

STUDENT SERVICES

USQ

Careers & Employment

Careers Resources Kit

Bridging the gap from university to the workforce.

USQ

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

fulfilling lives

Contents

1.0 Writing an Application Letter	3
1.1 Writing a Job Application.....	3
1.2 The Application Letter	3
1.3 Sample Application Letter	4
2.0 Resume Writing	5
2.1 Sections to include:.....	5
2.2 Your Resume - Summary	6
2.3 Sample Resume	7
2.4 Resumé Checklist.....	10
3.0 Selection Criteria	11
3.1 Understanding the Criterion.....	11
3.2 Addressing the Criteria	12
3.2 Writing Selection Criteria	12
3.4 Sample Selection Criteria.....	13
3.5 Application Terminology.....	14
4.0 Social Media	16
4.1 Who uses Social Media?.....	16
4.2 What should I use?	16
4.3 How to get started?.....	17
4.4 Social Media Etiquette.....	17
5.0 Interview Skills	18
5.1 Purpose of an Interview	18
5.2 Interview Preparation.....	18
5.3 During the Interview.....	19
5.4 After the Interview	19
5.5 Interview Questions.....	19
6.0 Useful Websites	21

For more information, come see us:

Toowoomba Campus

The 'Work Shop' (G229)

07 4631 2638

careers@usq.edu.au

Career Counselling

Student Services (G Block)

07 4631 2372

Drop in appointments available:

- 10 – 11am and 2 – 3pm.

Springfield Campus

Career Counselling

07 3470 4400

studentservicespringfield@usq.edu.au

Drop in appointments available:

- 11am – 12pm

Fraser Coast

Student Hub (A Block)

07 4120 6133

Career Counselling

07 4194 3125

FraserCoast.StudentHub@usq.edu.au

Drop in appointments available:

- 10 – 11am.

1.0 Writing an Application Letter

1.1 Writing a Job Application

Your application is the first contact you will have with an employer. The employer will use it to help decide if you are suitable for the job and if they would like to give you an interview.

It is most important to take time and care with your application. Make it look good and make sure all the information is clear and easy to read.

1.2 The Application Letter

You only get one chance to make a first impression so when you're applying for jobs, a cover letter can help you inject some personality into your application, and give a potential employer a quick and easy idea of why you'd be right for the job.

When applying for graduate jobs, write up your cover letter so it's concise, punchy and friendly. This makes it easy for the recruiter to get a good impression of what you're about.

Before you start writing an application, find out as much as you can about the job, that way the application will be tailored to the position. However, there is certain information that is required in any application letter. The following is a rough guide on how to set it out:

- **Your details.** Your full name, email address and telephone number at the top of the letter.
- **Employer Details.** Contact person (try to get an actual name),
- **Why are you sending them your resume?** Outline the role you are applying for and where you saw it advertised.
- **A quick introduction.** Introduce yourself including your qualifications, work experience and other relevant information.
- **An explanation of how you're the perfect match.** Tell them why you're so well suited to the company in their own terms. Address the information that is available in the advertisement. If they list a number of qualities or requirements that are sought, then you should outline how you meet them all. Eg, if they are looking for 'excellent interpersonal skills' and 'experience in a customer service role' talk about your ability to build relationship with people as demonstrated in previous roles.
- **Call to action.** Encourage the reader to browse through your CV to find out more about you, and suggest that you'd love to meet them face to face for a meeting or interview.

Things to remember:

- Get someone to proof read it for mistakes before you send it.
- Make sure your letter fits onto one A4 page.
- Keep a copy of your application (you might be able to use a similar one again)

Do not:

- Mention what you expect to get paid.
- Sound too cocky/ boastful.
- List the things you are not good at.
- Undersell yourself – if you are good at something, say so!

1.3 Sample Application Letter

Graduate Accountant, \$50K - \$60K + superannuation

The Company

This client is a Chartered Accounting firm based in Brisbane. They provide services from privately owned businesses and their proprietors to subsidiaries of international companies, emerging businesses and individual professionals. This company values staff development and retention whilst possessing an excellent work culture.

The Role

We are seeking a Graduate Accountant who is keen to learn and develop their career. This role provides a variety across a wide range of accounting functions such as financial and management accounting, tax advice, audit and assurance and financial analysis interpretation advice.

Your Profile

The successful candidate will ideally possess:

- A bachelors degree in Accounting or Commerce with excellent academic credentials
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Willingness to learn from others
- Some experience in an accounting role

Apply Today

Tom Jones
100 Bridge Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
0400 123 456
Email: tom@hotmail.com

23 December 2010

Ms Mary Fisher
Human Resources Manager
Brown & Bourke Accountants
25 Mary Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Outline the position you are applying for and where you saw it advertised.

Dear Ms Fisher

Refer back to the original advert when describing why you are suitable to the role. They will tell you what they are looking for in the ad. Try to use some of the key phrases that they used.

Position: Graduate Accountant

Please consider this my expression of interest for the position of Graduate Accountant that was advertised on Seek.com.au. I am keen to pursue a career in private practice accounting and would value the opportunity to further my practical skills and knowledge that I have gained through my studies.

I am currently completing my final year of a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) from the University of Southern Queensland and am due to finish at the end of 2010. Throughout my studies, I had the opportunity to gain practical accounting experience through completing work placement with Hooper and Litwit Accountants over a period of 5 months. During my time here as a work experience student, my core responsibilities included liaising with the ATO, basic book keeping and coding as well as general administrative duties.

In addition to this, I have developed excellent interpersonal skills through my employment with Sizzlers Family Restaurant, where I was employed as a shift manager. This role required me to communicate effectively with patrons from diverse backgrounds. My communication ability in both a written and verbal capacity has also been demonstrated through my studies, where I have maintained a high level of results (GPA of 5.7) through my written and verbal assessments.

Throughout my work experience I have demonstrated excellent team work skills with a particular ability to learn from my team mates as well as acting in senior positions with a leadership focus.

I am keen to pursue my career in financial services with a Chartered Accounting firm and I have enclosed a copy of my professional resume for your consideration. I would value the opportunity to discuss this application further with you in person and am available to be contacted on 0400 123 456.

Yours Sincerely,

Tom Jones

Call to action! Gently ask for an interview or opportunity to meet with the company.

2.0 Resume Writing

A resumé is your marketing campaign and you are the product. Use it to make an impression and stand out above your competitors. The purpose of a resumé is to get an interview not necessarily to get the job. Research suggests that employers/ recruiters will spend 20 seconds scanning a resume before it is short listed or rejected, therefore it should be **easy to read** (use bullet points where possible).

There is no definite way to present a resumé, however, there are some standard expectations (education, job history, referees etc). This allows to you tailor the resume to suit the job you are applying for and to highlight the most relevant points. A resume is usually between 2 – 5 pages dependant on your experience.

2.1 Sections to include:

Personal Details

- There is no need for a cover page. Put all your contact details in the first few lines.
- Make sure that your phone numbers are current and be aware of offensive or unprofessional emails or voicemails. These can annoy employers and do not portray professionalism.
- Do not include photos on your resumé.
- Do not include personal details such your date of birth, religion, marital status, gender, etc. This avoids potential discrimination.
- You can add a career objective, which briefly summarises your experience to date and where you would like your career to go with this company. **See Sample Resumé.**

Education

- Include all relevant education, both completed and continuing.
- Include the name of the institution where you studied, the name of course, majors, and date of completion.
- You may want to include 1 or 2 key subjects that relate to the position (optional).
- Mention if you graduated with Honours.
- Additional Training & Qualifications - Include details of short courses or training and/or qualifications that are relevant to position (e.g., First Aid certificate, Certificate II in)

Demonstrated Skills

- Demonstrate that you possess employability skills (e.g. communication, problem-solving, initiative, enterprising, planning, organising, self-management, learning, technology).
- Make them specific and quantifiable if possible. Provide supporting evidence.
 - *“Innovative – I was able to increase company profits by 25% in 2 months as a result of my new ideas.”*
 - *“Leadership – I was appointed as captain of the local rugby team because of my well developed leadership skills.”*
- A useful section if you cannot demonstrate competency through related experience (Transferable Skills).

Employment Experience

- List your employment experience either in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Include the name of your employer, the job title, and the start and finish dates of employment. State the year, and month if possible, that you started and finished.
- List key duties and responsibilities (if unsure you may be able to refer to a position description). Include achievements or highlights – don't be shy, let them know how good you are!
- List all of your duties and achievements in bullet points.

Other Experience and Skills

Special Achievements or Sporting Achievements

- Include any key achievements (e.g., if you received a scholarship or award based on your academic performance)

Volunteer Work or Community Involvement

- You may choose to include this work in a career overview if you need to show instances of yourself in action using relevant skills.
- This section allows you to show further relevant skills that you have developed through your volunteer work.
- When you are engaged in voluntary work you are still able to develop skills, gain experience, and rightly claim that you have done the job.

Professional Membership

- List any relevant professional associations that you belong to.

Referees

- Should be people who have supervised your work (e.g. Prac supervisors, or managers) or who has a good knowledge of your ability to do the job.
- Don't use a relative.
- Make sure you ring and ask them to be a referee for you and to be a GOOD referee. That is, ensure that they will give you a positive report to employers.
- You need at least two referees (3 is ideal).
- Provide your referees with your resumé and inform them of the jobs that you are applying for.

2.2 Your Resume - Summary

- A resumé is a marketing tool to promote your skills and abilities in order to get you an interview.
- Keep it clear, concise, and easy to read.
- Don't include anything that reflects you in a negative light and don't big-note yourself without supporting evidence.
- Emphasise relevant skills and employment history.
- Maintain professional presentation and communication.
- Ask your referees for permission to list them on your resumé.
- You have, on average, 20 seconds in which to make an impression on the employer to consider you further.
- Ensure that you have no spelling or formatting errors. This could lose you the job!
- Highlight your key skills and abilities that would make you the best person for the job.

2.3 Sample Resume

John Smith

1 Long Street
Toowoomba Qld 4350
Phone: 0404 632 165
Email: john@hotmail.com

Be sensible with your contact details, only include if they are accurate, **professional** and working.

Career Objective

I have recently completed my Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) through USQ and am now seeking full time employment that allows me to utilise both my theoretical and practical knowledge of Mechanical Engineering.

Education and Training

Tertiary

2010 **Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical)**
University of Southern Queensland
Key Subjects:
Fluid Mechanics
Manufacturing Processes
Stress Analysis

You may also list notable projects that you contributed towards. Eg., group assignments, demonstrations, designs etc.

2007 **Certificate III in Computer Aided Drafting**
Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE

2005 **Senior Certificate**
Toowoomba State High School

Additional Tickets and Training

2007 Senior First Aid Certificate, Queensland Ambulance

2006 Construction Safety Induction "White Card"

2006 Forklift Ticket

Demonstrated Skills

Computer Skills AutoCAD, AutoCAD Vault, QDMS, Project Wise, Solid Works, MS Word, Excel, Explorer, PowerPoint, Publisher, & Outlook, Adobe Acrobat (Writer & Reader).

Planning/ Organising Demonstrated by successfully balancing full time study commitments as well as part time employment.

Attributes and competencies are often included here, however be original and truthful. Words like **teamwork**, **communication**, **leadership** and **interpersonal** skills are popular, and if included, be sure to provide an example of how you have shown these attributes.

Work Experience

May – Sept 2010

Tyce Southern Cross, Toowoomba Qld

Mechanical Drafter (unpaid work placement)

Duties:

- Development of mechanical drafting's of pumping systems
- Assisting engineering team with development of new products

This section may include unpaid/ volunteer work experience.

Employment History

December 2008 - Current

Harvey Norman, Toowoomba Qld

Storeman (Casual)

Duties:

- Safe forklift operations, management of stock storage;
- Assisting customers with collecting purchases;
- Monthly figures and safety reporting.

While your experience may not be relevant to your studies, you still gain transferable skills. List employment that you have held in the last 10 years.

Most recent first

November 2009 – January 2010

RIO Mining, Blackstump Qld

Engineering Vacation Program

Duties:

- Organised site drawings and documentation
- Worked in a team of 4 on major site projects and shut down
- Coordinated the delivery of materials required for a major engineering project
- Assisted with implementation of maintenance documentation
- Updated site layouts documents
- Assisted with system and procedure development

March 2006 – November 2008

McNab Constructions, Toowoomba, Qld

Construction Labourer

Duties:

- Safe operation of construction tools and equipment;
- Progress reporting through to site supervisor;

Projects Worked on:

- UQ Rural Medical Training Centre - Toowoomba
- Telstra Technical Service Centre – Toowoomba

List any important achievements or projects that you contributed towards.

Professional Associations

Student member of Engineers Australia

Referees

Mark Dawson

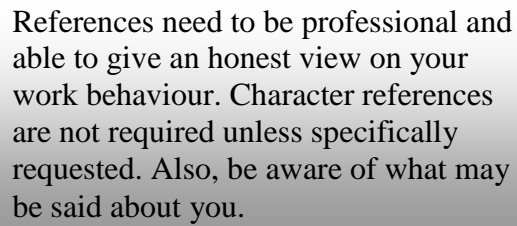
Stores Supervisor
Harvey Norman Stores
Toowoomba, Qld
(07) 4635 2456
0408 564 255

Tony Mackenzie

Engineer
Rio Mining
Dampier WA
(07) 4999 9999
Email: tony@rio.com.au

Jack Johns

Senior Engineer
Tyco Southern Cross
Withcott, Qld
(07) 4698 7654
Email: jjohns@typac.com



References need to be professional and able to give an honest view on your work behaviour. Character references are not required unless specifically requested. Also, be aware of what may be said about you.

2.4 Resumé Checklist

- ✓ To whom are you selling yourself? Is your resumé targeted? Does it match the requirements for the job?
- ✓ Is it written in clear and concise English?
- ✓ What are you describing? Is the resumé pointing out your key sales points (skills, experience, training, potential)? Why should the employer need you?
- ✓ Are your skills emphasised and prioritised? Is your experience quantified where possible, e.g. sales targets reached, budgets managed, number of staff supervised?
- ✓ Are buzzwords used sparingly to show knowledge and explained in parenthesis if the meaning is not obvious?
- ✓ Is the information correct and truthful (employers will check)?
- ✓ Have you avoided discussing sensitive subjects such as race, religion, marital status, age, politics, or personal views? Check local standards, particularly for overseas applications, e.g. marital status will be relevant in some countries.
- ✓ Is your name, address, phone and email at the top?
- ✓ Have you omitted salary information or demands?
- ✓ Is it neat and clean? Well-proportioned margins? Use of white space to divide sections? Visual elements used sparingly?
- ✓ Quality paper and printing? No perfumes? No smudges? White paper?
- ✓ Is it grammatically correct with all spelling checked?
- ✓ Have you avoided overusing of personal pronouns – “I” and “she”?
- ✓ Are your key strengths points highlighted in text using bold, indents, bullets, italics and / or white space?
- ✓ Do the tenses agree - past tense for old jobs, present tense for current job?
- ✓ Length: 5 pages for senior management; 2 to 3 pages for recent graduates.
- ✓ Is the format suited to method of submission (internet, faxed, sent or emailed)?

Source: DeLuca, M. J. (1999). *Get a job in 30 days or less*. Blacklick, OH, USA: McGraw-Hill Professional Book Group.

3.0 Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria are used widely in recruitment for graduate, government and professional positions, therefore, as a student, it is important to know how to address them. Essentially, it is a written interview based around the essential requirements of the role and your responses can determine if you are short listed for a face to face interview.

Preparing selection criteria, addressing them effectively, and writing the final product is a time-consuming exercise and will take effort, however as with everything, practice makes perfect.

3.1 Understanding the Criterion

Before writing your response, you need to understand what is being asked of you. Below is a list of commonly used terms in Selection Criterion and what they mean.

Term	Meaning
Ability	Your capacity and talent for performing set tasks.
Basic understanding	You are required to know basic concepts and your response needs to show you have this understanding.
Demonstrate	You must give specific examples from your own experience that demonstrate your skill, ability or effectiveness.
Equity	Equity is a broad concept that encompasses principles designed to ensure fairness, consistency, and non-discrimination. In practice it denotes impartiality, the upholding of procedural fairness, and consideration of the individual circumstances of each case.
High level	You must give specific examples from your own experience that exhibit advanced practice or knowledge or skill, ability or effectiveness.
Knowledge	This refers to two aspects: 1. Cognitive skills involved in processes such as judgment, thinking and understanding, and 2. Information, which is based on factual and theoretical material that is accessed, manipulated and used cognitively.
Potential	Although the person may not have the skills or knowledge at the present time, they have the ability to develop these skills or knowledge through experience and or training (both on the job and formally).
Qualifications	As well as tertiary qualifications, it also includes any short courses a person may have attended, e.g.: In-house training, adult education courses, private training consultants, etc.
Skill	Skills may be intellectual, manual, motor, perceptual, social. The nature of the tasks usually requires the combination of these and usually involves the application of cognitive and psychomotor functions together with appropriate knowledge.

(Source: Queensland Department of Main Roads. (2002). *Words that work*. Brisbane: Author.)

3.2 Addressing the Criteria

The most common approach to addressing the criteria is the **'STAR' model**.

- Situation** In what **situation** have you demonstrated the criterion?
- Task** What **tasks** were you required to complete in the situation? Set the scene.
- Action** What **action** did you take to achieve your task? How does it relate to the criterion?
- Results** What were the **results** of your actions? Were they successful? If not, what would you do differently to change outcomes?

Provide a statement for each of these categories as well as other relevant information and you will be able to effectively demonstrate how you have met the criterion.

3.2 Writing Selection Criteria

- Approach it like an assignment
- Answer each criterion on a new page
- Put a header on your document with your name, the job name and number
- Write out the criterion in full at the top of the page
- Maintain a positive communication
- Ensure your document is neat and concise
- **USE EXAMPLES!!!!!!**

DO

- Pick out the key words and answer all parts of the criterion
- Be concise and use the STAR method
- Provide concrete examples of how you have met the criterion in previous experience
- Check for spelling and grammar

DON'T

- Give outdated information
- Present messy or unprofessional documents
- Waffle or provide unsubstantiated claims
- Use negative words to reduce your credibility, or big-note yourself

3.4 Sample Selection Criteria

Use the terminology that they used.

KSC1 Well-developed communication and interpersonal skills

Throughout my university studies, employment experiences and community activities, I have developed excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

As part of my university studies, I was required to interact with diverse groups of students and staff, both in person and online. I was also required to develop a wide variety of verbal and written skills through assessment and study group activities, such as written essays, reports, group work, oral presentations, emails and online discussion. To be successful in an academic context, it is essential to address some key elements of verbal and written communication, such as:

- Consider the audience
- Analyse the question or task
- Use appropriate language for the situation
- Ensure spelling, grammar and pronunciation are correct
- Ensure presentation and tone are suitable
- Have a logically flowing structure that relates to the topic

As a result of implementing these elements effectively in my communication at university, I received good marks on my assessment and gained positive feedback from the class and from lecturers on my oral presentation. One of my essays was used as a good example for future students.

As a Deli Attendant at Coles, I am constantly utilising my communication and interpersonal skills with customers, colleagues, and supervisors. Recently, I served a customer who had a complaint about some poor quality meat that was sold to them through the deli. I utilised active listening, reflection, clarification, and questioning skills to deal with the situation. After listening to the customer's complaint, and clarifying the exact situation and desired result, I spoke to my supervisor and suggested that we refund the customer's money and provide him with a replacement product. My supervisor approved this action and I was able to satisfy the customer's needs. I also advised the other deli staff of the situation and supervised the replacement of the product. My actions resulted in the customer feeling happy and continuing to shop at our store, and a commendation from my supervisor for the way I handled the situation.

My involvement in the Golden Key Society also requires good interpersonal and communication skills. Golden Key is an international honour society that invites the top 15% of academic achievers in the university to be a member. It is a student-run chapter, and is involved in various activities such as fundraising and charity work, tutoring, and study groups. I am the secretary of the committee and perform tasks such as taking the minutes of meetings, managing email and mail correspondence, and communicating with committee members via phone, email, and in person. This position has allowed me to interact with a variety of different people in both formal situations such as committee meetings and official functions, and informal situations such as fundraising activities. Recently, we organised a trivia night as a fundraising activity. I assisted with the organisation and promotion of the event to society members and the wider university population. During the night, I interacted with the guests in a fun and social environment, as well as being involved in the formal proceedings. The result of this communication and interaction was that we raised \$600 for the charity and I received positive feedback from the guests who attended the event. I believe that the communication and interpersonal skills I have developed in all areas of my life will be an asset to your organisation and this position.

3.5 Application Terminology

Winning Words

In your application, you must showcase your skills and yourself to the selection panel to be short-listed for an interview. One way of doing this is by using words that sell in your application! These active verbs help you to clearly describe what your skills, experience and knowledge have enabled you to do.

Accomplished	Achieved	Acquired	Adapted
Administered	Analysed	Answered	Anticipated
Applied	Appraised	Approved	Arranged
Assessed	Assisted	Audited	Authorised
Budgeted	Calculated	Calibrated	Carried out
Checked	Circulated	Collaborated	Communicated
Compiled	Computed	Conducted	Considered
Controlled	Contributed	Converted	Coordinated
Counselled	Created	Decided	Defined
Delegated	Demonstrated	Designed	Determined
Developed	Devised	Disseminated	Documented
Eliminated	Encouraged	Ensured	Established
Estimated	Evaluated	Examined	Expedited
Facilitated	Filed	Forecast	Formulated
Gathered	Generated	Headed	Identified
Implemented	Improved	Increased	Initiated
Inspected	Instigated	Instructed	Introduced
Investigated	Launched	Liaised	Maintained
Managed	Mediated	Modified	Monitored
Motivated	Negotiated	Operated	Organised
Oversaw	Participated	Performed	Planned
Processed	Produced	Promoted	Provided
Published	Recommended	Reconciled	Recorded
Recruited	Redesigned	Reorganised	Regulated
Represented	Researched	Resolved	Responded
Reviewed	Revised	Scheduled	Served
Simplified	Set up	Solved	Started
Strategically	Succeeded	Supervised	Trained
Transformed	Translated	Tripled	Uncovered
Undertook	Unified	Used	Validated
Valued	Verified		

Words to Avoid

The use of some diminutives or negative words could spoil the positive description of your skills, experiences and qualifications and cost you the job. The problem with using any of these words in an employment situation is that many can imply a lack of skill or experience and a degree of negativity or uncertainty. Avoid them!

Quantitative words like 'some', 'small', or 'a little' are open to various interpretations. Who would you employ - someone who has some experience or someone who is experienced.

Phrases such as 'I think' or 'I hope' leave employers wondering if you have the confidence or the skills to complete a task. Who would you employ - someone who thinks that they can do a job or someone who has the necessary skills and relevant experience to complete the duties effectively and efficiently.

The use of one word answers should be avoided at all costs, as you waste an opportunity to offer something positive to the employer.

You might find that the situation you are in necessitates the use of some of these words. Be aware of them and the damage they can cause if they are misused.

A little	Small	Perhaps	Don't know
But	However	Some	You know
I hope	Just	Bad	Fairly
Never	No	I think	Not sure
More	Less	Too young	Too old
A bit	Maybe	Finally	I feel
Only	Probably	Even though	Obviously
All I have	All I am		

Source: <http://www.usq.edu.au/resources/wordsthatwork.pdf>

4.0 Social Media

What is Social Media?

Social Media refers to a form of media communication that rather than simply informing, provides the user the ability to participate, interact and contribute material online. Regular media reports inform with little creativity, while social media is interactive and thrives on the contributions of others.

Forms of social media included may include:

Blogs	WordPress, Blogger
Micro Blogging	Twitter
Social networking	Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn
Wikis	Wikimedia, Wikia
Social bookmarking	Googlereader
Video sharing	YouTube
Live casting	Skype
Community Q&A	Yahoo!, WikiAnswers
Music & audio sharing	MySpace Music

4.1 Who uses Social Media?

Because of its widespread use, Social Media has become a powerful marketing tool. The marketing trend has moved towards methods of 'recommendations' and so too, has the employment market.

Social media has become an excellent method of:

- Building networks & connections
- Exposing your skills & expertise
- Branding yourself

Employers are scanning the social web to find suitable employees based on their professional profiles, personal branding and reputation present online. With this in mind, we are now finding employers & recruiters use:

- Google to eliminate candidates
- Social media as a form of recruiting potential candidates

4.2 What should I use?

These days most of us use social media tools in some shape or form. But which ones should you use to market yourself effectively to employers? The 'Power Trio' in social media is:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn

Other forms of social media you may wish to use:

- Blogging, Video Blogging (YouTube etc)

4.3 How to get started?

It takes approximately 6 months to build a solid professional presence within social media networks. Care must be given to ensure you 'brand' yourself appropriately. Remember you are marketing yourself to potential employers.

To help you get started:

Linkedin	Build your professional profile, ensuring your online resume is fine tuned. Join groups and discussions.
Twitter	Be selective who you follow and talk to. Follow those who hold similar interests and those who inspire you. Have conversations with experts.
Facebook	Although this is less formal than other social media Facebook has both Personal & Business Pages. Both should still remain professional but this doesn't prevent you from still having fun. Use your common sense and remind yourself of the 'brand' you are promoting.
Blog	Blog about subject matter in your field. This is your chance to show your expertise and interests.

4.4 Social Media Etiquette

Your profile is a powerful marketing tool, so you must ensure you are sending a professional image of yourself. The purpose is to form relationships and build your networks. This means linking yourself with those you know, like, respect & trust.

Things to think about when using social media:

- Your name (nick names should be avoided when trying to send a professional image)
- The language you use (watch what you say, you're on show for the world and employers to see)
- Pictures and photos (party photos and inappropriate pictures may do more harm than you think)
- Associations (who are you connected or linked to; who are your 'friends'; who are you 'following') that may reflect poorly on your profile for not holding the same values or presenting themselves in a professional manner like yourself?)

Our suggestion

Keep your Facebook account for personal use and keep it on private security settings if you wish to keep your private life and professional life separate. The most important of the power trio for graduates is LinkedIn, as this is a professional networking site. LinkedIn is an online resume that comes with recommendations and is a great place to connect with other professionals.

5.0 Interview Skills

You made a good impression with your application, now do the same in the interview. This is your chance to seal the deal and promote your skills and abilities to the employer. Time to show them why they NEED you!

The key is to be prepared and act confidently (even if you don't feel confident).

5.1 Purpose of an Interview

For the Employer

- To assess the quality of applicants in person and to provide more information about the organization and the position.
- To get a feel how your personality would fit in with their work culture and team.

For the Applicant

- To promote and market yourself and to make a good impression
- To get a feel for the organization and the team as a potential work place.

5.2 Interview Preparation

- Read through the position description or job advertisement and identify the key skills that they are looking for in applicants.
- Prepare answers to questions based on these skills. Make sure that you can explain how you DEMONSTRATED the required skills. Provide examples!
- Research the company. What are its goals, corporate structure, product/service (internet and publications)?
- Prepare any documentation or samples of work that you may need. Collate it in a folder.
- Read over your resumé and application documents. You may be asked questions based on what you wrote about your employment history, skills, qualifications, etc.
- Practise questions that highlight your strengths and weaknesses.
- Decide suitable clothing to wear that is appropriate for the type of job. Don't be over- or under-dressed.
 - Men can't go wrong with a shirt and tie (suits are ideal, however may be a little formal for some roles)
 - Women are also safe with a skirt or pant suit.
- Be aware of body odour and overpowering perfume/aftershave (also be aware of cigarette smell if you smoke)
- Know the exact location of the interview, including parking options.
- Arrive about 10 minutes early. Plan your journey including traffic delays.
- Find out **who** will be involved in the interview and what type of interview it is (one-on-one, panel, group).

Phone Interviews

- Do your research just as you would for a face to face interview. Familiarise yourself with the company and the position.
- Ideally use a land line connection as mobile phones have a tendency to cut out at the worst possible times.

- Prepare yourself in a quiet environment, where you won't be disturbed by roommates, children, TV's or computers.
- While you don't need to dress up for a phone interview, play the part of a professional. Have a shower, get out of the pyjamas and feel ready to face those questions.
- Never eat during a phone interview, but have a glass of water handy in case your mouth gets dry.
- Phone interviews give you the advantage of taking notes and referring to documents that may assist you (resume, position description etc). Have a note pad and a spare pen available to jot down anything that may be important.

5.3 During the Interview

- Maintain eye contact and smile.
- Shake hands firmly (but not too tightly).
- Speak and think positively. Promote your strengths and key skills. Keep thinking positively (you have done well to reach the interview stage)!
- Be aware of your body language and read that of the interviewers. Actions speak louder than words.
- Avoid fidgeting and be aware of repetitive hand gestures, and sit comfortably but professionally.
- Don't make negative comments/criticisms about previous employers. Even if you left your last job on poor terms, negativity makes you sound unprofessional.
- When asked a difficult question, breathe deeply to control nerves and take a moment to think about how to answer it.
- Ask the interviewer to reword the question if you do not understand.
- Feel free to use the STAR method to answer questions. Provide examples where appropriate.
- Speak clearly, professionally, and at a level that can be heard easily. Don't speak too fast or mumble; don't provide one word answers; avoid saying 'um' and 'ah' etc.
- At the conclusion, ask any other relevant questions of the interviewers. For example:
 - Why is this position vacant?
 - Does the position offer career progression and opportunity for promotion?
 - What opportunities for training do you provide?
 - What commencement date suits you?
 - How will I be notified if I am offered the job?
- Thank the interviewers and restate your interest in the job
- **Avoid discussing remuneration at the first interview**

5.4 After the Interview

- Reflect on your answers and make notes on what you were asked and how you could improve.
- If you were unsuccessful, ask for feedback about how to improve.

5.5 Interview Questions

There are different types of interview questions that you could be asked and before you launch into an answer, you should think about what they are expecting.

Behavioural: Are asking for an example of previous behaviour. Generally start with "tell us about a time when..." or "what is your experience with..."

- Have you ever worked in a team where there was significant conflict? What did you do to manage this?
- In the past, tell us how you have overcome a difficult work environment.
- Describe a situation when your workload was particularly heavy. How did you handle this?

- Can you describe a time when you have taken initiative? What was the result?
- Tell me about a time that you experienced failure and how did you handle it?

Situational: Asking about how you would approach a situation. These questions generally outline a situation and then ask how you would respond.

- Tell us how you would manage conflicting priorities?
- What would you do if you encountered a difficult client?
- Describe how you would handle the situation if you met resistance when introducing a new idea or policy to a team or work group.
- List the steps that you would take to make an important decision on the job.

Open Ended Questions: These questions can be used as ice breakers or as a way of getting to know more about you. For example:

- Tell us about yourself.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- What do you like to do outside of work?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?

Discussing Remuneration and Salary

Remember, it is **never** your position to initiate discussion around pay or remuneration. However if you are asked about your expectations, it is important to have done your research. If the original advertisement or position description does not include the salary, do some research into similar roles that may be advertised on other websites. Seek.com also provides a survey of pay ranges for a wide variety of jobs that may be of use to you.

Things to take into consideration:

- Location – you may be paid less in a regional centre than you would in a metropolitan centre;
- The initial offer may be a starting wage that allows opportunity for significant growth;
- Does this figure include superannuation? In Australia, employers are required to contribute a minimum of 9% towards your superannuation;
- What other perks are included? Are there training opportunities? Car? Relocation assistance?

If you have any major concerns or questions about this, please feel free to contact a member of the Careers and Employment team on careers@usq.edu.au.

6.0 Useful Websites

Career Information

www.usq.edu.au/studentservices/careers/

www.myfuture.edu.au

www.jobguide.dest.gov.au

www.thesource.gov.au

www.gradlink.edu.au

Job Search Websites

<http://careerhub.usq.edu.au>

www.graduatecareers.com.au

www.seek.com.au

www.mycareer.com.au

www.careerone.com.au

www.nowhiring.com.au

www.apsjobs.gov.au

www.jobsearch.gov.au

www.unigrad.com.au

www.graduateopportunities.com

www.jobs.qld.gov.au