

# JOB SEEKING GUIDE

CAREER SERVICES



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MAIN POINTS OF JOB SEEKING **3**

START WITH UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF **6**

Motivation and goals **7**

Skills **8**

RECOGNISE YOUR OPPORTUNITIES AND  
THE DEMAND FOR YOUR SKILLS **9**

Profile text/elevator pitch **10**

Phone calls **11**

FIND THE BEST WAY FOR YOU TO NETWORK **13**

Social media and LinkedIn **14**

Informational interview **16**

JOB SEEKING DOCUMENTS **17**

CV **17**

Application letter **23**

Digital recruitment systems **26**

JOB INTERVIEW **27**

VIDEOS AND PORTFOLIOS **30**

Video CV **31**

Portfolio of your work **32**

# MAIN POINTS OF JOB SEEKING

Welcome to the University of Helsinki Career Services job seeking guide!

Job seeking can evoke many different kinds of emotions. It's perfectly normal for your feelings to go from insecurity to excitement and from disappointment to the joy of success, particularly if you're looking for a job when you are about to graduate. Job seeking can be surprisingly time- and energy-consuming. We have compiled key points of job seeking in today's labour market into this guide so you can focus your time on what's really important. The first thing we want to do is to highlight three main points. Please read them carefully.



## **1. Most jobs are not advertised publicly, meaning that they cannot be found in the job advertisements.**

Recruitment processes are expensive and time-consuming, so from the perspective of the employer, it is easiest to hire a person whom they already know and who is available. It is still possible to find a job by looking through job advertisements, but well-targeted open applications and personal contacts are becoming increasingly important channels for job seeking – and ones that can reach a much larger number of potential jobs.

## **2. Articulating your competence is a key job seeking skill – and takes some time to learn!**

In order to communicate the most relevant things about yourself and your skills, you must first explore them yourself. Laying the groundwork for job seeking means a dialogue between your skills and interests and the available opportunities. What this often requires is that before you send your first application, you stop to reflect upon what you have learned from all the things you have done and experienced in your life, and consider what about them is interesting to you. In the next chapter, we will help you get started on this project.

## **3. It is useful to make new connections.**

As most positions are not publicly advertised, it is becoming increasingly important to meet people. When you get to know people who are important for your field or your future plans, you will also gain information about things you consider important. Conversations with such contacts will probably also help clarify your career goals. Find your own way to network in chapter 4.

# Job seeking is a **process**.



# START WITH UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

The groundwork for job seeking includes recognising your skills and interests. This entails self-reflection, which may be a lifelong process.

It is up to you how profoundly you want to reflect and what the questions that are particularly relevant to you are. You must also choose the best way to tackle these questions. Many find it helpful to write things down or to talk to others during their self-reflection process.

We suggest you write your thoughts down on a piece of paper, for example. This renders your thought process visible while making it easier to return to your thinking without having to start from the beginning. For example, you can create a folder on your computer with all your notes and reflections, no matter how random and scattered. Drawing a mind map is another good method.

Do your job seeking groundwork carefully, with a focus on quality over quantity. Your notes will also make it easier to write your CV and application, answer questions in the job interview, and help you deal with any other situations where you want to communicate your skills to others. They can also support you in finding the path you want to take in your career in a more profound sense.



## MOTIVATION AND GOALS

Think about why you chose the field of your degree. What do you hope to achieve with your studies? It's good to set goals and think about the future. You will gain more motivation for your studies when you know why you are studying and what you are striving for.

- What do you enjoy? What do you find interesting or exciting?
- What are the things you liked the most in your studies: what were the best courses and why?
- What kinds of work methods and tasks do you enjoy the most?
- If you had your dream job, what would your typical working day be like in concrete terms? What would the environment be like?
- What are your most important values and how would you like them to be present in your work?
- What would you like your work community to be like?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- What kinds of practical issues (e.g., life situation, family, friends, health, hobbies, place of residence) are likely to impact your work in the near future?

## SKILLS

List the study modules, work experience and volunteer duties that you have completed so far. Look through your list and think carefully about what you have gained from each experience. You can ask yourself the following questions:

- What did you learn?
- What kinds of questions and topics did you focus on? What type of understanding did you gain?
- What kinds of academic skills did you learn? (e.g., argumentation, information seeking, analytical thinking, field-specific skills)
- What kinds of general skills did you learn? (e.g., languages, interaction and communication skills, IT skills, public speaking and teamwork skills, organisational skills)
- What types of skills would have been useful and what kinds of skills would you like to learn?
- What kinds of personal strengths and characteristics did you discover in yourself? What kind of feedback did you get from others?

It's often useful to think about your skills together with others. You can try the following methods:

- a) Describe your skills to someone who is unfamiliar with your field. This means that you will have to make an effort to clearly express your field-specific competencies and practise how to articulate them.
- b) Request feedback from people who know you and with whom you may have worked. Ask them to address both your strengths and areas where you still have room for improvement. What kind of a person are you? What are your strengths? If you feel shy advertising your achievements, it can be helpful to ask your friends and colleagues to pitch in.



# RECOGNISE YOUR OPPORTUNITIES AND THE DEMAND FOR YOUR SKILLS

After charting your skills, it's important to determine where there is demand for them. You will be more successful in drafting your job seeking documents if you have a good general understanding of both your skills and the things needed on the job market.

- Read through job advertisements and job descriptions. Write down the kinds of positions that are available, and note which ones you liked or were interested in. (Please remember that you don't need to fulfil all the criteria listed in the advertisement to be a good applicant.)
- Talk to people with jobs that might be interesting to you in some way.
- Read the University of Helsinki's career monitoring reports. They will give you information on the employment of graduates from your faculty.
- Visit the [Töissä.fi](https://toissä.fi) website to see what types of work your degree is relevant for and which degrees have led graduates to which job titles.
- Browse through the websites, social media channels and other publications of companies and organisations. Think about what you have to offer the organisation in question.
- Investigate communities, events and forums which you find significant. They may be related to your field, skills or interests. There is also a wide selection of online environments and social media platforms that provide opportunities for connecting with people.
- Look at the career paths people have listed on LinkedIn, the professional social media platform (see page 14).

Make a note of interesting employers and positions as you come across them. You can also expand on the notes you made at the self-reflection stage. If you cannot find your dream jobs immediately, it may be useful to start with a job that will help you get started on your career, even if the position is not everything you hoped for.

## **PROFILE TEXT/ELEVATOR PITCH**

Try to complete these sentences so that they express the things you have realised by reflecting on yourself and your options:

*My main areas of interest are... / In my studies I have focused on...*

*Through my minor studies /specialisation studies, I have also increased my understanding of...*

*Through my work experience / hobbies I have...*

*My personality is...*

*The things that are important to me in the future are... / My goal is...*

Drafting your profile text helps you communicate the main things about yourself as an applicant. If you have a specific job in mind, you can already write your profile from the perspective of that position so that you focus on the key skills needed in it. You'll need your elevator pitch when you call potential employers or meet them in other contexts. You can also condense it into a couple of sentences and add it to the beginning of your CV (see CV, page 20–23).



## PHONE CALLS

Phone calls are a good way of making personal contact with a potential employer. During a phone call, you will be able to gather additional information on the position you are interested in, or ask about other potential job opportunities in the organisation. Sometimes you may wish to call after you have sent an application to ask how the recruitment process is progressing.

Prepare for such phone calls carefully. Read the main things about the organisation, e.g., from the website, and write down a few sentences about how you want to introduce yourself and what questions you want to ask. Try to call the right person (e.g., the unit head or team leader). If you are uncertain whom to call, you can call the company's switchboard and ask who would be the right contact for you. Phone calls may make you nervous, but they are useful!

Let the person on the phone answer your questions without interrupting them. You can ask follow-up questions, but keep the call short unless the employer is clearly interested and keeps asking you for more information.

An example call:

***"Hello, this is X. I would like to ask some questions about the open position of XXX. Do you have a moment?"***

Start the call by stating why you are calling. If the time is inconvenient, ask when you can call back and remember to do so.

***"My current situation is..."***

Explain your situation briefly: e.g., I'm a student of X, I'm interested in things like X and have done things related to it such as X, and now I'm looking for a job or information on X.

***"Might you have need for these kinds of skills in the near future? / Do you have any open positions at the moment?"***

You can also request an informational interview (see Informational interview, page XX) if you do not want to ask about a potential job straight away. You can also ask if there are other people you should contact.

***"Sounds good, I would love to talk more face to face and I could send you my CV. Would you have about 15 minutes for me some day next week, for example?"***

If it is not possible to schedule a meeting, but they seem interested, ask if you can send an open application and CV by email.

# FIND THE BEST WAY FOR YOU TO NETWORK

**Networking** means making connections that are relevant for your career. Networking is not about insincere self-interest. Instead, it should be a natural process of meeting new people, and ideally, also providing reciprocal support. Creating new contacts often requires that you venture out of your comfort zone, are active and creative. However, keep in mind that most people do want to help you, and everyone needs help sometimes – even at work!

Networks are very important in job seeking. If an organisation wants to hire a new employee and is not obliged to publicly advertise the position, it is only natural that they would start by considering people they already know as potential applicants.

However, the goal of meeting people does not have to be to directly find a job. Through conversation you will gain tacit knowledge of what working in different fields and organisations is like, and you will be able to compare this information with your own career goals. Such conversations will also help you demonstrate your motivation during a job interview and indicate that you have already investigated the position.

Choose your style of networking based on what kind of interaction you like the best, and select a networking channel that reaches the people who are relevant to you. However, we also suggest that you push yourself to think outside of the box: many students have discovered new opportunities by browsing LinkedIn and contacting interesting people there to meet for a quick coffee. Don't be afraid to meet people outside your field: they will make your network richer!



## SOCIAL MEDIA AND LINKEDIN

Social media is constantly changing, enabling increasingly diverse ways of keeping in touch for individuals and communities. It has also opened up new dimensions for job seeking. Even though in this guide we only discuss LinkedIn, there are also other applications and websites that provide opportunities for job seeking and networking.

**LinkedIn** is a social media platform intended for professional networking and job seeking. We recommend that you create a basic profile for yourself: write a brief description of yourself, add your education and your latest jobs, upload a photo and write a few words in your profile headline to describe yourself. Think about which would be the most important keywords for you (interests and skills) and add them to your profile summary. You can browse through other profiles

for ideas and inspiration. There are also many online guides available for using LinkedIn. You can use LinkedIn:

- **For seeking information.** Once you have added a few dozen contacts, you will have a huge number of virtual CVs at your disposal. You will be able to see different career paths and examples of what kinds of jobs people with your degree have found. Type “University of Helsinki” in the search bar and select “Alumni” from the drop-down menu. By using different search terms and filters, you will be able to view various organisations and individuals. If your profile is public, bear in mind that people will be able to see when you have looked at their profile. So make sure you have a presentable basic profile before you browse.
- **For profiling.** LinkedIn is like a virtual CV, but it can be more extensive than a conventional CV and does not have to be tailored for a specific employer. However, when you are seeking a job, make sure that your profile reflects the things you state in your application documents.
- **For networking.** On LinkedIn, you can add the kinds of people to your network that you might not add as friends on other social media. Make it a habit to invite people you meet into your network, or people with whom you have been or would like to be in professional contact. You can also send contact requests to people whom you have not met but who have an interesting profile. Remember to always write a personal invitation message and explain why you would like to add the person to your network, or describe your shared interests.
- **For job seeking.** Indicate in your profile settings that you are looking for employment. Make sure that your profile is up to date so that LinkedIn can suggest open positions that are relevant to you. LinkedIn is increasingly being used to announce open positions.

## INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

An informational interview is an opportunity to gain useful information about potential employers and positions while creating a personal contact in the world of work. The idea is to contact someone who already has a career and who could perhaps bring new perspectives to your thinking. You can find additional information about organisations you find interesting, or approach a role model who has a job that corresponds to your career dreams. For example, you can look for alumni from your field of education, interesting profiles on LinkedIn, or ask your existing contacts whom you should talk to.

You may wonder why someone would spend their time on you. However, people usually want to be helpful, and if you interview alumni, they will see it as a way to support the University community and help a younger colleague. Meanwhile, you as a student may be able to offer new ideas to someone who has a long career under their belt, along with an energising spark of fresh enthusiasm, perhaps. People usually like to talk about their work once they realise that you are genuinely interested.

We recommend that you call a suitable person and suggest that they have lunch or coffee with you, or propose a phone or video call. If it seems strange to ask for an interview just because you feel like it, you can say that you are working on a career studies assignment at the University.

During the interview, you can ask the interviewee about their duties, the skills needed to complete them, their career path, or experiences during their student years that helped them find employment (e.g., summer jobs, exchange studies, working in student organisations, etc.).

If you are interested in the organisation where your interviewee is working, do the groundwork beforehand and find out basic information about the organisation. You can enquire about the market situation in the field, the products, services, mission and operating environment. You can also ask about challenges as well as the competence and development needs the organisation will be facing in the future. Finally, you can ask about the organisation's recruitment needs and try to determine whether you would be able to put your skills to use there. If the discussion has been interesting to you, you can also ask whom else you could contact at the organisation.



# JOB SEEKING DOCUMENTS

The documents needed for job seeking – most commonly the application letter and CV – are just one part of the job seeking process. Challenges in drafting these documents often derive from the fact that applicants have not done the groundwork of examining their own skills and goals with sufficient care. So if writing the application or CV feels challenging, go back to an earlier section in this guide.

Make sure you **tailor your CV and application for the recipient and express the relevant things in a clear and concise manner**. Ideally, you should be aware of the full spectrum of your skills as well as the things that your target organisation appreciates. That way, you will be able to emphasise the specific aspects of your competence that the target organisation needs.

## CV

A good CV is like an expanded calling card. It has a summary of your contact details, education, work experience and skills as well as any other information that is relevant for the position in question. CVs are often used to do the first round of eliminating candidates, so your CV must communicate effectively that you are the right person for the job.

Add a profile text to the beginning of your CV with a few sentences describing you as a professional (see profile text/elevator pitch, page 10). This helps the person doing the recruitment to focus on the right things and gives you a chance to show a glimpse of your motivation and personality already in your CV. The profile text is particularly important if you have not accrued a great deal of work experience in your field, if your degree does not prepare you for a specific profession or if you are in the process of switching fields.

# Basic details must be accurate, **so be careful with these points!**

- Your up-to-date contact details are at the beginning of the document.
- There are no spelling or grammatical errors.
- Your education and work experience are clearly presented, along with other skills which are relevant to the position (e.g., language or IT skills).
- The file is named in a clear way, ideally with your own name (e.g., CV\_Firstname\_Lastname.pdf).
- The file type should be a common one to avoid any problems with opening it: a PDF is a safe bet.
- List things in reverse chronological order, starting with the latest one.

If you do not have a good photo of yourself, ask someone to take a picture of you looking relaxed but professional. It can also be useful to add the contact details of one to three referees at the end of your CV. Remember to inform your referees that you are actively seeking a job.

When describing your work experience, please note that just listing your job titles or duties does not tell the reader much about you. Make sure to include which things you were responsible for, what



the position required, what you achieved and what kind of feedback you received.

There are many different CV templates available, and you can find them by searching online for, e.g., “visual CV”. The traditional black and white style is becoming less common in CVs. A CV should stand out and reflect your personality, but the layout, colours and graphical elements should always be chosen to suit the position you are applying for. Make sure that the appearance and fonts are legible, and remember that at the end of the day, the content of your CV is what counts.

A CV should be between one and two pages in length. A single page with a tight layout is fine, or you can extend your CV to two pages if you have more work experience. Place the most important things on the first page: your contact details, education and key work experience. Once you have accrued more work experience, you can list it before your education in your CV.

The information in the CV must be relevant to the position. Sometimes it can be difficult to decide what to include. For example, your hobbies may not be directly related to the position, but a brief mention of what you like to do in your free time may tell the recruiter what kind of a person you are and reassure them that you have things in your life that help you unwind from work.



---

## CONTACT DETAILS

Phone 040 234 5678  
maija.matikainen@gmail.com  
Mutkakatku 2 C, 00560 Helsinki  
[www.linkedin.com/in/maija-matikainen](http://www.linkedin.com/in/maija-matikainen)

---

## INTRODUCTION

I'm a biology student with robust experience in communications and customer service work. Environmental ethics and communication are my passion. My personality is analytical, active and creative. My career goal is to promote the environment through communications.

# MAIJA MATIKAINEN

---

## EDUCATION

9/2018 – ongoing (expected graduation 2020)  
**Master of Arts, University of Helsinki**  
Study tracks: biology, communication studies

9/2015–06/2018  
**Bachelor of Science, University of Helsinki**

---

## WORK EXPERIENCE

11/2018 – ongoing  
**Fashion retail assistant** (part-time), Meijun Muoti Oy  
During my shifts I am responsible for store maintenance, customer service and sales. I also participate in drafting the shift roster. I have received excellent feedback for my customer service skills.

5/2018 – 8/2018  
**Office assistant**, Eskon tapetti Oy  
I was responsible for many assistant duties, including order processing and payroll. I also drafted media releases and advertisements as well as redesigned the company website. I used my digital and social media skills to revamp the company's social media strategy.

## LANGUAGES

---

Finnish	Native
English	Excellent
Swedish	Good
French	Basic

## IT SKILLS

---

I am comfortable with a wide range of software, from text and photo editing to layout and social media platforms:

- MS Office
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe InDesign
- Facebook & Instagram

I can also create basic websites.

## HOBBIES

---

Jogging, reading and writing my blog:  
[www.maijamaista.com](http://www.maijamaista.com)

6/2016 & 6-7/2017

**Club instructor/coordinator**, Metsään! Nature clubAs nature club coordinator, I was responsible for school groups of around 20 children. I also took part in planning the activities for these environmental clubs and the associated communications.

I have also worked in childcare, park maintenance and newspaper distribution.

## OTHER EXPERIENCE

---

1/2017 – ongoing

Communications officer, Ulpuukka student organisation  
I am responsible for creating content for the organisation's newsletter, website and social media together with a colleague.

## REFERENCES

---

Esko Virtanen, CEO, Eskon tapetit Oy  
Phone 050 123 4568

Minna Metsänen, coordinator, Metsään! Nature club  
Phone 040 555 6666

## Example of articulating and tailoring your competence for an employer

Matti is a student of mathematics. Alongside his studies, he has worked as a receptionist at a gym for two months . When Matti spent some more time thinking about his work experience, he realised that in the course of his work he had learned the following things: a good group of colleagues helps work run smoothly, patience is the most important virtue in customer service, and when things are busy, organisation and prioritisation of tasks is key.

Now Matti has found an interesting project in the field of mathematics, and he is applying for work as a client liaison. After talking to the project manager, he realised that the work requires good interpersonal skills, the capacity to organise tasks in a busy environment and the ability to see the bigger picture. What should Matti write in his CV?

5/2018 – 7/2018

**Receptionist**, Voimaveikko Gym Oy

Customer service and administrative tasks

→ *This is a brief description that doesn't reflect Matti's work experience in the best possible way.*

5/2018 – 7/2018

**Receptionist**, Voimaveikko Gym Oy

Customer service, making class bookings, organising the schedule, sales and marketing, writing notices, assisting in event organisation

→ *This simple list of duties tells the reader a little more about the work, but the part of Matti's experience which is relevant to project work is still obscured.*

5/2018 – 7/2018

**Receptionist**, Voimaveikko Gym Oy

My work at the reception desk included a wide variety of tasks relating to the daily operation of the gym, ranging from customer service to communications. In my work, I learned to organise my tasks particularly during busy times and to work as part of a team. I received positive feedback for my proactive customer service.

→ *This might be the most relevant description.*

Remember that the things **you** should write in your CV depend on your specific skills and strengths as well as the things required for the position you are applying for. Be honest, don't exaggerate or belittle your achievements. The employer wants you to communicate your skills effectively and honestly.

## APPLICATION LETTER

The application letter is a single-page document intended to communicate your motivation and get you an invitation to an interview. It's also an opportunity to explain to the employer at more length what you can offer to the organisation and how you could apply your skills to the position. This means that you will be able to demonstrate your suitability for the position and environment in question. The application must respond to the job advertisement as closely as possible and address the requirements and requests stated in it.

When writing an application, remember that quality is often more important than quantity. This means that you should not send the same application letter to different employers. Instead, tailor the letter for each position separately. Genuine motivation and carefully done groundwork will come through in your application letter, and they must be different for every position. Your application letter

will show whether you understand what the organisation does. The more you know about the values and tasks of the organisation, the kinds of people who work there and the types of people and skills they appreciate, the easier it will be for you to write a compelling application.

If you are interested in an organisation that has not publicly advertised an open position, you can always send an open application. In an **open application**, it is particularly important that you make a convincing argument for what your role in the organisation could be. For example, you can describe a challenge facing the employer that you could help solve with your skills. This requires double the amount of groundwork, but in the best case, you will be able to highlight a need for an important skill that the employer may not have identified yet.

Keep a list of the organisations where you have sent applications. In general, it's a good idea to make and keep notes of whom you have spoken with, on what date and what you have agreed in the course of the conversation.





# Structure of an application letter

Maija Matikainen  
Phone 040 234 5678  
maija.matikainen@gmail.com  
www.linkedin.com/in/maija-matikainen

Open application  
1 February 2019

Director Päivi Pomo  
Työnantaja Oy  
Duunikatu 1  
00560 Helsinki

Re: our phone conversation (if relevant)

## YOUR PERSONALISED HEADLINE

The **first paragraph of the application letter describes your motivation and summarises you as an applicant.** Explain the types of positions that your skills could be applied to and why. Also explain why you are interested in this employer in particular and what is your main motivation for these specific duties. List your ideas and provide examples. Remember that your first paragraph is also intended to arouse the interest of the reader. Avoid clichéd opening lines like “I am a 25-year-old Master of Arts in linguistics...” You can be very creative when writing your opening as long as you’re in line with the style of your target organisation.

The second paragraph should be about your skills. **Explain how the employer could benefit from your skills and what kinds of demands you can address.** Describe your skills that are most applicable to the position. Don’t try to explain everything, just focus on what is relevant. Your strengths may relate to your study or work history or other experiences. Describe how you could apply these skills in your prospective duties.

In the third paragraph, you can **describe yourself:** what are your work methods like, how do you work alone and as a member of a team. Demonstrate your claims, for example by citing feedback you have received.

Propose the next step: state that you are interested in meeting and discussing matters further.

With kind regards,  
Maija Matikainen

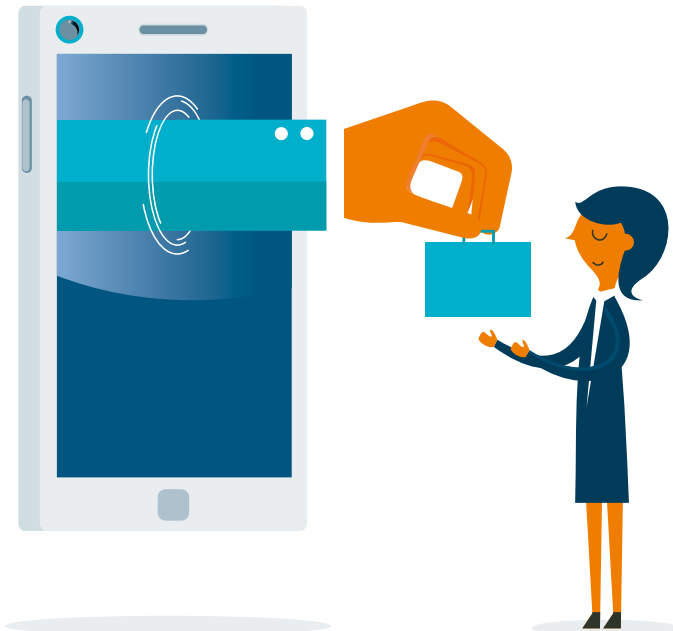
Attachment: CV

## DIGITAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEMS

Some employers use digital recruitment systems. Municipalities (kuntarekry.fi), the government (valtiolle.fi), recruitment companies and large corporations often have their own systems. If you apply through such systems, you will typically have to enter your information onto a digital form.

Make sure you fill out the form carefully, even though it will require some patience. Recruitment systems usually process applications automatically, meaning that the system scans your information for specific keywords. If it doesn't find any, your application may not make it to the next round.

If it's possible to add attachments to the form as separate files, such as your CV or application letter, it is a good idea to do so. Try to include everything you would normally explain in your CV and application letter.



# JOB INTERVIEW

An invitation to a job interview means that the employer considers you a qualified applicant. The interview lets the employer evaluate your motivation and your suitability for the position and work community. You will also be able to evaluate whether the position is suitable for you and to ask more detailed questions about the work and organisation. Genuine interest in the position will come through, so try to think about things you would like to know beforehand and during the interview.

During the interview, the employer will try to gain an overall image of you as a person. The main focus will be on determining your motivation and suitability. In addition, the interview will assess your knowledge, skills, attitudes, experience, values, style of working, work methods and other strengths.

Be prepared for a variety of settings: there may be several interviewers or observers present, or the interview may feature problem-solving assignments that relate to the position. Please note that the interview may be conducted in several languages, depending on the language skills indicated in your CV.

Always try to find out as much as you can about the position beforehand, for example from the organisation's website, and also look through the basic information of the organisation. Prepare to state your desired salary at the end of the interview, or to react to a salary proposal. You can refer to the collective agreement that the organisation works under, or your field's salary recommendations, to draft your salary suggestion.

# At minimum, be prepared to

- Introduce yourself: “Tell us a little about yourself” is a typical request.
- Provide a summary of the education and work history you described in your application documents.
- Explain your ideas and expectations about the position.
- Demonstrate your motivation and interest in the position and organisation.
- Briefly describe your skills relevant to the position.
- Describe matters relating to you as a person and your individual characteristics as well as your strengths and areas of development.
- Explain how you work as a member of a team and what you expect from a supervisor.
- Describe your life situation and when you would be able to start in the position.
- Ask the interviewer for additional information, for example, what kind of a team would you be working in, what would your typical working day be like, or what kind of performance is expected.

List examples and try to speak in concrete terms. If you say you're a good team worker, you can briefly describe a real-world situation where you worked well in a group and mention the positive results that were gained thanks to the teamwork. Be honest: don't downplay your skills, but don't overstate them either. Think about what should be your main message to the interviewer and make sure you bring it up during the interview. Avoid speaking too long or hopping from one topic to the next when you answer questions.

According to the law, the employer can only ask you questions that are directly related to the position to which you are applying. If for one reason or another they ask you questions which are personal or do not relate to the position at hand, you can politely decline to answer.

Bring your CV and employer testimonials with you to the interview. Check that you know where the interview is set to take place and how to get there, and ensure that you arrive in good time. Set your phone to silent. Remember to present a positive attitude and to smile. Give a friendly greeting to everyone you meet. You can try to determine an appropriate dress code from the employer's website, for example. It's fine to be nervous! A little bit of nervousness can be good, and the interviewer may be nervous as well.

Remember to ask for feedback after the interview every time, and particularly if you are not selected for the position. Don't waste time mulling over whether you did something wrong or whether you could have done something better. Even if you don't get the job, you can still get valuable feedback that can help you move forward. Good luck!

# VIDEOS AND PORTFOLIOS

Using video is becoming increasingly common both in applications (video CVs) and interviews (video interviews). Videos are your chance to highlight your personality, and for the recruiter they are a quick way to get a first impression of you and your style of communication.

When shooting a video, make sure the background is appropriate, the lighting good, your appearance neat and that the sound is audible. Find a well-lit place, and when preparing for a video interview, place the camera so that it's at, or slightly above, eye-level. In a video CV you can be creative in terms of the location and the content of the video.

## Video interview

Video interviews are particularly popular when the recruiter expects a large number of applications. This is typically the case when organisations are seeking employees for summer jobs. Based on the videos, the candidates with the most potential are selected for an interview, but remember that if you are invited to a video interview, you will have already passed the first round.

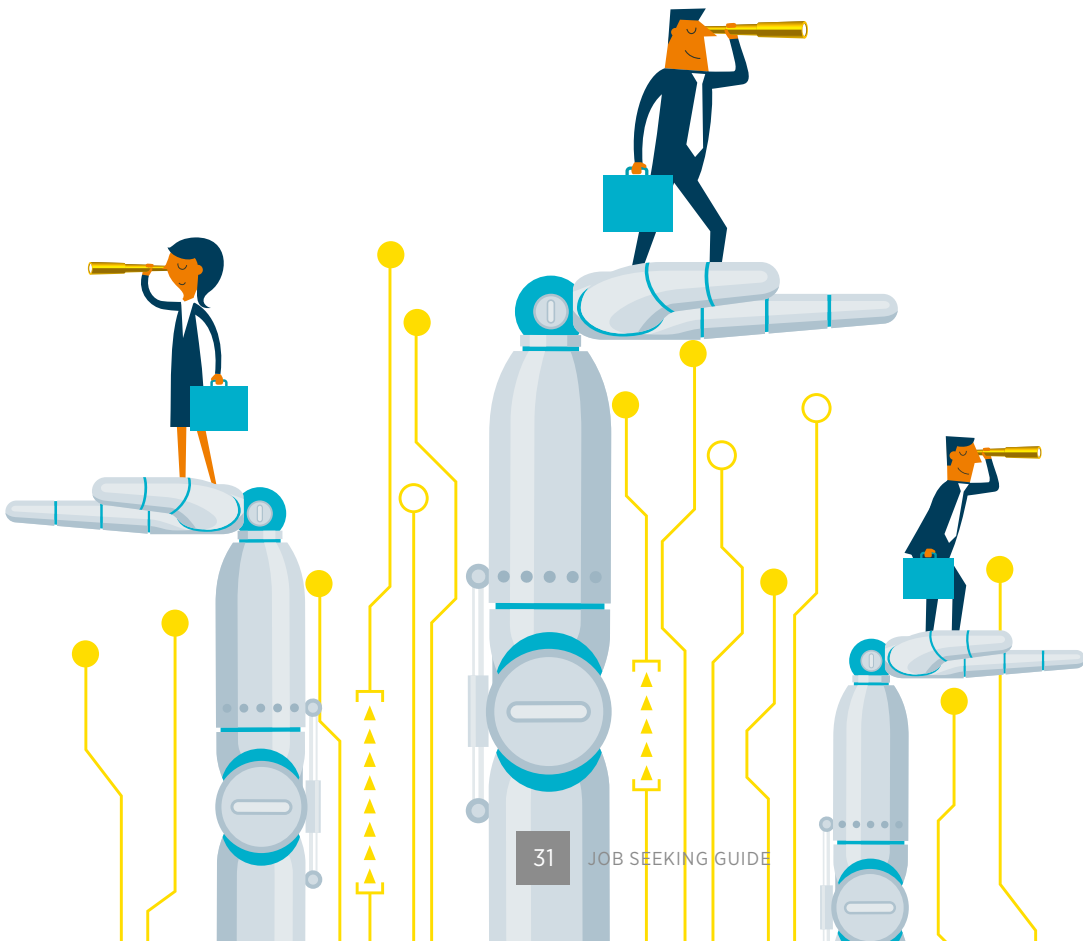
In most services which are used for video interviews, you will be able to listen to or read the questions beforehand. Do take advantage of this opportunity. You can plan your answers by bullet points or similar so that you can be sure you will say the most important things. Try to be natural, don't read directly from your notes and don't forget to smile! If the employer has set a time limit for your answers, don't exceed it.

Don't be afraid to press record! Usually you will be allowed to make several tries before sending your final answer that you are satisfied with.

## VIDEO CV

Video CVs can be made for a wide variety of purposes. You can tailor yours for a specific job or make a more general video describing your skills to publish on your LinkedIn profile, blog or other online platforms. Don't recite your full CV in the video, just pick out the most important things. Be very concise: a good video CV is just one or two minutes long. Drafting the script carefully and editing your video after recording will help you make a polished product. Make sure to ask for feedback from others.

Your video can be a pleasant surprise for the recruiter, it can help set you apart from other applicants and emphasise your motivation. You can find examples of video CVs from Google.



## PORTFOLIO OF YOUR WORK

Portfolios are a concrete way of demonstrating your skills. Collect a private portfolio of images, texts or links for all examples of work that you consider significant, including results from your study and work projects, received feedback as well as any texts, images and videos you have published. Please note that the contents of a portfolio can be very different in different fields. This compilation is your meta-portfolio and is not intended for publication as such. Instead, it will serve as your own memory bank into which you collect various work samples and artefacts.

You can draft a sample portfolio from your meta-portfolio for many different purposes by selecting the most relevant samples for each situation. You can also publish your portfolio on several platforms, just like your video CV. A direct link to your portfolio gives your employer an easy way of browsing your earlier projects and becoming even more interested in your work.

The key point of a portfolio is that it demonstrates a dialogue between your work and the associated work samples and your self-reflection. Tell the reader what you want them to understand about your skills, experience and personality from each sample. When drafting your portfolio, consider what kinds of headers would be best to organise your samples and reflection. For example, you can proceed chronologically from one point in your life to the next like on a CV, or you can set headers for different themes, compiling samples from different stages of your life under the same header.





\*\*\*\*\*

We hope this guide has given you good tips and ideas for your job search. Job seeking can sometimes be a long process which can take several months and test your determination. However, if you feel stuck, don't be afraid to reach out for support. Mulling over things alone will do no good. Ask for feedback from your friends and family, and find people who are in a similar situation to form a peer support group. Help is available from many places.

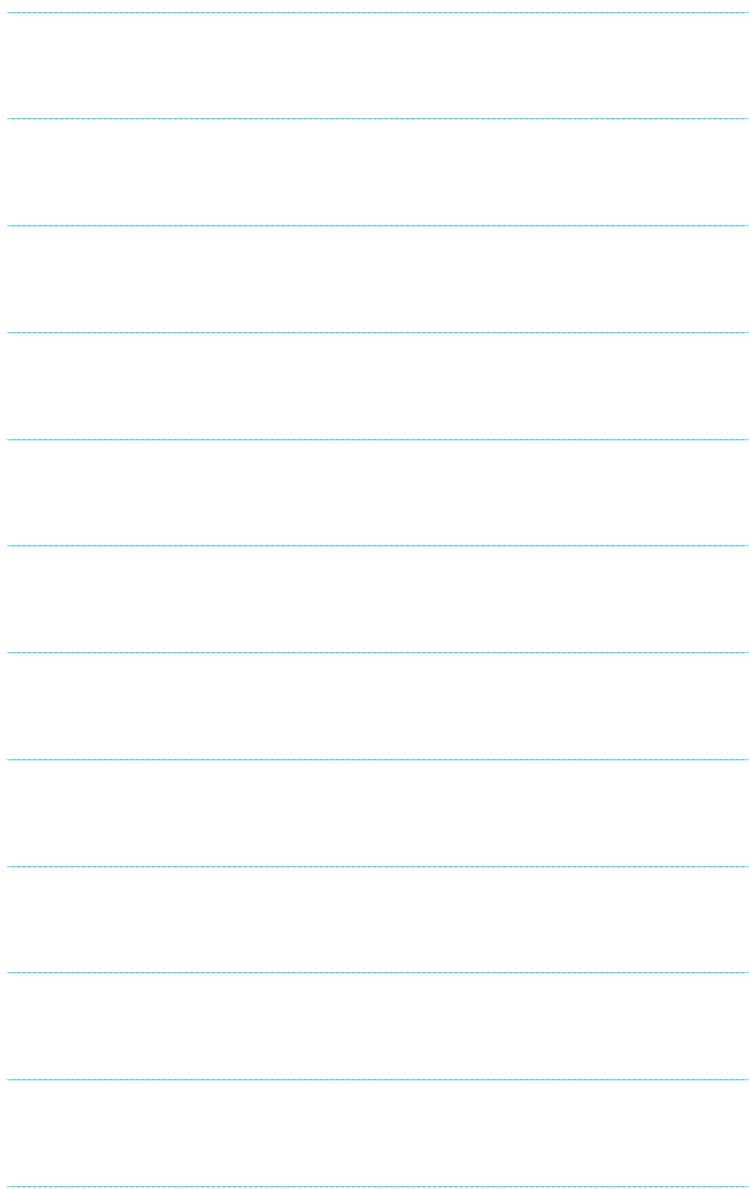
Don't be afraid to contact us if you need training in career planning or job seeking. Good luck!

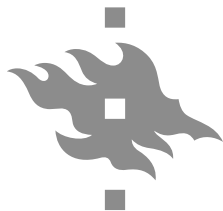
### *Career Services*

On the web

Instructions for students > Work and Career, Traineeships  
[guide.student.helsinki.fi/en](https://guide.student.helsinki.fi/en)







**HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO  
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET  
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI**