

LYIT | CAREERS BRIEF

LYIT'S CAREERS NEWSLETTER | February 2016| www.lyit.ie

TÁ SEIRBHÍS LE FÁIL TRÍ GHAEILGE FREISIN

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Foreword

Hello All,

Welcome back to the start of a new semester. This term the Careers Office is offering a comprehensive line up of events and seminars which will help you to ensure you are making the most of your options. Check Noticeboards, Emails and Blackboards for updates!

If you are thinking about summer work/part time work/voluntary work, why not avail of a free CV check? Contact the Careers Officer for an appointment.

As always, students are welcome to avail of the Careers Service. Make us your first stop for: information on career options following your studies, creating a winning CV, advice on dealing with the toughest interviews, assessing your postgraduate study options, completing personal statements for courses, working and studying abroad.

You can make an appointment by email/telephone or in person:

Tel: (00353) 7491 86812

Email: Catherine.Lyster@lyit.ie

Tá seirbhís le fáil trí ghaeilge freisin

I look forward to meeting you in this coming year. Check out what's inside this month's edition:

Whilst LYIT Careers Office makes every attempt to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information contained in Careersbrief, it should not be relied upon as a substitute for formal advice from the originating bodies, it is strongly advised that readers refer to original sources for information as the Careers Office cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies.

Fáilte ar ais don téarma nua. Beidh a lán imeachtaí á n-eagrú ag an Oifig Ghairmeacha a bheidh an áisiúil duit nuair a tá tú ag pleanáil cad a dhéanfaidh tú taréis do staidéir san LYIT.

Beidh tuilleadh sonraí ar fáil ar an leathanach Facebook (Careers). Coinnigh súil ar an leathanach sin le haghaidh sprioc dhátaí, cúrsaí nua, blogs, físeáin agus go leor eile!

Beidh tionólacha ar siúil do lucht an 3ú agus an 4ú bliain sa ghnó, eolaíocht, ríomhaireacht agus dóibh siúd ar mian leo a ghnó féin a chur ar bun. Breis eolais le fáil ar an leathanach Facebook agus Blackboard.

Le coinne a dhéanamh leis an ghairm threoraí, seol ríomhphost chuig: catherine.lyster@lyit.ie nó teileafón 0749186812

Beir Bua

Catherine Lyster
Gairmthreoir



Graduate level jobs in Public Sector

Thinking of a graduate level career in the public sector? – before applying, get an insight in to the range of departments and opportunities by checking out <http://www.gradpublicjobs.ie/gradpublicjobs/opportunity.htm?panel=1>

Thinking of Changing Course?

You can find out about the range of courses available in Ireland by checking out www.qualifax.ie.

If you are looking to do a similar course but at a higher level at another college, you can apply as a direct applicant. **Contact colleges directly.**

If you are looking to transfer to year one of course in any college, you will need to complete a CAO form on the website: www.cao.ie

Contact Catherine Lyster to arrange an appointment.



The Gradireland Postgradireland Further Study Fair 2016 will take place on 10 February 2016

From 12-4.30pm at the Serpentine Hall, RDS, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 [#postgradfair](https://www.facebook.com/postgradfair)

This is the official national postgraduate further study event for students, graduates and people returning to full time and part time education, in Ireland north and south.

There will be hundreds of postgraduate, further education courses and research opportunities with exhibitors from across Ireland, Northern Ireland and overseas.

Preparation is key

- Think of yourself as a consumer shopping for your ideal course.
- Think of all of those questions that might not be answered by reading brochures or by searching a website.
- Carefully select the exhibitors and then find out what they can offer you. What kind of courses do they offer? What careers can these qualifications lead to?
- Review the seminars that are being run and see which one will most benefit you.
- Research the institutions attending.

What to do when you arrive at the fair

- When you arrive at the fair make sure that you register, if you have not already pre-registered, check in and pick up your FREE copy of the fair guide.
- Take time to look through the guide and decide which exhibitors you would like to talk to. Don't forget to pick up your floor plan from the registration desk and remember to check what room your seminar is in.
- Make notes so that you've got all the details you need to follow up contacts when you get home. Treat the fair as a fact-finding mission, and don't forget that this is your opportunity to ask questions

postgradireland further study fair 2016 seminars announced!

Personal Statements

Teacher training in the UK

The Fulbright Awards: Opportunities to Study and Research in the US

Careers Awareness Week

Get your Career into Gear and make your job applications stand out for all the right reasons by taking part in our Careers Awareness Week!

The Careers Office at LYIT is delighted to announce details of its upcoming Careers Awareness Week which will be taking place from 8th–11th February inclusive in the seminar room, Co Lab, LYIT.



Presented by experienced careers professionals, Careers Awareness Week will consist of a series of lunchtime seminars (1.30 – 2.30 daily) on hot careers topics including 'Successful job applications', 'Coping with interviews', 'Using LinkedIn in your job search' and 'Applying to Postgraduate Courses'.

- Careers Awareness week begins on Monday 8th February with a presentation by Emma Boylan on 'Using LinkedIn in your Job search'. Emma owns 'Outside the Box', a very successful Letterkenny based PR company. Attendees will learn how to set up a good profile, be aware of the do's and don'ts of using LinkedIn for job hunting and will discover useful tips on how to get their profile noticed by the corporates.
- On the 9th February, Helen Mc Grandles, HR officer, LYIT will present a seminar on 'Successful job applications', where attendees will gain top tips on how to craft a well written cover letter and CV. They will also become aware of common mistakes candidates make in job applications and how to avoid them.
- Dermot Gallagher, HR officer, ZEUS, Letterkenny will provide some valuable insights on the 10th February on how to prepare for interviews and give tips on how to navigate those tricky questions.
- The final seminar of Careers Awareness Week on 11th February will be of interest to those who are applying to postgraduate courses. Presented by Catherine Lyster, this seminar will provide information on best resources to use to research information including sourcing and funding for courses in Ireland, UK and further afield. The seminar will address key questions to ask of department heads. The topic of personal statements will also be covered – what to include and avoid and to be aware of what course selectors look for in personal statements.

Further information on Careers Awareness week is available from Catherine Lyster, Careers Officer LYIT

Graduate sites of interest to you...

Engineering finalists and Graduates add this site to your list **Construction Jobs.ie** - http://www.constructionjobs.ie/construction_construction_graduate/ lots of positions available in Ireland and worldwide

Calling all **admin and legal** finalists – check out www.adminjobs.ie - lots of Irish based positions advertised.

Considering a career in sales? – a comprehensive listing of opportunities can be viewed on <https://www.salesjobs.ie>

Applying to postgraduate courses abroad

With the cost of postgraduate studies spiraling in Ireland and the UK, an increasing number of graduates are heading to other EU states where:

- Fees are lower
- Courses are taught through English
- In some cases you can get a non means tested grant

Find out the range of possibilities open to you by checking the following sites:

<http://www.eunicas.ie>
<http://www.european-funding-guide.eu/>
http://www.eurograduate.com/postgrad_search.asp

Networking and Job Hunting for Introverts

– if you are shy, the thought of going out and approaching others for tips on jobs and meeting employers at events can be daunting. As only 25% of jobs are ever advertised, it essential that you develop the confidence to use networking in order to get the best job for you. Fortunately, there are a number of ways to set your introverted tendencies aside and excel in job hunting and networking situations.

Practice Meeting New People Take every opportunity possible to meet new people and use those social experiences as practice for future job hunting and networking situations. You can start putting yourself out there by attending any social events that come your way, regularly socialising will prepare you for one-on-one interviews as well as business networking situations.

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare If you're on the hunt for a job or heading to an interview, make sure you know your cv like the back of your hand. Likewise, make sure you know the companies you are interviewing with inside and out.

Regroup Frequently & Learn From an Extrovert If you have an extrovert in your life, use them as a learning tool, especially for networking situations. By keeping the pointers above in mind, you'll succeed in any social situation – work related or not.

Get your career plans off to a great start get the inside track on what employers really look for in applicants

A large number of Irish employers were asked to provide valuable advice to job seekers and a series of excellent videos were produced.

IT Related Videos especially for computing graduates **Graduate IT Skills Deficit**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJvNRPsQsFg>

Agile skills, Research, Implement your final year project in an agile way, code maintainability, clean code.

IT Telephone interviews and Code Tests- Guidewire, AOL
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnUC6FRgdM4>

Length of technical phone interview, course, final year project, subjects you like, github repositories, code test, problem solving ability, base technical skills. Agile development environment explained - product owner, iterative drops of the software, online assessment.

Graduate Technical CVs-AOL, Guidewire
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UfWUYxObjE>

Github, projects, extra-curricular interests, open source projects, stack overflow.

Whiteboard interviews explained -Guidewire, AOL
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaWqTXJn3es>

Technical and analytical skills, architecture of the code or a problem they solved, understand train of thought, explaining complicated concepts.

Careers Fairs Making the most of Careers Fair
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wag7z-1iqA>

Why companies attend, talking to employers, prepare your questions, CV, asking questions, learn about the role, making an informed choice, getting advice, following up afterwards.

Online Presence -The importance of an online presence
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hO2ZCQwtR5Q>

Involvement in community, github community, following their passions, building connections, social networks are a huge resource, LinkedIn, follow up after presentations, tweeting recruiters, being active on social media, engaging in the business and technology world.

CVs & Application Forms
Tips for effective Graduate CVs
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=punFiJGcswc>

Well-structured 2- 2.5 page CV, simple, well laid out, use the language in the job spec, selling your language skills, tailoring your CV to maximise the relevant information.

Completing Graduate Application Forms:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgR5VIjjeAw>

Volume of applications, targeting the application form, researching the company, wow factor, what is your value add, career motivation, tailoring applications.

Interviewing / Assessment Centres
Competency Based Interviews
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwOjV7rtbjA>

Examine all areas of your experience, all your experience is valid, CARL – Circumstances, Action, Results, Learning; focusing on your contributions, Using the STAR framework, SIR – Significant Impact Result

Questions to ask at the end of the interview
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3PEqLYM7b8>

What would I expect to be doing in the first few months, opportunity to learn more about the company, shows an interest in the job.

Succeeding at telephone interviews
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxMJKuNvYrQ>

Phone manner, know their CV/application form, career goals, don't say yes if its not a good time to talk, why did they apply to this role, why this company, environment, take notes, asking questions at the end

Tips for completing video interviews
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8g4i5FFEQk>

Do it in your own time, timeframes, one chance, preparation, presentation, environment, language tests through video interviews, no bio feedback, practice.

Group Activity in Assessment Centres
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uh75zwiFkvs>

Put yourself forward, sharing ideas, listening, clear communicators, group dynamics, getting trapped in a role, summarising, collaborating, contributing.



Developing Skills

The importance of extra-curricular activities for students/graduates.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmVsyYV5gXk>

Enactus, Differentiate yourself, drawing competencies from extracurricular activities, values, wider campus life, societies, volunteering, Erasmus.

The importance of work experience for students and graduates

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLWgNMslTic>

Skills Deficits in graduates

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRuXcPqRRTs>

PC Skills, Excel, digitally savvy, overinflating competence, language skills.

New year, new you and getting the into the career you want!

1. Update Your CV With Recent Accolades

Today, CV's are strategic marketing documents that must reflect a candidate's worth and value. A CV must properly brand the candidate within his/her areas of focus and be targeted towards the actual job position. Updating your CV and reflecting your recent achievements and accolades is a sure way to provide more value to the reader.

2. Get advice from your careers officer

Many job seekers, millennials in particular, are frustrated with job searching and the job market. A careers office can be a great resource and tool when a job seeker has trouble achieving career goals or continues to reach stumbling blocks. The careers officer can help job seekers realign their direction with solutions-focused ideas, provide positive praise and motivation, and offer guidance in self-discovery.

3. Use Social Media To Your Advantage

We are now living in a heavily advanced digital age. Job seekers can tweet to CEOs and employers, post a Facebook status to alert their friends and family members about their job search, and they can use their LinkedIn profiles to apply for a job, connect with hiring managers, and even expand their own network to connect with other professionals.

4. Network Like There's No Tomorrow

Use networking events to your advantage. You can locate events through Facebook, Twitter, and even sources such as Eventbrite. Be sure to have a business card handy. Pass them out and take the business cards of the other networking professionals. But, don't forget to follow-up through a connection on LinkedIn or even an email that requests a low-key coffee break

Make 2016 your biggest and best year to kickstart your career endeavors with these tips. Don't wait for February to pass you by. It's already here and you are too!

What Are Transferable Skills? And why are they so important?

Transferable skills are the skills you've gathered through various jobs, volunteer work, hobbies, sports, or other life experiences that can be used in your next job or new career. In addition to being useful to career changers, transferable skills are also important to those who are facing a layoff, new graduates who are looking for their first jobs, and to those re-entering the workforce after an extended absence.

How to Identify Your Transferable Skills

The job titles you've held may tell little about what your actual jobs entailed. In other words, formal job descriptions are often very different from reality. That is why it's important to dissect each job you've held in order to discover what skills you actually used to do that job. If you are re-entering the workforce or entering it for the first time you'll have to look at your life experiences to get this information.

Find Out How You Can Use Your Transferable Skills

Self assessments are essential to helping career changers find suitable careers. Part of this should involve finding out what careers best utilize your skills. To learn about various occupations and what skills are required for each, you can do the following:

Gather occupational information.

- Read job descriptions in help wanted ads.
- Contact professional associations.

Selling Your Transferable Skills to a Prospective Employer

You've identified your transferable skills. You know where you can use them. Now you have to convince potential employers. Simply presenting your job titles on your CV won't do the trick since those titles track your old career path. One way to do this is to write an objective that tells which skills are applicable to the position you are seeking. The other way is to write a skills-based cv — either a functional or combination cv.

A functional cv describes each of your skills.

A combination cv combines a cv with a chronological resume, listing your work experience in addition to your skills.

Important Message for any 3rd level student thinking of going to study at 1st year level of a LYIT or that of a different college.

As you are already in the 3rd level system, there is no pressure to have your application with the CAO by 1st February. In fact, the deadline is end of June 2016.

The Careers Office has now placed a broad range of careers related topics on **Blackboard**. If you're ready to make a commitment to your career, the LYIT Careers Office can help you find the position that's just right for you.

Get easy-to-use tips on building your professional network. No matter where you are in the job search process, we can offer expert advice on what you need to do to land your dream job.

The following information is available to you:

Aptitude Tests – Did you know that upwards of 40% of employers use aptitude tests in their recruitment process. If you fail the initial aptitude tests, you are eliminated from the competition. With regular practice, it is possible to pass the aptitude tests.

Get practice now by using sample tests on the LYIT Intranet and Blackboard. For those of you considering applying to nursing, check the Nursing Test Familiarisation Booklet.

CV's – Your cv should clearly show the type of employment you are seeking. Is it part time/full time, work experience or voluntary work? You will probably need 2 cv templates; one for casual work and the other for graduate level employment.

Your cv must be job specific and tailored for the position to which you are applying. The days of sending the same cv to 100 companies are long gone!

LYIT CAREERS SERVICE



IS NOW ON FACEBOOK

Finding the Right Job During this time of economic downturn it is more important now than ever to get as much help as possible in gaining suitable employment. The Careers Officer is available to help you in this process.

Interviews Strategies on how to deal with the toughest of interviews. Do you have an important interview coming up? Find out how to answer the most difficult of questions by booking a mock interview with the Careers Officer.

Working Abroad For those of you thinking of working abroad, there is a readymade list of the most useful websites which will aid your transition to your new country.

Graduate Internship Programmes Internships are often easier to find during a downturn than full-time jobs, as companies that are struggling to afford permanent staff may hire interns to help them to tackle excess workload. These can be an excellent way to gain experience and new skills in a challenging jobs market–find out which programmes are available and when to apply.

Postgraduate Studies Issues to consider and a listing of possible sources of funding.

Postgraduate Teaching Find out about the range of options for study in Ireland and UK in the areas of primary teaching, secondary teaching, teaching English as a foreign language, education psychology and lots more.

Career Options arising from specific courses Including Business, Computing, Design, Engineering, Nursing, Science, Social Care and lots more.

How To Write a Successful Job Application

Job application forms, whether online or on paper, are the first step to getting a job interview. This step-by-step guide explains how to give employers the information they need to put you on the shortlist.

How employers use job application forms

Many recruiters prefer application forms to CVs because they help to standardise applications. This can be seen as fairer because recruiters can compare candidates easily. The downside is that this standardised approach also allows recruiters to filter out unsuitable candidates quickly (sometimes this is even done by computer), so it's important to include all the information necessary to make your case. Employers use written applications to select candidates for interview, and may also refer to information on the form during the interview. It's a good idea to keep a copy so you can remember what you wrote.

What employers are looking for in application forms

When assessing an application for a job, recruiters want to know two things:

1. Do you meet their criteria? This information lets them filter candidates into a 'long list'. Make sure you check the job description and prove that you match the requirements.
2. Do you stand out among the other applicants? This is what helps recruiters make their shortlist for interview. If other candidates have similar qualifications it may be your work experience or extra-curricular activities that reveal your employment potential.

How to complete a job application form

Step 1. Prepare yourself. Get all your basic information together: personal details, education etc. Contact the people you want to use as referees, to get their permission and to confirm their contact details. Think about why you want the job. Think about what you have to offer and what makes you stand out.

Step 2. Find out what the employer wants. Check closing dates; if possible, apply before the deadline. Some employers start processing applications before the closing date – and they are usually deluged by last-minute applications – so if you submit yours early you may get more attention. Read the job description and personal specification to find out what skills and experience they are looking for. Research the organisation for more clues about the kind of applicant who would be successful.

Step 3. Write your application. Give yourself enough time: writing a good job application is likely to take longer than you expect. Draft your answers first, before you start filling in the form. Read the application form right through before you write anything. Follow all instructions and answer the questions asked (yes, it is a bit like an exam!). If there is a question that does not apply to you, write 'not applicable' or 'N/A' in the appropriate box. This shows that you have considered the question and is better than leaving blanks. Make your answers relevant, interesting and personal. Your aim is to write your own interview invitation, so you want to stand out.

Step 4. Final checks. Spell check and proof read your application. If possible, ask a friend or careers adviser to check it too. Check that you have included everything you've been asked for. Keep a copy of your application, so you can go over it before the interview.

Sign and send!

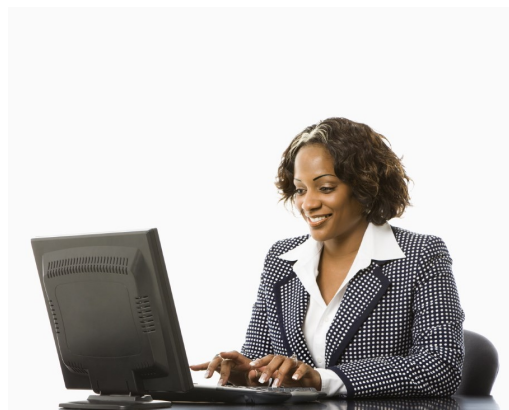
Job application checklist

Here are some final checks before you send off your application form:

- Are your personal details accurate?
- Have you spelt the employer's name correctly?
- Have you filled in all the fields?
- Have you signed the form and cover letter?
- Have you kept a copy?

Job application tips

Take your time: it could take several hours and a lot of concentration to complete an application form. Think about what's behind each question: what are recruiters looking for? Keep a copy for reference: if it's a paper form, photocopy it; if it's online, print it out before you hit 'send'. Make sure you meet all the employer's criteria, and make it easy for them to see this.



How To Write a Successful Job Application (continued)

Online application forms Applying for a job online is similar to filling in a paper application form. The questions will be the same; only the format is different. Allow plenty of time and make sure you won't be disturbed. Some online forms allow you to 'save and return' but some have to be completed in one sitting.

If possible, print off the form so you can prepare your answers offline. This gives you thinking time and lets you check your answers before pasting the text into the form. Use a word-processed document to write longer answers so you can edit and spell check them first. Write for online applications in the same way as you would for a paper form: beware of lapsing into the informal style you might use when sending emails to friends.

If you are asked to email your CV, it is likely to be electronically scanned. You may have to use standard typefaces etc so follow any instructions you are given. If a recruiter is using scanning software, you'll also need to ensure you include keywords for the specific skills and qualifications that they have asked for. Some online application forms include built-in psychometric tests, so it's useful to get some practice in first.

Keep a copy for reference: print out the form before you hit 'send'.

The 'further information' section in job applications

Most application forms will include questions such as 'Why are you suitable for the job?', 'What is your greatest achievement?' and 'What are your interests and hobbies?' Don't ignore it: this is your chance to make an impact.

This gives you a chance to reveal something of your personality: aim to show that you're more interesting than other candidates with similar work experience and grades. Use a range of examples from all areas of your life – college, work and other interests/activities.

Sometimes an application form will just have the heading 'additional information': this is an open invitation to tell them what you want them to know. However the question is worded, your answers should demonstrate that you are a well-rounded individual with the skills, aptitude and personality to do the job and to fit into the organisation. That's exactly what a recruiter wants to hear.

Top Tips for 2016 graduates

Clean up your online presence

The first thing employers will do is to see what they can find out about you on the Internet. Are you ready for that? They may look at your Facebook page during the interview. Are you ready for that?

Look for WORK, not a JOB

Don't scare off employers by communicating that you're looking for a job and all the traditional benefits that go with it. Make it easy for them to hire you by making it clear that you are happy to accept part-time, temporary, or contract work. If you are equipped to work from home, tell them that too. It may appeal to them.

Think

Put yourself in the shoes of any employer you plan to contact. Why would they be interested in you? What exactly do you have to offer them? Show them in your first contact with them that you know about them, the type of work they do and the industry they're in. NEVER send out lots of cv's in a shotgun fashion.

Create your own job

Instead of waiting for someone to offer you a job, consider what millions of graduates around the world have been doing for years; i.e. operate as a freelancer!.

Do your homework

There's a wealth of information available on the employer's web site. Amazingly, many graduates never take the time to thoroughly analyze this information and be ready to answer questions about it in the interview. It will also help if you can talk about some of the key issues going on in their industry.

Bite your tongue

Talking too much in the interview is among the biggest mistakes graduates make according to employers and recruiters. The more prepared you are for the interview, the less inclined you'll be to ramble on.

For further information, please make an appointment to meet the Careers Office by emailing: careers@lyit.ie

How to Get a Work Experience Position

Tips for students on finding and applying for a work experience or internship position.

Where to look: Think local and see what is available in your area. Networking can also help, especially if you are looking for work in the media or the arts. This is the process of exploiting contacts and other sources to find information, possibly work experience and maybe a job when you graduate. Ask yourself if you know anyone who might be useful to chat to about his or her job, or if you know anyone with a useful contact.

Applications: You should treat your work experience application with the same mentality as you would an application for a graduate job. You may have to adopt a slightly different approach to creating your CV at this stage, since you are seeking work experience and may have limited experience to present. You could include some of the modules or areas of study that make up your current qualification: a full list of subjects or modules will not say as much about you as a carefully selected list of subjects or modules that you find interesting or perform well at.

When to do it: The best time to get some work experience will depend a lot on your academic commitments and the other activities your institution has to offer which you might want to get involved in. It is for you to decide what your priorities are; financial pressures mean many students do part-time work. But you can also develop employability skills through your involvement in societies and sports because you are bound to be involved in communication and teamwork as well as problem-solving.

Tips for getting the most from your experience: Put together a portfolio of work that you've done or projects you have contributed to during your placement. This is concrete evidence of your work and abilities to show prospective employers.

Note examples of things you have achieved that you can use in job applications to demonstrate work-based skills. Keep in contact with the people you meet and work with. This is the basis of your future professional network, and can also help with references.

Tips on how to deal with gaps in your CV

The list of reasons for a gap in your cv is seemingly limitless. Whatever the reason, gaps in our employment histories happen.

While there may be a gap on your cv, all hope for overcoming the hurdles involved in the hiring process should not be lost. If you're ready to jump back into the rat race, a little bit of can-do attitude and calculated clarifications can help to shift the focus away from an employment chasm. In some cases, you can even use these to your advantage. Here are some tips to help you bridge these gaps with recruiters and hiring managers.

Avoid Negativity: If your situation was the result of a redundancy, keep things positive! Regardless of how the process was handled or how you may have been wronged, when an inquiry does come up, explain the situation as concisely as possible. Focus on what you accomplished in your former role and use this as your chance to explain the benefits you brought to the organisation. Be sure to emphasize how you plan to use your experience and knowledge in the new position.

Put the Limelight on the Lull:

Don't be afraid to draw attention, or even focus on a particular gap—especially if you've filled your time with activities related to the new role or self-improvement. Did you return to college to pick up some additional skills or credits? Have you earned a new certification or endorsement? If you volunteered or picked up an internship, now is the time to explain the connection to these activities and your goals. Occurrences like these can actually be considered positive gaps, however the onus is on you to ensure the person on the other end of the phone or desk understands your unique situation.

Be Honest: Not every circumstance surrounding a lapse in employment is rosy; however, you should not be tempted to bend reality. In short, be honest.

Most importantly, don't go into an interview ready to "wing it." Have your answer(s) ready. Practice all the possibilities, both the obvious and the curveballs. With a solid answer in hand, you're sure to reach your desired destination!

Guidelines to enhance your CV and maximise its effectiveness.

At one time or another, we all develop and use CV's in making job applications but very few people manage to do this effectively. In part this may be due to a lack of clarity on how to develop a CV and while it is true that there is no right or wrong way, there are guidelines you may use to enhance your CV and maximise its effectiveness. These include:

Content: Remember that the purpose of a CV and covering letter is to clearly connect your qualifications, skills, experience and expertise to the job and employer you are applying to. This means that a fresh version of your CV and covering letter should be developed for each position applied to. At times, this may mean virtually no revision of the original, may lead to major rewrite with emphasis on different skills, experience and expertise or even the development of a different type of CV e.g. moving from a chronological CV to a skills-based CV (you will find examples of different CV types on the links provided in this section of the website).

Style: Your future employer is likely to spend not more than two minutes when deciding to short list you for interview. Therefore, your CV must be well laid out, easy to read and with all relevant information easily accessed. Consider using bullet points when developing your content, starting each with an active verb is possible. Words such as managed, organised, developed, published, led all convey engagement and activity the moment the reader's eye land on them and this strategy works well. Use plain white paper, clear sections but do not use tables, different fonts and style. Generally, speaking a font such as Arial 11 is easily read.

Communication: As already suggested, a CV must look professional, it should contain no errors in spelling or in grammar and if you have used the CV and covering letter in a previous application, ensure you remove any details specific to the previous employer, (this is one of the most common errors with CV's and covering letters).

Context: Use an appropriate format when applying for a position. You may have free choice but some employers will expect you to use a traditional 2 page CV, others may request a one-page summary and others may have an on-line template they want you to use. If they have a stated preference, you need to follow that format to be considered.

What is a functional CV format?

A functional CV is a skills-based CV format. These formats can be useful if you're looking for a career change. This is because they focus on your transferable skills and experience, rather than job titles, companies, and how long ago you got the experience.

In a functional CV you promote your skills and achievements in three to six 'functional headings'. For example, if you're applying for work in a retail role then headings could include 'customer service' and 'sales' – both key skills for any retail role.

Functional CVs are similar to targeted CVs, in that they focus on your skills, but on a functional CV you choose the title of the three to six skill headings. On a targeted CV the headings are always 'abilities' and 'achievements'. Therefore, functional CVs can be effective at highlighting your unique combination of skills.

What should I include and what should I leave out?

Under each sub-heading you include more details about your relevant skills and experience. You might have got this experience from paid work, voluntary work or education. Any experience that you feel isn't relevant can be left out.

What are the pros and cons?

You might consider using a functional CV if:

- ♦ you want to change to a broad, new area of work, and show your relevant transferable skills and experience
- ♦ you've got gaps in your employment history
- ♦ you've had a lot of jobs and you want to describe the experience you've got as a whole
- ♦ you want to highlight skills you've gained in previous jobs but that you don't use in your current or most recent job

While there is no correct CV and covering letter format, there are guidelines and conventions that will enhance your CV and help you understand the difference between an academic CV and a CV for use with non-academic employers.

Please make an appointment to meet the Careers Office by emailing: careers@lyit.ie

5 Unhealthy Job Search Habits Keeping You Unemployed

Sometimes in life, our actions are completely counter-intuitive. For example, deciding to go on a diet. The first thing most people do is think they must eliminate something or cut back. In reality, the challenge of a diet is you must add more good foods versus taking away bad foods. The good naturally replaces the bad. But, it's a huge challenge to plan and add good healthy foods to your diet five to six times a day versus going in drive through two times a day.

The same is true for your job search. Are you going to get "job healthy" by adding good habits to your daily routine, or are you going to stay fat, miserable and unemployed by choosing the "fast food" route? Of course, the challenge is to know what is healthy and what is not. Here are the top five unhealthy job search habits and how to replace them with healthy ones:

1. Targeting Human Resources And Recruiters

Yes, eventually you will likely have to talk to those folks, but they should be the last group you actually try to get in front of. Most people think they make the hiring decisions – they don't; the hiring manager does. And not only that, but the hiring manager is the one who has a vested interest in filling the position. They are the one who will lose sleep if the position is not filled. So, change your habit of going to HR and instead start going directly to the source or even better, get a referral to the source (that gives you the inside edge).

2. Thinking The Interview Has Anything To Do With You

In reality, your objective should be just like a salesperson when they are trying to make the sale. Your number one job is to serve *others*. And, the better job you do of proving that, the better you will be received. The interview has very little to do with you and everything to do with how you are going to solve the problems the company is facing. You find that out through research and good Socratic interviewing.

3. Trying To Be The "Most Qualified Candidate"

Honestly, the most qualified person rarely gets the job. First of all, the most qualified person probably didn't even apply. Secondly, he or she may have the best technical qualifications and years of experience, but be an absolutely horrible fit for the culture and objectives of the company.

The best candidate is the *best fit*, the one who can help the organization meet their goals, not cause a huge rift and stay for a long, long time. Simple enough, but more challenging to prove than just copying the qualifications from a job description and expecting an offer.

4. Using Quick Fix (Fast Food) Solutions

The list goes on and on and includes "resume distribution" services, and fancy resume writing packages and SEO services. Unfortunately, all of these quick fixes have one thing in common. They are passive ways to get a job. That is also called gambling. Sure, sometimes they work; and sometimes people win the lottery.

Instead, do what 80% of successful job seekers do and get proactively involved by researching and contacting as many companies and individuals that you possibly can.

5. Posting Your CV On Major Job Boards

This may be the most fattening solution of all! Why? Because it serves our need for immediate gratification, yet gives us virtually no benefit. We feel like we have done something, and in reality, we just took a short cut and went through the drive-through. By taking the time to continually post your resume and apply for jobs you are taking valuable time away from healthy, pro-active solutions. Think about the act of posting a resume on-line. It's not even as good as buying a lottery ticket. At least when you play the lottery, you find out in a week or so why you didn't win!

Taking the easy way out is what most people do (you know, because it's easy). For true success, you have to do just the opposite of what most people are doing. All you have to do is get off the couch and stop waiting for the phone to ring. Instead, *cause* the phone to ring. Wow, I can see the job search fat just melting off. Congratulations, you have now joined the ranks of fit, active, fulfilled job seekers!

Winning Job Interview Tips

Job interview tips for success. The more prepared and confident you are for your job interview the better your chances of getting the job you want.

There are a number of interview techniques that can help you with both your job interview preparation and to impress the interviewer as the right job candidate. Know what to bring to the job interview. Go through the advice on which documents and details you need to have before you set out for your interview

Pre Interview Checklist: Use this practical interview checklist of what you need to do the day before your interview. You want to be sure that you are properly prepared and confident of getting the job

- Full name of company, name and position of contact person/interviewer and contact number
- Full address of company and the department or building where your interview is.
- Good directions or map. Get these by calling the company, they usually have a standard set of directions they can email you or they can tell you on the phone. You can also obtain a map from an internet map site such as or Google Maps. If you are taking public transport have your route prepared.
- Details of where you can park

Read through your CV again and note any red flags that will have to be dealt with during the interview. Take out the clothes you plan to wear and make sure they are clean and pressed. Shoes should be polished. Select the accessories you want to wear. Lay your outfit out ready for the next day. Get a good night's sleep knowing you are fully prepared to ace the interview!

Best Preparation Tips for

Interviews: A couple of hours researching the company is your first step to good job interview preparation. Taking some time to prepare your best interview answers to common job interview questions and practicing these before the interview is the next essential step. The most effective way to prepare for an interview is to anticipate the job interview questions you will be asked and plan your best answers. This builds your confidence and greatly increases your chances of success in the job interview.

It is essential to make the right impression from the moment you enter the company for your job interview.

Present yourself positively to everyone you meet and leave behind a good impression. You will be remembered as a candidate who was polite and friendly. Your job interview begins in the car park: act professionally as anyone could be observing you. As you arrive for your job interview, turn off your mobile phone. Now you are completely focused on the interview and at no point will you be interrupted by a ringing phone! Using gadgets such as ipods or MP3 players while you wait for your interview gives the impression of a lack of interest and an unprofessional attitude.

Greet the receptionist politely and speak confidently when you introduce yourself. Explain your reason for being there and ask for the interviewer by name. You should arrive about ten minutes early, spend this time making friendly small talk with the receptionist. You can gain some useful information about the company or interviewer as well as make a positive impression on the receptionist.

You may be asked to complete some forms on arrival. Ensure you provide the correct information and complete all the requirements. Interviewers may ask their assistants for an opinion of the candidate. Make sure you are professional and polite to any support staff. [View each contact you make in the company as a part of your job interview process.](#)

The very first impression that the interviewer has of you is based mainly on your non-verbal clues - your appearance, how you dress for an interview and the way you greet the interviewer. Make sure you stand up, look directly at the interviewer and give a firm handshake, saying something along the lines of, "I am pleased to meet you, Mr Smith."

It is always valuable to use the interviewer's name. Wait for the interviewer to give you the signal to sit down, either a hand gesture or when he or she sits down themselves. If you are sitting at a table, place your document folder on the table rather than keeping it on your lap. If you have a handbag, place this on the floor by your feet. If there is no table think carefully before accepting the offer of something to drink. You don't want to have to balance a cup of coffee or glass of water throughout the interview!

Establish good rapport with your interviewer by communicating effectively and appropriately during the interview. Interviewers are consistently impressed by candidates who are well informed and able to demonstrate the relevance of their skills and experience in answering a job interview question. The job interview is your greatest opportunity - present yourself as the best candidate. Thorough preparation of job interview questions and answers ensures you are well on your way to success!

Common Job Interview Questions:

- Tell me about yourself?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why should we hire you?
- Why this company?
- Describe your greatest achievement?
- What interests you about this position?
- Your goals for the next 5 years
- Reason for leaving current job?

Check out <http://www.best-job-interview.com/job-interview-questions.html> for a comprehensive list of Job Interview questions and answers

What Job Interview Question Should You Ask?

One of the easiest ways to interview success is to prepare a list of good interview questions to ask the interviewer. Asking thoughtful and well-researched questions during your job interview makes a great impression. Take advantage of the opportunity to ask focused job interview questions. Show that you are better prepared than the other candidates, use your questions to highlight your suitability for the job. Take control of the discussion by asking the job interview question that you have researched and prepared. The timing of your interview questions should be thought about. The interviewer will ask you at some point, "Do you have any questions for me?" You can wait for this opportunity to ask your planned questions or you can assess the situation as the interview progresses to decide when it is a good time to ask your question. Interviewers want candidates to ask enough questions during the job interview to collect the necessary information to make a wise decision. Focused, open-ended questions help you come across as a resourceful candidate who is able to gather enough information to make a well-informed decision, an essential job competency.

Nothing frustrates an interviewer more than asking a candidate if they have any questions, only to be told, "No you have answered them all already."

Not asking good questions during the job interview when given the opportunity is a big interview mistake. It indicates a lack of interest and initiative.

Good tips for asking a job interview question include:

Ask open-ended questions. Closed questions that require just a "yes" or "no" response contribute little to the flow of the interview and provide minimal information.

Avoid interrupting the interviewer, make sure you are at an appropriate point for your question.

Only ask questions that are relevant to the job, department, management and organization.

Interview questions that appear to be challenging the interviewer or that require knowledge or information that the interviewer is unlikely to have create an uncomfortable atmosphere and impact negatively on attempts at establishing rapport.

Closing the Interview Closing the interview successfully is crucial to your job search success. Close the interview with a proactive closing statement.

How you close should be tailored to suit the position, the company, the style of the interviewer and your own personal style. Use the possible statement below to help you develop your own closing that is appropriate and that you feel comfortable with.

"I did extensive research on this company beforehand and was really excited about this interview. This has been reinforced by everything I have heard and learned today. I appreciate the time you have taken with me and I am positive about my ability to perform successfully in this job. Is there anything else you need to know, ?"

Thank you Letter or Email Always send a thank you letter or email within 24 hours of your job interview and stand out from the competition. [View sample Interview Thank You Letters on : http://www.best-job-interview.com/interview-follow-up-letter.html](http://www.best-job-interview.com/interview-follow-up-letter.html) to select the most appropriate letter for your situation. In addition to thanking the interviewer for his or her time, it reinforces your enthusiasm for the job opportunity, it highlights your suitability and it sends the message that you are a professional and organised job candidate.



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