

How to gain work experience as a new graduate in Australia

While graduating from university is an exciting time for many, it can also come with great stress about how and where to find your first graduate job. It is important to remember that every student goes through this stage at some point. You should also remember that your education and learning skills don't just stop when you finish university. University is only part of the journey. While finding work experience is difficult, regardless of whether it is paid or unpaid, these tips will definitely send you in the direction.

1. Networking

Networking is an incredibly powerful tool which is incredibly important in almost every career. Networking allows you to expand and open new and exciting opportunities for your career. To give an example, if you have ever completed a group assignment with classmates, or ever talked to a lecturer about how you want to learn more about something, then this means you have done networking before. Networking is essentially building relationships with people for the purpose of advancing one's career or knowledge about business.

2. Always include a personalised, well-written cover letter for each application

While many companies only require a resume/CV when applying for a job advertised online, it is essential that you provide a cover letter with every application, unless the company specifically states they do not WANT a cover letter. A cover letter helps expand on and

humanise what you have written about yourself in your resume/CV. With just a resume/CV, many applicants just appear as a bunch of numbers or grades to employers, whereas if you also attach a cover letter, you can explain a bit more about yourself and your interests. Possible content in your cover letter could include talking about why you want to work for that particular company, the reasons you feel you would be suited for that job and encouraging the employer to contact you so you can talk to them further.

3. Practice improving your interview skills

While it is very tiring to write resumes and cover letters to apply for any kind of job or work experience, that is only half the battle. The most critical part of finding and being accepted for work experience is the interview/s. That is why practicing your interview skills and regular conversation skills are an absolute must. The interview is the key part of the application process where you can sell yourself and your qualities to the interviewer. There are endless resources on the internet about how to work on these skills. For starters, you can try Youtube or Google. Remember to also try searching more specifically about the type of job you will or want to interview for, such as 'marketing job interview questions'.

4. Volunteer work or experience should not be overlooked

If you are struggling to find any paid work experience, then it might be worth looking for local volunteer opportunities. Volunteer work is very effective in brushing up your resume and it is normally much easier to be accepted for volunteer work than it is for a paid job. Volunteer opportunities are advertised online and can be easily found on Google, just like real job advertisements. Some examples of possible volunteer work include volunteering at aged care facilities, volunteering for animal care at an RSPCA, or volunteering to be a sport referee. To start looking for local volunteer work, try Googling

volunteer opportunities in your local area or city, such as 'volunteering opportunities Melbourne'.

5. Send expressions of interest to companies you like, even if they are not currently hiring

Companies do not always public advertise jobs or work experience opportunities they are hiring for. If you find a company you wish you could work for but they don't advertise anything currently, feel free to send them a brief email asking if they have any opportunities available and also explaining why you would like to work for them. Most companies have a 'Contact Us' section on their websites where you could do this.

6. Do not feel afraid to apply for a position even if you don't meet all the requirements

You might be able to convince a company you are still a good match for a position, even if you don't meet every single requirement they ask for. Do not outright lie on your resume or apply to a managerial position when you haven't even had your first job, but you should focus on selling yourself well and being realistic with what you could do. For example, you can still apply to a work experience position if that role asks you to have intermediate Photoshop skills, even if you only have basic Photoshop skills. Then, if you were accepted for the position you could work hard to build your skills up to that intermediate level if still required.