

A BRIGHT (RED) FUTURE FOR GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY?

What Employers Know



12,000 UK applicants to Graduate Scheme ; 200 jobs.
80% fail at application form stage



Candidates are unprepared for competency based interviews despite being told that is what we use.

HR Dept, Top Edinburgh Employer

Edinburgh Napier graduates are among our best employees but comparatively few make it through

Less than 5% of 186 got to the assessment centre stage last year.

Major UK-based manufacturer

- 20 Edinburgh Napier applicants to graduate scheme (2010).
- 6 progressed past application form.
- 0 passed assessment centre.

What we know

- Employers can be faced with hundreds of applications for every job so often don't offer feedback on applications to candidates.
- Students will use similar applications to apply for dozens of jobs; i.e. they don't spend much time considering the employer's needs.
- Graduate employers have identified that many Edinburgh Napier graduates struggle to demonstrate what they have to offer in their job applications.
- In highly competitive recruitment situations quality applications stand out.
- The Careers team encounter many graduates who fail to recognise their lack of knowledge of application best practice as a reason for lack of success.
- There are lots of opportunities in the University for students to experience realistic recruitment processes and thus graduate more prepared for the world of work. E.g. recruiting for Placements, Student Ambassadors, Project Workers, Management trainees.

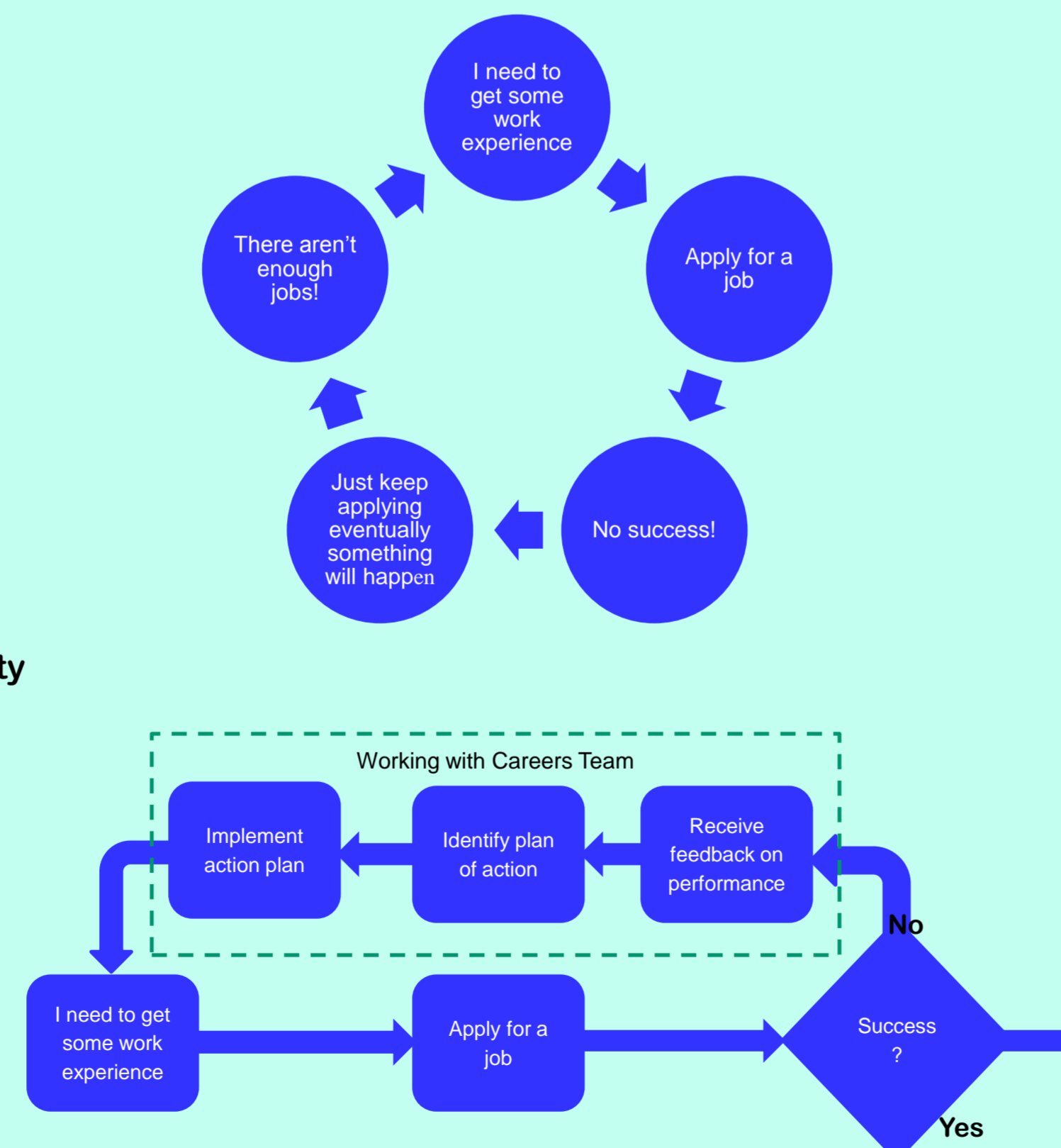
What Students Should Know

Generally students understand the importance of work experience but often fail to realise what is expected of them in the recruitment process. They will regularly blame the lack of opportunities rather than be motivated to compete more effectively. They can get stuck in a non-progressive cycle.

Students need to be more aware that;

- Recruitment is often very systematic.
- Recruiters may not read right through poor applications.
- All applications can be improved.
- Making good applications is a skill that can be learnt.
- Positive action as a result of feedback develops employability next time round.

Feedback on applications is critical in helping students realise that they need to improve their performance but are they equipped to make the most of it? Where the Careers team works closely with recruiters and applicants, to ensure that an unsuccessful application is not seen as 'failing', positive outcomes and cognitive learning can result.



How Some Students Get to Know



Pilot Project -Recruiting Junior Consultants for

Opportunity: Paid work experience on projects for industry, brokered by Bright Red Triangle.

Status: Students are recruited to a bank of Junior Consultants.

Recruitment Process:

- Application Form
- Competency-based Telephone Interview
- Written Exercise
- Group Exercise
- Role Play
- Presentation
- Face to Face Interview.

Assessment Centre

Students are given detailed feedback on the reasons for non-progression (and success) at all stages and referred to Careers services in order to discuss their employability development and to improve future applications.

Since April 2013: 68 applicants, 39 telephone interviews, 1 Assessment Centre (9 candidates) next Assessment Centre in June.