

# The benefits of job-search seminars and mock interviews in a work experience course

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Prior research indicates that some form of career development program is essential to prepare undergraduate students for a competitive employment market. This research examined the benefits gained by students in preparation for the workforce following a program of job-search seminars and mock interviews. The study revealed that the students perceived the program produced significant increases, as indicated by changes in mean scores obtained on the Measure of Guidance Impact (Killeen, 1992). Pre- and post-mean scores of 79.2 and 98.0 were reported, compared with norm values of 82.5 and 93.4. This improvement in mean scores demonstrated the effectiveness of the program, compared with results obtained on a large-scale survey. Students indicated a low participation rate (15%) in voluntary job-search seminars, emphasizing the importance of including these seminars as a required course component in university programs. Generally, participants reported a favorable attitude to the job-search seminars and accompanying printed booklets. The subjects identified a number of benefits as a result of participating in mock interviews, as well as being a member of the interview panel. Overall, the students perceived they had developed a reasonably high level of confidence in preparation for "real-world" scenarios. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 2008, 9(2), 113-127.

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The notion of cooperative education as an educational strategy was first mooted in the USA, in particular at the University of Cincinnati (Coll & Eames, 2007). Currently, the term used to describe this approach tends to be *work-integrated learning* (Franks & Blomqvist, 2004). Work-integrated learning (WIL) combines work experience with on-campus academic learning, with the emphasis that learning from each 'site' is *integrated* (Coll & Eames, 2007). WIL is practiced extensively in the USA, UK, Australia, the Asia-Pacific region, South Africa and Europe (Franks & Blomqvist, 2004). A significant number of research studies report students acquiring benefits from WIL in comparison to conventional programs (Dressler & Keeling, 2004). These include: *academic benefits* (e.g. increased motivation to learn), along with *personal benefits* (e.g. increased autonomy), and *career benefits* (e.g., increased employment opportunities). Students can gain significant benefits from involvement in WIL programs: a work setting in which theoretical knowledge can be put into practice; an appreciation of the rapidly changing world of work; developing key generic skills such as teamwork, interpersonal and communication skills; short-term financial benefits; enhanced employment prospects; developing career strategies; and working in another culture (Fraser & Deane, 2002). WIL programs are becoming popular with students, government, employers and universities (Abeysekera, 2006; Reeders, 2000). A major benefit of a WIL program is the increased employability of students, which fits well with the present tendency of students to expect a pay-off from their investment in education (Valadkhani, Worthington & Layton, 2004). Thus, it could be argued that students in today's world tend to seek vocationally oriented courses (Coll & Eames, 2007). WIL has provided universities with an opportunity to offer programs of study that students will appreciate and that will also enhance the branding of the university. This approach will attract students by the re-marketing of traditional academic courses as vocationally-oriented courses.

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WIL has been described using two different terms: work-based learning (Wagner, Childs & Houlbrook, 2001), and experience-based learning (Beard & Wilson, 2002). The term work-integrated learning was developed to include the increasing diversity in the modes of vocational programs (Reeders, 2000). An important goal of WIL programs is to improve the employability of students, rather than their academic performance (Duignan, 2002; Fallows & Steven, 2000). With this in mind, it has been suggested that WIL programs should focus on employability skills such as the ability to retrieve information, communication and presentation, planning and problem-solving, and social development and interaction (Abeysekeva, 2006).

There appears to be increasing international awareness of the importance of work experience and related learning activities for university students. In fact, three UK universities have considered the inclusion of work-integrated learning as a component of all their degrees (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2006). Institutions of higher education are under increasing pressure to prepare graduates for the work environment by including a component of work-integrated learning to achieve the expectations of society (Spowart, 2006). One of the roles of higher education is to provide society with individuals who are trained so that they can respond to the demands of knowledge-based occupations (Council for Higher Education, South Africa, 2001), as well as demonstrating the skills necessary for participating in a global economy.

#### CAREER DEVELOPMENT COURSES

Uncertain graduate employment prospects are a concern for all universities, which face an increasing problem of preparing graduates for a competitive employment market that no longer provides traditional career paths (Nabi & Bagley, 1999). Furthermore, there now exists an oversupply of applicants for graduate placements (Doherty et al., 1997). Thus, it is essential that universities invest resources into services that optimize success for students seeking jobs, while also providing graduates with marketing and transferable skills which will enable them to manage their careers (Miller & Liciardi, 2003).

Most commentators in the career management literature recommend some type of educational training for undergraduates to meet these needs (Stewart & Knowles, 2002). It has been suggested that students need to develop an awareness of their personal strengths and weaknesses, in addition to an awareness of workplace opportunities (Nabi & Bagley, 1999). Pang and Lau (2000) indicate that undergraduate students should develop career planning skills by attending university programs as part of their degree requirements, as well as through on-the-job training during work placements and through self-learning. Early development of career plans is likely to assist students to focus on the most important skills that will enable them to become more self-reliant (Nabi & Bagley, 1999).

A review of career course literature traced 50 reports related to the effectiveness of career planning courses offered in higher education institutions in the USA. There was overwhelming evidence that these career planning courses have a positive effect on the cognitive functioning of students, as well as student outcomes, including student satisfaction and retention. Furthermore, it was apparent that comprehensive career courses which provide academic credit provide a cost-effective strategy that could be described as a “megadose” of career services (Folsom et al., 2005).

## SELF-EFFICACY

The concept of self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1995) as the impact of how people feel, think and act in stressful situations that reflect accomplishments and personal development. People with low self-efficacy typically hold negative thoughts about their achievements and accomplishments in certain domains, and become anxious when discussing their expertise. Practicing for situations such as being interviewed for a job vacancy can help improve self-efficacy (Harchar, 2005). Self-efficacy affects an individual's choice of activity, environment, energy-expenditure, persistence and thought patterns as well as their emotional reactions (Smith & Fouad, 1999). Self-efficacy is dynamic and specific to particular areas of activity and thus is considered domain specific although it interacts with a person's behavioral and contextual factors (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994; Sweeney & Twomey, 1997). WIL has been shown to enhance self-efficacy towards career development (Weaver-Paquette, 1997). Fletcher (1989, 1990) suggests that WIL can enhance efficacious beliefs in three ways: enactive mastery (the gaining of specific practical skills); observation of others; and verbal persuasion of others evaluating one's performance.

## INTERVIEW PERFORMANCE

Many students have little experience in being interviewed for positions when they begin seeking work placements. Despite possessing excellent resumes, students may fail to secure a placement if they perform poorly during pre-placement interviews (Coll & Lay, 2001). Comprehensive, formal interviews represent a formidable challenge for many young students. Pre-planning for interviews has been reported to improve student confidence and interview performance, and is recommended as a strategy for improving prospects of a job placement. Strategies include preparing questions to ask employers, and anticipation of questions from employers at interview time (Formo, 1995), and spending time polishing interpersonal skills or practicing mock interviews. Coll and Lay (2001) report trial interviews improved self-efficacy towards the pre-placement interviews for two reasons. First, it enables students to gain an understanding of the type of question they would encounter in an in-depth formal interview, and second, it affords them the opportunity to practice the articulation of answers. In addition the trial interview appears to have provided information about the nature of the organization. They suggested that students should conduct mock interviews with peers, perhaps in a group session, mediated by a faculty member to provide feedback (Coll & Lay, 2001). Performing well at the interview is one of the most important steps in successfully securing a job. While some students are comfortable in discussing and marketing themselves to potential employers, others may benefit from building confidence in their performance. Mock interviews provide students with the opportunity to practice interview techniques and to experience being an interviewer in a small group setting.

The strategy of using a mock interview experience before field work is relatively understudied at the post-secondary level and more research is needed in this area (Harchar, 2005). This paper examines the benefits provided by job-search seminars and a mock interview in preparing students for the workforce as part of a work-integrated course in exercise science.

## CASE STUDY CONTEXT

Griffith University has several campuses located in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, Queensland. Griffith University's teaching and learning programs aim to provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills that can be applied in the community. Griffith aims to include work-integrated learning in at least 70% of all degree programs by 2010 (Griffith University, 2006). Field Project B is an optional third year course in the Bachelor of Exercise Science program conducted at the Gold Coast campus. Normal enrolments in the course range from 30-50 students out of a cohort of approximately 100. The rationale for including this course is to make students aware of the requirements of the industry they wish to enter and the working environment of various organizations in which they may wish to seek employment. The course is designed to link and complement the student's program of study by introducing them to the work environment. The main purposes of this course are: (a) to provide students with work experience within the industry they may seek employment; (b) to introduce students to various topics concerning the work environment; and (c) to provide career planning procedures and job search skills training. This course includes 13 two-hour lecture/workshops in which students are introduced to professional and personal techniques to assist them to gain entry into the workplace and to function successfully once they are in the workplace. The course is staff-intensive with input from lecturers from the School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science, Careers and Employment Services and relevant employer groups. Four staff members were involved in each of the two-hour mock interview sessions.

This particular research focused on an evaluation of the perceived effectiveness of the job search-seminars and mock interviews. The seminars included:

- Development of resume/CV;
- Effective job search;
- Application letters;
- Selection criteria; and
- Job interviews.

For the purpose of the mock interviews, students were organized into groups of five or six (and sub-groups of two or three). Each group was provided with a job advertisement relevant to a graduate of the Bachelor of Exercise Science program. A staff member from the School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science or the Careers and Employment Services was allocated to each group. Students were required to construct appropriate interview questions. Prior to the interviews, sub-groups formed panels and organized questions with direction from the allocated staff member. When the first sub-group had been interviewed, the panels swapped roles. Before the interview commenced, the panel reviewed the student's cover letter, CV and responses to selection criteria and made comments on feedback sheets. During the interview, panelists noted points in relation to professional image, communication skills and confidence. After all interviews had been completed, panelists discussed feedback with each student. Following the interviews all staff members forwarded a summary of their perceptions of the group's strengths and weaknesses to the course convener. The following week the convener presented these summaries to the class for discussion.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### *Research Purpose*

This research examined the effectiveness of part of a work-integrated learning course in preparing students for interviews related to real-world positions in industries relevant to their undergraduate studies in Exercise Science. The results will be used to improve the effectiveness of Field Project B for future students. The research included five research questions:

1. How effective did students perceive the job-search seminars and mock interviews in preparing them for their future careers?
2. Why did a majority of students not take advantage of the voluntary job-search seminars, provided by the Careers and Employment Services at Griffith University, prior to the commencement of Field Project B in the final semester of their degree program?
3. What were the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the job-search seminars and printed booklets according to students? How might these sessions be improved?
4. What perceived benefits did students gain from being interviewed, as well as being a member of the interview panel? and
5. How did students perceive the package of job-search seminars and mock interviews prepared them for “real-world” interviews?

### *Data Collection*

The research was conducted using 33 third year Exercise Science students who made up the entire cohort in Field Project B at Griffith University in their final semester of study. The instruments used for data collection included the Measure of Guidance Impact (Killeen, 1992), which was utilized before and after guidance (Appendix I). Following the job-search seminars and mock interviews, students also responded to a self-completion questionnaire specifically designed for this study (Appendix II).

The Measure of Guidance Impact (MGI) was used as it is a valid and reliable instrument, which is completed before and after guidance related to career development. Its main purpose is to provide objective information to assist training organizations and guidance agencies to evaluate the effectiveness and monitor the learning outcomes of adult guidance programs and interventions (National Foundation for Educational Research, 1992). The MGI may be used to provide a general indication of the value added through guidance services or to compare the value of different types of guidance in relation to their longer-term economic outcomes (Christophers et al., 1993). Evidence for the validity of the MGI has been provided through several sources. The theoretical formulation of the guidance process from which the items within the instrument were developed provides one type of evidence of validity. The methods used for item selection, particularly the use of a panel of judges, ensured that the items truly reflected the issues of concern and represented the four areas of guidance. A previous test-retest study provided additional evidence for the validity of the instrument (Christophers et al., 1993).

Evidence related to the reliability of the MGI has been provided by two sources. First, clients made the same responses to the questions when given these items a week apart but with no guidance interview. This demonstrated that the questions are consistently interpreted each time and clients do not respond randomly. Second, the items in the questionnaire tend to correlate with each other. A Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.89 indicates good reliability,

which indicates substantial reliability especially for an instrument consisting of 25 items. Longer instruments can produce higher measures of reliability (Christophers et al., 1993).

There are two forms of the MGI – Form 1 is used pre-guidance and Form 2 post-guidance. Each form contains 25 statements, for which clients are asked to record, on a scale of 1 to 5, the extent of their agreement. Thus, the maximum score that can be achieved is 125 (25 x 5). Average scores (norms) were developed as a result of a large-scale pilot study involving 807 subjects. The statements are simply phrased and have been designed to be read by the majority of adults. The needs of those clients who are learning English have also been considered in the construction of the statements. The learning areas addressed by the MGI are the four categories of guidance commonly used within the guidance service and described by Killeen et al. (1992). These areas are described as:

- Decision making;
- Opportunity awareness;
- Transition skills; and
- Self awareness.

The MGI provides an overall score for clients, demonstrating the extent of change that may be attributed to the effect of the guidance they have received. This is achieved by measuring the level of career awareness the clients demonstrate when they commence a guidance program, compared with the level they attain following the program. The instrument is intended for use in agencies offering a range of guidance services, from simple provision of information to further career counseling. Form 1 of the MGI was administered during the first lecture of the course, while Form 2 of the MGI was administered after the job search seminars, mock interviews and feedback sessions had been completed.

Students also completed a two-page questionnaire to allow them to answer freely and explain their perceptions, suggestions and experiences. The researcher and a counselor from the Careers and Employment Services developed the questionnaire, which consisted of short answer questions focusing on several different aspects of the program. Some questions were closed to elicit specific information and ratings, while other questions were open to allow students to provide personal opinions on the effectiveness of the program and make suggestions with regards to possible future improvements.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research findings are reported here using the five research questions as headings.

*How effective did the students perceive the job-search seminars and interviews in preparing them for future careers?*

Form 1 of the MGI was administered in the first lecture of the course. Mean ( $\pm$  SD) scores obtained were  $79.2 \pm 13.5$  for Griffith students compared with a norm value of  $82.5 \pm 13.0$ , indicating the subjects were slightly below average in relation to their readiness for the workforce. However, scores on Form 2 (conducted following the series of information sessions and interviews) demonstrated a mean of  $98.0 \pm 8.6$  compared with a norm of  $93.4 \pm 11.2$ . The post-test MGI score was significantly greater ( $p < .001$ ) than the pre-test score. The change in mean scores between Form 1 and Form 2 (i.e., before and after the information sessions and interviews) was  $18.8 \pm 11.9$ . The change in the MGI score was significantly greater ( $p < .01$ ) than the criterion (normative) value of 10.9, indicating the effectiveness of the course in preparing students for the workforce.

Subjects with initially low scores on the MGI would appear to have greater potential for improvement following guidance than those with relatively high baseline scores. These points need to be taken into account when interpreting the results of the MGI. A useful method of interpreting the information is by analyzing the performance of subjects whose baseline falls within certain bands. The MGI uses three bands for categorizing subjects. Band 1 consists of those subjects whose baseline scores fall between 25 and 80 (out of a possible 125). Band 2 consists of those subjects who have scores between 81 and 90, whilst Band 3 consists of those subjects who score between 91 and 125. "The use of banding increases the sensitivity of the instrument to detect changes, while at the same time decreasing the influence of a few extreme scores which could skew the results" (National Foundation for Educational Research, 1992, p. 8).

In the present study, 42% of subjects were categorized as Band 1 (compared with a norm of 43%), whereas 40% scored within Band 2 (compared with a norm of 30%), and 18% were placed in Band 3 (compared with a norm of 27%). The average changes in points for subjects within each band in this study were: 28.4 for Band 1; 12.5 for Band 2; and 10.0 for Band 3. The corresponding norms for the large-scale pilot were 17 for Band 1, 9 for Band 2 and 4 for Band 3. These differences indicate the Griffith program is producing considerable benefits within all three bands in the study group.

*Why did a majority of students not take advantage of the voluntary job search seminars provided by the Careers and Employment Services at Griffith University prior to the commencement of Field Project B in the final semester of the degree program?*

The voluntary job-search seminars are available to all university students on several occasions throughout the year. Only five students (15%) enrolled in the voluntary information sessions prior to the commencement of Field Project B, while 28 (85%) did not take advantage of these sessions. The most common reasons for not attending were (number of students shown in brackets):

- Was not aware of the program (18);
- No need (5);
- Lack of time (4); and
- On holiday (2).

Other individual reasons provided were "laziness"; "didn't see relevance"; "unaware of content"; "focused on study"; "injury"; "paying house off"; and "no-one to go with". It would appear that different marketing strategies should be used by the Careers and Employment Service and the School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science to ensure that a greater number of students are aware of and actively encouraged to participate in this beneficial voluntary program to increase student awareness of the importance of career development. The low participation rate in the voluntary seminars has emphasized the importance of including these seminars as a required component of Field Project B to ensure that all students have been exposed to this information which is vitally important for their career development.

*What were the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the job-search seminars and printed booklets according to students? How might these sessions be improved?*

The subjects were asked to rate the effectiveness of the information sessions and printed booklets on a scale of 1-10 (1 being very poor and 10 being outstanding). The ratings were quite positive with mean scores ranging from 7.1 to 8.2. Students suggested that the booklets

for the Resume/CV and Effective Job Search were more useful than the respective information sessions. The students indicated a number of strengths of the information sessions. The most frequent responses were:

- Information provided (6);
- Breadth of material (6);
- Booklets (5);
- How to get to the interview stage (4);
- What the employer is looking for (3);
- Increased awareness of aspects involved in job applications (2);
- How to improve interview performance (2);
- Importance of networking (2); and
- Relating to the real world (2).

Generally students demonstrated a favorable attitude to the information sessions. Using the same 1-10 scale, the students were asked to rate the effectiveness of the information sessions in preparing them for the interview. The results suggested the majority of students were positive about the experience with a mean response of 8.0 with a range from 6 to 10. In response to their perception of weaknesses of the information sessions, 14 subjects (42%) suggested that there were no weaknesses. Other common responses were:

- Not specific to a degree in Exercise Science (5);
- Could have been compressed (3);
- Some sections repetitive (3);
- Too brief (2);
- Too rushed (2);
- Should have been provided in first year (2); and
- Need to provide more active participation – more interview practice (2).

Suggestions were sought in regards to the improvement of the information sessions. Some 10 students indicated no changes were necessary, while other common responses were “need to provide more examples relevant to Exercise Science” (5), “spread over more sessions” (4), “employers from workplace should be involved in interviews” (2), and “use job search engines to find a job we would like to apply for and submit a week before interview” (2).

*What perceived benefits did students gain from being interviewed, as well as being a member of the interview panel?*

The students indicated a number of benefits were provided through being interviewed. The most common benefits suggested were “realize weaknesses – what I need to work on” (5), “practice in answering questions” (4), “how to prepare” (3), “experience” (3), “actual questions I would be asked”, “knowledge of personal strengths” (3), “improved self-confidence” (3) and “ability to handle stress” (3). Students suggested that they also gained significantly from being a member of the interview panel. The more frequent responses included:

- What the interviewers are looking for (8);
- What it’s like from the other side – what looks good and what doesn’t (6);
- Importance of body language (4);
- Importance of eye contact (3);
- Preparing responses before answering (2);
- Possible questions which might be asked (2); and
- Appropriate way to respond to questions (2).



*How did students perceive the job search seminars and mock interviews prepared them for “real-world” scenarios?*

The most common reply related to understanding the importance of preparation (6). Other frequent responses included “demonstrating what employers are looking for” (4), “provided experience” (4), “knowing what to expect” (4), “improved confidence” (3), “gave me practice” (2) and “provided sufficient background knowledge for future applications” (2). Subjects were asked to rate their level of confidence for a future interview on the 1-10 scale (1 indicating a very low level and 10 a very high level). The mean of the ratings was 7.8 with a range of 6 to 10, demonstrating a reasonably high level of confidence within the cohort in preparation for “real-world” scenarios.

The following suggestions were provided by students in regards to the organization of Field Project B for future years:

- The job-search seminars should be spread over three weeks rather than two in order to allow students to fully explore the material, develop their CV and gain more knowledge relevant to the job application process;
- More examples need to be provided of ways in which students can demonstrate their abilities to meet selection criteria with reference to scenarios in Exercise Science;
- Students need to be more actively engaged in the learning processes in the job-search seminars. Small group activities and scenarios should be included to create more enthusiasm for learning;
- More practice should be provided in mini-interview situations to allow students to feel comfortable in the mock interview scenario and future “real-world” interviews;
- It would be more relevant and motivating if students were allowed to select a job from appropriate job search engines for which they would like to apply, rather than being allocated a position suitable for an Exercise Science graduate;
- More time should be allowed for discussion of feedback and self-reflection to allow students to analyze and evaluate their performance, identify aspects requiring improvement and develop plans to reach personal goals and standards; and
- A second formal interview should be made available on a voluntary basis to provide students with another opportunity to practice in a mock situation before entering the “real world”.

#### IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research clearly identify positive trends in students’ perceptions in regards the benefits of this program. Further research involving students from other faculties within the university would provide more conclusive evidence. Although the job search seminars were provided on a voluntary basis to all students prior to the commencement of Field Project B, the majority did not take advantage of the program for a variety of reasons. Thus, it would seem appropriate for all students at Griffith University to be exposed to these features of work-integrated learning as part of their formal academic program of study. Given that scenario, specific Schools and Faculties could design learning experiences so that they are relevant to their particular students rather than the generic approach used when students voluntarily attend sessions offered by the Careers and Employment Services. All students would gain from experience of the interview process in preparation for the workforce. This type of course would seem best placed prior to the final year of study to allow students sufficient time to apply the information to their personal circumstances and improve their skills before emerging from the “protected cocoon” of university.

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APPENDIX I

The Measurement of Guidance Impact Instrument Used in the Study

TEC .....

AGENCY .....

CLIENT NUMBER .....

2

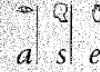
*measure of guidance impact*

You will remember filling in a questionnaire before you had your guidance session(s) about finding out about education, training and jobs and deciding what to do next. Please could you complete this second form, which will tell us what you now know about making your education, training and job choices. This will enable us to judge whether the guidance you have received has been of use to you.

The questions are easy to fill in and there are no right or wrong answers. Each question has a scale from 1, *Strongly Disagree*, to 5, *Strongly Agree*. Please circle a number to show what you think. Some questions may not apply to you – if so circle 3, *Not Applicable*.

Here are some examples:

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided or Not Applicable</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
I know how to fill out an application form.	1	2	3	④	5
I know my skills would suit different jobs.	1	②	3	4	5



	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided or Not Applicable</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1. I have a good idea of the jobs that will suit me.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have the information I need about education, training and/or job opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel able to make a decision about the job or career that I want to do.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I do not feel completely in charge of what is happening to me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know how I can find out about education or training.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I know how I can find out about jobs.	1	2	3	4	5

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided or Not Applicable</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
7. I have found out about opportunities that might suit me.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have made a plan for my future working life.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I know what I want from education or training.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I know what I want from a job.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I know what I would need to get into the education or training which interests me.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know what I would need to get into the job which interests me.	1	2	3	4	5

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Page 2  
Totals

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Carry forward to SUB-SCALE TOTALS

Page 2  
Total

Carry forward to  
TOTAL SCORE

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided or Not Applicable</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
13. I can see the steps I must go through to make a decision.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I know what work is involved in doing jobs I have been considering.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have found out what I will learn in education and/or training courses.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am worried about the decisions I need to make.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I do not know enough about how to prepare for an interview.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am confident of making a good impression at an interview.	1	2	3	4	5

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided or Not Applicable</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
19. I know myself well enough to know what kinds of help I want.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I need to know more about what I really want.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I know what my real interests are.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I feel positive about making applications.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I never know what to write on an application form where it asks you about yourself.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel that there is more to find out before I decide.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I know where I can get the information I will need.	1	2	3	4	5

<i>Office use only</i>	Page 3 Totals	D <input type="text"/>	O <input type="text"/>	T <input type="text"/>	S <input type="text"/>	Page 3 Total	<input type="text"/>
	SUB-SCALE TOTALS	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	TOTAL SCORE	<input type="text"/>

APPENDIX II

Evaluation of Job Search Seminars and Mock Interview

Did you attend the job search seminars presented by Careers and Employment Services prior to the commencement of Field Project B? Yes/No

If no, please provide reasons.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 being very poor and 10 being outstanding), rate the effectiveness of the job search seminars and the printed booklets.

a) Session	Resume/CV	Rating
Booklet	Resume/CV	Rating
b) Session	Effective job search	Rating
Booklet	Effective job search	Rating
c) Session	Application letters/ selection criteria	Rating
Booklet	Application letters/ selection criteria	Rating
d) Session	Job interviews	Rating
Booklet	Job interviews	Rating

What do you see as the strengths of the job search seminars?

What do you consider to be the weaknesses of the job search seminars?

What benefits did you gain from being interviewed?

What did you learn from being a member of the interview panel?

On a 1-10 scale (1 being very poor and 10 being outstanding), how effective was the package of job search seminars in preparing you for the mock interview?

Please provide reasons for your rating.

What suggestions do you have for improving the job search seminars?

How have the job search seminars and mock interview prepared you for “real world” interviews?

On a 1-10 scale (1 indicating a very low level and 10 a very high level), how confident are you for a future interview?

What did you gain from the feedback following the interview?

Do you believe a second interview should be included as a follow-up exercise within Field Project B? Yes/ No Provide reasons.

## ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative education (APJCE) arose from a desire to produce an international forum for discussion of cooperative education issues for practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region and is intended to provide a mechanism for the dissemination of research, best practice and innovation in work-integrated learning. The journal maintains close links to the biennial Asia-Pacific regional conferences conducted by the World Association for Cooperative Education. In recognition of international trends in information technology, APJCE is produced solely in electronic form. Published papers are available as PDF files from the website, and manuscript submission, reviewing and publication is electronically based.

Cooperative education in the journal is taken to be work-based learning in which the time spent in the workplace forms an integrated part of an academic program of study. Essentially, cooperative education is a partnership between education and work, in which enhancement of student learning is a key outcome. More specifically, cooperative education can be described as a strategy of applied learning which is a structured program, developed and supervised either by an educational institution in collaboration with an employer or industry grouping, or by an employer or industry grouping in collaboration with an educational institution. An essential feature is that relevant, productive work is conducted as an integral part of a student's regular program, and the final assessment contains a work-based component. Cooperative education programs are commonly highly structured and possess formal (academic and employer) supervision and assessment. The work is productive, in that the student undertakes meaningful work that has economic value or definable benefit to the employer. The work should have clear linkages with, or add to, the knowledge and skill base of the academic program.

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The editorial board welcomes contributions from authors with an interest in cooperative education. Manuscripts should comprise reports of relevant research, or essays that discuss innovative programs, reviews of literature, or other matters of interest to researchers or practitioners. Manuscripts should be written in a formal, scholarly manner and avoid the use of sexist or other terminology that reinforces stereotypes. The excessive use of abbreviations and acronyms should be avoided. All manuscripts are reviewed by two members of the editorial board. APJCE is produced in web-only form and published articles are available as PDF files accessible from the website <http://www.apjce.org>.

Research reports should contain; an introduction that describes relevant literature and sets the context of the inquiry, a description and justification for the methodology employed, a description of the research findings-tabulated as appropriate, a discussion of the importance of the findings including their significance for practitioners, and a conclusion preferably incorporating suggestions for further research. Essays should contain a clear statement of the topic or issue under discussion, reference to, and discussion of, relevant literature, and a discussion of the importance of the topic for other researchers and practitioners. The final manuscript for both research reports and essay articles should include an abstract (word limit 300 words), and a list of keywords, one of which should be the national context for the study.

Manuscripts and cover sheets (available from the website) should be forwarded electronically to the Editor-in-Chief directly from the website. In order to ensure integrity of the review process authors' names should not appear on manuscripts. Manuscripts should include pagination, be double-spaced with ample margins in times new-roman 12-point font and follow the style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association in citations, referencing, tables and figures (see also, <http://www.apa.org/journals/faq.html>). The intended location of figures and diagrams, provided separately as high-quality files (e.g., JPG, TIFF or PICT), should be indicated in the manuscript. Figure and table captions, listed on a separate page at the end of the document, should be clear and concise and be understood without reference to the text.



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