
The Importance Of Extracurricular Activities For Future Work

Due to immense competition in today's market, many students struggle to find jobs once they graduate. It is simply because employers ask much more than they used to before. Back then just having a degree and good GPA was enough, but now it is not the case. As a graduate you got to have extra skills, attributes and knowledge to survive in today's market. The report highlights the importance of having those skills and attributes. Adaptability, effective communication, teamwork, problem solving and performing well under high pressure are some skills that the employers look for the most.

These skills can be developed through gaining work experience and undertaking internships as it makes graduates aware of the workplace and makes them "work-ready" which the employers want. It helps to improve the knowledge of the graduates in their discipline, especially in internships. Taking part in extracurricular activities (volunteer work, learning new languages, doing extra courses) is also valued a lot by the employers and gives the graduates a comparative advantage. Overall, these skills will help in increasing the employability and make the graduates more likely to be employed once they finish their degree. For the commerce degree students, my recommendations are to avail the career hub facilities in the University of Adelaide (Adelaide University Union). Build connections with the university students, lecturers and tutors and take part in extracurricular activities of the university by joining University of Adelaide clubs (over 130 clubs in University of Adelaide). If the students take all these steps in order to improve their skills, knowledge and attributes, in three-year time by the end of their degree they will have a comparative advantage over other graduates and will have an increased employability.

1.0 Introduction

In today's world the competition is extremely high in the corporate world. That is why the employers are seeking graduates with skills which are outside of the subject area of study in the higher education. They want graduates to have excellence in various aspects and not just in their degree. A simple degree is not everything for them anymore. Such is the competitiveness of the market that even the already recruited employees are given regular trainings in order to ensure that they are keeping their pace with the market. Looking at the current scenario, current students must make sure that they acquire the right skills, capabilities and attributions, in order to increase their employability and competitiveness in the market (Mattis 2019).

1.1 Background

"Employability is having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful" (Pool and Sewell 2007). It is not as straightforward as it looks and is a multi-faceted concept open to a range of interpretations and conceptions. Employability and Employment are two different things, students confuse both the terms with each other at times. Employment refers to the aspect of an employee having a job, whereas employability refers to the capability

of a person in getting a new job (Maher & Graves 2007).

2.0 Increasing your employability

Recruitment strategies are evolving with each passing day. It is shifting more towards data science and digital technology. Recruiters also hold student business plan competitions and job fairs to find students who stand out (Hays 2018). Nowadays, psychometric tests are also in the trend and employers use it to calculate the aptitude of a candidate. So just having a degree is not enough in today's age. There are many other skills that an employer looks for nowadays in fresh graduates. Skills such as adaptability, effective communication, teamwork, problem solving, performing well under high pressure are at the top of their list. In order to increase your employability in today's market, it is highly important to have these skills (McQuerry 2019). These are the ways how students can improve their employability:

2.1 Work Experience

Work experience is something every employer expects graduates to have in today's competitive world. As work experience makes you learn about the diversity in the workplace and makes you more adaptable. It makes you ready for the real world and employers want "work-ready" graduates, not someone they have to teach everything from the scratch. It improves their knowledge and skills too which are mentioned above. Furthermore, tests them where they stand in the real world. So, it is a must to have work experience before you apply for a job in today's market (Marymount College 2017) Most of the times an employer rejects the application of a job seeker, if they lack work experience (Jackson & Wilton,2017).

2.2 Internships

A proven way to gain skills, knowledge and experience that employers want from graduates. Graduate internships and future career success are directly related to each other. The most vital part about internships is that it provides students experience in the area of their specific interest/degree which helps them in their professional career, unlike some of the part time and casual work (Lian, Foo & Ling 2018). Just like the work experience, it is a way of showcasing your professionalism and the fact of being able to work in a workplace with different kinds of individuals. Furthermore, you can also gain a great reference letter at the end of the internship if you do well, which helps you greatly in getting a job (Loretto 2019).

2.3 Having comparative advantage

In this day and age of competitiveness, it is highly important that you stand out as a candidate while applying for a job. As mentioned above, just having a degree is not enough, you got to have some extra skills too. Skills like knowing another language other than English, being efficient with Microsoft Office etc. can make you stand out Infront of the other candidates. Taking part in extracurricular activities is also highly appreciated by the employers. They want someone who can offer more than just the desk work, they want a worker who can excel in many facets. They will prefer a person who plays sports, has different hobbies and does volunteer work than a candidate who just has a degree with a GPA of 6 plus. Hence, it is very important to gain that comparative advantage over the other candidates (Clark, Marsden, Whyatt, Thompson & Walker 2015).

3.0 Conclusion and Summary

No one can deny the fact that a degree is the steppingstone for a corporate career. However, in the present market, due to the extreme competitiveness employers want more from the graduates. They want to hire the standouts. Having just a degree and GPA isn't their only requirement anymore, they want graduates to have many other skills along with it. In order to develop those extra skills and attributes, students should undertake work experience, internships, take part in extracurricular activities and do other courses apart from their degrees in order to have a comparative advantage over the other candidates in line. It will increase their employability and make them more likely to attain their jobs.

4.0 Recommendations

Here are a few recommendations that a graduate student can follow to achieve all the aspects mentioned in the report:

4.1 Going to the Career Hub

- Provides career advice to students
- Helps students in finding internships
- Guide you with ways that you can improve your skills and credentials by recommending you courses to do along with the degree
- Contact Adelaide University Union

4.2 Building Connections

- Must develop good connections with the lecturers and tutors
- Try to meet with more students too as it increases your exposure and knowledge
- Creates references for the future and helps in the attainment of the jobs

4.3 Participate in Extracurricular Activities

- Join different university clubs
- Over 130 clubs in The University of Adelaide
- Will increase the knowledge and exposure of the students
- Will be a good addition to the resume too

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5.0 Reference List

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