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# [New year, new graduate job?](#)

**Posted:** January 9, 2012 | **Author:** [Susannah Woolmer](#) | **Filed under:** [Careers advice](#), [Choosing your career](#), [Job hunting](#) | [Leave a comment »](#)



So, 2012 is upon us. As ever, the dawn of a new year heralds a wave of resolutions, good intentions, fresh ideas and new approaches to life. With this in mind, January seems like a great time to introduce some fresh approaches to the graduate job hunt. Here are some tips for making the whole process less of a chore and more likely to yield results.

**Make social networking work for you.** Chances are you spend a fair bit of time on Facebook/Twitter already, so use these sites and their more professional counterpart – LinkedIn – to reach out to potential contacts, research companies that interest you and get the lowdown on what current employees think about their jobs. Social networking sites are a great way to start your research, firm up ideas and network with useful contacts, all without the pressure of face-to-face interaction with recruiters or official application processes. Of course, always be professional and polite in any correspondence with employers and on any forum where you have a public persona.

**Make use of the ‘other interests’ section on your CV.** There was a time when this section was all but a footnote to the main bulk of a CV, but this is no longer the case. In today’s fiercely competitive graduate market where differentiation is paramount, a choice piece of extra-curricular activity or two (did you set up a society at college? Were you instrumental in fundraising for a particular charity event?) can really give you the edge over your peers.

**Don’t set yourself up for a fall.** Many New Year’s resolutions never really get off the ground because we set ourselves wildly unrealistic expectations. If you’re bursting with good intentions and plan to apply for 20 jobs a week, but don’t manage half of that, the chances are you’ll be so disheartened that you’ll give up applying for any. Don’t despair: instead, revise your goals to make them more manageable. If five thoughtful, carefully researched applications a week is more achievable, then that’s perfectly fine. Make that your goal instead. And don’t forget to reward yourself for the successful achievement of any resolution, job-related or otherwise. Happy New Year!

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## [Top graduate job-hunting tips of 2011: a review](#)

**Posted:** December 14, 2011 | **Author:** [Susannah Woolmer](#) | **Filed under:** [Careers advice](#), [General](#), [Job applications and CVs](#), [Job hunting](#), [Postgraduate study](#), [Work experience](#) | [Leave a comment »](#)



Merry Christmas from gradireland!

We've spoken to hundreds of Irish students and graduates at various stages of the graduate job hunt over the past 12 months about their career aspirations, ambitions and experiences. As the year draws to a close, we take a look at the issues and observations that have mattered the most in 2011.

Overwhelmingly, the significance of relevant work placements/internships was of paramount concern to graduate jobseekers across virtually all sectors:

- 'An internship can be a great way to differentiate yourself from your peers while also allowing you to sample a job you are interested in'. (Corporate Finance Trainee, Financial Services)
- 'Take every opportunity to do a placement year – it's the perfect chance to try out a company and find out what suits you.' (Graduate Engineer)
- 'Don't just stick to law firm internships – demonstrate commercial awareness by taking placements in banks and businesses too.' (Trainee Solicitor).

But it wasn't all about work experience. Graduates had plenty to say in relation to job applications, the dreaded job interview, and how to get ahead at work:

- 'Don't rush into half-hearted job applications; spending time developing an effective CV and covering letter will improve your chances no end.' (R&D Food Scientist)

- ‘Interview early and often. I don’t know if I would have been as successful in the interview process here had I not had prior experience elsewhere’. (Software Development Engineer in Test)
- ‘Get yourself a mentor. Being able to learn from experience and through others is vital.’ (Quality Assurance Lead).

At a time when funding for fourth-level study is being squeezed, deciding whether or not to pursue postgraduate education has become tougher than ever. Postgraduates of 2011 offer valuable advice:

- ‘Put a lot of thought into further study and make a mature decision; you have to enjoy your research topic because you’re in it for the long run.’ (MEng, Waterford Institute of Technology)
- ‘It’s important to have a strong, supportive network of people around you – other researchers and staff – as no one can achieve a PhD by themselves. Your research community and support network is vital and enriching.’ (Structured PhD, Tyndall National Institute, UCC)
- ‘Check the credentials of the staff and departments you are interested in. What journals are they published in? What kind of research do they conduct? What reputation do they have?’ (MSc, Bangor University).

Whichever direction 2011 has taken you, all of us at gradireland wish you a very happy Christmas. We’ll be back in the New Year to help you make the most of 2012.

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## [Global graduates for a shrinking world](#)

**Posted:** December 5, 2011 | **Author:** [Chris Phillips](#) | **Filed under:** [Graduate jobs news](#) | **Tags:** [international](#) | [Leave a comment »](#)



It's pretty obvious that the job market for graduates is becoming increasingly global, driven by three major factors. One is the growth of international businesses across frontiers, the second is the perceived need for graduates in recession-suffering countries to leave their country of birth in pursuit of opportunities elsewhere, and the third is the fact that there is a demand from global businesses to develop a truly multinational and multicultural workforce.

This emerging global graduate job market has thrown up a set of 'global competences' that people need to develop in order to thrive in demanding international businesses far from home. These competences have been identified in a new report by the Council of Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) and the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) as:

- the ability to work collaboratively with teams from different backgrounds and countries
- excellent communication skills
- a high degree of drive and resilience
- the ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking
- multi-cultural learning agility and
- an ability to form professional, global networks.

Interestingly, the need to speak several languages, though considered a good thing (obviously), is near the bottom of the list. This is probably to do with the convenient fact that English is the language of international business (thank God). The report also identifies the need for aspiring global graduates to be knowledgeable and interested in world affairs.

This is a UK report, based on surveys with international organisations, and concludes that too few UK nationals are gaining the kind of international experience and developing the right competences that could give them a head start in the new global jobs market. So this is conceivably an opportunity for Irish graduates to seize such opportunities, as I think it's fair to say that we're talking here of a body of people who have a more international outlook than their counterparts in the UK and are more geographically flexible. The Irish

diaspora is already global but this report identifies an increasing need for talented recent graduates to play their part in building modern international businesses.

More details at: <http://www.agr.org.uk/Content/GLOBAL-GRADUATES-NEEDED>