

Does a degree get you a job?

You are at university, studying hard and think that your degree will get you the job you want. Well it may help, but organisations, especially the top quartile now demand other skills as well as a degree.

Working together, communication, influencing, challenge, initiative, motivation, achievement, the list is endless, but these are skills that organisations require as well as your degree.

So when should you start to think about these skills: when you complete an application form; in your final year of study; or when you begin your University career.

In order to have the evidence required you must start to understand these skills and how to gain evidence of them as early as possible, it's not something to be left to the last minute.

So where do you get them:

social clubs; work experience; dealing with friends and family; travel, to name but a few, in other words everyday life, organisations want to hear about what you have done and achieved, so you have to become involved and gain experiences.

For example:

You have been asked for evidence of your business sense and you work in the student bar. You notice that the Bicardi Breezers aren't selling because they are hidden by the till; you know if you change their location you will sell more. You speak to your manager, explain the situation, understand how many sales are being lost and what sales could be gained, influence the manager to go with your idea of moving them and sell more. Hey presto you have a evidence of business sense which is something in your everyday life. (By the way I suggest you don't use this exact example on your application form, it may be spotted!)

So it's simple, but you have to be prepared, make sure you write down your experiences, they are easy to forget and you need the details: what, when, where and how you did it, so when you complete your application form or go for an interview you have a number of evidence and experiences.

If you know which organisations you want to work for, ensure you know what skills they are looking for. Then you can gain evidence of these skills before you start an application process.

Examples:

BP	Drive, Thinking, Working Together, Influence, Business Sense.
Price Waterhouse Cooper	Communication skills, Initiative, Problem Solving, Motivation, Commitment, Team Working, Flexibility.
Foreign & Commonwealth Office	Results Oriented, Flexible Thinking, Decisiveness, Relationship Building, Making an impact.
Shell	Capacity (analytical ability, thinking, creativity, problem solving), Achievement (drive, enthusiasm, resilience, self confidence), Relationships (ability to work effectively with others).
PSA Peugeot Citroen	Building/Maintaining Relationships, Communication (written and verbal), Influencing, Achievement Orientation, Problem Analysis, Judgement/Problem Solving, Planning & Organising, Taking Responsibility, Resilience/Self Confidence.