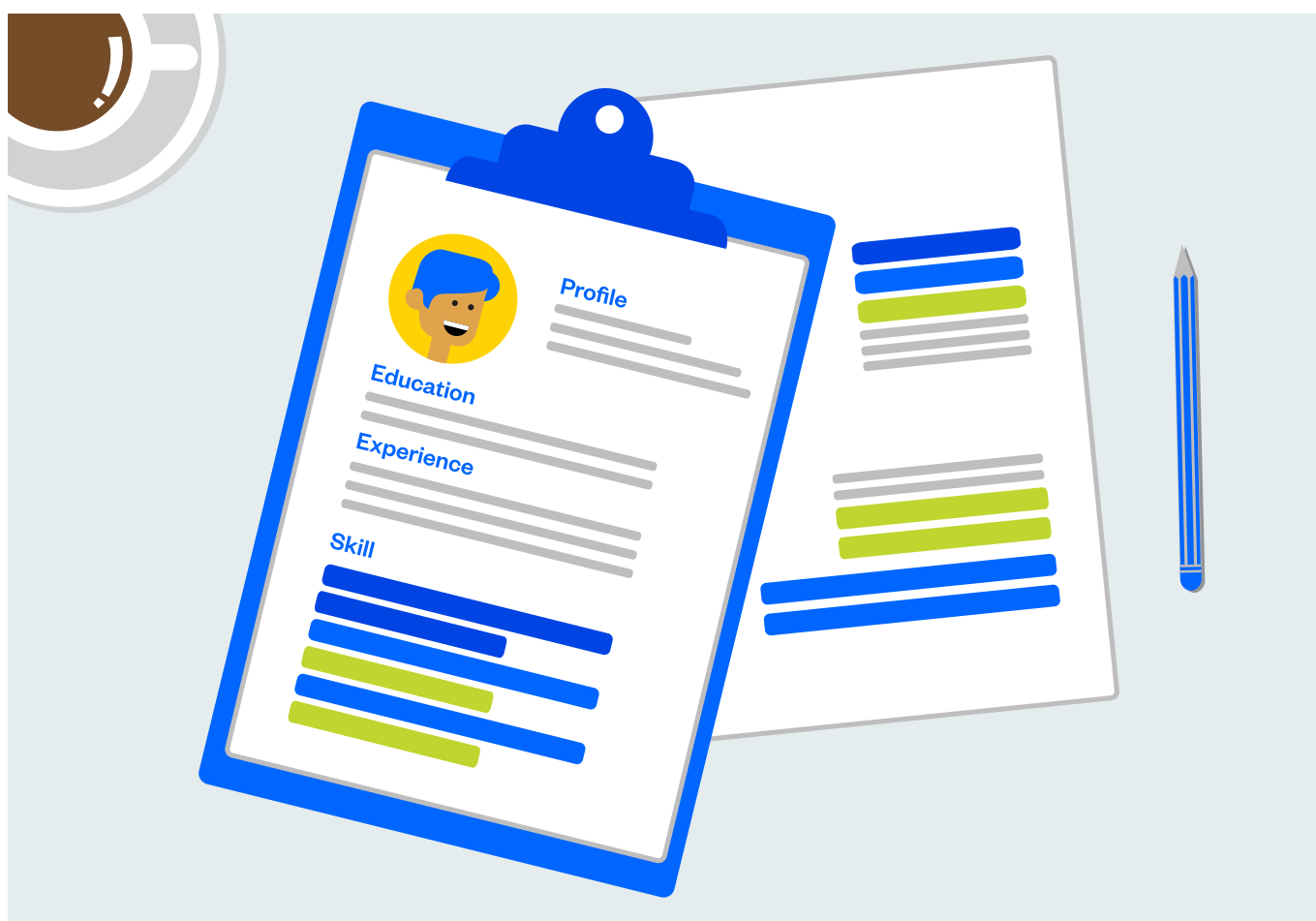


STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD



Finding a graduate job can be tough. Each year graduates struggle to get their foot in the door. The best thing you can do is be proactive – attend local engineering events, get your CV looking good, update your LinkedIn profile, and actively search for opportunities.

Standing out from the crowd doesn't need to be hard – follow our simple advice to help put you on the track towards nailing that job. Use all the possible channels to find available roles and connect with people, craft a CV that has everything employers want to know (and nothing more!), and understand the role your cover letter should play and why it can be vital to your success.

AMPLIFY YOUR APPLICATION

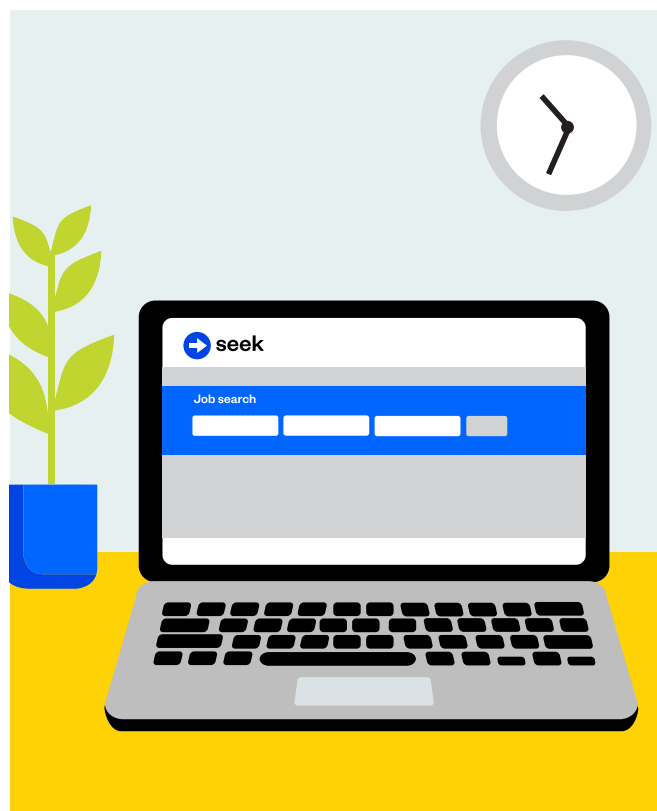
Start simple

You could start by looking at key job sites, such as Seek and Trade Me, as well as the Engineering New Zealand jobs board. However, these sites rarely advertise graduate roles. It's best to contact HR departments directly, look on engineering organisations' websites, and check out your university job board.

If you're striving to work for a particular organisation, check their website, follow them on LinkedIn, or contact the HR department to communicate your desire to work at the organisation (even if there aren't job openings!). This will show your enthusiasm.

Network

Reach out to relevant contacts and let them know that you're looking for a job. Be specific about what kind of work you're looking for and ask them if they have any information or know anyone in a relevant field. Being involved with your local Engineering New Zealand branch and Young Engineers group can help to expand your network and connect you with engineers of different experience levels.



Be proactive

When you come across a job, be proactive and apply directly with businesses instead of just going through job boards. You should make sure to follow the recruitment process (ie send in your CV and cover letter first). But it doesn't hurt to pick up the phone and call the hiring manager to make sure they received your application. This way you'll be top of mind, and your application is far more likely to be noticed.

Check your socials

It's important to up your social prowess. Recruiters and hiring managers often check applicant's social media accounts, so check the privacy of your accounts and what can be seen by the public. You should also create a LinkedIn account – this acts as your digital CV where you can showcase your achievements. LinkedIn is a great way to grow your network and is a tool heavily utilised by recruiters.

Get a head start

Engineering New Zealand student members can view our recorded webinars on how to make LinkedIn work for you.

TAKE YOUR CV TO THE TOP OF THE PILE

Creating a CV that stands out is the first step to get your foot in the door. Help recruiters and hiring managers notice you as they wade through numerous applications. Your CV is your passport to the interview stage so make sure you dedicate adequate time to updating and improving it.

Here are the key elements every CV should have:

- **Personal details:** include your name, email and phone number (don't include a photo).
- **Personal profile:** a short paragraph on who you are and your strengths.
- **Key skills:** list your key skills that are relevant to the job and elaborate on these in the employment/volunteer section.
- **Education:** list your qualifications relevant to the job, including the date they were achieved. Feel free to include final year subjects but no need to highlight your grades (your transcript covers this).
- **Employment:** list your employment history that is relevant to the job, with start and finish dates. Briefly state your achievements, responsibilities and skills you learnt, relevant to the job.
- **Volunteering:** list your volunteering history, including start and finish dates. Briefly state responsibilities and skills you learnt, relevant to the job.
- **Referees:** Supply on request.

And remember to include your Engineering New Zealand membership and list any other relevant organisations you're involved with

Keep it concise

Avoid including information about every single job and course you've done. This will unnecessarily lengthen your CV, which should be no more than two pages long. Employers mainly want to know if you can do the job. Get rid of the fluff you don't need and look at your CV critically. What will stand out to this particular employer and makes you sound like the best candidate for the job? Think about what will likely appear on the majority of other candidates' applications, and how you can differentiate yourself.

Emphasise your results

In the employment section, emphasise your results rather than your responsibilities. When writing about your skills, don't just list them – make sure that you give examples of how you've used each skill by identifying what you did and what happened as a result. If it's a skill that's expected of you, or that everyone else has, consider removing it. Some skills make you sound unique, whereas others sound like they've been copied and pasted from a generic CV template. A great tip is to use action words to bring your achievements to life, eg implemented, improved, advanced, strengthened, enabled, increased, awarded... you get the picture!

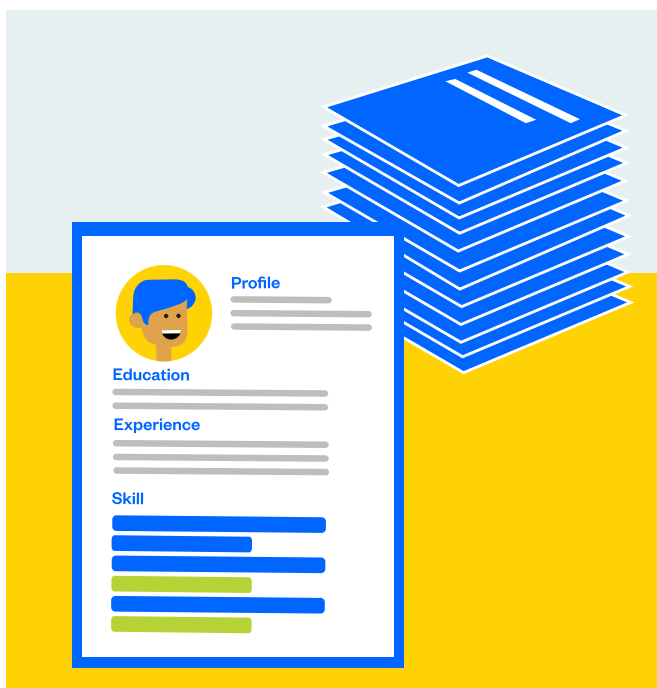
Customise

One of the first questions an employer will ask is, "Why do you want to work for us?" Thinking about this when writing application material means you'll be three steps ahead. Research the company – look for recent news articles, thoroughly review their website, check out their company values, and view the LinkedIn employer page.

Tailoring your application to the company shows the hiring manager that you've taken the time to apply – it's not just a tick and flick with a hundred other companies. So, customise your CV for each different role you apply for, particularly the first page where you write your personal summary and skills – this is where you sell yourself!

Get it checked

It's important to get a second pair of eyes to check your CV makes sense, is well-formatted and has no spelling or grammatical mistakes. It's a good idea to utilise career facilities at your tertiary institution.



COVER LETTERS WIN HEARTS

Your cover letter shouldn't be a repeat of what's in your CV. It should showcase your personality, what you bring to the specific role, and talk about why you are applying for the role. Keep it to one page.

Addressing the hiring manager

Firstly, it's important to address the hiring manager by name – "dear sir/madam" will immediately rule you out. Also, you don't need to profusely thank them for taking the time to read your cover letter. Instead, demonstrate genuine interest by writing a cover letter that connects the dots between your experience and the requirements of the position.

Start strong

Don't remind the hiring manager of what they already know, for example starting with "I'm writing to apply for the position of graduate engineer at [organisation name]...". Instead pick a point to start with, such as an aspect that you felt excited about in the job description, for example, "I've always been a big admirer of the work [organisation name] does..."

Expand on your CV, don't repeat it

Your CV neatly lays out your work history, skills, and accomplishments in organised bullet points. Your cover letter should expand on your CV, explaining how your experience is relevant to the organisation, and why hiring you is a good idea. If you simply repeat what's in your CV, your cover letter will lack the compelling pitch necessary to make a strong impression, and your application will likely be overlooked.

Try expanding on your experience by going into detail about a significant accomplishment or explaining how your experience is relevant to solving the company's problems. This is your opportunity to convey your enthusiasm for the job, in working for the organisation, and why you're a great fit!

Align yourself

Set yourself apart from other applicants by demonstrating your commitment to ethics and professionalism. Being a member of Engineering New Zealand shows you're serious about your career and being the best engineer you can be.

