. And remember the most dominant person may not necessarily have all the answers!
- If you are given pens and paper and a whiteboard, use them
- Remember that the group process is as important as the result. Everyone should be involved

Group interviews may be followed with an individual behavioural interview, case interview or testing of some kind. You can find more information about these components of the selection process in Section G, Psychometric Assessment and Testing, of the Compendium.

Following-up Applications

Should I follow up my application?

After submitting a job application, it will likely remain on your mind for a couple of weeks, as you wonder whether you will be called for an interview, or if you've been to an interview, whether or not you were successful. Whilst these thoughts may be prominent in your mind, the employer is likely busy with tasks other than the recruitment process, and the process may have been delayed by factors beyond their control.

In deciding whether or not to follow up on your application, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- What did the employer tell you in regard to how long the process will take?
 - If they informed you a decision will be made after a certain period of time, you need to give them at least that much time to decide.
 - If they intended to be in touch with you but you haven't heard anything, it might be appropriate to follow up.

- What are the advantages of following up? Potential advantages include:
 - Finding out the outcome so that regardless of what happens, you can move on and (if appropriate) focus on preparing other applications;
 - Following up may reiterate your interest in the position and/or organisation;
 - If the employer has not yet made a decision and you impress them, you may influence the outcome; and
 - If a decision has been made and you were unsuccessful, you may receive feedback on your application and/or interview that will be helpful for next time.
- What are the disadvantages of following up?
 - You may appear too keen;
 - If a decision has not been made and you make a bad impression in following up, this may influence the outcome; and
 - You may find out you were unsuccessful and the employer may not be willing to provide any feedback.

Ultimately, you need to make a decision that you feel comfortable with, according to the situation.

When to follow up?

If you've decided to follow up on your application, timing is important.

If the employer advised when they will be in touch, wait until after this time to make contact, and give a few days' leeway, just in case they have been delayed due to reasons beyond their control.

If the employer has not provided advice about the next step, here are some guidelines, depending on the type of job you've applied for:

- **Temporary jobs:** if you applied via a recruitment agency for temporary work in general (i.e. no position in particular), you need to follow up with the recruiter approximately once per week or once per fortnight, as they deal with a lot of applicants and may otherwise forget you.
- **Lower skilled, non-permanent jobs:** if the application process was informal (e.g. a waitperson in a café), you could follow up after about one week.
- **Professional jobs:** allow the employer at least two weeks to process your application or make a decision after your interview. In large organisations, it can take up to several weeks for the human resources department to process offers. If you haven't received an offer or a rejection letter, it is possible that you are the reserve candidate, in case the employer's preferred candidate is unable to take up the offer.
- **Graduate jobs:** often involve long recruitment schedules, and the process can take several months. As recruiters are very busy and often working across a number of states, be aware that they are often not able to provide individual feedback on your application. Pay close attention to the recruiting timeline on the organisation's website. Patience is the key.

Which mode of contact?

Each mode of contact has advantages and disadvantages. Here are some factors to consider:

E-mail: Send a professionally worded e-mail to enquire about the status of your application and emphasise interest

- Advantages: can ensure it's right before sending; don't seem over-keen; good if you feel nervous on the phone or English is not your first language
- Disadvantages: no instant response, don't hear recruiter's tone of voice
- Verdict: recommended in some cases

Post: Send a hand-written card to the employer directly after interview

- Advantages: shows sincerity and interest

- Disadvantages: may appear old-fashioned
- Verdict: unlikely to disadvantage you. May work well if you made a good connection with the recruiter.

Phone: Call the recruiter to enquire about the status of your application and emphasise your interest

- Advantages: receive an immediate answer; if unsuccessful, may receive verbal feedback to improve other applications
- Disadvantages: more difficult – may need to rehearse to make a professional impression; could seem over-keen
- Verdict: recommended in some circumstances

Networking: Ask your contacts who work in the organisation whether they know about the status of your application

- Advantages: indirect – employer unlikely to know you enquired
- Disadvantages: none, as long as you trust the person in your network to keep your enquiry confidential
- Verdict: recommended

In person: Visit the employer to ask about the status of your application

- Advantages: very few!
- Disadvantages: likely to appear too keen and you may interrupt their busy schedule
- Verdict: not recommended, unless in very specific circumstances (e.g. you're a regular customer at a café and very friendly with the staff)

What should I say?

The key to saying the right thing is preparation! Put yourself in the employer's shoes and think about how you would react if an applicant contacted you. Firstly, think about to whom you should direct your enquiry. The best person is usually the recruiter or person named on the job advertisement. Next, prepare what you want to say. Don't assume they will know who you are – let them know your full name, which job you applied for, when, and what stage you're up to (e.g. sent an application; attended an interview), as they may be recruiting for several positions at the same time. Whether you are composing an e-mail or preparing what to say on the phone, the key is to be professional. Depending on what you already know about the recruitment process, you could say something like:

Good morning, it's Olivia Soh calling... we met just over two weeks ago when I attended an interview for the Project Assistant position... [how are you/well thanks, and you?...] As you know, I'm really interested in the job and wonder whether you're able to give me an update on the status of my application?

Dear Ms Jones,

It was a pleasure to meet you at my interview for the position of Creative Assistant on May 12th. As you know, I'm very interested in joining Expert Consulting and would be grateful if you could provide me with an update on the status of my application. I understand a decision was to be made last week and wonder whether all applicants will be informed of the outcome?...

Kind regards,

Olivia

What if they don't reply?

If you don't receive a response, it's best to move on. Perhaps you weren't the preferred candidate, or perhaps the organisation is so disorganised that they didn't have the courtesy to advise you of the outcome. Remember that the process of applying is always a useful experience and seek some advice from the Careers Centre on how you can improve for next time.

We hope you have found the Careers Compendium useful. Here is a closing thought that represents our best advice to you:

“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.” - Confucius