

Want to get the most out of the Expo?

By Suzie Brace

BEFORE EXPO GUIDE

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Who are you?

In order to start planning your career options for the future it is important that you make an informed decision. This starts with looking at your own skills and characteristics. A skill is something which you can do well and a characteristic is a quality or feature of your personality.

- Check out <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-skills.html> - select all the skills which you think you excel in. Get a friend who knows you well to select from the list too. Compare what you have chosen to what your friend has chosen. (Sometimes others see you excel in an area you do not see yourself.)
- Do this again for your characteristics – for a list of characteristics check out <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-attributes.html>.
- Make a list of your top ten skills and characteristics in your opinion.
- Look back at the Vocational Pathway pages and see which one suits someone with your skills and characteristics – look at the different career options which are related to that Vocational Pathway.
- The key skills which employers have identified as important are:
Communication Skills (being able to communicate easily and clearly to others through written and verbal means)
Having initiative (being able to think for yourself)
A Positive Attitude (being up for trying anything and being an encouraging and supportive member of the company)
Showing Commitment (being able to complete work and follow through with things)
Showing Resilience (being adaptable and responding to feedback and feedforward well)
- Do you have these? What can you do to develop these skills? Do you have any examples of when you have demonstrated these skills?

What do you want?

The job market has changed greatly and now the idea of working 9am-5pm at the same job for the same company is a thing of the past. More and more companies are sending work off-shore and hiring people for short term work rather than permanent contracts. Having a clear vision on what is 'non-negotiable' for you in terms of a career will help you to make an informed decision.

Location of work / study

- This could mean you only want to stay in one city/town for the foreseeable future or this could mean that you want a job which you could move around either New Zealand or the world doing.

Hours of work

- Are you open to working shift work or weekends? Can you work in the evenings or the early mornings?

Pay

- How important is this to you in the big scheme of things? Some people work in careers which have emerged from their hobbies but because they love the work so much they understand that the pay is always going to be minimal.

Permanent vs. contract work

- How important is job security to you? This could be influenced by how in-demand your career is. The more in-demand your job is then the more flexibility you can have around permanent vs. contract work. The benefit of contract work is that you tend to get paid more. Disadvantage: No holidays.

Conditions of work

- This could include quantity of holidays or when you can take holidays during the year.
- Are you happy to be based in an office all day or do you want to be outside.
- Do you want to work with people?

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What do you want / continued..

Have a look at www.seek.co.nz and look at some of the different job descriptions. You will start to see some particular jobs which interest you. Write down some of the aspects of these jobs such as pay, conditions, type of work which interest you. You will start to see some patterns emerge and this will help you to develop a list of non-negotiables for your own career.

Try to also think about some of the other aspects of your life and how these could influence your career decisions. such as family responsibilities, church responsibilities, sports or hobbies which are important to you.

Goal setting

It is important to make sure you get the most out of the Expo. Having a clear focus of what you want to achieve going into it will help you realise your goals.

What are THREE things you would like to achieve at the Expo? This could be To visit the Defence Force exhibition and ask about free study options, to find out which is the best hostel for you at Otago University.

To make this into a class activity get everyone to share their goals – someone might have a better one to share with you.

What do I need to ask?

Make a list of questions which you could ask providers. Remember everyone has websites so try to think of questions which you cannot find out online.

For example: **Questions you can find online**

- What are the entry requirements?
- How do I enrol?
- What is the cost going to be?

Questions you need to ask face to face

- What are the differences between the various hostels?
- What percentage of students get into their first pick of hostel?
- What extra-curricular groups and sports are on offer?
- What scholarships are there available to students like me?
- Do you have an interview process or need to have a portfolio of work to get into a course?

To make this a class activity develop the question bank as a class list – assign the “questions you need to ask face to face” to different people in the class and see if they can find out the answers from the different providers websites.

Is the workplace ready for you?

Before you commit to a career pathway it might be helpful to research into sectors which are going to be in high demand in the future. It is interesting to see what the emerging industries which are tipped to grow such as biotechnology and information technology are as well as the industries which are declining such as postal and banking.

Have a look at the websites below:

- The Future of Work – <http://skillshortages.immigration.govt.nz/>
- Jobs which are in skill shortage – <http://www.careers.govt.nz/jobs-database/whats-happening-in-the-job-market/skill-shortage-jobs/>
- National pay rates by category of jobs – <http://www.trademe.co.nz/jobs/salary-guide>
- Who earns what – <http://www.careers.govt.nz/jobs-database/whats-happening-in-the-job-market/who-earns-what/>
- Occupational Outlook (education, employment and income information on some of the top occupations in New Zealand) – <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/employment-skills/labour-market-reports/occupation-outlook> (this can also be downloaded as an app)