

IIE launches new online resource to assist graduates

The Independent Institute of Education (IIE) has launched a new online resource, The World of Work, designed specifically to help South Africa's graduates to perform optimally when entering the workplace for the first time.



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The site helps prospective students, current students, graduates and young workers navigate the various aspects of preparing for, searching for, and impressing in their first jobs. Although it is a product of the IIE, the resource is available free to all of the country's young people, regardless of their academic affiliation.

"It is not unusual for employers to decry the ill-preparedness of young people for the working world," says Dr. Felicity Coughlan, director of the IIE. "The World of Work seeks to address the issues facing both job seekers and employers, by ensuring young people are prepared for the application and interview process, but also prepared to deliver their best and display proper work ethic from the word go."

The World of Work focuses on five main areas: Preparation, Presentation, Pay, Impressing and Promotion. Preparation looks at issues of deciding what to study, and doing the right things while studying to bolster your post-study chances; Presentation considers aspects such as CVs, and the job application and interview process; Pay mulls issues such as expectations vs opportunity, and budgeting; Impress looks at how to put your best foot forward in your first job, and Promotion assists in getting ready to take your career to the next level.

Competitive job market

"The IIE places huge emphasis on the work-preparedness of our graduates, via our work-integrated learning approach, as there is often a gap between graduate skills and attributes and employer expectations. Because we know that young people need all the help they can get, we decided to broaden our offering to include online advice, assistance and thought leadership from recruiters, academics and young people who have successfully made the transition. The job market in SA is highly competitive, and it is not unusual for young people to search for a long time before landing their first job.

"In addition to receiving advice from recruiters and employers about what they look for when making appointments, The World of Work also shares advice and success stories from students and job-hunters' peers, about how they made things work," says Coughlan.

She added that submissions from all were welcomed, and could be submitted via the "Share your experience" button on the website. "Additionally, if you have any burning issues you want us to address, we would love to hear from you," she said.

"It is incumbent on both the public and the private sector to work together to improve the economic landscape of the country as a whole, and to improve the preparedness of graduates for the workplace. We believe that the common sense advice and insights of The World of Work could go some way to help all of SA's graduates focus on the next steps."

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