



Australian Government

**JOB JUMPSTART**  
YOUR CAREER. YOUR FUTURE.

# Job search basics - Teacher's guide



# Introduction

For some young people, finding their first, and subsequent jobs, is a breeze. For others it can be a daunting prospect.

The Job Jumpstart website (at [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au)) aims to bring together a range of information and guidance to help support young people to make a successful transition to work. Whether it's through meaningful work experience, finding a part-time job while studying or planning their career post-study.

The 'Job search basics workbook' brings together key resources from the Job Jumpstart website to help young people build their job search skills to:

- understand their personal preferences and skills and how these can benefit employers
- confidently approach employers about job opportunities
- build quality job applications, including tailoring their résumé to a specific job, and
- prepare for and succeed at interviews.

The 'Job search basics workbook' is available at [https://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/job\\_search\\_basics\\_interactive\\_workbook\\_020420.pdf](https://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/job_search_basics_interactive_workbook_020420.pdf)

Alternatively you can order printed hardcopies by emailing [jobjumpstart@dese.gov.au](mailto:jobjumpstart@dese.gov.au).

## Notes on this teacher's guide:

This teacher's guide is intended as a supplementary support for teachers, employment services providers and career advisers to work through the 'Job search basics workbook' with young people. As they work through the 'Job search basics workbook', you can use this guide to support them and facilitate group discussion.

The 'Job search basics workbook' contains a range of self-reflection, group work and whole-group discussion topics. This teacher's guide includes additional activities including:

- **Supplementary exercises** - not covered in the workbooks. These aim to help young people further solidify their understanding of this topic.
- **Questions** - To help you facilitate discussion or to get young people to further reflect on their preferences.
- **Further resources** - Links to a range of further information (including additional workbooks) that may be of interest or relevance to young people.

# Job Jumpstart video content

To help young people to engage with the topics covered by the 'Job search basics workbook', we have developed some short videos to grab their attention and get them thinking about how to take action on their job search and employment planning.

You could use these videos to introduce the chapters of the workbook or to break up the content.

## How to be competitive for jobs:

This short three-part video suite offers insights and tips for job seekers to understand their own preferences, engage with employers and stay motivated during their job search:

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/how-be-competitive-jobs-part-1-getting-know-yourself](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/how-be-competitive-jobs-part-1-getting-know-yourself)

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/how-be-competitive-jobs-part-2-what-do-employers-want](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/how-be-competitive-jobs-part-2-what-do-employers-want)

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/how-be-competitive-jobs-part-3-you-got](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/how-be-competitive-jobs-part-3-you-got)

## Topic videos:

These short (45 sec) videos offer quick tips on a range of job search topics:

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/got-goal-got-find-pathway](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/got-goal-got-find-pathway)

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/no-work-experience-no-problem](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/no-work-experience-no-problem)

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/4-steps-writing-killer-cover-letter](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/4-steps-writing-killer-cover-letter)

[www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/hot-tips-stand-out-crowd](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/video/hot-tips-stand-out-crowd)

# Chapter 1 - Know what you want and can offer

By understanding their work preferences and motivators, job seekers will be better able to identify the roles that will suit them.

This chapter poses some simple questions to prompt job seekers to think about their specific preferences, specifically around their ideal work environment, tasks and personal interactions.

By completing this exercise, job seekers could build a better understanding of how they would like to work. This could help them find roles that match their preferences and personality.

## How to use the results

As our preferences can change over time, an individual's results should be viewed as a general indicator only. A job seeker may be willing to reconsider their identified preferences for a job that offers other perks or motivators.

The insights from this exercise can also help job seekers when they contact employers and are asked about why they are right for the job and how they might fit within the organisation.

## Supplementary questions

**Activity 1.4: How to use what you found out** - These steps aim to help job seekers reflect on their work preferences and then explore roles that might suit them using the Job Outlook website at [www.joboutlook.gov.au](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au).

**This activity can be expanded by adding these additional questions:**

- Based on the information you found on Job Outlook, in general, do the roles you are interested in match the preferences you outlined in Step 1?
- If not, are there any big differences between your preferences and what is required for the role? Did this surprise you?
- Can you think of any ways you could perform any of these roles so they better fit with your preferences? For example, could you control noise levels with earplugs?
- Alternatively, would you be willing to perform the role/s despite not exactly aligning to your preferences?
- Can you find any occupations on Job Outlook that exactly match your preferences?

## Further resources:

### Know your work preferences

This article aims to help job seekers to understand their work preferences, the types of activities they enjoy and the environments they work best in.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/know-your-work-preferences](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/know-your-work-preferences)

### Figure out your workplace skills so you can tailor your résumé

Job seekers can use this workbook to understand their workplace and communication skills (also referred to as 'employability' or 'soft' skills). This workbook takes job seekers through how to talk about these skills in their job application to impress an employer.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/08/employability\\_skills\\_-\\_profile\\_aug\\_19.pdf](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/08/employability_skills_-_profile_aug_19.pdf)

# Chapter 2 - Understanding employers

Employers tell us that the job applicants who stand out from the crowd are the ones who:

- demonstrate a real understanding of the business, and
- can articulate what they have to offer.

Taking the time to see things from the employer's perspective before submitting an application or attending an interview can work in a job seeker's favour.

Before submitting a job application or an interview, job seekers should always try to understand the following:

- what is this employer looking for in workers?
- how do they recruit?
- how can I market myself to meet their needs?

This chapter provides insights and an activity for job seekers to build their knowledge about:

- the different recruitment channels employers use
- ways to make contact with employers about job or work experience opportunities, and
- how to make a great first impression on employers.

## **Activity 2.1: What are employers looking for? (page 11-12)**

This activity asks job seekers to review a job ad to work out the employer's skill requirements. They then need to relate these requirements back to their own skills, experiences and abilities.

This exercise helps job seekers to understand that the majority of their skills and experience are directly transferable to a range of different roles and employers.

By understanding the employer's expectations and requirements, job seekers can work out how to communicate their skills and experience in a way that make them relevant and valuable to the employer.

## Supplementary exercise

As an additional activity, job seekers are encouraged to complete the 'Employer Profiling' workbook available on the Job Jumpstart website.

**Step 1:** Think of an employer you would like to work for.

**Step 2:** Go to the Job Jumpstart website and complete the workbook 'Employer profiling' - at [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/09/employer\\_profiling\\_-\\_work\\_book\\_-\\_sept\\_19.pdf](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/09/employer_profiling_-_work_book_-_sept_19.pdf)

- Job seekers should use a range of information to find out about this employer, including looking on their website, on jobs boards, social media or in the news.
- Depending on the size of the employer, some of the information may be difficult to find. As an alternative, job seekers could try looking for general information on the broader industry to find this information.

**Step 3:** Consider the following questions.

- Are there any big surprises with the employer you chose? For example, is the work culture what you expected or do their values stack up to what you thought?
- Does this information give you a better idea of what it might be like to work there? Do you think this workplace would suit you or has this information put you off the employer?

## Further resources:

### Australian employers offer advice to young job seekers

The Department regularly surveys Australian employers to find out what advice they would give to young people looking for a job – check out what they said:

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/australian-employers-offer-advice-young-job-seekers](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/australian-employers-offer-advice-young-job-seekers)

### Contacting employers directly

This tip sheet offers tips and advice for anyone contacting an employer they want to work for.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/08/contacting\\_employers\\_directly\\_aug19.pdf](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/08/contacting_employers_directly_aug19.pdf)

# Chapter 3 - Your job application

Looking for a job usually involves some type of recruitment process, requiring a résumé and interview. This means job seekers need to learn to actively market themselves to an employer as the right person for the job.

This chapter provides information and activities on how to:

- build a résumé that shows off your skills and personality and is tailored to a specific job, and
- create a cover letter that gets an employer's attention.

## Activity 3.2: How to write a tailored résumé (page 14-21)

This activity takes job seekers through the steps required to build a résumé tailored to a specific role and employer.

### Key words (page 18-19)

In this activity, job seekers are asked to find a job ad online that interests them and identify the employer's 'key words'.

To find a job ad, job seekers can visit [www.jobactive.gov.au](http://www.jobactive.gov.au) and use the 'Looking for a job?' function to search for a job title that interests them. Alternatively, they can search online for a company they want to work for and view their recruitment page.

### What are key words?

Key words are the statements employers make in their job ads about the kind of candidate they are looking for. Job seekers need to review the job ad to identify these statements and the words describing the essential traits the employer is looking for.

Key words fit into three categories:

- **personal attributes** - for example, hard working, punctual, highly motivated, creative, well presented
- **skill and experience** - for example, customer service, proficient in Microsoft Office
- **training and qualifications** - for example, First aid certificate, Cert III in Childcare, driver's licence.

You'll note that some of these words can be classified into more than one category. For example, having your driver's licence is both a skill and a qualification.

After identifying an employer's 'key words', job seekers should reflect this language in their cover letter and/or résumé.



## Referees (page 22-23)

This activity asks job seekers to identify and list details for two individuals to act as referees for the job ad they were reviewing.

### Key points:

- You should always ask someone's permission before listing them on their résumé.
- For those with previous work experience, listing a former manager is best. They should try not to use general co-workers as referees.
- Listing managers from an unpaid work experience placement and volunteering is also a good option.
- For those working in a family business, it is always best not to list direct family members. These individuals should try to find a referee who is not related to them.
- Those without previous work experience, could get a character reference from teachers, sports coaches or members of their religious or community group.

## Direct and indirect messages (page 25)

This short activity prompts job seekers to consider the positive and negative messages they might be sending an employer through their résumé. For example, a résumé with spelling errors tells an employer "I don't have good attention to detail".

By identifying and addressing any negative indirect messages their résumé might be communicating to employers, job seekers can ensure they send the right direct message about their suitability for the role.

## Cover letters (page 27)

By including a cover letter with their résumé, job seekers get a chance to introduce themselves to the employer. Their cover letter should outline their qualifications, experience, strengths and positive work traits that are relevant to the job and business. A well-written cover letter also demonstrates strong written communication skills.

This chapter also provides a brief checklist for help with writing a cover letter.

### Tips for writing a cover letter:

- A cover letter should be short - about 2-3 paragraphs. It should explain how a person's skills, experience and personal traits make them a good match for the job.
- Job seekers should always tailor their cover letter to each employer. Sending out a generic 'form' letter clearly tells employers they are not interested in them or their job.

## Supplementary exercise

Take the Job Jumpstart Résumé Quiz:

**Step 1:** Visit [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/resume-quiz](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/resume-quiz)

**Step 2:** This tool can test an individual's knowledge of what information to include when tailoring a résumé to a specific job.

The aim is to help one of three 'virtual' job seekers get their perfect job while learning how to tailor a résumé to meet an employer's needs.

**Note:** This activity takes about 10 - 15 minutes to complete.

## Useful links:

### **Building your résumé**

This article provides an introduction to what makes a good résumé.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/build-your-basic-resume](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/build-your-basic-resume)

### **Four steps to tailoring your résumé**

This article breaks down the steps to tailoring a résumé to an employer.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/four-steps-tailoring-your-resume](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/four-steps-tailoring-your-resume)

### **How to write a tailored résumé**

This workbook helps job seekers to understand how to build a tailored résumé. They can then use a résumé template to create a résumé for a specific employer.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/11/how\\_to\\_write\\_a\\_tailored\\_resume\\_-\\_work\\_book\\_-\\_oct\\_19\\_edit.pdf](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/11/how_to_write_a_tailored_resume_-_work_book_-_oct_19_edit.pdf)

### **Résumé Templates**

This article provides links to résumé templates and outlines the importance of choosing a résumé template that matches the employer and the role.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/resume-templates-why-and-how](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/resume-templates-why-and-how)

### **What is a cover letter and why do I need one?**

This article explains how a cover letter can help job seekers promote their skills to an employer.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/what-cover-letter-and-why-do-i-need-one](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/what-cover-letter-and-why-do-i-need-one)

### **How to write a cover letter**

This workbook provides information on building a cover letter that grabs an employer's attention.

Link: [https://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/09/how\\_to\\_write\\_a\\_cover\\_letter\\_-\\_work\\_book\\_-\\_sept\\_19.pdf](https://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/09/how_to_write_a_cover_letter_-_work_book_-_sept_19.pdf)

# Chapter 4 - Interviews

Attending an interview can be stressful even for the most confident person. This chapter offers tips and prompts for preparing for a job interview.

## **Activity 4.1: Succeeding at job interviews (page 30-35)**

For this exercise, job seekers are asked to choose an employer or job ad that interests them.

### **Research the job and/or employer**

Researching the employer before the interview can help you feel more confident on the day. This exercise requires job seekers to answer some questions about the employer and job to find out more about them.

### **Interview warm up and common interview questions**

This exercise provides prompts to help job seekers develop suitable answers to a range of common interview questions.

### **Time to rehearse out loud**

Job seekers can work in pairs or groups to answer common interview questions and then provide feedback to each other on how they went.

A list of feedback prompts are provided in the workbook.

### **Identify and remove barriers to success**

This section encourages job seekers to identify the barriers and issues that might impact their interview performance.

They then need to consider possible solutions for these issues to feel more confident about their interview.

At the end of the chapter there is checklist to help job seekers to review their job interview readiness. This table can help job seekers identify the specific areas they may need to focus on to improve their performance at interviews.

## Further resources:

### How to succeed at interviews

This article explains the practical steps job seekers can take to prepare for and succeed at interviews.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/five-steps-interview-success](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/five-steps-interview-success)

### Succeeding at job interviews

Job seekers can use this workbook to build their confidence for job interviews.

The workbook offers tips and information on how to:

- research the employer
- better understand your own strengths and what you have to offer
- prepare responses to common interview questions
- ensure you make a great impression on the day

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/09/succeeding\\_at\\_job\\_interviews\\_-\\_work\\_book\\_-\\_sept\\_19.pdf](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/09/succeeding_at_job_interviews_-_work_book_-_sept_19.pdf)

### Why personal presentation is so important

An employer will have likely formed an impression of a candidate before they've even had a chance to say hello, so they should make sure it's a good one.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/why-personal-presentation-so-important](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/why-personal-presentation-so-important)

### Contacting employers directly

This tip sheet offers tips and advice for job seekers making contact with an employer they want to work for.

Link: [www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/08/contacting\\_employers\\_directly\\_aug19.pdf](http://www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/sites/default/files/tools/2019/08/contacting_employers_directly_aug19.pdf)



Notes:

# ABOUT JOB JUMPSTART

Job Jumpstart (at [jobjumpstart.gov.au](http://jobjumpstart.gov.au)) is an Australian Government website.

Job Jumpstart offers practical, independent and free employment planning information from a trusted source.

The Government worked with young people and their supporters and advisers to develop this website.

## How can Job Jumpstart help?

Job Jumpstart offers a range of support for job seekers, workers and their advisers. We have dozens of workbooks and tip sheets as well as job search tips from Australian employers. We also offer information and links to relevant government resources.

### Job Jumpstart provides information and resources to help you:

- learn about the different ways to contact employers about jobs
- find out about the jobs and industries that might suit you
- understand how to develop your skills and build your experience
- learn how to make your job application stand out to employers
- settle into the workforce and understand your workplace rights and responsibilities.

## Want to find out more?

- Visit us at [jobjumpstart.gov.au](http://jobjumpstart.gov.au)
- Provide feedback at [jobjumpstart.gov.au/job-jumpstart-feedback](http://jobjumpstart.gov.au/job-jumpstart-feedback)
- Email us at [jobjumpstart@dese.gov.au](mailto:jobjumpstart@dese.gov.au)



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