

MY CAREER NOW!

Self Discovery Workbooks

Workbook II

My Next Job Now!

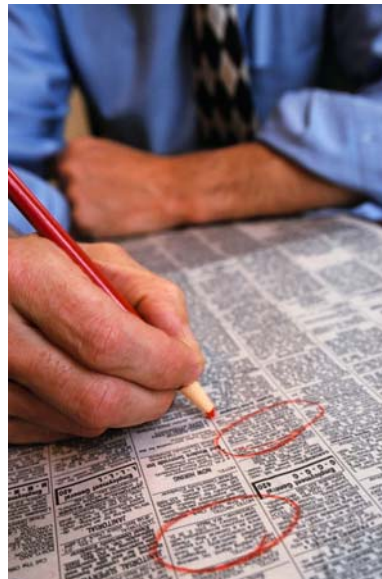


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GOAL SETTING

Whether you are looking to change your career, or simply trying to enter the job market, job-seeking can be disheartening, draining, frustrating, daunting, and very challenging! Life-Psych Solutions has prepared this booklet to provide you with the tools and tips you will need to try and win that job!

The first step in job-seeking is to identify and set goals. It is recommended that you do this by using the “SMART” approach – that is, your goals should be:-

- S** pecific
- M** easurable
- A** chievable
- R** ealistic
- T** ime based.

Just like an athlete, one of the important aspects of job-seeking is to constantly improve your form and performance. Therefore your SMART goals should reflect this.

The work environment today involves multi-skilling, and therefore you need a changed mindset which is based on a strong desire to achieve your goals, as well as maintaining a positive mental attitude.



In a recent survey, it was identified that the ability to learn on the job was more important than technical skills. The following attributes were also listed by employers as important:

- ✓ teamwork and co-operation
- ✓ negotiation skills in disagreements
- ✓ organisational effectiveness
- ✓ oral communication and listening
- ✓ creative responses to obstacles and setbacks
- ✓ taking pride in one's accomplishments and sense of wanting to develop career
- ✓ interpersonal and group effectiveness
- ✓ input and contribution
- ✓ adaptability to setbacks and obstacles
- ✓ personal management
- ✓ confidence
- ✓ motivation to work towards goals
- ✓ potential for leadership.

However, it was identified that the three most desired capabilities sought are:

1. Communication skills
2. Interpersonal skills
3. Initiative.

PLACES TO JOB-SEEK

You may like to try the following places for seeking employment opportunities:-

- Newspapers, eg:-
 - Local Community
 - Capital City
 - National
 - Industry Specific Newsletters
- Cold calling, eg:-
 - Face-to-face by hand-delivering your resume to prospective employers
 - Searching the Yellow Pages by industry or location
 - Over the telephone by contacting prospective employers and seeking an appointment
 - By mail or email – sending a covering letter and resume to prospective employers
- Networking, eg:-
 - Getting in touch with old/lost contacts
 - Talking to friends to see if there are any job opportunities at their work
 - Expressing interest in employment to people you meet at functions, parties, etc.
- Internet, eg:
 - Seek: www.seek.com.au
 - Job Search: www.jobsearch.gov.au
 - Career One: www.careerone.com.au
 - My Career: www.mycareer.com.au



JOB APPLICATIONS

You should consider the following when applying for jobs things:-

- Read the advertisement well
 - do you meet the specifications of the job?
 - what is the advertisement it saying?
 - what do you know about the company?
 - do you know anyone who works at their organisation?
 - should you phone first, visit, and then write?

It is estimated that 80% of jobs are available through the hidden job market (ie. not advertised). Therefore, if you are taking a "cold-calling" approach to finding employment, different strategies will apply to your marketing approach. For example, you may need to call a potential employer after you send a non-specific job application. The main objective of this approach is to try and secure an interview, ultimately enabling you to discuss opportunities that can benefit them.

Tips for success:

- ✓ make contact with the decision maker
- ✓ try not to lose control, waffle, or make up an in-depth story
- ✓ practice what you will say, and smile while you are talking
- ✓ decide what you need to say beforehand, and keep it simple
- ✓ try not to plan to have a long discussion
- ✓ remember – it is not a job interview, just a way to make contact with a potential employer and try to secure an interview



When sending an application, it is suggested that your application consist of the following components:

1. short covering letter
2. resume (the selection committee will be looking for relevant experience)
3. supporting statement addressing selection criteria (this is the most important part of your application - many applicants do not get selected for an interview because they have been unable to convince the selection committee that they have the skills required to meet the selection criteria)
4. referees

COVER LETTERS

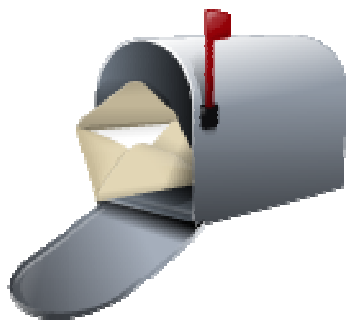
A cover letter is used to get a potential employer to read your resume. Therefore you should always ensure that your cover letter is neat, clean, and direct.

Ensure your cover letter is:

- ✓ illustrative of your occupation, profession, and self-knowledge
- ✓ shows clarity of purpose (ie. knowledge of the target position)
- ✓ conveys a sincere belief in the benefits you can bring to the job
- ✓ reflects a mature outlook (not presumptuous self-assurance).

The most important thing for your cover letter is that it should market your skills, be succinct, and show how your skills and experience relate to the selection criteria. It should also be professional and polite, and generally only one page in length.

For different examples of how to set out your cover letter and what information to include, refer to the example provided on page 13 of this booklet.



SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria can be one of the most crucial parts of your application, and therefore it is crucial that you follow some general guidelines in order to ensure you have appropriately addressed the selection criteria.

1. Try to use examples gained through your employment experience when including information in your application. However, if you are unable to do this, endeavour to use other relevant examples (such as school or university).
2. Try to focus on "I" rather than "we" when using personal statements.
3. If possible, aim to use examples that have been gained within the past two years.

When responding to selection criteria, it is generally recommended you use the "STAR" approach:

Situation	Provide a brief outline of the setting or situation Who was involved? What was your role?
Task	What did you do? What happened next?
Approach/action	How did you do it?
Result	What was the outcome? What feedback did you receive?

YOUR RESUME

One way of introducing yourself to potential employers is through your resume, as so it is important to assess the skills and experience you have acquired very carefully. Generally, the purpose of a resume is to:

1. Interest a prospective employer in both yourself and your abilities, with a view to securing an interview
2. Create a register of your marketable skills and qualities.

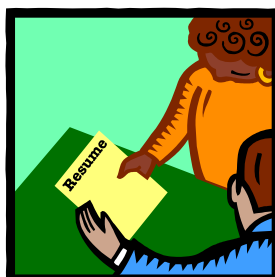
Even though you are not generally present when an employer reads or receives your resume, it still creates the first impression – so in effect, it is your first interview!

Prior to writing your resume you should:-

- ✓ obtain duty statements or selection criteria and seek guidelines for specific requirements
- ✓ become familiar with the prospective organisation's goals, mission, and code of conduct.

Try to keep your resume condensed to only a few pages (unless you require the space to clearly document your relevant extensive job experience), as employers are looking for well-composed, easy to follow, action-based resumes. Don't forget to proof-read your resume and make sure you haven't made any grammatical or typographical errors. If possible, ask a family member or friend to proof-read it for you.

For different examples of how to set out your resume and what information to include, refer to the examples provided on pages 11 and 12 of this booklet.



INTERVIEW SKILLS

At a job interview, your objective is to convince the interviewers that you are the best possible candidate for the position. Therefore, an interview is like a sales job, because you are trying to sell yourself to a prospective employer. While it is natural to feel nervous and anxious before an interview, there are a few things you can do to avoid letting your nerves getting the better of you.

Try these suggestions:

- ✓ Relax - take deep breaths and have a relaxing shower or bath prior to your interview
- ✓ Think positive - let go of negative thoughts and remember that if they weren't interested in you then you wouldn't have been asked for an interview
- ✓ Assume you will be one of the best candidates
- ✓ Preparation - make sure you arrive at least 5 minutes prior to your interview (but no more than 10 minutes)
- ✓ Get a good night's sleep the night before your interview, as people tend to make more mistakes when they are tired
- ✓ Be enthusiastic about your skills, experience, and knowledge
- ✓ Practice - rehearse your interview technique and have a friend ask you some interview questions from your resume. Practice your answers until you are happy with them.

Some of the more commonly encountered interviews include:

1. Behavioural (ie. the best indicator of future performance is past behaviour)
2. Competency-based (ie. key attributes and competencies required for the position)
3. Biographical (ie. history from your education to various jobs)
4. Critical incidents (ie. perceived critical experiences within your career or life).

Checklist for personal marketing:

- ✓ match your job skills and values to the job
- ✓ be friendly and relaxed during interviews, but remember to be true to yourself
- ✓ enhance your communication skills
- ✓ explore opportunities within the hidden job market
- ✓ maintain and use your networks and key people as referees
- ✓ dress according to the norms of the working environment (ie. not too formal or too casual) and make sure your clothing is clean and tidy
- ✓ use visualisation techniques to overcome fears and develop confidence
- ✓ ensure your resume and cover letter address the criteria and are professional
- ✓ brace yourself and be prepared for rejection in a competitive job market, and build resilience.

At the end of the interview, employers may ask if you have any questions. Ensure you have one or two questions prepared in advance - ie. plans for expansion, recruitment process, etc. Avoid questions regarding possible takeovers, salary, risk of redundancy, etc.

SPECIAL ISSUES – EXPLAINING AN INJURY OR SPECIAL NEEDS

Once you have had a relevant injury or have a disability or special needs which may impact upon your job, it is natural to feel some amount of hesitation when applying for a new job.

While it ultimately up to you to decide whether or not you advise a potential employer of a prior injury/ disability or special needs, should you prefer to let them know, the following are some suggested explanations:-

- "Previously I suffered an injury to my, however, I have since recovered from this injury and my doctor has certified me fit for full duties and I feel fully fit, motivated and energised.... "
- "Whilst I am always happy to go the extra mile for my employer I want to let you know that at times I may need some flexibility due to (special needs) however I have always been able to work around this issue to ensure I can contribute fully to the team...."
- "At my last place of employment I experienced an episode stress due to demanding expectations on me with my workload when two other staff members resigned. I have since been taught how to deal with and handle stress, and now apply these strategies and techniques effectively"

A general rule of thumb is to try and emphasise to the employer that while you did have a injury, you have now rehabilitated and have the support of your doctor to return to work. Try to present it to the employer in a positive way, as they are likely to be guided by your response to your injury. If you present negatively about it, they too are likely to feel negatively and hesitant about it.



DEALING WITH UNSUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

Unfortunately, despite your best efforts, there will be occasions when you are not successful in being offered employment following your job application or interview. Therefore, preparing for unsuccessful outcomes is vital:

- ✓ Have a contingency plan in place just in case you don't get offered the job
- ✓ Learn how to deal with the ups and downs
- ✓ Seek emotional support and debrief after the event
- ✓ Try not to take an unsuccessful outcome personally and use it as an opportunity to seek feedback on your performance if possible
- ✓ Review feedback and think about what you could do differently next time
- ✓ Use stress management strategies and relaxation techniques to renew your goals and re-focus on them
- ✓ Try to stay focused and not lose sight of your goal
- ✓ Examine your attitudes to success and failure - resolve to do better on your next interview and improve on your skills.



SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Joe Bloggs
123 Brown Street
Smithville Qld 1234
Telephone: (07) 1234-5678

(Today's date)

Mr Peter Brown
Chief Executive Officer
Business Corporation Pty Ltd
123 Ryde Place
Smithville QLD 1234

Dear Mr Brown,

I am interested in the Business Development Manager position you advertised in the Courier Mail Newspaper on (date), and would like the opportunity to discuss working for your company.

I believe my experience in business and management, along with my strong sales knowledge and background from my Bachelor of Business degree, makes me an excellent candidate. As you will see on the attached resume, I have spent the past year working for ABC Company Pty Ltd as their Director of Business. I have also acquired extensive knowledge of the XYZ systems through my work experience and education.

I look forward to speaking with you soon. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Bloggs

Enclosure

SAMPLE RESUME

This resume style is suited to someone starting a new career or applying for a position below management level.

Personal details:

Joe Bloggs
123 Brown Street
Smithville Qld 1234
Telephone: (02) 1234-5678

Education:

2003 - Bachelor of Business Degree (University of Southern Queensland)
2000 - Year 12 Certificate (Queensland High School)

Educational and professional achievements:

Received professional recognition for fundraising for local charities after floods
Awarded Dean's award from University of Southern Queensland

Extra and unqualified skills:

Fluent in Japanese language
Current first aid certificate
Certificate IV in Human Resources

Career history:

2004 - current

Business Development Manager

ABC Company Pty Ltd

- Preparation and implementation of business development plans
- Organisation of monthly promotions
- (etc.)

2003 - 2004

Business Development Officer

Another Business Company Pty Ltd

- Assisting business team with promotional activities
- Co-ordination of fundraising activities
- (etc.)

Interests:

Walking, cycling, attending toastmasters meetings, reading

Referees: References available upon request.

SAMPLE RESUME

This resume style is suited to more experienced candidates or those at management level.

Personal details:

Joe Bloggs
123 Brown Street
Smithville ACT 1234
Telephone: (02) 1234-5678

Personal profile:

Strong leadership and management skills, proactive, uses initiative (etc.)

Career history:

2004 - current

Business Development Manager

ABC Company Pty Ltd

- Supervision of 12 staff
- Sole responsibility for budgeting and business plans (etc.)

2003 - 2004

Business Manager

Another Business Company Pty Ltd

- Assisting business team with promotional activities
- Co-ordination of fundraising activities (etc.)

Education:

2003 - Bachelor of Business Degree (University of Southern Queensland)

2000 - Year 12 Certificate (Queensland High School)

Educational and professional achievements:

Received professional recognition for fundraising for local charities after floods

Awarded Dean's award from University of Southern Queensland

Current studies:

Master of Business Administration (MBA) - University of Queensland

Extra and unqualified skills:

Fluent in Japanese language

Current first aid certificate

Certificate IV in Human Resources

Publications:

2004 - Journal article on business published in Business Journal Australia

2003 - Editorial published in Time Magazine

Interests:

Walking, cycling, attending toastmasters meetings, reading

Referees:

References available upon request.