JOB SEEKING INFORMATION

Counselling Service
Centre for English Teaching
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1. Getting Started.

Know your rights at work!

All workers, including international students, have certain rights when working in Australia such as the right to be paid a minimum wage, to have a safe workplace and to be free from harassment and discrimination. The Australian Government has provided information specifically for international students about your rights at work at www.fairwork.gov.au/employment/international-students/

Tax File Number.

It is advisable that you apply for a Tax File Number before starting a job. If you do not have a tax file number, your employer will be required by law to take a large amount of your pay as tax. By having a tax file number, you will have more money in your pocket each payday. The simplest way to obtain a tax file number is by applying online via www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Tax-file-number/Applying-for-a-TFN. Follow the link under the section “Permanent migrants or temporary visitors” and then the “online tax file number enquiry or application” link at the bottom of the page.

Fulltime, part-time and Casual employment

Full-time employees usually work 38 hours a week. They’re paid for a full week’s work and get paid annual leave and sick leave.

Part-time employees work fewer hours than full-time employees. They normally get the same benefits but they’re based on number of hours worked. If you’re employed part-time you will usually work regular hours or shifts.

Casual employees work by the hour or by the day and are less likely to have regular hours. They don’t get paid sick leave or annual leave. Their pay rate is usually higher to make up for this. Because of its flexibility and higher rate of hourly pay, most students will search for causal employment.
2. Where to Look for Jobs

Online

www.jobsearch.gov.au is a government run web site that helps people find permanent, temporary, part time, or full time work anywhere in Australia. They also provide information about fruit picking and harvest jobs, working visas, Australian Visas.

Seek Job Search

www.seek.com.au A huge jobs database connecting travelers with job & work opportunities that are available around Australia. Whether you are looking for temporary work, part time or full time work, they have thousands of job listings.

Career One Job Network

www.careerone.com.au Web site with job listings in all industries and all areas of Australia. Temporary work, Part time work and Full time work.

My Career

www.mycareer.com.au Web site with job listings in all industries and all areas of Australia. Temporary work, Part time work and Full time work.

Study and Work Employment

www.studyandwork.com.au

This website is dedicated to helping students, graduates and professionals find internships, causal employment and professional placements.
Other Useful General Job search Websites

- Australian Job Search - www.jobsearch.gov.au
- Byron Employment Australia - www.employment.byron.com.au
- CareerJet - www.careerjet.com.au
- jobseeker - www.jobseeker.com.au
- Jobaroo - www.jobaroo.com
- JobSearch Australia - www.jobsearchaustralia.com.au
- Jobserve - www.jobserve.com.au
- NowHiring - www.nowhiring.com.au
- Ozfreeonline - http://jobs.ozfreeonline.com
- PositionsVACANT - www.positionsvacant.com.au
- Who's Hiring - www.whoshiring.com.au
- Gumtree - www.gumtree.com.au
Register your interest with large organisations.

Many large organisations accept expressions of interest for a position through their websites. The company will then contact suitable applicants who have registered their interest should a position arise in the future.

A list of organisations that will accept expressions of interest is available at:


Some useful keywords for your online job searches

- Part time
- Casual
- Entry level
- Junior
- Temporary employment
- Graduate
- Intern
- Student
Recruitment/Employment Agencies

An employment or recruitment agency is a company that matches workers to open jobs. They may charge a fee and may or may not find you a job. These are some Recruitment Agencies, just Google Recruitment Agencies Sydney and you will find others.

Vantage Recruitment - Sydney Office
www.vantagerecruitment.com.au - (02) 8224 8700

Kelly Services
www.kellyservices.com.au - (02) 9246 6000

Launch Recruitment
www.launchrecruitment.com.au - (02) 9232 8133

IT Jobs, IT Recruitment - CITI Recruitment
www.citirecruitment.com - (02) 8117 9855

Staffordshire Recruitment
www.staffordshirerecruitment.com.au - (02) 9929 0322

Tuckwell Recruitment - Sydney CBD
www.tuckwell.com.au - (02) 9299 3222

eJobs Recruitment Specialists
www.ejobs.com.au - (02) 9221 6221

Disclaimer: Employment Agencies in this booklet are provided as a support service for students. Mention of an agency is not an endorsement by the Centre for English Teaching of a particular employment agency, organisation, or website. It is not a warranty as to the suitability of the website or sure provision of employment by an agency. We do not check any service listed here. It is up to students to make their own inquiries about the suitability and condition of the website or employment agency.

Newspapers and Trade Magazines

- Sydney Morning Herald - check the MyCareer section of the weekend edition. Also have a look through other sections at the front of the newspaper as job ads are scattered throughout

- Daily Telegraph – has a daily classified section towards the back of the newspaper featuring daily job ads
• **Local Newspaper** – Check the back section of your local newspaper which will feature weekly job listings within your local area

• **Trade journals and magazines** – If you do not subscribe to them you may find current journals and magazine in the library many contain job advertisements.

**Volunteer Work**

• Australian Volunteer Search - www.volunteersearch.gov.au

• Fido (skilled volunteer search) - www.fido.com.au

• Go Volunteer - www.govolunteer.com.au

• Good Company - www.goodcompany.com.au

• Seek Volunteer - www.volunteer.com.au

• Volunteering NSW - www.volunteering.com.au

**Cold Canvassing**

To cold canvass means to approach employers whether they have any suitable positions without them having advertised the role.

Cold canvassing may be completed either:

• In person
• By telephone
• Via email/mail

With face-to-face canvassing the employer is also able to see that you are well presented and be more likely to consider you for future roles if there are no suitable opportunities at the time that you meet with them.
Cold Canvassing in Person

This may be undertaken by compiling a list of organisations within your field of interest (this may be accessed through yellow pages or internet search), and then strategically working your way through it.

It is important to remember that when you are cold canvassing in person, your presentation must be as if you were attending an interview. You must be appropriately dressed and suitably groomed and be prepared.

Ensure that you ask to speak to the right person, be it the manager on duty at the time, or a human resources staff. Always be courteous to the receptionist as they may provide feedback to the manager about you before you have even had a chance to meet with them.

When undertaking cold canvassing in person it is recommended that you have the following with you:

- A number of copies of your resume in a plastic sleeve or folder to protect them from being damaged
- A pen and paper
- Examples of work if relevant

Before leaving home, consider whether catching public transport or driving would be more appropriate. The industry that you are cold canvassing within and the location may dictate which mode of transport is most suitable.

Before you commence cold canvassing, it is recommended that you develop a spiel. This will help to control your nerves as you will feel more prepared. The aim of the spiel id to:

- Introduce yourself
- Outline that you are looking for work
- Advise of your skills and how they may contribute to the company
• Provide further information about your employment history (through providing a resume)
• Provide contact details for further action.

Cold Canvassing via Telephone

Canvassing via telephone has similarities to canvassing in person with the major difference being that you are not face-to-face with the employer.

Much the same as canvassing in person, you may compile a list of suitable companies to contact. As you are not face-to-face with the individual, it is important that you are positive and sound energetic and optimistic about your job seeking efforts so that you make a good impression. A good trick is to smile when you are talking. Believe it or not, people can hear when you are smiling on the telephone.

Again, it is important that you speak with the correct person, therefore requesting to speak to the manager or the human resources department is a good start. They may refer you to someone more appropriate if they are unable to address your enquiry. Being courteous throughout the process is vital so that you continue to make a good impression.

As with canvassing in person, it is recommended that you develop a spiel that you can refer to when speaking with employers.
Cold Canvassing Via Correspondence (email/mail/fax)

Another method of cold canvassing is to send a letter, fax or email to an organisation outlining that you are job seeking and interested in identifying whether there are any suitable positions. If you prefer to use this method of job seeking it is advisable that you follow up with a phone call to make it more effective.

Develop your Cold Canvassing Spiel Here:
# Cold Canvassing Log

(Use this log to keep track of the companies that you have contacted for employment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company name, Contact Name and Number</th>
<th>Email and Address</th>
<th>Action/Outcome</th>
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## 3. Resumes

**What is a resume?**

A resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV) is the document you forward to an employer in response to an application which outlines your skills, work history, educational history and other relevant information.

The purpose of a resume is to obtain an interview, not a job and it must be written with this in mind.
Your resume provides the first impression that an employer will get of you and will be the factor that determines if you get an interview or not. You should think of your resume like an advertisement or your own personal sales brochure.

Your resume should emphasise the good points and play down your weak points. A resume does not contain details regarding your age, marital status or sex. It is an account of your work related history and therefore should only include details which are relevant to your ability to undertake the role.

To market your skills effectively it is important to tailor both your cover letter and resume to each role you are applying for. Read the Job advertisement carefully and research both the company and the type of position before getting started.

It is important to consider BOTH the format of your resume as well as the content when putting your resume together.

Make sure that the language you use is relevant to the desired occupation or industry. Avoid colloquialisms and use professional vocabulary or action verbs to highlight your skills.

Use the Resume Worksheet in this workbook to help you get started.
Resume Formatting Basics
(adapted from Resume Writing, The University of Sydney Careers Centre)

- **Do** make your resume easy to read as it is scanned in as little as 30 seconds. The most important points should be on page one.

- **Do** limit your resume to a maximum of 2 - 3 single-sided A4 sheets. This enables the reader to quickly see the most important elements of your background.

- **Don’t** leave out important information. Generally, employers don’t find a one page resume sufficient.

- **Do** use your name as the heading on the first page rather than a heading called “Resume”.

- **Do** keep font sizes between 10 and 12 point for body text, with a larger font for headings. Arial, Tahoma or Times New Roman are safe fonts to use, but be consistent with how they are used and don’t use more than two different fonts.

- **Do** leave margins of 2 – 3 cm each to make it possible for the reader to write notes.

- **Do** maintain a consistent style with bullet points, font spacing and indentation.

- **Do** check your spelling and grammar. Don’t rely solely on your spell checker as a word might be spelled correctly, but incorrect for the context.

- **Don’t** use coloured paper, recruiters and employers prefer white paper.

- **Don’t** use underlining as it looks old fashioned; however, bold is acceptable for headings.
• Don’t ever send your first draft, thoroughly proof read and edit before sending

• Do include the information in reverse chronological order with the most recent experience and qualifications first.

Resume Checklist

☐ Review job description, have you shown you have developed the skills for the job?

☐ Is it in reverse chronological order for education and work history?

☐ Has a spell check has been run on it?

☐ Has someone else proof read it

☐ Is it on white paper?

☐ Is it clear, logical and is the information easy to find?

☐ Is it neat and professional?

☐ Does it emphasize your good points and play down your weaknesses?

☐ Is it between 2 and 3 typed pages?

☐ Does it leave out unnecessary information about your age, marital status or sex?

☐ Do you have a cover letter to go with it?

Have you double checked all you contact information and make sure that you phone number(s) and email addresses are accurate?
Elements of a Resume

- **Personal Details**

  Begin the document with name as the heading in large bold lettering. Directly underneath include:
  
  - Address
  
  - Contact numbers (Home and mobile),
  
  - Email Address (if you are including an email address remember to ensure that it is conservative and professional)
  
  - Visa Status - If you are an international student and it may be worthwhile to include information about your eligibility to work such as the type of visa you are on

- **Career Objective**

  This section is optional and should be no longer than a paragraph. It is a simple statement which describes your career aspirations and the type and level of position you are seeking. Ensure that the objective is brief and realistic and tailored to each position that you are applying for.

- **Skills and Attributes Summary**

  A skills and attributes summary provides the prospective employer with an at a glance list of all your key skills relevant to the position you are applying for. List each skill with brief examples of how you obtained and demonstrated it.

- **Educational Qualifications**

  These must be listed in reverse chronological order, i.e your most recent qualification first.

  University Degrees Include:
  
  - The full name of the degree you are studying or have completed
- The name of the institution where you obtained or are obtaining your qualification

- The year you completed your studies or if you are still studying use the word “current” for example 2009 - current

Final year at High School include:

- The highest level attained (for example High School certificate) If your completed high school overseas include what the final year was equivalent to (High School Certificate equivalent)

- The School you attended in your final year

- Your final result

Include any other relevant qualifications such as TAFE qualifications, certificates, community college course, professional development courses attended.

- **Employment History**

  In this section you must also list your most recent experience first. Include any volunteer or part time work you undertaken as well.

  Include:

  - Position Title
  - Company Name
  - Dates of Employment
  - Duties and Responsibilities

You can use bullet points to outline your duties and where possible make your employment history achievement orientated rather than a list of your duties for example; contributed to the increase in revenue/sales, worked as a team member
on a major project, awarded employee of the month for excellent customer service skills.

- **Interests**

  This section allows your prospective employer to gain an insight into the type of person you are and about the skills you have developed outside of the workplace which may be useful within their organisation. List only interests that an employer may want to know about.

- **Extra-Curricular Activities**

  - Professional Memberships - List any professional memberships you hold
  - Associations – List any associations that you belong to that are relevant to the position you are applying for
  - Personal Achievements – List any major personal achievements that are relevant for example awards
  - Educational, community or Church- List how you were involved and type of activity that you’ve been involved in.

- **Referees.**

  This is a list of two or three people that a potential employer can contact to verify information about you and to ascertain if you would be a suitable candidate for the position. You do not need to include these in your resume but it is a good idea to have these ready typed out on a separate sheet of paper in case the potential employer requests it. Include their name, their position title, name of their organisation and contact numbers. Ensure that you contact the person first and ask their permission to include them as a referee for job seeking.
purposes. On your resume you can type at the bottom of the resume *Referees available upon request.*

**Transferable Skills**

Transferable skills are those skills and abilities that you have developed through employment, hobbies, parenting, university study, volunteering (or a variety of other activities) that you may be able to utilise in the workplace.

Think about what you are good at and what skills and abilities you have developed. If you have researched topics for an essay and written reports or edited and presented papers for classes, then you have used skills that are not limited to just university but are transferable to many different occupations or disciplines.

You can apply many of transferable skills you have learned in your total life experience into the work environment as well. Even though you may have no direct experience in a particular job you may have developed similar skills. This will let the employer that you could do them or learn them relatively quickly. For example if the position is for a sandwich hand and you have never done this before but have worked as a shop assistant where you served the public and had to handle money or have done some voluntary work serving customers.

**Examples of Skills and Activities**

(adapted from Queensland University of Technology, Personal Transferable Skills brochure)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication skills</th>
<th>Effective Writing</th>
<th>Effective Speaking</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Languages other than English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report writing</td>
<td>Making speeches</td>
<td>Active listening</td>
<td>Conversing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Leading tutorials</td>
<td>Checking for understanding</td>
<td>Being understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reviewing</td>
<td>Instructing</td>
<td>Reflecting</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editing critiques</td>
<td>Debating</td>
<td>Summarising</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing talks</td>
<td>Leading a group</td>
<td>Clarifying</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Interviewing</td>
<td>Encouraging</td>
<td>Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documenting</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td></td>
<td>Translating</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Referencing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recognising</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

which contribute to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counselling</th>
<th>Persuading</th>
<th>Presenting a case</th>
<th>cultural differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooperation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Helping in a crisis</td>
<td>• Explaining</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Facilitating</td>
<td>• Being approachable</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Waiting your turn</td>
<td>• Empathising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Trusting members</td>
<td>• Praising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Accepting differences</td>
<td>• Rewarding</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sharing tasks</td>
<td>• Supporting</td>
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<tr>
<td>• collaborating</td>
<td>• Mediating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Supervising</td>
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<td>• leading</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Managing and Organising</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Which contribute to long term and short term strategic planning</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organising Ability</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Planning ahead</td>
<td>• Being self motivated</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Contingency planning</td>
<td>• Being self disciplined</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Adapting to change</td>
<td>• Knowing own limitations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Setting realistic timeframes</td>
<td>• Trusting own judgement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reviewing progress</td>
<td>• Taking responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learning from experience</td>
<td>• Coping with stress</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Delegating</td>
<td>• Managing time effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Concentrating on task at hand</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Problem Solving (Creatively)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Which contribute to productive outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identifying and analysing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Literature searching</td>
<td>• Locating information</td>
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<td>• Collecting data</td>
<td>• Organising material</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Collating information</td>
<td>• Sourcing information</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prioritising</td>
<td>• Using retrieval systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Classifying</td>
<td>• Evaluating data identifying facts</td>
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<td>• Hypothesising</td>
<td>• Gathering data</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Speculating</td>
<td>• Drawing inferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Drawing conclusions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Allocating time</td>
<td>• Allocating money</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Choosing a course/subjects</td>
<td>• Being realistic</td>
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<td>• Considering the long term making decisions under pressure</td>
<td>• Judging likely consequences</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Decision making &amp; Follow through</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Keeping up with current issues</td>
<td>• Being sensitive to the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Being sensitive to the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Applying Knowledge</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reworking</td>
<td>• Experiencing other cultures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reorganising</td>
<td>• Having an open mind</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Testing new conditions</td>
<td>• Recognising prejudices</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Making connections</td>
<td>• Keeping personal integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Applying formulae</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Awareness of current needs
- Seeing issues in a broad context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Transferable Skills</th>
<th>Tasks (think about previous work, hobbies, study, volunteering, life experience)</th>
<th>Skills Developed</th>
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Sample Basic Resume

John Smith,
6373, East 34 Street,
Strathfield, NSW 2040,
M:0418 703 483  E: John_Smith@yahoo.com

Career Objective:
Seeking a casual or part time position in the hospitality industry as a kitchen hand or wait staff. Available to work 20 hours per week on Thursdays Fridays and Saturdays, any shift. Have access to reliable transport

Skills and Attributes Summary:
- Excellent ability to read, understand and follow the safety procedures
- Able to deal with people in a friendly and confident manner
- Very good coordinating and organising skills
- Excellent customer service skills
- Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines
- Good knowledge of equipment, supplies and services.
- Very good knowledge of catering set-up procedures.
- Experience in cooking and preparing variety of foods.
- Good numerical skills and some cash handling experience

Education:
Bachelor of Management, Sydney University, Sydney 2006
High School Certificate, Strathfield High School, Strathfield 2002

Work History:
Waiter/Kitchen Hand
Duties:
- Basic Food preparation (hot cereals, sausage, eggs, coffee, bacon, toast and sandwiches)
- Helped to prepare vegetables, meats, fish and various other foods for serving.
- Responsible for preparing salads and desserts
- Helped with food service
- Responsible for cleaning kitchen and kitchen equipments and utensils
- Arranged ingredients attractively to prepare cold plate combinations
- Performed various other duties as assigned

Waiter
Collins Hotel
(2008 – present)
Duties:
- Attend customers to their tables.
- Explain how different menu items are made, describing the cooking methods and ingredients.
- Tell customers of daily special items
- Confirm with customers to make sure that they are enjoying food and take action to correct any troubles.
- Other duties as assigned

References available on Request
Resume Worksheet

Use this worksheet to gather the information you require for your resume. (If you don’t have any information to include in any of these section, it is ok to leave it out)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL DETAILS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name __________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address ______________________________________________________</td>
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<td>Phone ________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email _________________________________________________________</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>CAREER OBJECTIVES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Provide a brief statement of the type of position you are seeking. You will change this statement to fit each position you are seeking. Use the job description for clues. The remainder of your resume must support your career objective in some way)</td>
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<tr>
<th>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS</th>
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<td>Secondary (Name of School) __________________________________________</td>
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<td>Date Completed __________________________________________________</td>
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<td>Tertiary (Name of Institution) _____________________________________</td>
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<td>Qualification attained ____________________________________________</td>
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<td>Date Completed __________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUMMARY OF ABILITIES, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE</td>
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<tr>
<th>PROFESSION DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>(List any licences gained or professional development courses attended)</th>
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<tr>
<th>PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS</th>
<th>(List any professional memberships you hold)</th>
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<tr>
<th>ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
<th>(List ANY MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS RELATING TO WORK OR EDUCATION)</th>
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<tr>
<th>WORK EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>(Consider all experience—paid, unpaid, volunteer, etc.)</th>
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### Duties

References (People an employer can contact to ask about your employment history)

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<th>1. Name</th>
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<td>Position title</td>
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<td>Company</td>
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<td>Position title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact details</td>
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### ACTION VERBS FOR RESUME & COVER LETTER PREPARATION

#### Business Related
- Administered
- Compiled
- Expedited
- Scheduled
- Advised
- Corresponded
- Streamlined
- Instituted
- Balanced
- Defined

#### Science Related
- Observed
- Accelerated
- Reduced
- Investigated
- Surveyed
- Documented
- Classified
- Tested
- Examined
- Identified

#### Engineering Related
- Assembled
- Maintained
- Achieved
- Reorganized
- Built
- Calculated
- Operated
- Computed
- Handled

#### Social Science Related
- Listened
- Administered
- Reinforced
- Screened
- Taught
- Lectured
- Supported
- Delegated
- Trained
- Advised

#### Miscellaneous
- Fashioned
- Wrote
- Edited
- Created

---

**Note:** These verbs are suggestions for action-oriented language in your resume and cover letter. Use them to highlight your professional skills and experiences.
4. Cover Letters

When you are sending an application to a potential employer, there are two documents that you need to include:

- Your resume
- Cover letter

The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce yourself to the potential employer, provide some information about why you feel that you would be a good candidate for the role, highlight your skills and abilities and ultimately, to entice them to go on and read your resume.

Your cover letter should be tailored to each position you are applying for. Remember to check through the roles selection criteria and ensure that you have addressed each item in your cover letter.

**Cover Letter Checklist**

- Include the company’s address information, individuals name and title
- It should be concise and no longer than 1 typed A4 page
- The font should be easy to read and professional looking (do not handwrite an application letter)
- Run a spell check on the letter and ensure that there are no typing or grammatical errors.
- Date and sign your letter
- It should include your contact details so that employer is able to follow up to make an interview time if they feel that you are suitable for the role.
- Ensure you address the selection criteria demonstrating how you obtained those skills giving examples where possible.
- Use action words (see Action Verbs for resume and cover letter preparation in this workbook for some examples) and make it sound as enthusiastic as possible.
Cover Letter Structure

Your Name
Your Address
Phone
Email

Name of person (Ring up and find out if none shown on job ad)
Title of person
Company name
Address
Date

Dear (Person’s name or Sir/Madam if you do not know)

Reference (Position applied for, position number)

Paragraph 1
Refer to the position that you are applying for

Paragraph 2
The second paragraph changes with each application. This section can be one or several paragraphs long but this will depend on your experience, skills and qualifications. It should outline your skills and experience that are beneficial to the role and the company. Remember to include examples of HOW you have demonstrated each of the selection criteria or essential skills for the role. Also, This is the section where you need to sell yourself so...
  - Indicate that you know exactly what the job actually involves
  - Relate your skills, interests and experience to the job
  - Convince the employer that you are the right person for the job and able to do the job
  - Stand out from all other potential candidates
  - Refer to your resume

Paragraph 3
Highlight some of your strengths, professional achievements, qualifications, interests and other information which may help to sell yourself further.

Paragraph 4
Conclude your letter by saying that you are available for an interview and advise them of the best way to be contacted. Thank them for considering your application and that you look forward to an interview with them.

Yours sincerely,

Signature
Typed name
Mr John Smith  
Mad Technology  
123 Fake Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam  

Re: Technology Specialist Intern

I wish to apply for the position of Technology Specialist Intern as advertised on Seek.com.au on August 12 2011. I believe I would enjoy the challenge and the opportunity to learn provided by this position. I also recognise the invaluable experience that would be gained working with the largest name in the industry.

I am currently completing my Bachelor of Engineering (Electronics)/Bachelor of Information Technology (Computer Science) degrees at The University of Sydney. Over the past two years in particular, I have achieved an average grade of 78%. I have attained academic excellence in subjects involving large professional-style projects, communications, management and business skills.

My involvement in the operation of EESEC, the largest single-campus student society in Sydney, has strengthened my leadership, teamwork, problem-solving and decision-making abilities and has enabled me to acquire expertise in all facets of successful business administration. I believe that these factors, along with my broad information technology and engineering knowledge base, my extensive experience with the Microsoft suite of products and my personal skills such as initiative, creativity, adaptability and a willingness to learn will enable me to excel in the role of a Microsoft Intern.

Please find attached my resume and academic transcript. I would appreciate the opportunity of an interview and I can be contacted at the above addresses, on my mobile phone number 0422 111 111

Yours faithfully

Simon Messner
5. Interviews

An interview is an opportunity for you to meet with the advertiser of the position (be it a recruitment agency or the organisation with the vacancy), to discuss your suitability for the role.

There are a number of types of interviews:

- Structured
- Unstructured
- Interview and exam format
- Performance based interviews (e.g. group interviews)

Structured Interviews

A structured interview may involve discussing the role and your suitability, in a formal context with a number of company members. This is known as a “panel”. Tips for a panel interview include:

- Introduce yourself to each panel member
- Address each panel member, ensuring that you make even eye contact throughout the course of the interview
- Initially address the panel member who asked you the question, then include other panel members in your response making eye contact with each member
- Thank each panel member for their time.

Unstructured Interviews

An unstructured interview may involve you discussing your suitability for the role within an informal context. This may be due to time constraints, the nature of the company, or the requirements of the role. Despite being less formal than the structured interview, it is recommended that you follow the general tips for interviews, and do not become too relaxed in your presentation.

Interview and Exam

An interview and exam format may take the form of a structured or unstructured interview, with the difference being that you may be required to undertake testing. This testing may be to obtain further information on your interests, aptitude, or psychological situation, and will therefore require you to complete tasks as directed. It is recommended that you relax and respond to the questions calmly. Take the time that you need, without being excessive (unless there is a timeframe, in which case stick to the allotted time limits).
Performance Based Interviews

Performance based interviews may take the form of a group interview. The purpose of a group interview is to interview large numbers of people at the one time. It is also to screen applicants by providing tasks and assessing an individual’s capacity to work in a team, as well as autonomously, and assess them for other characteristics that they may value in an employee.

In order to present well during a group interview, the following is recommended:

- Treat the interview as if it were a formal structured interview and conduct yourself professionally
- Be involved – be confident and participate in group activities. The interviewers will see that you are able to work in a team, and have the capacity to give as well as to receive orders.
- Do not be over bearing and conversely do not be too shy.

Hints and Tips for Successful Interviews

- Take your resume, referee details, phone number, address and directions of where you are having the interview, pen and paper along with a copy of any letters or written applications that were submitted for this particular position.
- Be professional in your presentation
- Dress appropriately for the role. It is better to be on the smarter side in your presentation
- Prepare for the interview (research the company and role, location, how you are going to get there, dress code)
- Ensure you are suitably groomed, with high quality personal hygiene
- Attend the interview 10 15 minutes prior to interview time. This will allow you to complete any required paperwork and compose yourself
- Do not chew gum or have any food or drink whilst in the interview
- If you are offered a drink it is recommended that you accept water. This will be good for your throat should you get nervous
• When you walk into the interview room, introduce yourself with a smile whilst making eye contact. Put out your hand to initiate a handshake. Use the person’s name

• Be positive and optimistic – do not focus on negatives and do not bad mouth your previous employer

• Do not enquire about salary, holidays or working conditions unless it is appropriate

• If you have asked a question and have not heard it properly, it is OK to ask the interviewer politely to repeat it

• Do not fidget whilst in the interview. If you have fidgety fingers interlocking them in your lap may help

• Answer questions measurably – don’t speak too softly or loudly, or too slowly or quickly

• Keep the topic of discussion to employment related matters

• Maintain appropriate eye contact and body language throughout the interview. Try and appear relaxed, but maintain professionalism

• Take every opportunity you can to link your skills and experience to the position. Refer the interviewer to sections of your interview portfolio if appropriate to highlight your skills and reinforce an answer

• Be sure in your responses and avoid using 'I might' or 'I guess'

• Give a detailed response to questions asked. Avoid using “Yes” and “No” answers as these give interviewers little information about you or your ability to do the work

• If you have gaps in your employment history you can comment on any study, volunteer work or other activities you completed during this period, emphasise your keenness to work or describe your future career goals and how the job fits into this path

• Be prepared with some questions regarding the company or the role that you would like to clarify such as what sort of training is provided, is there a dress code/uniform, when do they
need someone to start, Where and who would I be working with? and what are the duties of the position

- At the end of an interview do not rush off. Smile, shake hands and thank your interviewer for their time
- If you are late for an interview for an unforeseen reason, politely apologise and ask if it is still suitable to proceed with the interview. If the interviewers are no longer available, follow up on whether there is a time that they may be able to meet with you on another day

Sample Interview Questions

Remember to be yourself, and try to answer as many questions as you can with an example of a work situation.

Relax! Remember that the interview is a time for you to talk about YOU! Sell yourself! Be confident!

Practice answering these questions. What other questions may the employer ask you? How would you respond?

Q: "So, tell me about yourself"

This question may be used to assess your personality, preparation, communication skills and ability to think on your feet.

Prepare a list of the job tasks you have done (your current or last job), your strengths (stick to job-focussed skills), link strengths to new potential job

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<th>Link to new job</th>
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</table>
Q: "Why did you leave your last job?"

Respond positively and don’t talk negatively about a previous employer.

Notes:

Q: "Why do you want to do this job / work for this company?"

Demonstrate your knowledge of the company through your own research (online, in person) and re-emphasise your suitability for the position.

Notes:

Q: "What do you think you have to offer this company?"

This is a chance to sell yourself — concentrate on the skills you have that are required for the position.

E.g. "I have strong sales skills, I am a good team player and I am very keen to be involved in the new markets you are developing in the Asian region."

Notes:
Q: "What do you think this position involves?"

This question is designed to reveal if you have thought about the position, done some research, listened to the interviewer, and can summarise all of this information clearly.

Notes:

Q: "What do you know about the company?"

Demonstrate your interest in the job, and your understanding of the organisation and industry. Talk about the research you did into the company's key areas of interest, its size, its main customers or current status, making reference to your source of information.

Notes:

Q: "What do you believe are your key strengths?"

Prepare responses that give specific examples of your strengths at previous positions that will support your job application.

Notes:

Q: "What do you believe are your greatest weakness?"
Don’t say “none”. Try and use examples that are not really weakness and can be perceived as a strength or areas that might have been a weakness in the past that you managed to overcome.

Notes:

Q: "Why have you had so many jobs?"

If you have had jobs in different industries or several positions in a short period, describe the positives — that you were learning new skills, following different career paths, and travelling overseas, etc..

Refer to the experience you gained in past jobs that relates to the position under discussion.

Notes:

Q: "What do you enjoy most about your current / last job?"

Remember to state what you liked about your last role BUT list things that are also in the job you are being interviewed for right now.

Notes:

Q: "What kind of people do you like to work with?"

In this question the interviewer is trying to find out if you will fit in with their culture/team as people who have similar ideals and values work better together, so describe your positive characteristics such as hardworking, honest, dedicated, etc..

Notes:
Q: "Do you prefer working in a team or working alone?"

This question is asked to access your work style and see if you would fit in. The job description will give you a clue. Suggest that you are flexible, saying that you have worked alone in the past and with a team and enjoyed both situations for different reasons.

Notes:

Q: "Do you have any questions you would like to ask?"

Always prepare a question to ask the interviewer. Ask about the position, request clarification of general information about the company, or summarise your understanding and request confirmation. Some questions you could ask include:

- Is there any training provided?
- When do you need someone to start?
- What’s the next step?
- How many people work in the team/company?
- Is there a uniform/dress code?
- Can you tell me what a typical shift/day is like?

Notes:

Preparation and practice will help you to answer most questions easily and help you to feel more relaxed, so ensure that for each interview you prepare and practice your answers to these questions. If possible rehearse with a friend or family member.
Interview Preparation

Interviews can be stressful and nerve wracking as it is your big chance to prove and sell yourself to the employer. In order to best cope with these feeling and give yourself the best chance to succeed, it is essential to prepare as much as possible before your interview. Preparation is a key step in ensuring a successful interview. Make sure that in preparing for the interview that you:

- Research the company and find out as much as you can about them (for example, how large is the company and annual turnover, what are their main products and services, what is their largest target market?). Research can be undertaken by contacting the company directly and liaising with their Human Resources department, investigating on the internet or discussing with your friends and family who may know about the company.
- Research the role and what your main duties will be. Understanding what would be required of you throughout the course of employment will assist you in marketing the relevant skills that you possess.
- Prepare your answers based on the selection criteria using the enclosed worksheet.
- Rehearse your answers and have someone be your interviewer in a mock interview.

The Night before the interview:

- Prepare what you are going to wear to the interview.
- Gather copies of your resume, qualifications and examples of your work if applicable.
- Review your application, the selection criteria and your research about the company.
- Review your answers to the sample interview questions.
• Double check the location, interview time, travelling time required and your transport. arrangements. Make sure you allow yourself plenty of time to get to your location.

• Ensure you get a good night’s rest.

**Keeping Track of Your Job Applications**

To help you stay organised when you are job seeking it helps to keep a record of all the jobs that you have applied for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Ad Date</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
<th>Resume Sent on</th>
<th>Questions to Ask</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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The CET Counselling Service can help you with job seeking including assisting with job applications, resume and interview preparation.

Some of the other issues that international students talk about in counselling are loneliness and homesickness, cultural adaptation, academic difficulties, study problems and exam anxiety, relationship problems, financial pressures, accommodation issues and time management.

The Counselling Service is free and confidential, and appointments can be made at Reception or by emailing cetstudentsupport@sydney.edu.au