

Tertiary Education  
Commission

Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua



# Work Connect Workbook

Job search skills and interview preparation



# Kia ora.

# Welcome to Work Connect.

This programme will help you understand and develop your job search and interview skills to suit the New Zealand job market.

This workbook will be a valuable guide, to complement your one-to-one career guidance sessions and group workshops.

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## This is an interactive workbook



Fill in the templates and checklists



Click on the live links to take you straight to a page in this workbook or to a webpage

# Contents

## Welcome to Work Connect

Career management .....	4
Know yourself .....	4
Explore opportunities .....	4
Decide and act .....	4
Your journey so far .....	5
Job search in New Zealand .....	6

## 1. Know yourself

Introduction .....	9
Know your skills.....	9
The top 10 skills and attributes .....	10
Your employability skills.....	12
Achievements .....	14
Your unique value .....	16

## 2. Explore opportunities

Introduction .....	19
Steps to finding permanent full-time work .....	20
Ways to find work .....	21
Be a great networker .....	22
Develop your networks in Aotearoa New Zealand .....	23
Prepare for an informational interview .....	25
Example of networking and informational interviewing .....	26
Questions you could ask when informational interviewing.....	29

## 3. Decide and act

Introduction .....	31
A step-by-step guide to answering a job advertisement .....	32
How to apply online .....	34
CV essentials .....	35
Write or revise a CV .....	36
Your cover letter .....	38
CV and cover letter templates .....	40
New Zealand interviews .....	42
Prepare for an interview .....	44
The interview .....	46
Behavioural interviews – STAR methodology.....	47
Behavioural interview questions using STAR .....	48
Non-behavioural interview questions .....	49
Next steps – develop an action plan .....	50
Other useful resources .....	52
Note .....	53

# Career management

Effective career management requires you to self-manage your work and learning, and make informed decisions that support your career throughout your life.

There are three groups of competencies you need to successfully manage your career:

## 1 Know yourself

Understand your marketable self (skills, achievements, values) in the context of the New Zealand workplace.

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## 2 Explore opportunities

Investigate job search tools and techniques you can use to find work in New Zealand.

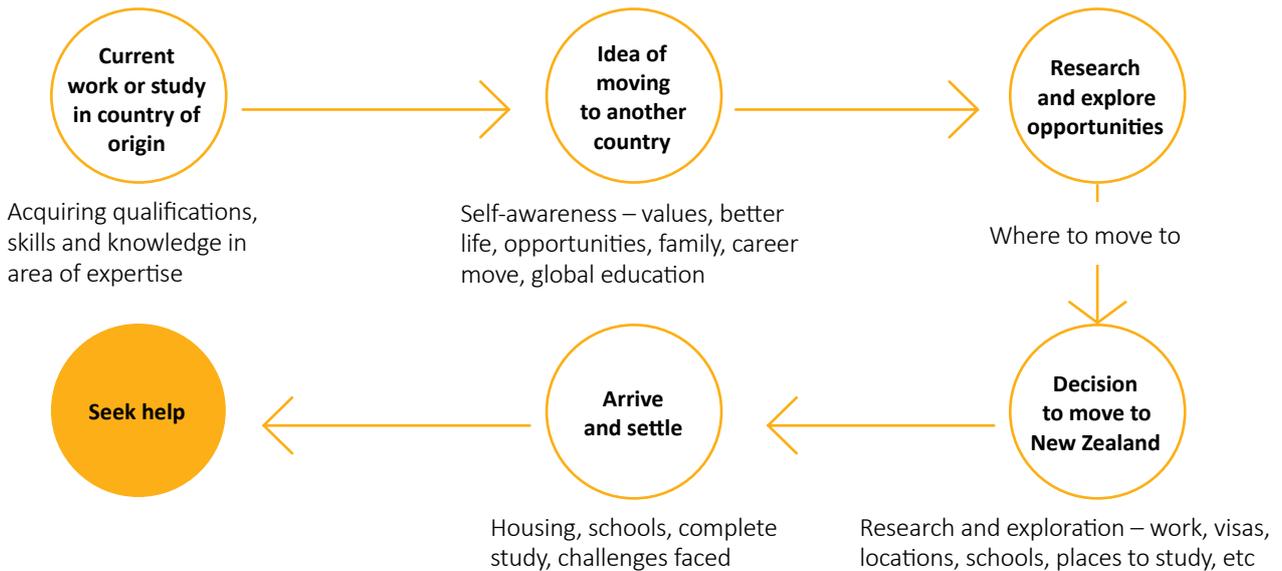
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## 3 Decide and act

Plan, manage change and transition into the New Zealand workplace within your field of expertise.

# Your journey so far

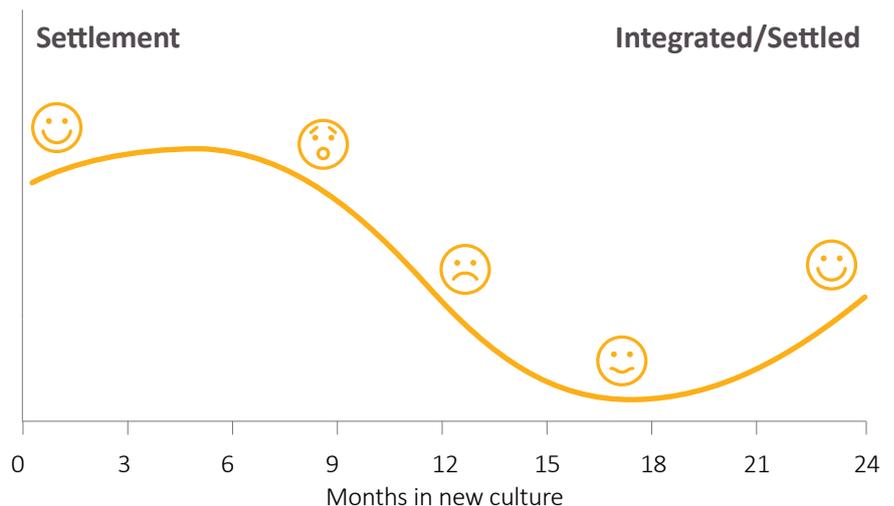
Making a decision about your career or a job often involves considering whether you want to change your job, employer, industry and location. Changing country means changing one or all of these things. Your decision to move to New Zealand probably involved research and talking and listening to your family, friends and other people. On arriving in New Zealand, you may have faced positives and negatives when looking for housing and finding work.



All newcomers go through a number of stages as they get used to their new life in a new country. It can take up to two years.

*Diagram courtesy of Immigration New Zealand  
Reference: [newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/settling-in/stages-of-settling-in](http://newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/settling-in/stages-of-settling-in)*

Look at the curve above and think about how you made your decision to settle in New Zealand, what you have achieved to get here and where are you now.



## Resource: Settling into New Zealand and your new workplace

Click to access the guide for newcomers to New Zealand.

# Job search in New Zealand

We all have a personal brand and it is useful to consider who we are and what we want to portray to employers, co-workers and contacts. Now you are in New Zealand, you may need to adjust your personal brand and here are some ideas to help you.



## What I bring to New Zealand

- Knowledge, experience, skills, values, aspirations, enthusiasm, work ethic and commitment.

## Explore opportunities

- Understanding what job roles I might best fit in New Zealand.

## Online presence

- LinkedIn profile.
- CV and cover letter.
- Developed for the New Zealand job market.

## Personal presentation

- Verbal skills and social intelligence – ability to negotiate meetings and conversations with New Zealanders in social and work settings. Can perform well in interviews.
- Able to understand the New Zealand accent and be understood by New Zealanders.

## Job searching in New Zealand

- Consistent across all platforms.
- Works within the New Zealand context.



### Tip: How does what you bring match what New Zealand needs?

Think about what you bring to the New Zealand workplace, for example, resilience or ability to work in a fast-paced environment.

Here is an example:



## Introducing Arjun Kumar\*

- Is excited to be in New Zealand and wants to stay here.
- Has a LinkedIn profile and CV that he developed in India.
- Was a manager in a large organisation in India.
- Has started to explore the types of roles available in the IT field in New Zealand through Seek, Trade Me jobs and the careers.govt.nz website.
- Realises that a lot of organisations here are small in comparison to India and that he might need to be flexible in order to find his first job here such as by doing volunteer work or part-time or contract work.
- Has registered to attend the Work Connect job search and interview skills workshop.
- Has googled himself and adjusted his privacy settings on some of his social media accounts.
- Has adjusted his CV and cover letter to suit employers here.
- Knows how to tailor his application to each job description.
- Knows how to write an email for the local work environment.
- Has adjusted his LinkedIn profile for New Zealand job roles.
- Has attended the cultural workshop run by Work Connect.
- Has read all the information and watched the Work Connect videos about finding a job in New Zealand as well as the videos on the immigration.govt.nz website about adjusting to life and work in New Zealand.
- Understands how to organise and undertake an informational interview.
- Understands some Kiwi slang.
- Slows down his speech so that New Zealanders can understand him.
- He is still himself but has adjusted aspects of his personal brand so that he can more easily find work and settle in New Zealand.
- He realises that this is an area of ongoing learning.

What I bring to New Zealand

Explore opportunities

Online presence

Personal presentation

Job searching in New Zealand

*\*Arjun Kumar is not a real person. He is based on a recent newcomer who has given us permission to share his story.*



### Tip: Google yourself

On your personal social media accounts, do you need to hide or delete anything that conflicts with your job search in New Zealand (for example is your previous job still showing on your LinkedIn).

# 1

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## Know yourself



# Introduction

This section allows you to explore who you are and what you have to offer New Zealand employers.

## Know yourself

- understanding the journey so far
- your marketable self (skills, values and qualifications)
- identifying friends, family, tutors, managers and other groups or people who can support you.

Knowing yourself is about who you are, what you enjoy doing (interests), what you can offer (skills), what is important to you (values), and what you are most proud of (achievements).

## Know your skills

Knowing your skills is essential to successful career management. It will be the focus of this section of the workbook. Being able to identify and provide evidence of your skills to employers will increase the success of your job search.

### Skills that are sought after by New Zealand employers.

New Zealand employers want to know about your skills. They want to read about your skills in your CV and hear about them in your interview.

Therefore, it is essential that you understand what your skills are and are able to express these in writing, in your job applications and when you are talking to employers.

New Zealand employers value some skills more than others in the workplace. In your home country different skills may have been valued so it is critical that you understand what is required for you to be successful in the New Zealand workforce.

In a 2015 Victoria University study,<sup>1</sup> 346 New Zealand employers outlined the top 10 skills and attributes they look for in graduates and students. We believe this is an accurate reflection of the skills that New Zealand employers look for when they are employing any staff in skilled roles.

The following pages 10-13 will help you identify your employability skills for the New Zealand market.

<sup>1</sup> Kusmierczyk, E., Medford, L. Victoria University of Wellington, '2015 Student & Graduate Employability Skills Survey', October 2015. Adapted with permission.

# The top 10 skills and attributes

1.

## Work ethic

- Being reliable
- Taking responsibility for your own performance at work
- Being committed to the best possible performance
- Having a high quality of work

2.

## Verbal communication skills

- Communicating in a clear and sensitive manner to people in different settings and from different backgrounds
- Giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Participating constructively in meetings
- Expressing ideas

3.

## Energy and enthusiasm

- Displaying a genuine interest in the organisation and what it does
- Understanding the industry sector
- Expressing your willingness to give one hundred percent to the job

4.

## Analytical and critical thinking

- Gathering and evaluating information from different sources
- Recognising patterns and scenarios to understand the bigger picture
- Being able to understand abstract ideas

5.

## Problem solving

- Using rational and logical thinking to achieve conclusions
- Analysing facts and asking the right questions to diagnose problems
- Making appropriate decisions in light of available information

# 6.

## Teamwork

- Completing group tasks through discussion and planning
- Working towards solutions that other team members can support
- Sharing knowledge and expertise with others

# 7.

## Interpersonal skills

- Being able to work with people from diverse cultures, genders, ages, etc.
- Acknowledging the complex emotions and viewpoints of others and responding sensitively and appropriately
- Understanding unspoken meanings in situations
- Being able to address and resolve issues effectively

# 8.

## Written communication skills

- Using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Being able to edit your own work
- Using appropriate tone and style in writing, depending on the audience

# 9.

## Self-management

- Being able to regulate your own emotions
- Actively seeking opportunities to keep learning
- Being confident in dealing with challenges
- Maintaining a balance between work and life

# 10.

## Initiative and enterprise

- Going beyond the call of duty by helping others, including undertaking menial tasks
- Having initiative – taking unprompted action to achieve agreed goals
- Being creative – using lateral and creative thinking to develop solutions
- Showing entrepreneurship and/or intrapreneurship – initiating change and adding value by embracing new ideas

# Your employability skills

**Skill**

**Examples of when I have used this skill**

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**Work ethic**

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**Verbal  
communication  
skills**

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**Energy and  
enthusiasm**

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**Analytical and  
critical thinking**

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**Problem solving**

**Skill**

**Examples of when I have used this skill**

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**Teamwork**

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**Interpersonal skills**

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.....

**Written  
communication  
skills**

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.....

**Self-management**

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.....

**Initiative and  
enterprise**

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# Achievements

**Achievements are evidence-based recognition of your accomplishments at work or through study**

They need to be:

- specific
- relevant to the work you are seeking – it might demonstrate you have a specific skill or experience that the employer is looking for
- a recent example.

**Provide evidence or quantify your achievement.**

For example:

- increased efficiency in production by 20 percent in 2016
- increased profit margin by 10 percent in 2016
- secured new business to the value of \$500,000 in 2016.

What was the achievement and why was it important? What specifically did you achieve?

## Achievement 1

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Why was it important and why were you proud of this achievement?

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What skills did you use?

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## Achievement 2

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Why was it important and why were you proud of this achievement?

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What skills did you use?

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## Achievement 3

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Why was it important and why were you proud of this achievement?

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What skills did you use?

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# Your unique value

## Your unique value is what you can offer employers

This is a combination of:

1. Your skills, achievements and talents. How do your friends describe you?  
What comes easily to you, eg, public speaking, study, listening and talking to people?
2. What the employer is looking for – specific skills, work values, team fit.
3. How you can contribute – what you are passionate about? How would you make a difference to that role/organisation? What motivates you?



### Example:

Example of Arjun's unique value based on his skills and experience.

1

#### What I am good at

- Talking and listening to people
- Staying calm under pressure
- Managing time efficiently
- Fixing IT issues

2

#### What the employer is looking for

- Good communication and customer service skills
- Identifies problems and solves them quickly and accurately
- IT qualification and experience
- Works well in a team

3

#### How I can contribute

- Good at helping customers with IT issues
- Can fix a high number of issues in a short time
- Builds relationships with team and customers
- Gives advice that suits customers' needs

In the area below identify your unique value.

1

#### What I am good at

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

2

#### What the employer is looking for

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- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

3

#### How I can contribute

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-

## Your unique value statement

Now that you have identified what you can offer, practise writing a small statement that describes your unique value.



### Example

Customer-focused with the ability to communicate technical information to fit the audience's understanding and knowledge. Enjoys problem solving, discovering the root cause and identifying solutions. My goal and interest is bringing technology and people together.

# 2

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## Explore opportunities



# Introduction

In the last section we looked at knowing yourself: who you are and what you can offer.

This section looks at exploring opportunities and the options available plus some tips on how to do this.

## Explore opportunities

- finding jobs in the New Zealand workforce
- networking and informational interviewing to connect with employers
- training, courses and upskilling.

Exploring opportunities is about identifying and understanding the opportunities that are available to you. It also means being aware of the shifts in your industry regionally and internationally.

## Example of IT job opportunities from [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)

# Business Analyst

Kaitātari Pakihi

Alternative titles for this job

Business analysts design or recommend solutions, such as computers or computer programs, to help organisations meet their goals.

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### Pay

Business analysts usually earn between

**\$81K-\$104K** per year

Source: AbsoluteIT, Tech Remuneration Report, January 2018.

### Job opportunities



Chances of getting a job as a business analyst are good due to a shortage of workers.

### Length of training



3 years of training usually required.

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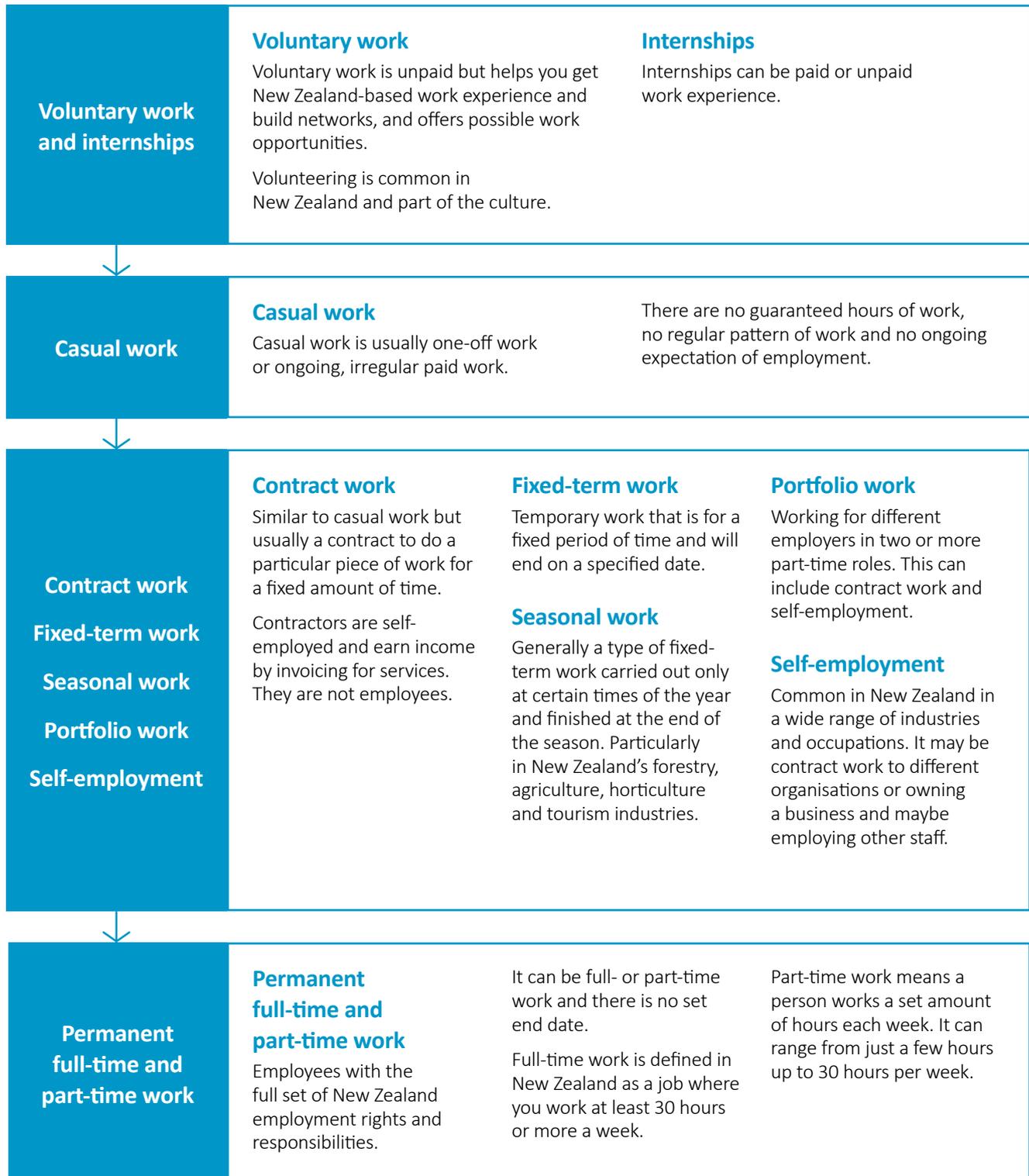
**Industry**  
Information Technology

 Vocational Pathways [More](#)

 Manufacturing and technology

# Steps to finding permanent full-time work

These are common steps that newcomers often need to take to find permanent work in New Zealand. However, there are lots of variables to this. Below are basic explanations of the types of work available.



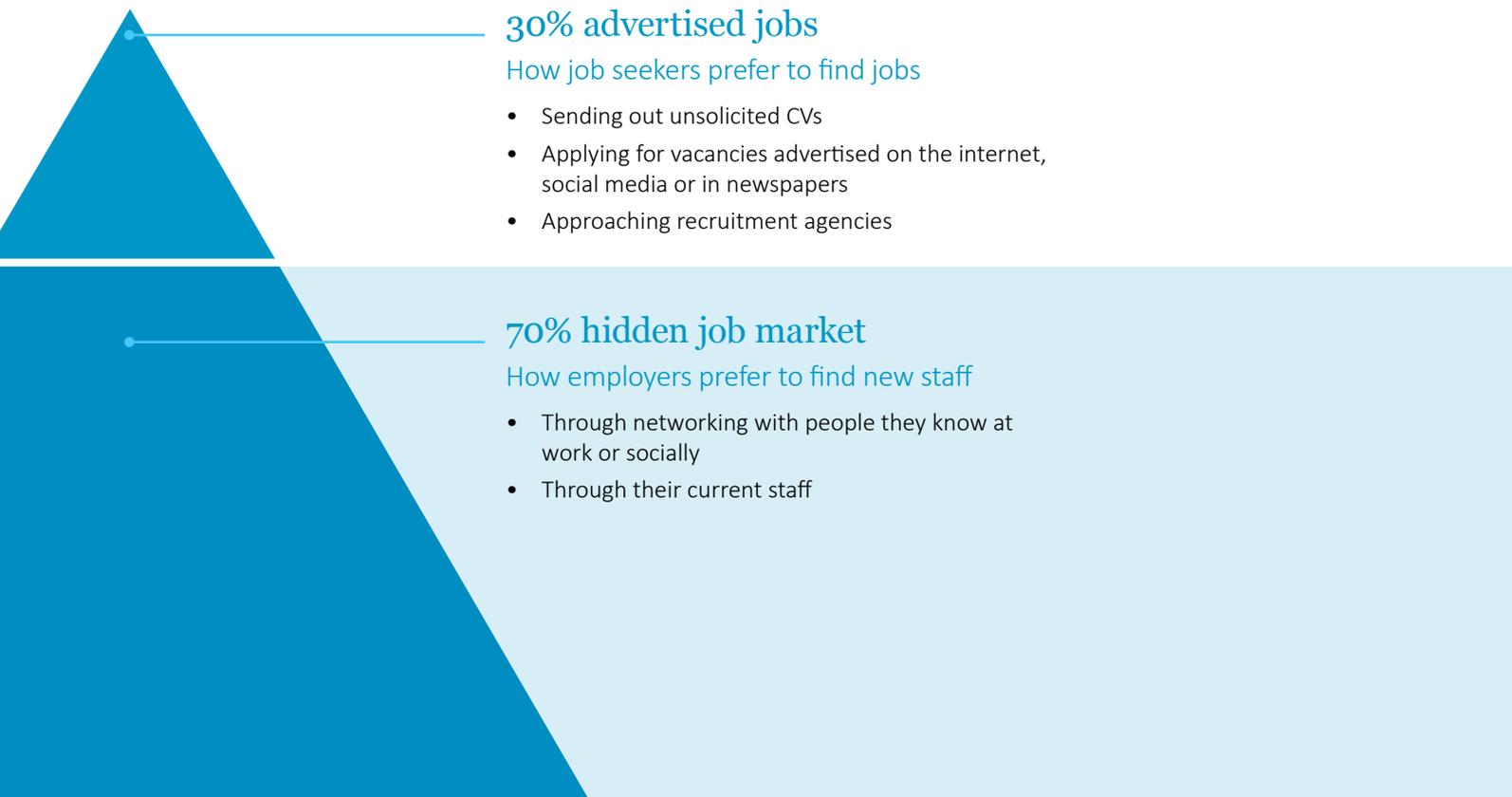
# Ways to find work

## The traditional job market

The traditional job market is the external advertising of jobs, predominantly online but also in print, by employers or recruitment agencies. For many job seekers this is the preferred method of seeking work. However, New Zealand employers like to employ someone they know or someone who has been recommended to them. So, only 30 percent of jobs are secured through external advertising alone.

## The hidden job market

70 percent of jobs are filled through employers using their connections and networks, or using the networks of people they know. This is called the hidden job market because many of these jobs are not externally advertised.



## How to find jobs in the hidden job market

### Networking

Networking is making connections with people who can give you information about potential job openings or who can introduce you to other people who have this information. Spend time identifying your existing and potential networks.

# Be a great networker

## I am new to the country and old networks can't help. What's next?

### People I know well back home and in Aotearoa New Zealand

Former colleagues, managers, alumni, family, friends, friends of friends and their connections in New Zealand.

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**Ask for referrals and connections**

### People I don't know well or those I have met briefly and who could help

Guest speakers, fellow students, people I have met at community networks, etc.

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**Connect online to LinkedIn immediately after meeting**

### People I don't know

Those who are currently in my ideal job.  
In my ideal or target organisation or industry.

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**Follow online comments, ask questions and organise informational interviews**

### People I could help

Pass on voluntary or part-time work to others.

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**Your future network**

# Develop your networks in Aotearoa New Zealand

A guide to finding out more about New Zealand culture, industries and jobs through networking and informational interviewing.

Informational interviewing provides an opportunity to speak with employers or staff in your industry or work area and uncover specific information that will help in your job search.

## People you know or have met are easier to talk to

Relationship	Close	Loosely connected
Situation	Talking to friends and family.	Talking to people at a social event, eg, child's football match, barbeque or lunch. Talking to people at a business networking event, eg, industry association seminar.
Communication style	Casual and impromptu.	Casual and impromptu.
Type of conversation	You can talk openly about your concerns, what's working and what's not.	Engage in small talk. Be curious about the other person. Share some information about yourself. If it is appropriate, ask them what they do for a living and where they work. Ask more about them and their job.
Purpose of communication	For support and to find out what they know about New Zealand culture, workplaces, industries and jobs.	To get to know people on a friendly, casual basis. To learn more about New Zealand culture, workplaces, industries and jobs.
Research required	No research.	Have some general questions ready.

### Next steps

Decide if it is appropriate to connect on LinkedIn or by email.

If appropriate, send a personalised message on LinkedIn.

If appropriate, ask if you can discuss in more depth at another time, eg, over the phone or going out for a coffee.

**See guidelines on page 22 for more information.**



### Cultural tips:

**Research the New Zealand culture before you meet people.** New Zealanders are indirect in their approach when they write and speak. Learn the 'unwritten' rules on how to negotiate emails, phone calls and meetings. See the resources at: [newzealandnow.govt.nz](http://newzealandnow.govt.nz)

New Zealand has a small population and people often know each other at work and socially.

**Be polite and courteous to everyone you meet.**



### Tip: When you meet someone, do not ask for a job

This is not appropriate within New Zealand culture and will make the person you are with feel uncomfortable. Develop a relationship with them first. You could say at the end, in a casual way,

“Thank you very much for your time. I have really appreciated the opportunity to talk to you. I’d be very keen to work within your company so if you hear of any vacancy, please do let me know”.

New Zealanders are willing to help people but they prefer to get to know you first and decide whether you will fit with the other people within their network.

## People you don’t know are more difficult to talk to

Relationship	Don’t know personally	Don’t know at all
Situation	Talking to people you haven’t met but have connected to on LinkedIn.	Talking to people you aren’t connected to and don’t know, eg, in an organisation or role that you are interested in knowing more about.
Communication style	Formal. Requires preparation.	Formal. Requires preparation.
Purpose of communication	To develop more networks within your industry sector and more knowledge about the local industry.	To talk to people specifically doing the job you want in the future.
Research required	Identify people who work in your industry who are within your LinkedIn network.  Research their organisations.	Search the internet for organisations in your field. See if there is anyone in your network who might know someone who works there.  As this is the most challenging group to approach, build up your knowledge through first talking to people you know.  Can you ask the person you know to do an email introduction?  Follow up on the email introduction and contact the person directly.

**New Zealanders have a lot of conversations in cafés** over a cup of coffee or tea. If you have asked someone to talk to you about their industry/job, it is appropriate for you to pay for the drink as they are doing you a favour in taking time out of their day to talk with you.

**When you are talking to New Zealanders, smile and show your enthusiasm** for your sector/type of role/New Zealand.

# Prepare for an informational interview



## Homework: Interviewing people you don't know

Below are guidelines to prepare for an informational interview.

### 1. Setting up a time to talk

Some people may prefer to talk over the phone rather than meet you in person. Be prepared with questions in case they want to talk to you at the time you call.

### 2. How to approach them

See our samples below for appropriate ways to word an email or a message via LinkedIn.

### 3. Before a meeting or phone conversation

Do your research on the industry/company beforehand on the internet. Learn as much as you can so you can use your meeting time with people wisely. Ask specific questions that might help you learn more about your sector/job area. See sample questions on page 25.

### 4. When you meet them

- Dress appropriately for the meeting.
- Thank them for coming.
- Say a little about yourself and your background but don't go into a lot of detail.
- Explain that you want to understand the New Zealand workplace, industry and jobs here.
- Ask them how much time they have to talk. Keep to this time. If you go over time, ask them for permission to keep going.
- It is acceptable to take notes.
- Once you have finished, reiterate how grateful you are that they have taken the time to talk to you.

### 5. After the meeting

- Straight after your meeting, make some notes on what they said. You are likely to forget what they have said otherwise.
- Send them a thank you message after you have talked, either by email or through LinkedIn.
- Email them when you have been employed and say thank you again for their help. They will be interested to know that you have secured work.

### 6. Be kind and supportive to others

- Return the favour to other migrants or other people who ask for help.



## Watch: Informational interviews: How to succeed

Watch the video at [youtu.be/CXZDTDBLKRE](https://youtu.be/CXZDTDBLKRE)

# Example of networking and informational interviewing

## Your marketing script

When someone asks, "So, what do you do?" how do you reply?

Three rules to consider:

1. Your reply should take 30 seconds or less.
2. Your skills (or how you would benefit a potential employer) should be clear.
3. You should identify some type of goal.

*This example is just the start. The key to a good script is practice, practice and practice.*

### Self-marketing script

My name is: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a: \_\_\_\_\_ (name of profession)

I have: \_\_\_\_\_ years of experience in \_\_\_\_\_

I have experience in (skills profile):

Currently I am: \_\_\_\_\_

I am really keen to get work in the area of:

## LinkedIn etiquette

Sample personalised request to connect to a person via LinkedIn:

(if you have met a person at an event)

Hi Joan,  
  
I really enjoyed talking with you last night at the IT service management forum. I look forward to catching up with you again at a future event.  
  
Regards,  
Arjun

Sample LinkedIn message asking a contact if they would be willing to meet with you:

(if you haven't met them)

Hi, my name is Arjun Kumar.  
  
I'm new to Wellington. I was reading your LinkedIn profile and was very interested to see that you have extensive experience in technical support. I have had four years' experience working as a technical analyst for two companies in India. Since I'm new, I'm really keen to learn more about the New Zealand workplace and what languages and systems are commonly used in Wellington.  
  
Would I be able to talk to you in more depth about this? I know you are very busy but if you have 20 minutes to spare I would really appreciate it.  
  
Regards,  
Arjun

## Email

Sample email asking a contact if they would be willing to meet with you:

Dear Joan,  
  
My name is Arjun Kumar. I'm new to Wellington. I work in the IT sector specialising in technical support. I've had four years' experience working as a technical analyst for two companies in India. Since I'm new, I'm really keen to learn more about the New Zealand workplace and what languages and systems are commonly used in Wellington. Would I be able to talk to you in more depth about this? I know you are very busy but if you have 20 minutes to spare I would really appreciate it.

Kind regards  
Arjun Kumar  
Phone: 021 123 456

Sample thank you email:

Hi Joan,  
  
Thank you very much for talking with me yesterday. Your insight into and knowledge of the IT sector in Wellington has helped me tremendously. I feel that I have a much better understanding of the size of companies and the skills I need to work here. I look forward to catching up with you at an industry event at some point in the future.

Thank you again.

Kind regards  
Arjun Kumar  
Phone: 021 123 456

## The 'gatekeepers' in an organisation

- If you phone a company asking if there are any jobs, the receptionist is likely to put you through to the Human Resources (HR) department. The HR staff are usually busy and don't have a lot of time to talk. They may refer you to the vacancy section of their company website, or to other job search sites.
- If there is a specific person you want to talk to, ask the receptionist if you can speak to that person directly. If they aren't willing to put you through, it may be easier to talk to the person if you are part of the same networking or technical Meetup group that meets outside work hours.



### Tip: Stay connected with LinkedIn

When you complete the Work Connect Programme, you will be invited to attend the LinkedIn Work Connect Networking Group [linkedin.com/groups/10462239](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/10462239)

# Questions you could ask when informational interviewing

It is your job to come prepared with questions to ask at an informational interview. Ensure that the questions are open ended, ie, they can't be answered by a yes or no answer. You want to get people talking about what they know.

- Can you tell me more about the (type of sector) in (city)?  
.....
- How did you get into your role?  
.....
- What is happening within the industry in New Zealand?  
Is it growing or declining?  
.....
- What does your average work day look like?  
.....
- What are the key skill areas that employers are looking for in this job/industry?  
.....
- Do you know if there are lots of people looking for work in this area?  
.....
- Are there particular skills or jobs that are in short supply?  
.....
- As I'm not from New Zealand and don't have New Zealand work experience, do you have any suggestions about how I can get into this area?  
.....
- What training is useful?  
.....
- What work experience do employers look for?  
.....
- Which networks would you recommend that I join?  
.....
- Do you know of anyone else who might be willing to talk to me? Would you be willing to make an introduction by email?  
.....
- Is there anything that would surprise people about your job?  
.....
- If you could go back and change anything about your career path, would you?  
.....
- What is the profile of the most recent person hired in my field?  
.....

# 3

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## Decide and act



# Introduction

In the last two sections we have looked at the following:

## Know yourself

- understanding the journey so far
- your marketable self (skills, values and qualifications).

## Explore opportunities

- finding jobs in the New Zealand workforce
- networking and informational interviewing to connect with employers
- some practical steps on how to do this.

Decide and act is about setting goals and putting into action what you have learned about yourself and the opportunities out there for you.

## Decide and act will include:

- a guide to answering a New Zealand advertisement
- applying online
- tips for writing a CV and a cover letter
- preparing for interviews
- your next steps in developing an action plan.

# A step-by-step guide to answering a job advertisement

## Step 1: Read the advertisement and highlight the key skills or competencies the employer is looking for

For example:

- strong written and verbal communication
- team player or teamwork
- analytical and problem solving
- time management
- specialised or technical competencies
- high level of computer competency
- ability to work well under pressure
- enthusiasm and initiative
- excellent customer service.

## Step 2: Do the same with the job or person description (if there is one)

This will include more information about what the employer requires in this particular role.

This identifies the skill set (sometimes described as competencies), qualifications and personal qualities the employer has identified for the position advertised.

## Step 3: Visit the following websites

**careers.govt.nz** and use the search box to find the job. The job description will give you a generic list of skills, qualifications and experience levels that are recommended for this job in New Zealand. This can help identify further skills. Add these to the skills identified in the advertisement and job description.

**onetonline.org** – O\*NET Online is an American database containing detailed information about thousands of jobs in the USA. Use the keyword search to find an equivalent job. There may not be a direct crossover to New Zealand job titles, so use broad terms in your search. Add any further relevant skills to your skills list.

You should now have a comprehensive and well researched list of the skills, qualities and experience needed for the position advertised.

## Step 4:

### **Complete a full list of your existing skills, if you have not already done so**

Consider your employability skills you identified earlier in the workbook. Include specialised or technical skills as well as any other transferable skills. Remember, skills can be gained from paid and unpaid employment, parenting, recreational pursuits, etc. Create a full list of these skills. Provide evidence of your abilities by adding examples of how you have used these skills.

New Zealand employers place importance on skills and will expect to see evidence of your relevant skills in your CV, cover letter and within an interview.

## Step 5:

### **Research the company**

- Look for information on the organisation's key products or services, their mission and anything else that gives you an insight into them. You can do this through their website and by talking to people you know.
- Record a few key words and phrases from this material. Keep them in mind while you decide what information you will use in your letter and CV.

## Step 6:

### **Match your existing competencies to the advertised position**

Compare your list of skills to the list of requirements you have created for the position.

You are now ready to write a targeted CV and letter that are totally and absolutely focused on that individual employer's needs for a specific role.



### **Tip: Imagine you already have the job**

What will you be doing, what technology, who will you be interacting with, what is your point of difference.



### **Fact: Employers are busy**

So your CV and cover letter need to clearly show how closely you match their needs.

Don't use the same CV and cover letter for each job application. Increase your chances of getting an interview by targeting your application to the job you are applying for.

CV

Cover letter

# How to apply online

**Apply for jobs that closely match your skills and qualifications. Focus on these relevant jobs rather than applying for a lot of different jobs.**

- Give yourself plenty of time to apply for positions and thoroughly check all the application requirements.
- Ensure you have a professional or business-like email address.
- Follow the application directions, even if it means you repeat information in your CV or cover letter for example. Employers may exclude your application if you do not follow their directions exactly.
- Include the title of the position you are applying for in the subject line of your email. Make sure the subject line matches any instructions given, for example, includes a job reference number.
- Make sure you include your name and phone number in the email.
- When you send your CV as an attachment, convert it into a PDF if possible. This will ensure formatting is retained. Make it easy for employers to find your CV by using your name in your CV filename.

## Sample email as part of your application:

To: HR@anywhere.co.nz

Subject: Arjun Kumar's application for IT Service Desk Agent

Dear \_\_\_\_ (name of person)

Re: IT Service Desk Agent position

Please find attached my curriculum vitae and cover letter for the above position as advertised on Seek on 24 May 2020.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely  
Arjun Kumar  
Phone: 021 123 456

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (name of person)

Re: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (your name)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



### Tip: Request and download the Job Description (JD)

Save it as a Word document to help you keep track of your applications and prepare for an interview.

# CV essentials

Make your CV a brief, positive and interesting snapshot of yourself.

## Step 1:

### Write your CV

The purpose of your CV is to get yourself an interview. Your CV should show a potential employer that you're the person they're looking for and that they will benefit from hiring you.

If you haven't written a CV before, use the following two pages as a guide.

### Before you start writing

- Brainstorm information about all the experiences you've had and the skills you've developed. Don't forget things you do outside of work. Give examples wherever you can.
- Look at example CVs for ideas on layout, language and effective ways of marketing yourself.

## Step 2:

### Put yourself in the employer's place

You have 10 seconds to persuade an employer to continue to read your CV. Your CV will have more impact if you highlight the things the employer is looking for and convey an idea of the person you are. Do this in a clear, concise and interesting way.

Three key questions to ask yourself:

1. **When someone scans my CV quickly, will they think 'This CV looks interesting'?**

Employers have to sort and reduce a pile of CVs to shortlists of two or three people. They will respond better to a clear, well-laid-out CV than a long, disorganised one.

2. **When they read your CV fully, will they think 'This person has skills we need'?**

Employers are looking for someone who matches the job description. Adjust and target your CV to highlight things that fit the job you are applying for.

3. **When they choose CVs to shortlist, will they think 'This person is worth meeting'?**

Employers are thinking about what you can offer them. Give people a sense of who you are and what you do best.

## Step 3:

### Ask others to look at your CV

It is important to get someone else to check your CV to see that it makes sense, is well formatted and has no spelling or grammatical mistakes.

# Write or revise a CV

## Tips

Put your name and contact details clearly at the top. (You don't need to put them at the top of every page.)

- Put page numbers in the footer.
- Make all headings stand out. Use bold, size, colour, white space, etc, to do this.

The aim of this section is to capture the reader's interest. If it doesn't, they won't read any further.

- People will interview you if they think you can do the job and will fit in with their team.
- This is your 10 second opportunity to highlight the most relevant skills you offer to the job.
- This is only an example of writing about one skill. You will need to include more than one skill, such as communication skills, problem solving, customer service and teamwork.

The aim of this section is to draw a bridge between what you have done previously and what the employer is looking for.

- You want the employer to think 'This person could do the job and I want them to do it'.
- Concentrate on key tasks. Highlight the ways you helped the company to do well.
- If your employment history is too long, include only your most recent or relevant roles.

## Simple CV template with example content

### Arjun Kumar

1234 Chelsea Road, Lower Hutt, 5010.

Email: arjunkumar10@gmail.com

Phone: 021 123 456

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/arjunkumar

### Key skills and competencies

#### Communication skills

- Experience working across a range of modalities (including phone, chat and face-to-face) using communication style to suit.

#### Problem solving

- Comprehensive experience investigating and diagnosing ICT incidents on Windows and Linux platforms for clients in the USA, UK and India, developed while working at Symantec.

#### Customer service

- Experienced in working with people across organisations, cultures and countries, from support staff through to senior management.

### Work history

#### Lead Operations Specialist

2015 - 2016

IBM, Chennai, India

- Responsible for a team of 10 help desk staff and technical analysts.
- Performed quality assurance checks of incident reports processed by team.
- Trained four new employees on correct procedures to respond to and manage incidents.
- Assisted my team through a business restructuring process.
- Collaborated effectively with clients based in UK, USA and India.
- Improved first call resolution from 70 percent up to 85 percent after initiating staff training.

## Work history (continued)

**Technical Analyst** 2013 - 2014  
Symantec, India

- Managed incidents and requests through calls, emails, chats and face-to-face from commencement to completion
- Investigated and diagnosed ICT incidents for all hardware, software and networking systems. Escalated problems to second level when required.
- Maintained help desk database by entering caller statistics, enquiries and responses in accordance with company policy.

## Education history

**Graduate Diploma in Information Technology** 2017  
Wellington Institute of Technology, Wellington

**Bachelor of Technology (Mechanical Engineering)** 2012  
Delhi University, India

## Interests

- Running
- Cricket
- Technology

## Referees

### Referees supplied on request

Or

**John Smith**  
Team Leader  
Burger King, Johnsonville  
Phone: 0213 012 3456  
Email: johnsmith14@hotmail.com

**Sanjeev Ahuja**  
IT Service Assurance Manager  
IBM, Chennai  
Email: sanjeev.ahuja02@ibm.com

## Tips

Ways of ordering this section include:

- job title in bold, followed by company underneath and tasks
- most recent job first.

Which section goes first – employment history or education history? Think about which section is most recent and relevant to the work you are looking for.

This section gives you the chance to talk about what you are like outside work.

- You can include interests, hobbies, volunteer or community work.
- Use bullet points.

Employers should tell you when they are going to contact your referees. Often they will only want to contact them after they have met you.

- If you don't include referees in your CV, make sure you are able to give this information to the employer when it is requested.
- Select your referees carefully. Inform them of the role you are applying for, so they can prepare – what they say about you should be relevant to the role.

# Your cover letter

## What to include

### Your contact details

Write, in this order:

- your full name
- your address
- your email address
- your phone numbers
- your LinkedIn address.

### Date

Include the date you send the letter.

### Their contact details

Write, in this order:

- the name of the person
- their job title
- their organisation and address.

### Contact person

Address the person by their name if possible. Contact the organisation and ask. If you cannot find the name, put "Dear hiring manager".

### Reason for the letter

- Write out the full job title and any reference numbers as a heading.
- State you are applying for the named position and where you heard about the job.

### Why you want to work in this position for the organisation and what you know about the organisation

- Be enthusiastic and show that you have thought about the job and why you would like to work for them.
- Make positive comments about the organisation, eg, their reputation, performance and product.
- Remember it's about what you can do for them, not what they can do for you.

## Here is a template you can follow for your own cover letter

Arjun Kumar  
1234 Chelsea Road,  
Lower Hutt 5010  
Email: arjunkumar10@gmail.com  
Phone: 021 123 456  
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/arjunkumar

29 May 2020

Jane Smith  
HR Manager  
Elite ICT Support Services  
PO Box 1234  
Wellington, 6011

Dear Jane

### Re: ICT Service Desk Agent

I am writing to apply for the position of ICT Service Desk Agent at Elite ICT Support Services as advertised on Seek. Please find attached my curriculum vitae to support my application.

The values of Elite ICT Support Services around honesty, trustworthiness and customer service appeal to me. I have always gone the extra mile when working with customers, following up on queries internally and with third-party providers, and keeping customers informed every step of the way.

I have extensive experience working as a Technical Analyst while at Symantec and as a Lead Operations Specialist at IBM, India. Within each of these roles, I managed incidents through calls, emails, chats and face-to-face from commencement through to completion. My role also included managing equipment failure and assisting staff by resolving ICT hardware, software and networking system issues. I have experience with Windows 7, 8, 10 and Microsoft Office applications including Lync. In addition, I have an ITIL Foundation Certificate and MCSA certification.

I have worked with clients from the UK, USA and India through my roles at Symantec and IBM. I enjoy working with clients and, while I was at Symantec, I achieved an average 85 percent first call resolution rate and 90 percent customer satisfaction rate. One of my qualities is my ability to resolve issues calmly and efficiently.

I am dedicated to continuous learning and am a member of the IT Service Management Forum in Wellington and Wellington Windows Infrastructure and Azure User Group. I enjoy staying up to date with developments within the ICT industry and attend meetings once every fortnight.

---

I am very excited about this opportunity with Elite ICT Support Services and believe that I would both add value within your team and fit into your team culture extremely well.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

---

Yours sincerely  
Arjun Kumar

## What to include

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### What you will bring to the role

- Highlight how well you match the requirements for the job.
- Outline your hard or technical skills, experience and knowledge that is required for the role.
- Soft skills, personal goals, excitement and enthusiasm.

---

### Finishing off

- If you are applying for a vacancy, thank them for considering your application.
- If you are writing to ask for an opportunity to discuss your application, state your intentions to follow up with a telephone call.

---

### Signing off

- Be professional with your farewell, not too formal or too familiar. Write out your first and last names and sign above your name unless you are applying online.

# CV and cover letter templates

**Use these templates to help you build your CV and cover letter**

- Copy and paste each sections into a Word Document.
- These templates are only examples. You can access further templates below.

**CV and Cover letter templates**

## CV

*Your name*

*Your contact details*

**Personal summary**

**Key skills and competencies**

**Work history**

**Education history**

**Referees**

**Interests**

## Cover letter

*Your contact details*

*Date*

*Contact person details*

*Contact person*

*Reason for the letter*

*Why you want to work in this position for the organisation and what you know about the organisation*

*What you will bring to the role*

*Finishing off*

*Signing off*

# New Zealand interviews

## Introduction

Parts to the appointment and selection process:

Preparing a CV  
and cover letter

Being interviewed

The referee check



**You have successfully got to the second stage of the appointment and selection process!**

The interview is your chance to present your skills, experience, personal qualities and other strengths that relate to the position you are applying for.

It is also an opportunity to research the organisation or position. This may help you decide whether this is the right role/place for you.

Interview styles can vary. Some may appear quite informal and casual, such as a conversation with someone at a Meetup or when you are first introduced to a staff member. This informal conversation is still a form of assessment for suitability. Many New Zealand interviews are formal, perhaps with three or more interviewers in a panel.

You can expect to be given information about the interviewing process including:

- the type of interview (such as panel and who will be on it; whether it is group, telephone, or video)
- any psychometric, mathematical or other testing.

Most interviews have a lead-in time of introductions and settling in, questions from the interviewer/panel and a chance for the interviewee to ask questions.

## Most interview questions are based on these five themes to assess your suitability:

---

### 1. Why do you want to work for this firm/organisation?

---

In New Zealand, this assessment can start as soon as you enter the building. Be friendly and approachable to any people you deal with in the lift or at reception. Employers may ask their staff for their feedback about you.

### 2. What have you got to offer?

---

Confidence is key. Many people feel nervous during an interview. However, it is important to show an interviewer you are confident for the position even if you are nervous. Demonstrate confidence by lifting your head, putting your shoulders back, making eye contact, having a firm handshake and remembering to smile.

### 3. Who are you? Tell us about yourself and your experience.

---

You may be asked to take a test before or after an interview. It might be a general test of your abilities or personality, or a task relevant to the type of job for which you are being interviewed.

### 4. Will you fit?

---



#### Remember to:

#### Contact your referees

Let them know you have an interview and give them information about the job you are applying for.

### 5. What will you cost? What are you worth?

---

# Prepare for an interview

## Preparation is essential and will make a difference to how you perform and how well you market yourself

Use this checklist to make sure that you are fully prepared.

### 1. Find out about the company or organisation

---

#### *Why?*

- If you know what the organisation does, you'll feel more confident about answering their questions.
  - The person interviewing you will be impressed if you show them that you are knowledgeable about what they do.
  - It will help you decide if the company's values and policies fit with your own.
  - It may make you think of some questions that you want to ask the employer.
- 

#### *How?*

- Look up the company website if they have one.
- Make a list of things you want to find out about the organisation such as salary information.
- Think about your networks. Do you know anyone who works or has worked there?
- If you know someone in a similar organisation, talk to them about what they do.

### 2. Review the job description, your CV and cover letter, practise interview questions and prepare your own

---

#### *Why?*

- Use the job description to think of questions an employer might ask.
  - Identify the skills you want to emphasise in the interview and be clear about how your skills could be used in that position.
  - You are likely to be asked at the end of the interview whether you have any questions to ask.
- 

#### *How?*

- Imagine you are the employer. What questions would you ask? You can use typical questions listed later in this workbook and on careers.govt.nz to help you.
- Write answers to the questions to help you think of good examples.
- Practise answering questions aloud with the help of another person. Or record your answers and play them back. Check that your answers are clear and easy to hear, with a positive tone. Sometimes when we are nervous, we talk faster.
- Make a list of questions you would like to ask about the work or organisation.

### 3. Plan what you will wear and how you will travel to the interview

---

#### *Why?*

- You do not want to be rushing on the morning of your interview. It would add to your stress and anxiety.
  - If you are late for the interview, you will give the employer a bad first impression.
  - Rushing may make you anxious and this could affect your interview performance.
- 

#### *How?*

- Some roles require smart clothes for work. Choose an outfit that is tidy and appropriate for a formal interview.
- Wash and iron your clothes ready for the day.
- Find out where your interview is then check how you will get there.
- If you need to catch a bus or train, make sure that you have checked out the times. Allow yourself extra time for any unexpected delays.
- If you can, do a trial run before the day of the interview so that you know where it will be held and how long it takes to get there.

### 4. Make sure you are clear about the interview process

---

#### *Why?*

- Some selection processes involve undertaking tests, delivering a presentation, giving group presentations or other tasks.
  - It is important to know whether you are going to be interviewed by one person or a panel of people.
- 

#### *How?*

- If you have not been given information about the interview process, contact the organisation and ask the employer what the interview will involve.
- If you are being interviewed by a panel, make a connection with all the interviewers. Address each reply to the person who asks the question, while being aware of the other panel members.



Check out  
[careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)

to help you prepare for New Zealand interviews.

# The interview

- Listen carefully to what you are being asked and treat each question as a chance to demonstrate your strengths.
- A general rule is to speak for no less than 30 seconds and no more than two minutes per answer. Keep your answers brief and to the point.
- Pause before answering if you don't understand. You might say, "Oh, good question – let me think about this one."

If you don't understand the question, you could say, "Could you please **rephrase** the question?" If you ask them to repeat the question they will use the same words again. If they rephrase the question, they will ask it again using different words.

- How much do you talk in an interview? There's a 40-60 rule: the interviewer talks 40 percent of the time during an interview, you talk 60 percent of the time.

## The opening questions and how to answer them

There will generally be an opening question like one of the questions below.

1. What brings you here today?
2. Why did you apply for the job?
3. What do you have to offer?
4. What in your background is relevant to this position?

This question gives you the opportunity to show your wisdom, insight and understanding about the job. Cover these areas in your answer:

- how you see the job
- what you see the job needs
- something about yourself and your strengths
- a summary of these three points.

5. Tell me about yourself.
6. What are your goals?

- Think about what the employer needs to know about you and your goals in relation to this position. Talk about some of your strengths and link them to the job.

## At the end of the interview

Prepare questions that you would like the interviewers to answer. They might be answered during the interview. Then you can say, "I had some questions but you seem to have covered them during the interview."

- Confirm your interest and enthusiasm for the job.
- Find out what the next steps are in the process following the interview.
- Consider sending a thank-you email to the interviewers following your interview.
- Ensure the interviewers have the names and contact details of your referees.

## Main interview styles

There are different styles of interviews and the questions are a little different for each one.

**Behavioural:** competency based or situational interviewing.

**Selection:** focus is on your personality, goals, motivations and your reported strengths and weaknesses.

# Behavioural interviews – STAR methodology

STAR is a strategy to use in response to behavioural questions

Behavioural or situational questions focus on your past performance in a similar situation. This technique is used by employers to evaluate a candidate's experiences and behaviours.

An example is:

“Tell me about a time when you had to assist an unhappy customer remotely to resolve a technical issue. How did you approach solving it? What was the outcome?”

*Example*

## **S** Situation – Give the context of your situation

I had an internal customer who was having trouble connecting to a particular application remotely. They were quite angry, as they had a deadline to meet and they could not forward their report.

## **T** Task – Explain the task you were required to complete

As a technical analyst, I was responsible for investigating and diagnosing ICT incidents for all hardware, software and networking systems.

## **A** Action – Describe the specific actions you took to achieve the task

The first step was to calmly listen to them and ask questions to clearly identify the issue and make sure I was not missing anything. I then remotely connected to their computer, as it was a straightforward problem that I could resolve myself straight away. So, I prioritised this work and resolved it, rather than placing it in our queue.

## **R** Result – Describe the result of your actions

- “Which meant that...”
- “Which resulted in...”
- “So that...”
- “The benefit was...”
- “We gained because...”
- “The advantage was...”

The outcome was a very happy customer who felt listened to and acknowledged how I prioritised this work so that they could meet their deadline. The next time they contacted our service with a problem they were very positive and easy to deal with.

# Behavioural interview questions using STAR

- Describe a situation where you had to adapt your style of communication to suit the person you are dealing with.
- Give me an example of a time when you had difficulty communicating with a co-worker. How did you deal with this situation? What was the outcome?
- What type of written reports or proposals have you done? How have you ensured that these are timely and accurate?
- Describe a situation where you have been under stress. How did you deal with this situation?
- Tell me about a situation where you had to deal with conflict.
- Tell me about a time when you had to quickly adjust to change.
- Give me an example of how you provided good customer service.
- Describe a time when you had a negative response from a customer. How did you solve it? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time you had to organise your time to get your work completed. How did you organise yourself?
- Give me an example of how you solve problems.
- Tell me about an event which really challenged you. How did you meet the challenge? In what way was your approach different from others?
- Give me an example of a time you were involved in a team project/teamwork?

**Practise answering behavioural interview questions below.**



**Watch:** Behavioural interview questions and answers

Watch the video at [youtu.be/sUWCSjwBpVs](https://youtu.be/sUWCSjwBpVs)

# Non-behavioural interview questions

## What are your strengths?

Talk about strengths that relate to this job and, if you can, link them to the job you are applying for.

---

## What are your weaknesses?

This is the trick question.

It is like asking “Tell me why you should not get this job?” It is not your job to tell the interviewer why they shouldn’t appoint you.

Ways to answer this question:

- “In the past...”
  - “What I have come to realise...”
  - “I have learned that...”
- 

## Initiative

Over the last five years, what have been your most important accomplishments? How have you made these events successful?

---

## Planning

What planning processes have you found useful?

If you have an important deadline or project to complete, how do you plan your work to ensure that you are successful?

How do you go about planning and/or managing time?

---

## Ambition

Where do you see yourself in five years’ time?

---

## Questions you could ask at the end of the interview

- What kind of introduction, orientation or training programme will I have when I begin the job?
- Who will I report to in this position?
- What will be the biggest challenge I’ll have in this job?
- Will the company support ongoing study?
- Will there be opportunities for more responsibility and broader experience in the company?

# Next steps – develop an action plan

## Identify some specific and achievable goals and actions

Here are Arjun Kumar’s goals and actions as some examples to assist.

What?	How?	By when?
<b>Short-term goals</b> Develop a targeted CV and profile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the information from this workbook and the careers.govt.nz website to develop a CV and LinkedIn profile.</li> <li>Get feedback from my career consultant.</li> </ul>	<b>One year</b> Date
Join a professional networking group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and join relevant professional organisations and Meetup groups.</li> </ul>	
Do some voluntary work to gain some New Zealand experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact a local volunteer organisation and sign up.</li> <li>Be flexible about where I volunteer.</li> </ul>	Date
Obtain my first paid job in retail or similar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise networks.</li> <li>Apply for jobs advertised online.</li> </ul>	Date
Develop New Zealand sales and customer service skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-the-job training and courses at my retail or similar customer service job.</li> </ul>	Date
<b>Medium-term goals</b> Gain permanent work as a Service Desk Analyst or similar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update targeted CV with New Zealand-based experience and referees.</li> <li>Utilise networks and LinkedIn profile.</li> <li>Apply for jobs online.</li> </ul>	<b>One to two years</b> Date
<b>Long-term goals</b> Manager of ICT team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities in current workplace.</li> <li>Maintain networks.</li> <li>Upskill, get qualifications.</li> <li>Attend leadership courses.</li> </ul>	<b>Two years plus</b> Date

Identify some specific and achievable goals and actions.

**What?**

**How?**

**By when?**

---

**Short-term goals**

**One year**

---

**Medium-term goals**

**One to two years**

---

**Long-term goals**

**Two years plus**

# Other useful resources

To further assist in your job search the following videos and websites provide additional information on working in New Zealand.



Visit our website [careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)



## Work Connect on Facebook

[facebook.com/workconnectnz](https://facebook.com/workconnectnz)



## Work Connect LinkedIn Group

[linkedin.com/groups/10462239](https://linkedin.com/groups/10462239)



## How to find work in New Zealand

[youtu.be/SAANrHm6Y80](https://youtu.be/SAANrHm6Y80)



## What employers want

[youtu.be/TnYQGVHkGH4](https://youtu.be/TnYQGVHkGH4)



## Work Talk – Immigration New Zealand

[worktalk.immigration.govt.nz](https://worktalk.immigration.govt.nz)



## Communicating effectively in a Job Interview

[newzealandnow.govt.nz/files/documents/MBIE\\_VUW%20Job%20Interview%20Doc\\_v21\\_Web.pdf](https://newzealandnow.govt.nz/files/documents/MBIE_VUW%20Job%20Interview%20Doc_v21_Web.pdf)



## Behavioural interviews

[youtu.be/sUWCSjwBpVs](https://youtu.be/sUWCSjwBpVs)



## Informational interviewing

[youtu.be/CXZDTDBLKRE](https://youtu.be/CXZDTDBLKRE)



## The Treaty Resource Centre

[trc.org.nz](https://trc.org.nz)



## Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – Employment New Zealand

[employment.govt.nz/starting-employment](https://employment.govt.nz/starting-employment)

# Note

A large empty rectangular box for taking notes.

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**Work Connect**  
[careers.govt.nz/workconnect](https://careers.govt.nz/workconnect)



**New Zealand Government**