

Your first graduate job

- things you should know NOW!

1. It does help if you have undertaken some work placements as an undergraduate. This can be a formal part of your degree, e.g. a sandwich course. You can also apply for summer placements with companies.
2. If there are some career paths you are interested in see if you can shadow a key member of staff for a day or a week. You will learn far more about your particular possible career through this than you would if you were doing lower level temping.
3. Temping whether it be in an office or factory can give you experience in many key areas. When you complete the assignment make a note of what you have learnt from it ready for when you apply for jobs.
4. Employers want to recruit people who are team players, so look to demonstrate these skills in your work placement. Be helpful and look for ways to get involved.
5. What skills and abilities would be helpful in your ideal job? Look for ways to develop some of these skills in your undergraduate life. Could you take on a leadership role in a club or society? What about fundraising for developing certain skills?
6. Think about the impression you will give if you can add only limited details on your time at university. If you can only list socialising what does this tell a future employer? Then think about what employers will think if you are an officer of a society, or have been involved in some voluntary occupation. Whatever you do, it doesn't have to be a 3 year commitment, and does not have to cover many different societies, so choose a couple of societies that interest you and that you want to be involved with.
7. Don't feel that you have to fill all your spare time with work and activities, being a student is a wonderful time so make sure that you allow some time to build friendships and to make times for your friends.
8. After a work placement make a note about what you enjoyed and would like more of, and what you didn't get a chance to do. See if you can get these needs met next time.
9. Placements can lead on to permanent job offers or graduate training schemes, so make sure you demonstrate good personal qualities while you are there. Even when asked to do what you consider to be menial tasks, do so with good grace. Be helpful.
10. Do you know what your abilities are? You could choose to have these assessed via a qualified psychologist. See <http://www.personalassessments.co.uk/Highlands.htm>

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