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How to get the job you want

Member Support Services



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We will cover...

- Implications of current health care context on job searching
- Adapting your job strategy, including:
 - How to generate job opportunities
 - Making the most of the RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair
 - CVs/application forms and interview skills



Current context

- Ageing population – long term conditions
- Changing disease patterns – public health
- Advanced technology – acute and specialist clinical skills
- Nursing demographics:
 - Large numbers of nurses are retiring
 - Recent cuts in student numbers
- Growth of assistant practitioner role

Future context

- Greater number of health care providers:
 - Social enterprises
 - Voluntary sector
 - Independent sector
 - Public health moving to local authorities
- Move to graduate pre registration level 2013
- Need to save £20 billion in the NHS in next four years

Employers will be looking for

- Adaptability and the ability to deal with change
- Nurses and nursing staff who are up to date through formal and informal study
- Positive team members who can support colleagues
- As well as the specific requirements for the post

Generating opportunities

- Networking:
 - Local events, colleagues, internet – eg: www.linkedin.com
- Know your local job market:
 - www.cqc.org.uk
- Shadowing
- Secondments
- Job swops
- Voluntary work, including union activist role can be useful if you have the time

Where to look for jobs

- All major nursing journals
- National press – online
- Job sites online eg:
 - <http://jobs.nhs.uk>
 - <http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk/>
- Less obvious journals:
 - Eg specialist HR journals for jobs in occ health, Health Service Journal



'Working' the Jobs Fair

- Plan what you'd like to get out of this Fair
- Pick less busy times – so they remember you
- Look positive, smile and warm handshake
- Rehearse points to present about yourself:
 - Brief summary of your experience
 - Five positive things you could bring to the organisation
 - Leave CV and all contact details
 - Write notes and take details of people you have spoken to, contact them a few days after the event

Applying for jobs

- **CVs**
- **Application forms**
- **Interviews**
- **Support available**

CVs

- Create an **impact**
- Choose an appropriate **format**
 - **Chronological**
 - **Skills-based** targeted to a particular job
- **Target** your CV
 - Include relevant information to the job
 - Place important requirements at the top of your CV
- Explain any **gaps**
 - Make clear any learning, skills and experience (even unpaid) gained during outside work
- If your work experience is diverse, group it according to relevance or skills areas

CVs

Personal profile

- your branding & summary of your CV

Qualifications

- Include your NMC pin number and expiry date

Work experience

- Key responsibilities or briefly your achievement in a role & how
- Use 'active words', e.g. led, evaluated

Professional activities

- Any clinical audits you have undertaken
- Any articles published or papers delivered at conferences

Application forms

- An opportunity to offer further evidence to your application
- Ensure you answer **every** section
- **Tailor** application to the job
- Personal or supporting statement section
 - Often competency based
 - Easiest to **answer each person spec criteria point** directly beneath it
 - Your portfolio can be helpful!!!
 - Focus your answers on the job you are applying for
- Make it easy for employers to find the information and that you tick all requirements

Remember!

employers may have 100 applications to shift through!

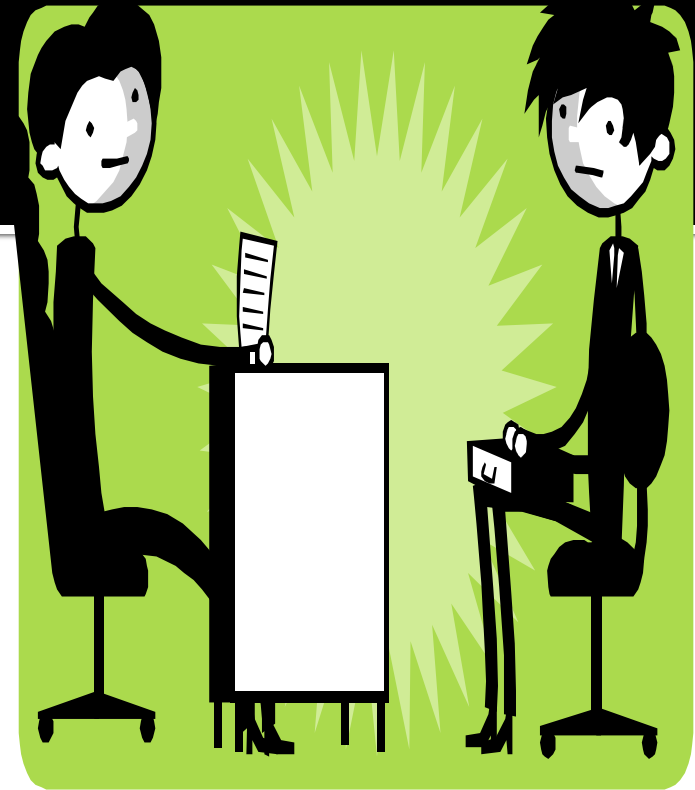
Online applications

- Different types of online applications
 - Save on to computer and email to employer when completed
 - Complete and save online (e.g. NHS jobs)
 - Complete online in one-go (can't save it)
- You need an email address to apply online
- Review and check for any mistakes/spelling errors **before** you press 'send'
- Save or print a copy for your record
- Allow enough time

Interviews: preparing for interviews

- **Research** the employer and industry/sector and what makes them tick
- Arrange a **visit** to the employer prior to interview
- **Study** the job description and your application form
- Prepare and practise **aloud** answers to possible questions or have a **mock interview**
- Make sure you present what you have done **positively**
- Think through some questions to ask interviewers
- **Dress smartly** and ensure you feel comfortable
- Remember: smile and be yourself!

According to research, **interviews are usually decided in the first 3 minutes**



How to handle interview questions

- Pause before answering
- Structure your answer giving yourself and interviewers key points to follow
- End your answer on a **positive note**
- Focus and re-focus attention on your achievements
- Ask clarification if you don't understand a question
- Focus on persuading employer that you are the right candidate for the post
- Be aware of the interviewer's body language

Answering competence-based questions

Aimed at **predicting how you would handle a situation**

Consider the *processes* involved:

- Assessing the situation
- Taking appropriate action
- Following protocols and guidelines
- Appropriate communication
- Record Keeping
- Evaluating and learning from situation

STAR

a good method to answer competency questions

- **SITUATION** Describe the context
- **TASK** What was required?
What was your role in the task?
- **ACTION** What did you do?
- **RESULT** What was the outcome?
What did you achieve?
What did you learn?

Support

- Senior colleagues and tutors
- University careers advisers
if you are a student or graduate
- RCN Careers Service – 0345 408 4391
- RCN job preparation guidance factsheets
<http://www.rcn.org.uk/support/services/factsheets#jobprep>

Summary



Think what makes you **special** and just promote it!

Prepare and practise

Seek advice and feedback

Applying for jobs is as much about finding out about the employer as it is about selling yourself

Use feedback and learning to improve your **application**

Good luck!