



# CAREER PLANNING FOR NEW GRADS

**A**s a newly graduated information professional, the challenges of securing employment can be daunting. *Pixie Stardust has a few ideas to set you on your way, and takes a look at opportunities at home and abroad.*

It's not unusual to find that when you are seeking your first role, you might need to take what you can get just to get yourself started in the industry. Once you have that 'foot in the door' though, it is worthwhile to take the time to reflect and plan for your career.

It is good to have a loose idea of what you want to do and where you want to go with your career. However, it is not always a good idea to be too rigid with your plan, as this can lead to missing a good opportunity. You need to know your strengths and weaknesses, and the kind of things that you most enjoy and feel fulfilled by in the workplace.

It is also important to reflect on the way you like to work – do you prefer team work or working independently? A large or small workplace? Managing people or dealing with collections, data or technology? Consider these preferences when assessing potential jobs. Read position descriptions for various jobs, even ones you are not interested in, or are above your level, so you know what employers are looking for.

Try to be strategic with your choices for the location of any placements or practicals that are required as part of your studies. This is your chance to explore the realities of work in a workplace you think you may love, or an opportunity to

learn more about the types of roles and the range of work that is done within a particular library setting. Use placements as an opportunity to demonstrate your enthusiasm and skills to a potential employer.

Many university libraries offer graduate positions too. If you have already completed a placement at a university and made a good impression, this can increase your chances of being considered for a role at the same university. Taking on volunteer roles is another great way to expand your skill set, broaden your networks and set yourself up for opportunities for career growth.

Networking, although it may seem daunting, offers great opportunities to develop your skill set and make connections that could eventually lead to employment. Attend all the activities put on by library organisations and groups in your area. Join ALIA and find out what ALIA is doing in your area. Take on a committee role and get involved with your profession.

These steps give you a chance to make friends with other information professionals, as well as broadening your skill set. Committee involvement looks great on your resume too – it shows you are committed to your profession and motivated to develop your career.

And remember, many of these strategies can be implemented before you even graduate, increasing the chances that you will be able to secure a great first job.