**What University Graduates Can Do To Boost Their Employability**

*Hugh Brereton’s view on what can be done to boost employability of university graduates.*

Jobs in the modern business world are becoming ever more specialised and the demand for highly skilled job applicants is on the rise, particularly in professional positions. It has now come to a point were an undergraduate university degree is not enough to guarantee a university graduate a fulltime job in their chosen discipline. A form of work experience is now a prerequisite for the majority of professional job applications. The following article will discuss what university graduates need to do in order to have a better chance at gaining fulltime professional jobs after completing university.

In this day and age jobs have become more complex and specified, this in turn means that job applicants must have more than just the average amount of knowledge in order to get considered for a position. In order for graduates to be employed in such a position they must gain additional qualifications or work experience through part-time or full-time work, or through internships or volunteering. These will give potential employees the necessary work experience needed to gain a position in their field of discipline. Some of this knowledge and skill needed is called *soft skills*. Soft kills relates to the interpersonal and individual interactions. (Matsouka and Mihail, 2016, p. 1). Matsoula and Mihail (2016) state that “There needs to be a heightening in the contribution of organizations and individuals to the employability of young people and to encourage greater convergence between the skills imparted by universities and those sought by companies.”

As technology is constantly evolving employees must evolve too this means that job seekers must have more than just an - what is now basic - undergraduate degree. In order for university graduates to be successful they must also gain experience in information technology (IT) to keep up with the ever-changing workplace. According to Antonelli, Almeida, Brito, Espejo, Bortolocci, Loghi and Luiza (2013)“The many improvements which have been witnessed in the different areas of knowledge in recent years have led organizations and people to constantly adapt to them. Information Technology (IT) has been one of the important factors to induce change in the environment.” Starting during the mid-twentieth century organisations started to experience the effect that technology can have on the level of performance and competitiveness of the organisation. It is no coincidence that there is a corresponding recognition of the contribution IT has on an organisation and that on organisational success. (Fetzner and Freitas, 2007a).

University graduates are now trying to improve their employability as the jobs they seek because increasingly specialised and confined. To do this they will need to seek other qualifications, work experience and knowledge on top of their university studies as the university qualification diminishes reputation. In the end IT and soft skills are what the majority of employers are looking for as both these skills are becoming ever more necessary in the modern workplace.