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# NEXT STEP

## WHAT TO DO WHEN ENTRY-LEVEL POSITIONS REQUIRE "TWO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE"

*It's your dream job in your ideal industry. This is what four years of undergrad built you up for. You are ready to take on all those challenging albeit thrilling responsibilities. Even better—you are genuinely digging the company's mission, you can already envision yourself sticking up Steve Jobs posters in that spiffy green cubicle with the plywood walls. So what's stopping you?*



The job description states the employer is looking for candidates with a minimum of two years of experience and you've just graduated.

This is the ultimate catch of job hunting: as a fresh grad or a professional looking to make a career change, you're aiming for entry-level roles, but even these demand at least a couple of years in the industry or the role. How on earth are you supposed to get started if you don't even qualify for a position at the bottom of the ladder? And why do so many companies include it in the JD?

Fret not, it's not quite as futile as all that.

### Approach job listings with a pinch of salt

Jds are like a recruiter's wish list. They contain all the characteristics your future manager wants in an ideal employee—from personality and work style (i.e. flexible or go-getter) to area-based skills (i.e. experience with SEO or managing social media accounts). They'll also pick a number of years in the field based on the level of expertise the job entails. More often than not, it's more a nice-to-have point rather than a must-have.

### So number of years doesn't count

### for anything?

Not quite. Some hiring managers will use it to screen out candidates, particularly if there's a deluge of incoming applications. More important is whether you convey the knowledge you do have in a way that shows the recruiter how your abilities would suit their needs. If you think you meet the majority of the requisites (say 80 percent), just apply.

### It's not as straightforward as you think

Relevant experience in marketing, for example, doesn't mean two years sitting outside the Head of Creative's office. Internships, projects you worked on while in uni, or part-time jobs and consultancies where you had similar duties all count. Always focus on transferable skill sets. If it's in the description and you've done it, it should go straight to your résumé.

### Knowing what you're passionate about

Ideally, you knew back in uni what industry you might be interested in so you were applying for internships and volunteering in those areas. If you've graduated with none of those things under your belt, consider interning while you job hunt. Depending on the position, you could work in teams, learn how to write profes-

sionally, and pick up software that might be useful in your first full-time job.

### Don't discount side-gigs

If you worked part-time during uni or volunteered with youth organisations, highlight how you picked up practical skills in those jobs and discuss the real-life challenges you faced during your interviews. If you're aiming for a job in HR and you worked in the registrar's office in uni, the time management, administrative and problem-solving skills you practiced are all applicable.

Drive that home in the description of duties in your résumé. It could read something like this: "Ensured seamless operations in the programme office, facilitating communication with administration, partners, and students. Supervised trainees and motivated team to deliver the highest level of satisfaction." In your cover letter and interview, you could describe in detail specific events and what you learned about HR during your time.

### Not quite there?

If it's something you're truly passionate about and you realistically think you can do the job, try regardless. Up your game by customising your cover letter and résumé, including referees, and using your network to get in touch with people who already

work at the company, preferably your alumni.

A powerful recommendation from someone who can vouch for your abilities and potential may go as far as directly applicable job experience. Additionally, find alumni on LinkedIn who work in companies with a position you'd love to have someday. Request to connect and ask if they would be willing to chat with you about career paths.

New connections can suggest online classes to take, networking events to attend, or colleagues who might be looking for interns. Remember, they were in your position once, waiting for their big break.

Last but not least, is there ever a time you should think twice? Yes: if you don't have any transferable skills or the number of years is way out of your reach, e.g. 10 years when you only have four.

Don't forget, most recruiters are going to be interested in the full package—the candidate whose application stands out, whose work is innovative and fresh, not some arbitrary period of time.

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## THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY



## 3 signs your workplace is killing you

Wondering if your workplace is getting to you? Here are the top three questions you should be asking yourself, according to Bob Sutton, Professor of Organisational Behaviour at Stanford University.

### 1) IS MY WELL-BEING SUFFERING?

Having trouble sleeping? Feeling a little bit anxious? Maybe having family/relationship problems? Sutton says that's a sign you have a long-term bullying problem.

### 2) CAREER/PERFORMANCE EFFECTS

According to Sutton, a lot of research shows that when people are surrounded by a jerk who's getting to them, their performance suffers, they have a hard time concentrating, they're less creative, or they just don't go the extra mile.

### 3) THE CONTAGION PROBLEM

There's also evidence that if you're around a bunch of jerks, number one, you're going to contract the "disease" and turn into a jerk; and number two, take it out on others.



## 5 TOP TIPS FOR WORKING ON THE GO

The new workplace is wherever you plug in your laptop. It's more a state of mind than a Partex desk and four Partex walls. You hop from meeting to meeting, take business calls during lunch, pitch at Gloria Jean's without even knowing it, and set up shop anywhere that has free Wi-Fi.

Succeeding in the new frontier of business is all about being flexible in terms of time and space. Here are five tips to help you survive.

### Charge thy device

Doesn't matter if you're at 80 percent, if there's a plug you can plug into, do it! You don't want your laptop dying in the middle of a Prezi or your phone running out of charge when that unplanned interview pops up. If you have a chance to charge your devices, don't think

twice. Keep a power bank (or two) handy at all times.

### List your hotspots

If you're running around Dhaka every day, you are all too aware of the importance of Wi-Fi and a chill place to work in-between appointments. As you learn your travel routes, make a list of your favourite coffeehouses, restaurants, and office lobbies where you can settle down and get a half-hour or an hour of work done during off-time. Having go-to hotspots means less time wasted finding a place to work and a world of anxiety over sending in that important memo on time avoided.

### Fix up a work bag

Your bag should have all the features of a proper office. That means your laptop, laptop plug, phone plug, notebook,

pen, pencil, as well tid-bits like light outer-wear, mints, tissues, deodorant and lip balm. You don't need to overdo it so just run a list of things you will need on the go because the day you don't pack something is going to be day you will frantically need it.

### Prep an all-day outfit

For work-packed days that are going to be go-go-go from breakfast omelettes to dinner at Lakeshore, it's good to set outfits that work all day long. For men, it's fairly simple—a solid button-up shirt, slacks, and dress shoes. For women, this can be trickier, especially if you're used to running around in shirts or kurtas. One piece of advice is you can always bet on dark colours. A pretty kameez with wedges lets you look professional during the day, and paired

with some sparkly earrings or a necklace, perfectly glamorous at night.

### Map out your day

Will you be able to take a rickshaw from point A to B or will you need a CNG or Uber? Can you walk? The worst feeling is getting dropped off on the wrong side of Karwan Bazar, never knowing whether you'll cross the road on time.

Know exactly how you're going to criss-cross around town and schedule meetings so that you're not going back and forth between destinations. Have a solid back-up plan in case transportation doesn't work out and learn which routes take the least amount of time and involve the least amount of traffic.

So, go forth ye busybodies! This is the way work moves. Find your best way to move with it.