

For Graduates – The Importance of Self Awareness

Self-awareness means knowing what you are good at, what you have a passion for and & motivates you. As a graduate it is important to be aware of your skills, your values and how your degree qualification and content will directly apply to the types of roles you might apply for.

The following may help you identify areas where you have a natural talent, strengths that give you an advantage when applying for a job in your particular field, or weaknesses that may require a little attention and work in order to put you properly in the running with most employers. Being able to define your strengths and weaknesses in the areas of your qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge is essential to enable you to foresee any gaps between you and your potential first job.

SKILLS AND QUALITES

Teamwork

- What roles do you naturally take in a team environment?
- How do you support others in a team?

Communication

- Know how to apply your written, oral and presentation skills to different contexts

Critical Thinking

- How do you analyse and interpret new information?
- How can you form your own opinion about information after analysis?

Creativity

- How do you approach finding solutions to a problem?
- How do you present solutions to others?

Leadership

- What examples do you have in leading others?
- How do you get others to follow your lead?

Working Under Pressure

- How do your react to difficult situations?
- How do you support others through difficult scenarios?
- Can you exercise sound judgement under pressure?



Enthusiasm

- Are you a positive person?
- Can you keep others motivated?
- Do you look forward to life?
- Do you go the extra mile?

Initiative

- When have you started and implemented a solution without direction?
- How do you present new ideas to others?

Self-confidence

- What examples do you have of being assertive?
- Can you sell things and ideas?

Adaptability

- How do you react to change?
- When have you had to adapt to new and difficult situations?

Time management

- How do you organise your work and prioritise your tasks?

VALUES – drive our behaviours and so it is important to know what they are and how they align with your job and organisation of choice.

**What are some of the things that motivate you?
What will give you satisfaction?**

What's important to you?

- wealth
- honesty
- happiness
- a social conscience
- security
- family
- power
- success
- ambition

Develop a lists of which ones are most important to you...
This will help you focus your job search and help you to expand your thinking. It is important to align your values with the choice of roles you are intending to compete for.

Your Qualifications

Your degree qualification is often the 'ticket' to the job seeking market, i.e. without it you would not be able to compete. However, be clear about what your learning has enabled you to do for an employer? What specific knowledge, content, skills and attributes will you bring to a job – your competencies? Become familiar with all your qualifications in order to match them to the positions you are seeking. Consider your qualifications in a broader sense beyond education and training and incorporate all your work experience and the elements of your industrial training and what applicable learning you have undertaken.

Many graduates will seek opportunities beyond their discipline area of study. This is because your university education and allowed you to think about and analyse problems in a particular way, you will have developed critical analysis, ways to solve problems and ways to learn. As a result you will have developed many relevant and transferable skills are developed and these together with part-time jobs, social activities and other experiences will contribute towards your employability.

Some final thoughts...

10 things I wish someone had told me before leaving university...

1. A degree doesn't guarantee me a job
2. I should start thinking about my career from day one
3. My first job from university is simply a step towards what I want
4. Keep trying – persistence counts
5. University was the start of my lifelong learning journey
6. Be clear what new skills I develop with each opportunity
7. A high salary doesn't necessarily mean I will love my job
8. I wish I had utilised the career support at my institution
9. I gained far more from my university studies than simply technical knowledge
10. I control my own destiny – and I will get out of it what I contribute!

