

# Guide to Recruitment

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Well, this is it! School's nearly done with and it's time to seriously consider what kind of job you might like. Now's the time to sit back, pause, reflect for a moment and ask yourself some serious questions.

- What sort of job am I looking for? (*full-time, part-time, contract, casual, temporary*)
- Is there a particular industry I would like to work in? (*travel and hospitality, agriculture, education, health*)
- What sector do I want to work in? (*corporate, government, not-for-profit, private*)
- What size business do I want to work in? (*large, medium, small, family*)
- What locations am I willing to travel to? (*do I want to stay local or travel to the city?*)
- What skills and qualifications have I got? (*what level NCEA do you have? Have you had a part-time job whilst you were at school?*)
- Do I need to do further study? (*university, polytechnic, private institute?*)
- Is there something I'm *really* good at and enjoy doing?



Now is the time to start working toward your longer term goals.

## WHERE DO I LOOK FOR WORK?

Now that you have an idea of what you want to do there are lots of places you can look for work, here are a few:

- Websites specifically tailored to job seeking such as [seek.co.nz](http://seek.co.nz) and [trademe.co.nz](http://trademe.co.nz).
- Career opportunities on employer websites (such as Retailword).
- Recruitment agencies (Star People).
- Social media (search for jobs in Kapiti on Facebook or Neighbourly)
- Professional membership organisations (many industries have a professional association which will give advice on training, such as the Roofing Association).
- Local and national papers.
- Professional or trade magazines.
- Let friends and family or people you might know who work in the industry that interests you what you are looking for - word of mouth.



## WHAT DO I DO WHEN I FIND A JOB I MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN?

It depends whether you found it through a recruitment agency or found it yourself.

If you found it through an agency they'll tell you about the position and give you a copy of the job description. They'll also put your CV forward to the employer for consideration.

If you found the job yourself the first thing to do is ask for a copy of the job description and an application pack – now you'll know exactly what the position is and what you have to do when applying for the role. An application pack can consist of the job description, an application form and sometimes a police check form.

After reading the job description you'll know if the position is pitched at the level you're looking for. You don't always need to know how to do everything in the job description as there's usually room to train and improve yourself.

Be sure to check out the website of the business or organisation and gain some knowledge about them

- How they're structured.
- What their vision and values are.
- How they fit in with your values and beliefs.

You may even think of a couple of questions you could ask at the interview.



## APPLYING FOR THE ROLE

Here's some key things to be aware of when applying for the role.

- Make sure you know when applications close. Most businesses won't accept late applications. If you think for some reason your application is going to be late ask if it's okay to still send it - give a date and make sure you stick to it.
- Make sure your cover letter relates to the company and the role you are applying for. Pay attention to detail - be careful if you're cutting and pasting to ensure you get the business name and position you're applying for right.
- Complete the application and any other forms included in the pack. Complete all sections. Don't put 'refer to CV' in any of the sections – there's a reason they want that information. And getting this bit right is the first step toward them even looking at your CV.
- Make sure your CV's up to date and looks professional. Try to include as much information that's relevant to the role as possible. Remember the person reading your CV doesn't know you and can only tell from information you've submitted if it's worth their while to interview you.
- Provide a cover letter – it looks professional and gives you an opportunity to offer more information in support of your application.

## COVER LETTER

- The cover letter is probably going to be the first point of contact a potential employer has with you.
- It has to be professional with no irrelevant information or spelling errors (remember we use an 's' in words like organisation not the American version which is spelt with a 'z'). Don't state the obvious, e.g., don't open your letter with "I am writing...", we can see that, start with "I wish to apply for the position of..."
- Tailor the letter to the job – it's purpose is to get the employer interested enough in you to read your CV.
- Give your letter structure
- Outline why the position interests you.
- Provide background information on what you know about the company or why you want to work there.
- Let them know any key skills you will bring to the role.
- Any other information that supports your CV.
- Keep it short (a page or less). Be specific and succinct (use the KISS principle – Keep It Simple and Succeed).

- Try to address your letter to a specific person rather than Dear Sir/Madam – if you don't know who that person is give them a call and find out.
- Send in the best cover letter you can with no spelling or grammatical mistakes. This letter acts as an example of your writing skills and attention to detail. Try not to cut and paste as this is where you can slip up with Dear Paul when you meant to say Dear Steve.
- Get someone else to proof read your cover letter before you send it out.
- Keep copies of cover letters you send out so if you get an interview you know what you wrote, especially if applying for a few roles at a time. It'll make the next letter easier to write!

## INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Put some time and effort into planning your trip to the interview and the interview itself.
- Know the exact place and time of the interview and who to ask for.
- Familiarise yourself with who is going to be on the interview panel.
- Research the company.
- Think about some achievements you may want to talk about, relevant to the role you are being interviewed for.
- Try to predetermine some questions they may ask. There's some example interview questions following.
- Take physical evidence if it might be required, e.g., a portfolio. In some cases employers will request to see certain documents.
- Think of some questions you can ask them - write them down and take them with you. It's okay to take memory jogging notes with you -
  - Why is the position available?
  - Is there any training I'll need to undergo?
  - Is there room for me to learn new skills and advance in the company over time?
  - Is there an induction or orientation programme?
  - If you would be taking over a role from someone else will there be a handover period?
- Dress professionally and pay attention to personal hygiene.
- Don't arrive late. An employer will usually be conducting a number of interviews on one day. Being late is not only unprofessional, it puts everyone else's schedule out of whack for the day.



## QUESTIONS THE INTERVIEWER MAY ASK

- Can you tell us a bit about yourself?
- What was it about this position that motivated you to apply?
- What do you see as your strengths/weaknesses?
- Why are you the best candidate for the job?
- Can you give me an example of something that didn't go quite as planned? What it was, what you did and what the outcome was.

## THE INTERVIEW

At the interview try to be confident and in control, here are some tips for the interview itself -

- Arrive on time.
- Shake hands.
- Be alert and interested.
- Concentrate, if you have something on your mind, leave it at the door.

- Smile.
- Talk about things relevant to the interview. Don't just say yes or no but also don't waffle.
- Listen to questions properly if you don't understand the question ask them to repeat it.
- Be positive about the skills you have. If you haven't had experience of the whole skill tell them what experience you do have.
- Don't put previous employers down.
- Understand that its inappropriate to ask about wages or benefits too early in the interview.

## THINGS YOU MAY BE ASKED TO DO

There are various tools employers may use when selecting the right employee for their company and the vacant position. Within the recruitment process you could be asked to do any of the following as well as attend one or two interviews.

- Take a test, this could be an aptitude test (generally timed), personality test or a test of your skills doing a particular task, e.g., using Microsoft Word or Excel.
- Take part in a group activity with other applicants to test your ability in teamwork and leadership.
- Write an essay or a project plan.



## TIPS FOR OVERCOMING THE INTERVIEW NERVES

- Do your homework and be prepared.
- Practice your questions and answers.
- Call people by their names.
- Use eye contact to establish rapport.
- Establish your credibility early.
- Make sure you have background information on the Company.
- Make sure you know who the interview panel are and their titles.
- Relax, breathe deeply, recognise that some nerves are good.
- Manage your appearance, feel confident and comfortable.
- Rest up so you are physically and mentally alert.
- Avoid over-talking, don't waffle.
- They are on your side, they want you to succeed!

## WHAT THE EMPLOYER WILL BE LOOKING FOR IN YOU

The main attributes and interviewer or the interviewing panel will be looking for in you are:

- Do you have the skills to do the job.
- Do you fit with the companies visions and values.
- Will you fit with the team.
- Can you add value to the company.
- Are you willing to improve your skills or do training.
- Do you have the right attitude.

## HINTS REGARDING REFEREES

- Make sure you let your referees know they may be approached, who is likely to contact them and something about the job.
- Make sure your referees are going to give you a good reference.
- Make sure the referee is the right person to give you a reference for the role.
- Usually a prospective employer will want to speak with someone who has employed you, worked with you on a project, been the manager of your sport's team or otherwise knows you, how you work and your strengths and weaknesses. It's not a good idea to use family members as referees (your mum just might be a wee bit biased!).



## IF YOU ARE OFFERED THE JOB

- Don't say yes immediately make sure you get all the details first.
- Ask for a job offer in writing.
- Employers are normally happy to make a draft employment contract available for you to look at so you can then discuss what the final terms and conditions will look like. It's mandatory for an employer to provide you with an employment agreement *before* you start working for them. It's also in your best interest to have someone else look over this with you.
- Make sure you cover off:
  - Pay or salary, make sure you both agree.
  - Start date.
  - Conditions to employment (police checks or drug testing may be required).
  - Trial periods.
  - Duties.
- Things to consider:
  - Is this the organisation you want to work for?
  - Does it match your goals and beliefs?
  - Is there a supportive team?
  - Does the job make use of your current skills?
  - Does the job match your interests?
  - Location, transport, hours.
  - Will there be a chance to learn new skills?
  - Are there opportunities for promotion?
  - What training programmes are in place?
  - Are the pay and benefits right for you?

## WHAT IF IT'S JUST NOT GOING TO PLAN?

### What if you don't get the job?

Ask the employer or recruitment agency for feedback. Don't be afraid of what the feedback might be because it will help you next time.

### What if you are not getting the interviews?

- Are you applying for jobs that you have the skills and qualifications for?
- Are you tailoring your CV to the job requirements listed in the job advert or job description?
- Was your application presented nicely, no spelling mistakes, was the formatting consistent?

## What if you are getting the interviews but not the job?

- It may be that the person who got the job had more of a skill set and mix for the role than you did.
- Get feedback.
- Did you have trouble answering questions? Prepare for the questions you had difficulty with and think of examples for your response.
- Nervous and unconfident? Work with a friend or family member and practice interviewing.
- Had you done enough research before the interview about the role and the company?

*"Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life"*

*Confucius*