

Job hunting rumours set straight

There are many rumours that circulate about the job hunting process, so one of the most beneficial steps you can take towards finding your dream job is to dispel any myths that might be holding you back. Here Paul Hallam, founding director and CEO at Six Degrees Executive, helps to set the record straight on some of the most common job hunting misconceptions to ensure your job search is a success.

- **Myth 1: Every job is advertised.** According to Hallam, the digital age has changed the way hiring managers and recruiters operate. Some jobs are not even advertised as employers are increasingly relying on employee networks and online career profile sites such as [SEEK Profile](#) to proactively find the right candidate for a role.

“Networking and being proactive on social media are two of the most effective job-search tools,” says Hallam. “Even if you’re starting out in your career, there are a number of ways you can build your online presence and find out about openings before they become known to the public,” Hallam suggests joining a company's Facebook community and keeping your online career profiles up to date to ensure prospective employers can find you if they come looking.

- **Myth 2: The more jobs I apply for the more chance I have of getting hired.** According to Hallam, casting a wide net and hoping for the best is definitely not the best job hunting strategy.

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Myth 3: Looking for a job is too time-consuming. It doesn't need to be. According to Hallam, you only need to spend one day a year to keep your resume and online career presence up-to-date. "If you dedicate one day a year to making sure your social media presence is strong and your resume is up-to-date, you will be ready to apply for jobs that are of interest to you, and what's more, the jobs might even come to you."

- **Myth 4: Your resume should only be one page long.** "The 'one-page resume' is the way it is done in America, but in Australia and New Zealand, most hiring managers recognise that you can't effectively get across your skills, achievements and who you are in just a page," Hallam says.

Ideally, if you've been working for 10 years or more, three to four pages is appropriate. Most importantly, make sure your resume focuses on your recent key responsibilities and achievements. "Highlighting the details in roles you undertook more than 20 years ago is simply not relevant, so make sure you omit any outdated and irrelevant information."

- **Myth 5: Your cover letter is the most important part of your application.** "Cover letters really aren't the be all and end all – unless they're too long or poorly written," says Hallam. "My advice to candidates is to keep your cover letter short and spend more time getting your resume right. Recruiters receive hundreds of resumes every day, so they will be focusing on the responsibilities and achievements that relate to the position they are trying to fill."

When writing your cover letter Hallam suggests to:

1. Keep it short and punchy – one or two paragraphs is enough
2. Explain in a sentence why you're applying for the job and why you're a good fit for the role
3. Highlight key points from your resume that [match the job on offer](#)

- **Myth 6: You can't talk about salary in an interview.** Hallam says your recruiter should be managing your salary for you but if you're interviewing directly with an employer, wait until the second interview to talk about salary. The most important thing is to be clear on what your salary is, including base salary, super, plus any other bonuses such as health insurance, motor vehicle allowance, etc. and what your expectations are.

"It is also worth letting them know if and when you are expecting a salary review," Hallam adds.

- **Myth 7: You are required to answer every question in an interview.** One of the most common areas of confusion in the job hunting process is around what questions [recruiters and prospective employers can and can't ask](#), so it is crucial for candidates to

know what their rights and obligations are when it comes to answering interview questions.

Hallam says candidates should remember that in Australia there are laws to ensure that employers can't ask discriminatory questions such as religion, marital status, race, but there are also some less obvious questions that candidates are not be obliged to answer, such as age (unless it is relevant to job performance) and whether you are planning to have a baby.

"All you should be sharing at the interview is information that is relevant to the job you are applying for," Hallam says.