



Unemployment is high and competition is tough. Here are the five areas to focus on as a career entrepreneur.

by Jackson Merrey



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Are you ready to find the right job?

Business leaders in Australia and around the globe continue in their war for talent, vying to recruit skilled employees. At a time when many in the baby boomer generation are approaching retirement, it is very important that businesses build and preserve a cache of talented candidates so they can effectively compete in, and fuel the global economy.

Employment readiness is defined as being capable, with slight or no external assistance, to locate, obtain, and keep a suitable occupation as well as being able to change over to new professions. Being employment-ready includes ensuring you can effectively sustain the following three goals:

- 1. Self-sufficiency in four employability dimensions:**
 - Planning and pre-employment
 - Job search
 - Skills/qualifications
 - Career decision making
- 2. Understanding and accepting the specific pressures or challenges one confronts.**
- 3. Efficiently managing the stresses or tasks one faces.**

Before you jump into applying for employment, you should ensure that you possess the right skills and qualifications to enable you to fulfil the essential criteria for your future pro-

profession. This simple six stage process is a guide for anyone that is looking to start their journey towards becoming job ready.

1. Find a career path: If you are just starting university or making an occupation change, you should outline a career path to support the accomplishment of your career objectives.

2. Evaluate your interests: Consider what you appreciate, enjoy and what you are best at doing. Take career ability tests to determine if you have the type of character and values that are needed to meet your job goal. Understand your 'thinking preference' – a great tool to do this is the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI), a system used to analyse and describe thinking preferences in people. Understand your personality by using assessment tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Learning Orientation Questionnaire, DISC assessment etc.

3. Investigate potential jobs and businesses: Look into professions in your area of choice. Decide if the employment potential, remuneration and work conditions are suitable for you. Finally, narrow down the emphasis to one or two explicit opportunities in the selected occupational field.

4. Set a career goal: Research the kind of preparation, abilities and education required to reach the set goal. Plan a clear process map on how you will achieve your career outline.

5. Select a training or educational facility: Find a university, trade school or preparation program that will help plan for the occupation or profession that you have decided to work towards.

6. Attend classes: Finish your training, up-skilling or degree. While at school, take the opportunity to practice and be better by applying and taking part-time jobs or internships in a career that most interests and benefits you.

Begin the job hunt: Prior to graduation time, plan your CV and get the best career guidance possible. Talk to a counsellor or maybe an experienced friend or acquaintance for help with CV tips, potential jobs in your field of interest and interview advice and procedures.





Job-hunting strategies

Being ready is the most vital part of looking for a job. Developing the **RIGHT SKILLS** and **PLANNING SOUND STRATEGIES** will make your job-hunt easier and more effective.

Job searching cannot be done efficiently unless you use the right skills and approach to your search. While CVs, covering letters and efficient communication are essential in the job search process, studying effective search strategies can be just as vital. Organising a great CV will not help you get a job if you don't know how to locate businesses that will be attracted by your services and credentials.

There are three crucial features to grow and plan job-hunting strategies:

1. Identify which job search approaches are applicable for you. Where is your time and energy best spent? Online? Employment agencies? Networking?
2. Work on how to market yourself. When searching for a job you need to be able to sell your abilities both verbally and in writing.
3. Work on your interview skills. The interview process is the final hurdle in obtaining the desired position. Review best practice ways to manage problematic topics such as income negotiation.



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Essential skills to nurture

Businesses in the market to recruit new workers look for specific/detailed skills and qualities. Their aim is to maintain or enhance a well-organised, specialised and creative business. Some of the most well-regarded employee capabilities include how people work and connect with each other and how research and preparation is done at work.

Communication skills:

Both potential employees and employers must have very good communication competencies. A vital part of any business is the need to communicate effectively; with one another, with supervisors and most importantly with the business's clients. Operational communication skills are imperative to guarantee that emails are succinct, documents are clear and presentations are sharp and professional. Listening is also a fundamental skill, as staff will be required to interpret requirements for assignments and projects, particularly when employed as part of a team.

Research and analytical

skills: Other significant skills that employers value in new workers are research and analytical skills. Some employers often require staff to do marketplace studies for new goods/services, to conduct research to keep internal processes costs low and profits high, and to assess emerging niche markets.

Preparation and multi-

tasking: Each individual staff member is accountable for simultaneously meeting targets, organising a schedule and completing various assignments. Businesses look for workers who can manage a job and don't need too much direction or supervision. This skill includes being able to solve problems, being adaptable with project variances and taking opinions on board from other employees.

Leadership and creativity

skills: Employees often work together on projects. Some of them will need to undertake a leadership role to ensure deadlines are met, problems are addressed and all ideas are considered. Therefore, employers will seek employees who display natural leadership skills. Additionally, these employees should be creative so they can identify and implement solutions to potential problems.



"If you just communicate, you can get by. But if you communicate skillfully, you can work miracles."

– Jim Rohn



Stress management tools

While a degree of pressure at work is expected, excessive or prolonged pressure leading to undue stress levels can affect an employee's health and a business's efficiency. The ability to deal with stress can mean the difference between triumph and disappointment. No one can control everything in the workplace but that does not mean workers are powerless to take control of their situation no matter how challenging a situation seems. Discovering methods to deal and cope with work related stress isn't about making big modifications or reconsidering career aspirations, but rather it's about concentrating on the things that you can control.

Stress can be very subjective. Some people may find that something that's nerve-wracking to one may not even bother another.

Factors that affect stress tolerance:

- **Support network:** A robust support system of understanding friends and family members is a great cushion in a stressful situation. Conversely, the more remote and inaccessible people are, the greater their vulnerability to anxiety.

- **Sense of control:** Self-confidence and the ability to affect outcomes assist employees with managing stress. Employees who are susceptible to stress feel like things are out of their control.

- **Attitude and outlook:** Being positive and assertive are traits that are prized, employees should be driven and encouraged to take on challenges. Workers with a good sense of humor and who are receptive to change are known to be less susceptible to stress.

- **Capability to deal with your feelings:** Everyone has their good days and their bad days. Being able to relax when a person is anxious helps them bounce back from hardship.

- **Awareness and planning:** Understanding how a stressful situation arose, how long it will impact and what the likely outcomes are makes it easier to prepare for and manage.

When stress at work affects an employee's capability to perform well they should look at their home life or anything else that negatively affects their wellbeing. It is then up to the individual to assess

Decision Making

Making a decision about a career path or deciding on a university degree are serious choices. Businesses' demand for high-quality decision making is always great, as leaders and good managers are hard to come by. Studies show that there are four vital stages decision-makers need to follow to make that right choice: ACIP.

A for Alternatives. When a significant choice or decision needs to be made, all the options should be considered. The decision-maker needs to ask themselves if there are any other ways to solve the problem.

C for Consequences. Once the choices have been narrowed down, weigh up the pros and cons of each of them.

I for Information. Look for fresh information about each choice under contemplation.

P for Plans. Ensure that comprehensive and thorough plans are made to carry out the decision along with contingencies to address any of the cons if they were to arise.

If the decision-making process is delayed the end result could be:

- A job that isn't compatible with your values, hobbies, individual characteristics and experience.
- Completing and paying for a degree that after 4 – 6 years you realise isn't for you.
- Feeling the work you do lacks worth or meaning and does not present a challenge.
- Becoming bored or burning out.
- Feeling trapped between life and work values that make it hard for anyone to accept what it is they are doing.

these indicators and make changes. Individuals should start by concentrating on physical and emotional well-being. When a person's own needs are looked after, they have greater resilience to stress. The healthier and happier they feel, the better prepared they'll be to deal with work stress without becoming overwhelmed.

The skill to exercise self-control in demanding circumstances will be received well by team members, leaders, and subordinates alike, which in most cases will lead to better relationships on both professional and personal levels. Here are some recommendations for minimising stress by arranging and organising key accountabilities.

- Generate a stable calendar. Analyse your agenda, duties, and day-to-day jobs. All work and no enjoyment is a recipe for disaster. Employees need to find equilibrium between work and personal life, community activities and private hobbies, daily tasks and relaxation time.

- Don't avalanche yourself. As much as possible, avoid squeezing in too much into one day. All too often employees misjudge how long tasks/jobs will take. If an individual has got too much on then it is up to them to prioritise the things they need to do and the things they could do.

Using emotional intelligence to resolve issues

Practising emotional intelligence can assist in dealing with stressful situations in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is the skill to control and use your feelings in optimistic and productive ways. When it comes to happiness and achievement in the workplace, emotional intelligence matters as much as academic ability. This skill is about interacting with team members in ways that bring people to you, mending hurt feelings and resolving conflict, pressure and anxiety.

The four main emotional intelligence mechanisms are:

1. Self-awareness – The skill to identify your feelings and their influence while using automatic approaches to guide your choices.
2. Self-management – The ability to regulate your feelings and behaviour and adapt to changing circumstances.
3. Social awareness – The ability to sense, comprehend, and respond to others' sentiments and feel relaxed on public.
4. Relationship management – The ability to motivate, inspire and associate with others and deal with disagreements.



Gishan Liyanage advises on HOW TO

Get your first job in Australia

Ask any recent migrant to Australia about getting their first job here and almost all will say that it is a daunting and frustrating task. Some may have registered with recruitment agencies or applied for jobs online without any success. While others may have been offered a job interview but were unable to turn that opportunity into steady employment.

As an experienced recruiter and Human Resources professional, I feel particularly qualified to help you get your first job in Australia.

Steps to Success

STEP 1:

Writing an effective Covering Letter (CL)

To get your curriculum vitae (CV) read, you first need to have an effective CL. If your covering letter falls flat, then it is highly likely your CV won't even be read by a recruiter.

Contents of an effective CL:

- Mention three points that highlight your specific expertise relevant to the job
- Explain how you can add value to the company with your skills
- Make sure that you include all your contact details
- Focus on the company's requirements rather than your own
- The opening paragraph should tell the employer who you are and what you want
- The second paragraph outlines what you have to offer and emphasises any relevant experience or skills
- The third paragraph explains why you would be of value
- The final paragraph should clearly state when you are available for an interview.

DOs:

- Always customise your CL to the job for which you are applying
- Keep it concise! If you give too much detail, you lose the effect
- Check grammar and spelling meticulously
- Always write to a named individual.

STEP 2:

Writing an effective Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Having an effective CV will help you get shortlisted for a job interview.

- Your CV should begin with personal details and a short career/qualification summary
- The length of your CV should be between two to three pages
- It should reflect your skills, experience, and achievements
- Customise your CV to the requirements of the job for which you are applying
- As some hiring managers won't read the entire CV always put the most important points first.

DOs:

- Get a professional CV writer to review your CV
- Be prepared to refine your CV a number of times until it is right
- Your CV should be printed, well designed, and properly formatted
- Make sure that the CV is clear and visually attractive
- Title your CV with your preferred name
- Update your CV regularly.

DON'T:

- List every training course that you have ever attended
- Indicate race/nationality/age/gender/height etc.
- Include present salary details
- Include all your work experience, as it will result in an extremely long CV
- Give references.



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STEP 3:

Preparing for a job interview

After you have been invited to a job interview, it is essential to fully prepare yourself if you want a chance of landing the job. Before the interview, be sure to do the following:

- Ask for details of the interview structure, i.e., who will be interviewing you and for how long
- If you need more information about the organisation and position, ask before you go in for the interview
- Practice common interview questions using STARS (Situation, Task, Action, Result, Summary)
- Study all your achievements from your CV and be prepared to elaborate on them if asked
- Be enthusiastic about your career and proud of what you have achieved
- Know specific facts about the organisation, its history, mission, markets, competitors, products, and services
- Be prepared to share facts and figures about your present and former employers
- Review the job advertisement, job description, and core competencies.

DOs:

Make a good first impression by:

- Arriving on time
- Dressing like a professional
- Shaking hands firmly
- Greeting the interviewer and thanking them for their time
- Sitting upright in your chair and looking alert and interested at all times
- Being charismatic
- Being a good listener and a good talker
- Smiling and maintaining eye contact
- Marketing yourself in every possible way.

“If you become very good at what you do, there is nothing that can stop you from getting paid more and promoted faster.”

— Dan Kennedy