

## Attention 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students – Preparing for a career cannot wait until tomorrow By Sarah Dunphy



So you have finally got into university and you are on your way – or so you thought.

Ask yourself whether you are really preparing for a future career or whether you just going through the motions of getting the

degree. Thinking beyond where you are at the moment is vital. The chances of landing a job by graduation are by no means guaranteed. In fact the graduate market is overflowing with highly qualified people who cannot find a job. The key to getting a job is **preparation**. Preparation means developing your skills and gaining qualifications that can be added to your resume.

Unfortunately just getting good marks is not enough anymore. Employers are demanding more and more of graduates. This includes university, but also other areas of your life. Listed below are suggestions for your career development. Having these types of activities or qualifications will give your resume a huge point of difference:

### Employment

- Why: Employers like nothing more than a student who has been employed in a casual/ part time job during their university years. This shows them that you already have a work ethic, are accustomed to a workplace and are reliable.
- How to get it: Check employment websites such as MONSEACS [www.monseacs.com](http://www.monseacs.com) or Seek [www.seek.com](http://www.seek.com) , newspapers (Saturday's Age), local papers, or just walk around your local shopping area with a resume asking if anything is available.

### Volunteering

- Why: Volunteering is an excellent way to develop course-specific skills in areas where finding paid work will be difficult
- How: Just drop in to you local community centre or check websites such as [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)

### Personal Development

- Why: Attending personal development courses (eg public speaking courses or first aid training) can improve your chances of employment by demonstrating a commitment to improving yourself.
- How: Check online for example: Council of Adult Education [www.cae.edu.au](http://www.cae.edu.au) or try Monash Short Courses [www.shortcourses.monash.edu.au](http://www.shortcourses.monash.edu.au)

### Leadership roles

- Why: A leadership roles in any organisation is a huge advantage. It shows the employer that you are able to manage and work effectively with people, as well as demonstrating good organisational skills
- How: Join your faculty club or society, take on more responsibility at your part time job, enrol in programs such as Young Achiever Australia.

### Other interests

- Why: Employers like to employ people who have a life outside of university. Students who have other interests are often better socialised and therefore better able to cope in a workplace environment.
- How: Join a sporting team or organise one of your own, take a short course, travel, study overseas, learn a language

Although these things may seem like a lot of extra work, you have to think of the bigger picture. Other people will be doing some or all of these things. Take it from someone who was not so well prepared at the end of her degree – making the effort to improve you “employability” during your earlier years is better than trying to do everything at the end of it!