

TOOLKIT NUMBER THREE: FINAL YEARS & FRESH GRADS SURVIVAL GUIDE

ESPECIALLY FOR YOU

BY

CAREER CIRCUS

• MY CAREER TOOLKIT •



Welcome to our survival guide to the graduate job market!

Graduating from University is a fantastic achievement of all your hard-work and all those late nights studying for exams or finishing off assignments will be long forgotten when you are toasting to the new future that lies ahead of you. BUT in the back of your mind there is that niggly of 'what next'? eek! Time to get a job and stop being a student..... Some final years have had it all sorted from the Autumn Term and have successfully navigated themselves through the graduate recruitment process and are sitting back all relaxed and smug as they have their perfect job sorted. Other final years have not been so lucky with their job searching or may even have decided to leave it until they graduate in the summer as they have been concentrate on work, some of you may have been travelling or interning after graduating.

Whatever your reason if you have downloaded this Toolkit, then most likely you fall in to the latter category and you haven't yet found your perfect graduate job. Do not fear - we are here to help you.

Chief Career Ringmaster and Career coach, Saffron Fidgett from Career Circus has put together this 6 page Toolkit to summarise what you need to be doing RIGHT NOW, including where to find all the best resources and help including your very own action plan to get you focused and speed up your graduate job search.

Use this Toolkit to get you started and then contact the team at Career Circus for any additional help you need or questions you have. Book in to a free Career POWER Chat or come along to one of our YP Network events to meet one of the team and get on the spot career advice.

Find info on how to book via our website www.careercircus.co.uk or contact events@careercircus.co.uk For now....let's get cracking!



STEP ONE: RESEARCHING, PLANNING & POSITIONING

The internet is your best friend for this step – get out your laptop/tablet or phone out and ask yourself some key questions whilst you search:

My career interests & motivations:

- 🕒 Thinking about your past and current jobs/work experience - what have you enjoyed the most and what have you hated/not enjoyed doing?
- 🕒 What jobs/careers are out there that you can do every day and are include tasks/activities that you enjoy – in a nutshell what motivate and interests you that you can get paid to do!
- 🕒 Jot down any suggestions that you come up with, noting any pattern of specific industries and job roles of interest

My skills and competencies:

- 🕒 Out of your desirable job list what skills and experience are needed to do the job?
- 🕒 Do you currently have or can you get the level of skill/competence/experience required?
- 🕒 Profile current graduates that are doing the jobs you like – who are they? What are the companies really looking for – what makes their current trainees stand out? Are you like them? Would you like to work with them? Be part of that team?
- 🕒 Add to your list all the jobs and organisations you like the look of and would like to work for/see yourself fitting in

Matchy Matchy:

- 🕒 You know what interests you, what you need and what that looks like – time to refine your list to your ‘TOP 10 HIT LIST’ of graduate recruiters to focus your efforts on. Be ruthless.
- 🕒 Research those on your Top 10 list in detail, contact them/visit them at Career Fairs or their office/follow them on twitter and LinkedIn. Get RSS feeds and Google alerts on your phone so that you are an expert on what is happening in your top organisations
- 🕒 Make note of their recruitment process and deadlines – you miss them you may have to wait another year before applying!
- 🕒 Practice, prepare and plan for the recruitment rounds (psychometric tests, interviews, assessment centres & case-studies do as many Mock Interviews and practices as you can)

OUR RECOMMENDED SITES FOR FURTHER EXPERT CAREER RESOURCES:



STEP TWO: NAIL THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

On average 85 people are applying for each graduate position with popular roles this number rises to 160, this could mean for a leading graduate scheme with 300 places you could be one of over 40,000 applicants applying! Crazy numbers and even more reason why you need to really **'nail the recruitment process'** and stand out. So after you have done your research, planned and positioned your skills and found a job that suits you your next step is to put aside some serious 'job search' time to make sure your application is PERFECT. There are numerous ways that companies assess whether you are the right 'fit' for their organisation these can include some of or all of the below recruitment methods:

- 🎧 APPLICATION FORMS, CV & COVER LETTERS
- 🎧 INTERVIEWS – SKYPE/VIDEO, PHONE, FACE TO FACE OR PANEL
- 🎧 SKILLS OR COMPETENCY TESTS – PRESENTATION OR TECHNICAL
- 🎧 ASSESSMENT CENTRES, CASE-STUDIES & SCENARIOS
- 🎧 PSYCHOMETRIC AND APTITUDE TESTING

ACTION WORDS!

Are you using them? Do you know them? Check out Appendix One



Don't forget to check out our other **Career Toolkits** for specific advice on how to succeed at each of the above recruitment stages!

MY CAREER TOOLKIT

Cracking the competency questions!

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

A typical question might be: Tell me about a time when you had to teach or instruct someone else. Was it successful?

RESPONSIBILITY

A typical question might be: Give me an example about a position of responsibility you have held?

LEADERSHIP

A typical question might be: Tell me about a time when you had to lead a team of people in order to achieve an objective?

PROBLEM SOLVING

A typical question might be: Tell me about a problem you have faced, either within a team or as an individual, and tell me how you solved the problem?

TEAMWORK

A typical question might be: Describe a time when you were a member of a team and tell me how you positively contributed to the team?

DECISION MAKING

A typical question might be: What is the most difficult decision you have had to make?

gradcracker

Find a useful guide to competencies via [gradcracker](http://gradcracker.com) website

STEP THREE: REFINE YOUR GAME PLAN!



What do you need to do? & **by when?** **Why** is it important?

How will you do it? **Who** can help you?

Where does this all fit in to your career game plan?

Download the Career Circus [‘Job Search Action Plan’](#) template to get you started and keep you on track with your ever growing ‘to-do’ list. See below for an example Graduate Game Plan:

Example – Game Plan
(applying for Grad schemes 2014/2015)

TASK TO DO	SUPPORT/RESOURCES NEEDED	MY DEADLINE
Perfect my CV with industry focus & key words	CV templates (Career Camel) CV check (Career Circus toolkit) Industry websites for key words (TotalProfessional.com)	By Sunday 9pm
Secure summer internship/work experience	Job search engines (Career Camel etc) Application & interview support & feedback (Career Circus consultation)	By end of Easter holidays
Practice online tests & applications	My University links (Kenexa, Prospects, TargetJobs) Company website	Practice over summer ready for September
Attend employer talks & career fairs	University – current/alumni City focused – London careers fair Online/virtual	Continuous (summer & autumn peaks)
Get my professional skills profile up on LinkedIn	LinkedIn essentials guide (Career Circus blog)	By March 17th

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There is a lot to do and for each job and industry the recruitment process and what the skills and competencies sought are different. You need to take time to tailor each application and know what the industry you are targeting is looking for.



This toolkit will help you to get started, if you need further help then get in touch!

#TeamCircus offer free and discounted careers advice for students and graduates of our partner universities. Contact us for further information.

Best wishes,

Saffron

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Appendix 1 – Action words from University of Michigan, Careers Centre, accessed via website March 2014 (<http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/resume-action-words>)

Achieved	Adapted	Addressed	Administered	Advised
Analyzed	Arranged	Assembled	Assessed	Assisted
Attained	Audited	Budgeted	Calculated	Classified
Coached	Collected	Communicated	Compiled	Composed
Computed	Conducted	Consolidated	Constructed	Consulted
Coordinated	Counseled	Created	Critiqued	Defined
Designed	Detected	Determined	Devised	Diagnosed
Directed	Discovered	Displayed	Earned	Edited
Eliminated	Enforced	Established	Estimated	Evaluated
Examined	Expanded	Explained	Experimented	Financed
Formulated	Gathered	Generated	Grossed	Guided
Handled	Hypothesized	Identified	Illustrated	Implemented
Improved	Increased	Influenced	Initiated	Inspected
Installed	Instituted	Instructed	Interpreted	Interviewed
Invented	Investigated	Lectured	Managed	Marketed

Mediated	Modeled	Monitored	Motivated	Negotiated
Obtained	Operated	Ordered	Organized	Oversaw
Performed	Persuaded	Photographed	Planned	Prepared
Presented	Printed	Processed	Produced	Projected
Promoted	Proofread	Provided	Publicized	Purchased
Received	Recommended	Reconciled	Recorded	Recruited
Reduced	Referred	Refined	Rehabilitated	Repaired
Reported	Represented	Researched	Resolved	Responded
Restored	Retrieved	Reviewed	Scheduled	Selected
Solved	Sorted	Studied	Summarized	Supervised
Supplied	Surveyed	Tested	Trained	Transcribed
Translated	Travelled	Tutored	Upgraded	Utilized
Wrote				