

A dummy's guide to how to apply for vacation work

Venue: Z313

Date: Wednesday June 8, 2011

Presenter: Murray Wright

Why bother applying for vacation work?

- Get the edge in the graduate market
- Learn the application process – improve your application
- Gain a practical understanding of your theoretical knowledge
- Complete the work experience requirements of your course

What are the work experience requirements of your course?

- Bachelor of Engineering (BENG, BEBB, BEBT, BEBS) – complete **ENG4909 Work Experience Professional** – mandatory 60 days of industry placement.
- Bachelor of Construction (BCON) – mandatory 80 days of industry placement
- Bachelor of Engineering Technology (BETC), enrolled in 2011, complete **ENG3909 Work Experience – Technologist** - mandatory 45 days industry placement.
- Associate Degree of Engineering (ADNG), enrolled in 2011, complete **ENG2909 Work Experience – Associate** - mandatory 30 days of industry placement

One of the best ways to complete your mandatory industry placement is via vacation work at a major engineering company.

More about vacation work ...

- Placements are usually for a period of 12 weeks
- Placements may/may not include payment
- Vacation work often leads to employment opportunities
- Allows you to complete your industry placement requirements outside of regular semester times/before final year demands.

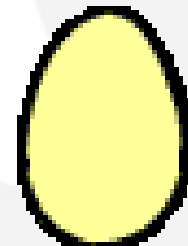
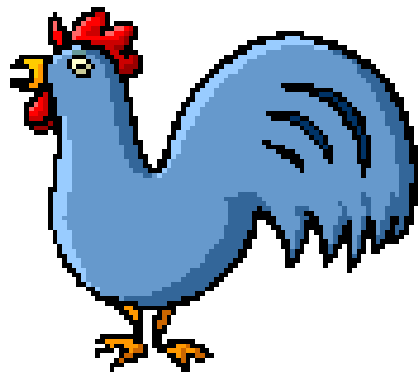
Get ahead of the game!

Where vacation work could take you!



<http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/story/2008/05/07/dont-hold-her-back/>

Which comes first - the chicken or the egg?



ExtremeFunnyHumor.com

We're looking for computer engineers who like to solve difficult problems.
Call us on this number now:

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What do you think employers are looking for?

What do employers want?

- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Team work skills
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Initiative
- ✓ Technical knowledge
- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Self-management



Thinking career - a three-part strategy

Part A: Career Vision- Long term personal vision for your career

- Where would you like to be in 5 years? What would you like to have accomplished in your career/life?
- *“Five years from now, I am an established engineer with a reputation for Working for a top tier consulting firm, my clients are blue chip companies that come back to me because I offer them expert strategic advice that assists them in meeting their business plans. I am earning in excess of \$150k and have achieved a realistic work/life balance that allows me to travel overseas at least once a year”*

Your three-part strategy

Part B: Professional objective:

- Concise phrase or sentence that describes the kind of role that you are seeking
- Goal statement for your marketing plan

“To secure a graduate position with a organisation that will provide a mix of experience, learning and development opportunities and relative job security whilst I build my experience base.”

“To secure a part-time engineering role with an progressive, modern organisation that offers flexible working hours and family friendly work practices.”

Your three-part strategy

Part C: Positioning Statement:

- Managing your brand!
- A brief summary of relevant background, skills, competencies and point(s) of difference translated into benefits, i.e. what you can offer a prospective employer
 - Does it describe what makes you successful?
 - Does it describe the attributes and characteristics that set you apart?
 - Does it use language appropriate to your target market?

Securing vacation work – the process

HATCH
Hatch supplies engineering, project and construction management services, process and business consulting and operational services to the mining, metallurgical, energy and infrastructure sectors.

Mining & Metals | Energy | Infrastructure | Services

My Career. My Hatch. My Way.

Home > Careers > Student Programs

Student Programs

**PLEASE NOTE: If there currently are no Graduate Programs and you would like to express your interest, please contact our [Global Career Centre](#) to resume in our [Global Career Centre](#).

Vacation Student Program

Hatch runs work experience programs for students during their university period.

You will experience opportunities to work alongside our experienced engineers and senior employees.

Upon commencement, you will be assigned a mentor who will help you settle into the organization and your buddies will be available to help you.

Check our [calendar](#) for more information.

Vacation work duties

- Engineering design and project management
- Database design/management
- Research projects

ARUP

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Recruitment

Want to see how you can be a part of our successful recruitment events? You'll be able to find out more information about one of our recruitment events by experiencing the program or by experiencing the program.

Booking isn't necessary, you can get more information about one of our recruitment events by emailing gradrecruit.aus@arup.com.au

Opening and closing dates for applications:

AUSTRALIA

2012 Graduate Program applications

- Open – 28th February 2011
- Close – 29th April 2011
- Applications reviewed, shortlisted and interviewed – October 2011
- Offers out – June & July 2011

2012 Vacation Program applications

- Open – 5th September 2011
- Close – 7th October 2011
- Applications reviewed, shortlisted and interviewed – October 2011

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JOB SEARCH

Positions Vacant

Graduates, Apprentices & Trainees

OUR PEOPLE LEARNING GRADUATES STUDENTS APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES SCHOLARSHIPS GENERAL ENQUIRIES & SUBMISSIONS

This page is suitable for :

- school/college leavers,
- undergraduates seeking scholarship and/or placements,
- graduates
- postgraduates

who are interested in fulfilling their potential and developing their future career. This site enables you to view current career opportunities or search for jobs using specific criteria to find a role that matches your skills, experience and interest.

Search openings

You can use this facility to search our current opportunities.

Log in to access your profile and job search tools. First time visitors, [click here to create a new account](#).

Username

E-mail address or any unique identifier

Password

[Forgot your password?](#)

Featured jobs

at specific opportunities and to apply for them please click on the job title

Region

Step 1 – Research suitable companies

- Where are their latest projects?
- Do they have a vacation work scheme?
- How do you apply – on-line or by letter/email?
- What are they looking for in their staff?
- What key words do they use when discussing their staff?

Useful websites to access company information:

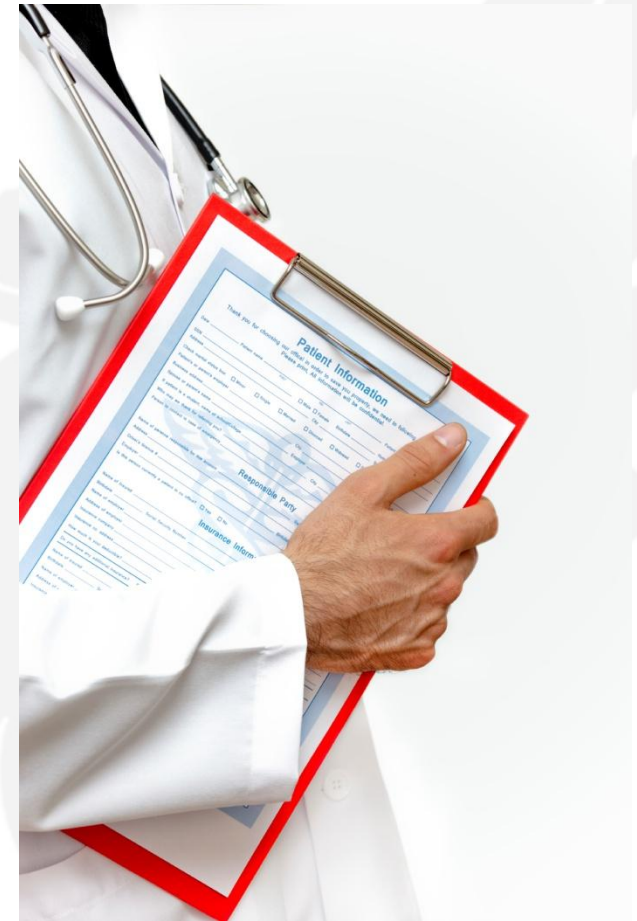
- <http://www.careerhub.com.au>
- <http://www.gradconnection.com.au>
- <http://careerhub.usq.edu.au/ViewJob.chpx?id=79762>

Companies offering vacation work

- [Hatch](#)
- AECOM
- Xstrata
- [Thiess](#)
- Cardno
- McNab
- [Abigroup](#)
- [Brisbane City Council](#)
- South Australia Water
- ARUP
- AURECON
- Bechtel
- [Laing O'Rourke](#)
- [QGC](#)
- [Defence Forces](#) (close 10 July)
- [Ostwald Brothers](#)

Step 2 – Prepare your resume

- use concise, dynamic content
- be tailored to show you have the experience to match key skills required
- use bullets and headings to keep information organised, pointed and punchy
- feature a clear, professional font
- be no longer than three pages.



This is why your quality is paramount!



Most important aspects of a resume according to graduate employers:

- Employment history
- GPA: Most engineering graduate programs have a minimum GPA of 5 for their vacation work/graduate opportunities
- Summary of key skills and personal attributes (with succinct practical examples)
- [Example](#)

STAR method for selection criteria

Situation	In what situation have you demonstrated the criterion?
Task	What task 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?

Be positive ...



"An 'ability to smell fear' is a quality I've never seen listed on a resume before."

References

- A reference list contains names and contact details of professional acquaintances (such as former employers or supervisors, volunteer coordinators, professors, coaches, etc.) who can provide an employer with background information on an applicant and attest to their character, personality and attributes.
- **Before** adding a contact to your reference list, confirm your reference is willing to participate and inform them of any applications you are submitting.
- A reference list should include:
 - two or preferably three referees
 - name, position title, company and contact information
 - your relationship with the referee.

(Adapted from an article by Yvonne Giltinan, Careers Educator, Department of Student Career Development, Portfolio of Learning for Work and Community, Victoria University, that previously appeared in Graduate Opportunities 2009 and 2010.)

Step 3 – Write a cover letter

- formal business letter addressed to an individual or company
- introduces you and your skills and how they meet the key skill listed in the advertisement
- demonstrate that you have gained these through your various work, study and voluntary experiences.

Vacation work is an opportunity to rehearse these skills!

Tips for cover letters

- Use a formal business letter format
- Less than one page
- Use an appropriate salutation (e.g. Dear Mr Smith).
- Provide your address and contact details followed by the employer's details
- Personalise it for the organisation you are applying for
- Discuss your skills and how you can support them, not what you want from an employer
- If possible address it to the person reading it namely the graduate consultant or equivalent
- Check it for spelling or grammatical errors
- [Example](#)

Step 4 – Send in your application

- Check for errors in all of the above
- Make sure applications are for individual companies
- Most companies will not look at your application unless it is complete
- Try to apply at least 3 weeks before the closing date- show how motivated you are!

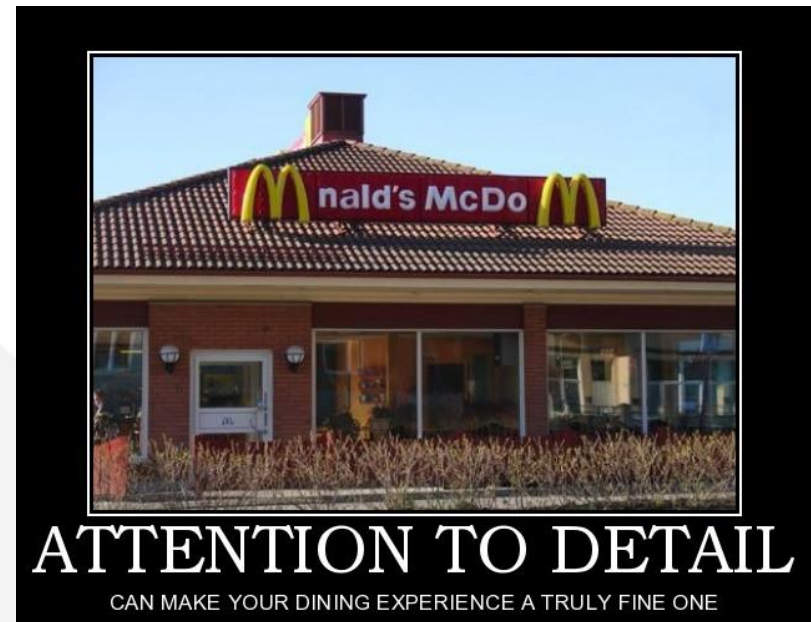
Before hitting send

- Always check your résumé for grammar and spelling
- Seek the assistance of your university career service to help you refine your application to ensure you don't repeat information, exaggerate qualities or undersell skills
- As part of the screening process, resumes and cover letters are often scanned for key words from the selection criteria. Applications that contain these terms are more likely to proceed.

Careers & Employment

Funniest resume blunders provided by employers

- Candidate included a letter from his mother
- Skills: Strong Work Ethic, Attention to Detail, Team Player, Self Motivated, Attention to Detail
- Applicant ghosted a headshot as the background to her resume
- Under “job related skills” – for a web designer – “can function without additional oxygen at 24,000 feet”
- I am great with the pubic



Useful Sites for further reading

- [My Future](#) is a government sponsored site that contains a wealth of information on career planning.
- [Graduate Careers Australia](#) allows students and graduates to gain information about career planning, preparing for job applications as well as providing employment opportunities.
- [Job Juice](#) is a government initiative that provides the latest information for young people and including Indigenous youth, on employment services, apprenticeships, career options and links to further education and training.
- [Job Outlook](#) is a government site that provides valuable and accurate information on the employment statistics for a wide range of occupations.
- [Unigrad](#) is designed specifically for university students providing access to a variety of job opportunities, job-seeking tips, company details, information about professional organisations as well as contact details for careers services at universities.
- [Career FAQs website](#) offers general and industry-specific career news, features, interviews, advice and more for students and job seekers. Career FAQs is truly a one-stop career shop that has developed a reputation for excellence with quality career resources and a commitment to provide the very best career information for Australians and others around the world.

Next semester ... a five week course

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Session 1 Understanding employer expectations

Session 2 Securing your first job

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

Session 3 Understanding work integrated learning

Session 4 Understanding faculty expectations

Session 5 Call to action!

Session 6 Meet with industry

**Watch out for
details!**

Student Services

For more information and assistance with Careers and Employment contact:

Student Services

Careers & Employment

Ground floor G Block

Phone 07 4631 2210

'The Work Shop'

Refectory Mall

Open 10am-3pm

Email: careers@usq.edu.au

Or contact:

Murray Wright (Industry Learning Coordinator)

Phone: 0457732437 (mobile) 46875709 (office)

Email: murray.wright@usq.edu.au

Office Hours: Monday (8.30-2.30), Tuesday (8.30-5), Wednesday (8.30-5)