

# Job Seeking Skills Workshop Report 9th-12th May, 2011

A collaborative venture between Campus  
Life and Student Learning Support



**Report compiled by: Asinate Savu-Korocowiri, Pauline Ryland, Siniva Laupepa, Roshila Singh and Afshana Anzeg.**

## **Introduction**

The Job Seeking Skills workshop held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May to Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2011, was once again a success. Judging from the student feedback [see pages 4-9], on the open and small group sessions, the students are calling for more workshops on this topic to be offered during the semester. The purpose of the workshop is to teach students completing their studies at the end of a semester, the skills to help them find and keep a good job. These skills include: writing good job application letters and curriculum vitae, winning portfolios and successful interview skills. One interesting feedback from this workshop was “the workshop should not be confined only to graduating students”. The Job Seeking Skills workshop is a continuing collaborative initiative between Campus Life (Counselling Centre) and Student Learning Support. The organizing committee for the workshop included Siniva Laupepa and Pauline Ryland from Student Learning Support, and Laisiasa Wainikesa and Asinate Savu-Korocowiri from the Counseling Centre (Campus Life).

Students can access more information and see pictures about the workshop on the Campus Life (Counselling Centre) website. Students are now able to register for the workshop via Moodle. For the first time the workshop was recorded on DVD, and copies will be forwarded to all the regional campuses to use for training their students. Other copies are held with SLS, Counselling Centre and the Library. A review of the job seeking skills booklet is currently underway with the aim of making the booklet available to students by the next workshop in Semester 2, 2011.

The workshop was held in the MBA conference room, in Statham Campus, in Vatuwaqa and was divided into two parts. First, the open group session was held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011, [refer to report below], and the small group sessions were conducted on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May to Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2011. The small group sessions were facilitated by the Student Learning Support staff members [refer to reports of these sessions below].

For every session an evaluation sheet was handed out to the participants to fill. The Likert Scale was used to measure the ratings. 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3= neutral; 4= agree; and 5= strongly agree. The criteria rated were to do with the content of the sessions and the pedagogical

approach [refer 'Criteria' table below]. There was also space for the participants to include their comments.

<b>Criteria</b>
<b>The workshop:</b>
1. Met its objectives/learning outcomes
2. Was interesting
3. Presented useful and relevant information and skills
4. Provided me with an opportunity to practice required skills
5. The content dealt with what I wanted
6. I felt comfortable with the facilitator
7. I would recommend this workshop to others

### **Open Group Session**

The open group session of the Job Seeking Skills Workshop was held on Monday evening, the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2011, in the MBA conference room, Statham campus, Vatuwaqa. 55 students and 10 staff attended this session. The evening's programme [See Appendix] included a word of blessing from Reverend Laisiasa Wainikesa, after which the Group Manager Campus Life, Glenn Pope, provided a brief background of the workshop. Mr Pope, said, "The job seeking skills workshop is designed to provide completing students with real experiences from the workplace and then back- up small group 'hands on' sessions on how to write an effective job application letter and CV, how to prepare for a job interview and how to develop a portfolio".

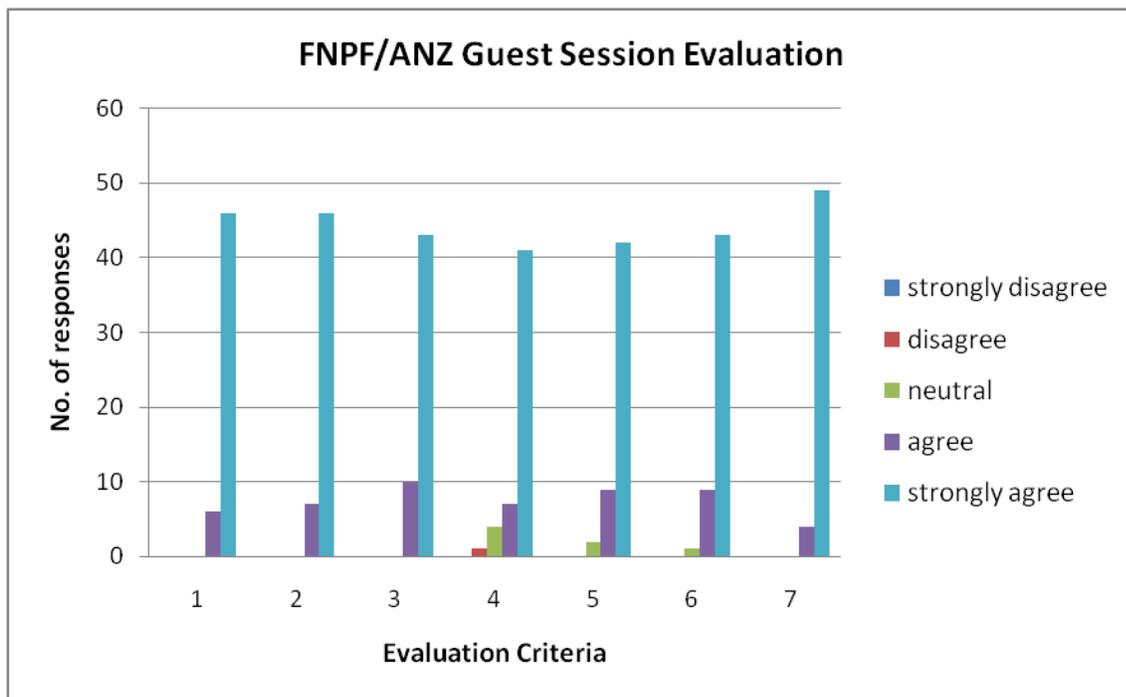
The workshop was opened by Professor Susan Kelly, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching, student services and campus life. In her opening remarks, Professor Kelly said "USP had agreed in the last couple of years to promote what we call graduate attributes. That is, what do we want from the graduates of USP? What should they be able to do? And what should they know?" In her address, Professor Kelly stressed the importance of being prepared for the job market.

The chief guests for the evening were Human Resources Manager FNPF, Mr Jonetani Tonawai and Human Resources Manager ANZ Fiji, Ms Arieta Cama. They shared their perspectives and experiences on what organizations look for in applicants. In addition, they shared useful tips

about preparation of job application letters, curriculum vitae (CV) and job interviews. Both speakers were very practical, honest and inspiring in their presentations, which were greatly appreciated by the students who attended the session. The students took the opportunity and asked both speakers questions. The guest speakers were presented with gifts as tokens of our appreciation. Refreshments were served at the end of the session.

**Students Feedback on the open group session**

The graph below shows the ratings by 53 students about the open group session on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011.



Overall, 82 percent of the students strongly agreed with the contents and pedagogical approach to this session.

In their suggestions for improvement, the participants mentioned the following:

- More time for the session
- Samples of job application letters and CVs to be provided

- Presentation handouts to be provided
- Allocated time should be adhered to
- Session should begin earlier

The additional comments given by the participants included:

- The talks were worthwhile, interesting, informative, useful, helpful, timely and valuable.
- More workshops on this topic should be offered during the semester.
- The workshops should not be confined to graduating students

### **Application Letter and Curriculum Vitae Session**

This session was held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011. There were two sessions [1pm-3pm and 4pm-6pm]. Facilitators were Riteta Laulala and Siniva Laupepa of Student Learning Support. A total of 55 students attended the sessions.

### **Students' evaluation of the application letter and curriculum vitae sessions**

Criteria	Rating				
	1: strongly disagree	2: disagree	3: neither agree nor disagree	4: agree	5: strongly agree
<b>The workshop:</b>					
8. Met its objectives/learning outcomes		1	1	21	32
9. Was interesting		1	5	16	33
10. Presented useful and relevant information and skills		1	2	13	39
11. Provided me with an opportunity to practice required skills		1	2	18	34
12. The content dealt with what I wanted		1	4	21	29
13. I felt comfortable with the facilitator			4	15	36
14. I would recommend this workshop to others	1		1	8	45

The evaluation of the workshop was highly positive with the majority of the ratings landing on 4 and 5, stating the participants either agreeing or strongly agreeing with all the criteria.

## **‘Comments’**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Comments</b>
36	Did not comment
10	Well done/Awesome/Interesting/Useful/Helpful/Good
2	Provide examples of Cover Letter
3	More time on activities/for practice
1	Refreshment to be provided
1	1 training per semester
2	Can you please come to main campus?

As the above table shows, a significant number of 36 students did not provide any comments, but for those that provided comments, they were generally positive about the sessions.

### **Developing Portfolios Session**

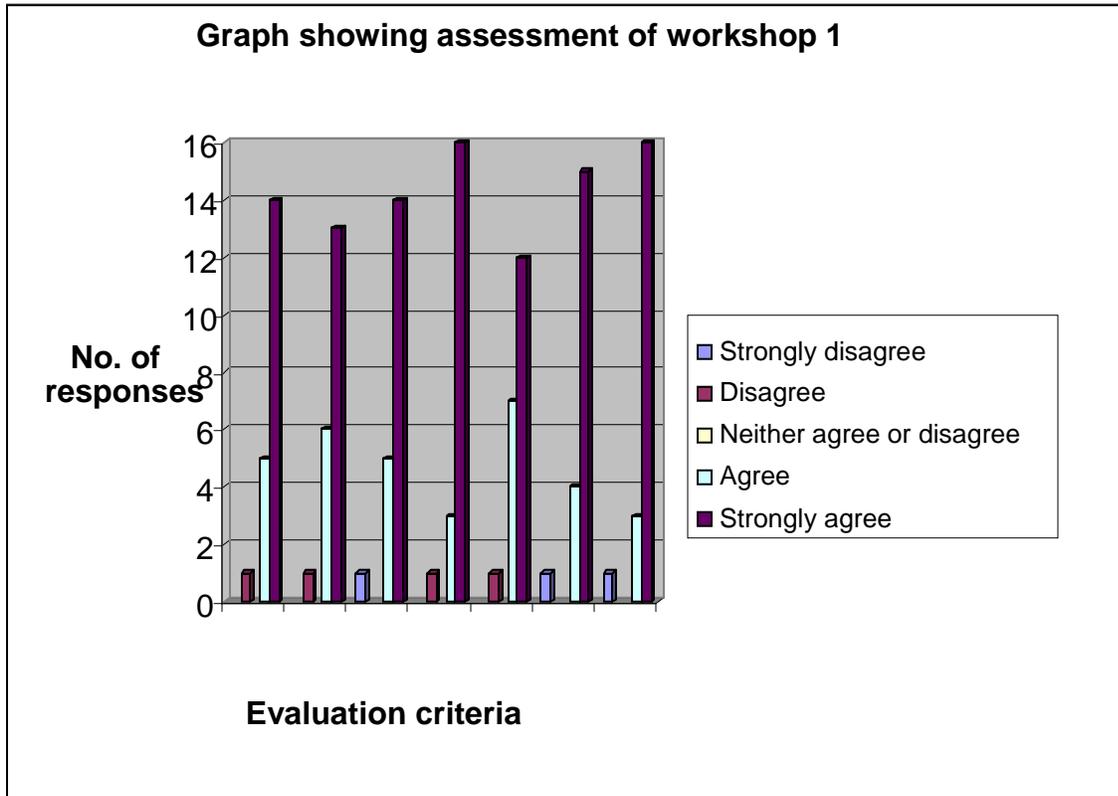
The small group session on developing portfolios was held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May. There were two sessions with 20 participants attending the (12pm-2pm) session and 25 participants attending the (5pm-7pm) session, a total of 45 participants. The facilitators were Roshila Singh and Pauline Ryland of Student Learning Support.

The participants were divided into smaller groups. Each session included the following:

1. An ice breaker in which the participants were required to imagine being at an interview and asked to talk about themselves. Each group member took turns at being the interviewee while the others were the panel of interviewers. This session was well appreciated as it gave the students the opportunity to reflect on and discuss the contents of their information.
2. A presentation which included: a description of what an employment portfolio is, its contents, format and functions.
3. A second activity constituted each group being given a characteristic that employers look for in applicants, such as: analytical skills; team player; working without supervision; adaptability and flexibility; and personal and interpersonal skills. The groups discussed how they would document evidence of the given characteristic in their portfolio and use it in an interview. This was followed by group presentations.
4. A short video clip concluded the session.

The responses from the participants for each session on developing portfolios are shown in the graphs below:

**Graph for First Session – 12pm-2pm of the Developing Portfolio Session**

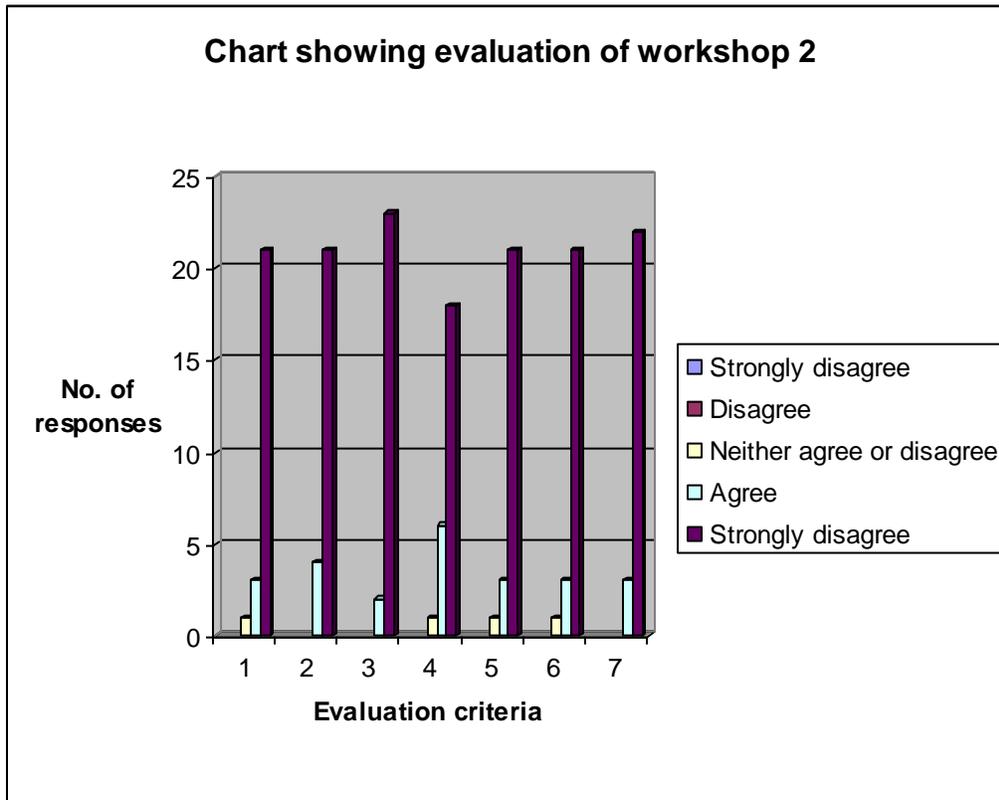


The graph shows 80 percent of the students strongly agreed overall with the contents and pedagogical approach to the workshop session.

Suggestions for improvements were for more activities, although there were also comments that stated the participants had enjoyed the session and had become aware of aspects relating to portfolio development.

Other comments focused on increasing the number of such workshops and giving more time to activities.

**Graph for Second Session 5pm-7pm of the Developing Portfolio Session**



The above graph shows 88 percent strongly agreed overall with the contents and pedagogical approach to the workshop session.

For this session, comments were complimentary with statements like: helpful workshop, and enjoyable activities.

### **Interview Skills Session**

The interview skills session was held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and concentrated on the 3 stages: before, during and after an interview. There was a morning session and a repeat session in the afternoon. The student turnout was very good. The session was facilitated by Afshana Anzeg and Rina Kumar.

The first half of the session concentrated on tips for pre, during and after an interview and the second half was a discussions session. The first activity in the second half was where students were divided into groups, and given some common interview questions and asked to come up

with model answers, which the rest of the class critiqued. This activity aimed to explain why some responses to certain interview questions are not good or not adequate.

The second activity was for students to come up with questions, and the facilitator and the rest of the session attendees were expected to answer the questions. The interview session was quite interactive and allowed students an opportunity to clarify their doubts.

Students were also given useful links to refer to while preparing for an interview.

Session evaluation reflected a high level of student satisfaction with the Likert Scale rating of 4 and 5 (for highly satisfactory).

In closing, the participants who attended the workshop comprised a very good cross-section of local and regional students. What has become pertinent after the workshop series is the need for more training of this sort. A similar workshop is planned for semester two, 2011, and will target completing students.

Vinaka

[Organizing Committee]  
Asinate Savu-Korocowiri  
Pauline Ryland  
Siniva Laupepa  
Laisiasa Wainikesa

## Appendix

### Program

**Open Group Session of the Job Seeking Skills Workshop, on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011, held in the MBA Conference Room, Statham Campus, Vatuwaqa from 6.00pm -8.00pm**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
6.00pm	Welcome	Niseta Buatava [MC]
6.05pm	Words of blessings	Laisiasa Wainikesa
6.10pm	The objective of the workshop	Glenn Pope[Director Campus Life]
6.15pm	Introduce Professor Susan Kelly [DVCLTSS]	Niseta Buatava
6.20pm	Speech by Prof. Kelly	
6.30pm	Introduce first presenter, Mr Jonetani Tonawai [Manager Human Resources, Fiji National Provident Fund]	Asinate Savu-Korocowiri
6.35pm	Mr Tonawai presents	
6.55pm	Introduce second presenter, Ms Arieta Cama [Manager Human Resources, ANZ Bank]	Asinate Savu-Korocowiri
7.00pm	Ms Cama presents	
7.20pm	Questions from the floor to both presenters	Niseta Buatava
7.35pm	Briefly share about what the students can expect from the small group sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday	Siniva Laupepa
7.45pm	Present Gifts to both presenters	Laisiasa Wainikesa
7.50pm	Vote of Thanks	Pauline Ryland
7.55pm	Wrap up	Niseta Bautava
8.00pm	Refreshment	Elenoa Seruvatu