Professional communication skills for the workplace

Tuesday 22 March 2016
Welcome
Olivia Doyle
International Student Advisor – Employability
Tel 9214 8248
Email odoyle@swin.edu.au
Specialist support for international students aiming to work in partnership with you to develop your employability

Provide professional insights and guidance

- Monthly Employability Newsletter
- Regular program of employability seminars
- Skill development
- Student appointments
- Industry connections
- Networking events
- Australian workplace cultural events
- Job Club
International student employability events – Sem 1

Workplace rights & responsibilities
Weds 23 March

Industry connections – professional speed networking
Weds 6 April

Australian workplace culture & introduction to Aussie Rules Football
Tues 12 April

Alumni guest speaker panel and networking
Thurs 21 April

Accounting guest speaker panel & networking
Thurs 28 April

Completion of studies
Weds 4 May
What skills and attributes do employers look for in a graduate....
## Employer expectations activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>Ordered Key Selection Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Academic results</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teamwork skills</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Aptitude</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cultural fit</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Motivational fit</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Adaptable</td>
<td>14%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Graduate Outlook 2014, Graduate Careers Australia
Swinburne communication skill support

Conversation group

Each weekday LAS run a conversation group on Hawthorn campus. No need to register, just come at 12.30pm - 1.30pm in GS203 (Level 2 of the George Swinburne Building)

Drop in consultations

• For quick questions about your assignment, assessment or managing your studies.
• Latelab, Level 2, Library
  2.00pm - 8.00pm, Monday to Thursday

Workshops

• Range of topics
Other communication support

- **Toastmasters**
  - Meetings
  - Free resources
  - [http://www.melbournetoastmasters.com/](http://www.melbournetoastmasters.com/)

- **CAE Business English - Speaking for Professionals**
  - 8 sessions
  - $465

- **English Conversation Club**
  - Local libraries
  - Eg City of Boroondara – free weekly sessions with a qualified tutor
• ‘Talking Circles’ - International Student Hub run by City of Melbourne

  Practice conversation for the workplace in a small group with corporate volunteers

  Talking circles focus on workplace themes and conversing effectively

Plan for today

Jill Noble
• HR and careers practitioner
• Published author
• Key note speaker and trainer

11.30am – 12.30 pm
Verbal communication skills

12.30 – 1.30 pm
Written communication skills
Professional Communication Skills
Agenda for today

• Oral communication and job seeking
• Written communication and business writing principles
WHO
Networking

- Networking is simply talking to people
- People like to help people
- If you are either a good listener or a good talker you can network
- Use positive body language during networking - maintain eye contact
Networking

What is it?  Where can you do it?
# Job Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Contact person</th>
<th>Position Applied for</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>
Persuasive & diplomatic techniques

- Modal verbs
- Modifiers
- Passive voice
- Suggestions
- Continuous tense
Contributing to Meetings

• Be very prepared – what does this mean to you?
• Convey ideas simply, but with enthusiasm
• Stay on topic and discuss the end result
• Don’t be afraid to highlight issues
• Ask questions
Telephone

• Quality tone – BL & position
• Pause-smile-answer
• Energy level
• Greeting & introduce self
• Offer of help
• Rule of 3 – names
• Use listening process to summarise, clarify and confirm
• Take notes
• What not to say.....

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Telephone listening skills

4 Step Listening Process
• Attending – Focus, BL
• Reflecting - Summarize
• Clarifying - Questioning
• Active – Notes, noises & neck!

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Polished presentations

• Remember the audience is not out to get you
• Think conversation – not presentation
• Use your voice
• Use your body
• Use your space
• Stay positive

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Tongue Twisters

- A phrase, sentence or rhyme that presents difficulties when spoken because it contains similar sounds

Examples:
- She sells seashells on the seashore.
- Three gray geese in the green grass grazing
- Nine nice night nurses nursing nicely
Written Communication Skills
Job Applications

- Do your research
- Tailor Your Resume and Cover Letter
- Avoid Gimmicks
- Stand Out in Your Interview
- Get Feedback

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Letters and Emails

• Subject lines are headlines
• - never leave the subject line blank
• Make one point per email
• - Clear and Concise
• Specify the response you want
• Be a good correspondent

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Key features of a report

Reports:
- are designed for quick and easy communication of information
- are designed for selective reading
- use sections with numbered headings and subheadings
- use figures and diagrams to convey data.
Active and Passive

What is Active Voice?
- The Active Voice shows the reader who is doing what. The ‘agent’ is placed before the verb.
  For example: ‘The engineer rewrote the report’

What is Passive Voice?
- The Passive Voice gives the activity centre stage and often leaves out the ‘agent’.
  For example: ‘The report was rewritten’ (by the engineer)
Active or passive

- The board were provided the papers.
- We provide the papers to the board.
- The board received the paper.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOT GOOD</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The report was written by Jamie, and was found to be excellent</td>
<td>Jamie wrote the report, which was excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The values were measured automatically by the control system</td>
<td>The control system measured the values automatically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was reported by the manager that the project was in trouble</td>
<td>The manager reported that the project was in trouble</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Avoid overusing noun forms

Use verbs when possible rather than noun forms known as nominalizations.

Unclear (use of nominalization):
➢ The implementation of the plan was successful.

Clearer:
➢ The plan was implemented successfully.
Noun forms

His courageousness filled us with admiration.

We admired his courage.
## Avoid using nouns instead of verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOT PLAIN ENGLISH</th>
<th>PLAIN ENGLISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He used to help in the specification of new software</td>
<td>He used to help specify new software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement of static software properties was performed by the tool</td>
<td>The tool measured static software properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicking the icon causes the execution of the program</td>
<td>The program executes when the icon is clicked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The analysis of the software was performed by Fred</td>
<td>Fred analysed the software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The testing of the software was carried out by Jane</td>
<td>Jane tested the software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was reported by Jones that method x facilitated the utilisation of inspection techniques by the testing team</td>
<td>Jones reported that method x helped the testing team use inspection techniques</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which one attracts your eye?

References
Your ref/Our ref are a codified system of referencing used by most businesses in their business correspondence. Most codes are alphanumeric and correspond with codes in the business’s paper and/or electronic filing system. Learn your business’s coding system. If you are initiating the correspondence, place the appropriate reference code on your first letter. If you are responding to somebody else’s letter, include their reference code and then include your own. Doing so assists your record keeping. Some businesses place the reference codes after the subject line. This assists with filing and record handling as all necessary details are captured in the one place at the beginning of the letter.

References
Your ref/Our ref goes top left of the letter or under the reference line. It assists filing for both parties.
12 July 2011

Mr T B Bowers
Florentino’s Restaurant
34 Parker Street
BRIGHTON VIC 3186

Dear Trevor

Systems upgrade

Thank you for your enquiry concerning the upgrade of your existing computing system. I have attached a proposal to meet your needs and it includes the following:
• capacity details
• time frames
• equipment
• warranty details
• costing.

I will telephone you early next week to discuss this proposal and answer any queries you may have.

Yours sincerely

Philip Howard
Managing Director

Enc 1
CC: Martin Chapman, CEO Accis Computing
## Conversational style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OLD FASHIONED</th>
<th>CONTEMPORARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I refer to your letter...</td>
<td>Thank you for your letter...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please find enclosed...</td>
<td>I have attached...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact this office...</td>
<td>Please contact me...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are in receipt of...</td>
<td>We have received...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Applying your learnings

THE PAST IS WHERE YOU LEARNED THE LESSON.
THE FUTURE IS WHERE YOU APPLY THE LESSON.

HPlyric.com

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