

Q: All right, welcome xxxx, and interview with xxxx for (? IL) and employability project on 29 April, and you've had a quick look at the questions?

P: Yes, I have.

Q: And just briefly explain you know, your workplace at the moment and you mentioned you're still study, just a degree, yeah.

P: Yeah. So currently I'm a student of psychology, doing a Bachelor of Psychology – I'm in an Honours Program this year. It is a part-time load, so I'm doing my thesis and my research this year whilst full-time working for xxxx at xxxx University. My role is an Organisational Change Manager.

Q: Good. So the second part as I mentioned is all to do with information skill set, so the first one is what activities require you to do research or find information from the workplace?

P: Well, I generally have to find out about my study (1.03) and who I am dealing with and investigating on the site, and always the reason why I'm here today, I'm on a flex day today, by the way, I'm here today because I'm an aspiring entrepreneur also. I have a product called xxxx which is an app that be for the android and IOS systems, so that required also quite a bit of research as to what my market is, who do I need to target, how do I make their life easier. And the same translation to my job as an Organisational Change Manager is that when a project from IT is required, you know, to be – effects – a great example is a small business and we're changing something dramatically, you know, whether it be technology or it be a resource, whether it be access. My job is to learn about what your needs are and learn about where you are at in the transitional or change point of view, and enable that change to be as

smooth as possible for your business unit. Because your perception of that change is really what determines the success of that project. And so the research in that regard is very - it's face-to-face a lot of it, a lot of face-to-face, a lot of it is communicative, but, you know, I am always trying to find out a bit more about you as a unit, or as a school or if it's not directly through you, it's through other people, and how the school engages. You know, in our organisation, we have some schools who are tightly wound with ITDS, we work side-by-side, and the other schools that, you know, keep up a very vast distance and so that's information I need to know, that I need to find out and that can be through various ways.

Q: So that peer information network?

P: Peer information network, yeah, (? vicarious) information also always helps too. The strongest, if I can just point out, the strongest skill is that personable skill, to be able to talk to somebody, to talk to different people appropriately, and I'm not sure if that's an age thing or if that's an education thing, and that's probably yet to be determined, but just yesterday we were at our presentation for the Honours Program and I noticed - I took notice of my peers who were also presenting. So the younger peers I noticed had almost like an insecurity when, anytime that they were asked a question, they would always look to the supervisor for a bit more reassurance, for a bit more of a can you back me up on this kind of there, where - - -

Q: So the experience.

P: Yeah, in my situation, I had my supervisor there, but I felt pretty confident just to answer things myself. I don't know how, where that falls, but I think that's probably quite a noticeable trait.

Q: Yes, it's come up a bit about this whole professional set of skills, yeah.

P: I think in the site where we always talk about emotional intelligence, just to be able to - and that's something that people develop, you know. Like some people have a real good - they're street smart, as they call it, the knack to be able to talk to different people in their own certain way.

Q: So what types of information do you use in the workplace in terms of when you are accessing information?

P: I use the Internet quite, quite a lot. I use the Internet quite a bit. I use feedback, I use surveys, I use dialogue - Yammer is a good example too, I like that back and forth. I don't think there's anything that you can remove away from the value people have as far as information is concerned, because there's certain bits of information that only someone working in that role for the last 15 years would know. And so that's, in this organisation - I can only speak for xxxx, that is invaluable. You're not going to find that on the net. You're not going to find that in a book, you know, it's in someone's head. And so that, sort of, sourcing and drawing and workshopping, so workshops are a very good example too. Put a few people in the room, let's walk through what your needs are, let's walk through what you've been doing so far so we can see where you need to go.

Q: You arrange those networking events?

P: Yeah, absolutely, yeah. And that can be brown paper bag lunches, as they call them, so if you want to just know about what's going on, bring your lunch, you know, for lunch, and then we can talk about where the project is that. That locus of control where people feel that they're involved, gives a lot of

information to you as a project. If you want to know a bit more about them, invite them, involve them.

Q: Yeah, it makes sense. Good. So what resources or tools do you use in the workplace?

P: I think a lot of the ways is contact, so I used to be technical support so I used to fix a lot of computers for a lot of people, so just by that, you become on first name basis with a lot of people; you build a rapport. So I would say that's quite the baseline for everything that I've done when it comes to communications or engagement, is that people know you, they remember you, you were there when things were wrong for them, so when you're there, when you need some information, they're very, you know, they're happy to communicate with you. So it's not leverage, it's almost like rapport, it's just that rapport that's been built.

Q: Yeah, proactively.

P: Yeah, if you engage with them, yeah, talk to them, knowing their name.

Q: Best things come from doing that, doesn't it?

P: Yeah, exactly.

Q: The next bit is about the sort of skills and level of skills to do the type of research in the workplace?

P: So that's why I was differentiating between technology, so when you're sitting behind the computer screen and you're, like, analysing data off the Internet, I don't think that emotional intelligence is very important. However, the

moment you step away from that computer or that technology and you now have that face-to-face, it all - everything rides on how you present yourself. It depends on how you talk to somebody; are you engaging that person correctly? Is that person maybe feeling anxious and you're not picking up on that and talking to them in a possibly derogatory fashion, that's the difference between information and non-information. Is really that perception. And I think, I mean, my biases are showing in psychology, but I think that's why it's very important for that psychological element to understand people's behaviours and people's situations possibly.

Q: Agree, yeah. It's important.

P: And so those two different types of research require different types of mindsets. People can be analytical and they're really well-placed in front of the computer, whether it's crunching data, running statistics and just finding information that they need, right, and then you've got the other ones, as you said, qualitative, qualitative, where you've got to face-to-face, you've got to have a dialogue to get more information out for you.

Q: Sometimes you need a mixture of both (7.50) go with both.

P: Absolutely, yeah.

Q: Okay.

P: I mean, I actually have coders in other countries and I work with programmers here too, and I notice quite a bit of similarities in different, you know, demographics, like, when you're a programmer and a coder, you talk a certain way. You don't really have the knack to be able to communicate to, you know, a stakeholder who has no idea what's going on. It's hard to turn

that language off. And so if someone in that position where they're in between, it's important for them to be able to translate between the two, and in my situation, it's technology, and talking to them in non-technological terms.

Q: Getting back to the school.

P: Yeah, use analogies, use examples, rather than saying, you know, server at this DATP level, blah, blah, blah, that just confuses anybody; it means nothing to them.

Q: Makes sense, all right. Is there any particular situation where you've had gather and use information to solve a workplace issue?

P: Yeah, absolutely. It's usually - I think my job predominantly requires me to find out a bit of information to know how to solve the problem, and part of, part of this, part of the work is to find a solution and knowing what solutions are adequate to what situation. If we're implementing something for the school of xxxx - that's the , whatnot, it is. They've got an IT department. Their level of change and solutions are going to be vastly different to, like, the School of xxxx, they've got one IT guy, but, you know, he's got work to do. So that, my job there is to go there and find out, talk to these people and to collaborate with these people to see how much do they want to be involved - how much time do they want to be involved. So, if I just had a - in change management there is no clear-cut this is how you apply to this project and, say, this department, you can't - you've actually got to constantly evaluate and people change. That's the other thing, like the university has changed, our brand has changed, changed perception; it's changed mindsets.

[Interruption - change rooms].

Q: All right. We talked about skills - I think it was situation, do you, kind of, finish that one?

P: Mmhm.

Q: The next one is what do you use the workplace to store and manage information?

P: I take - keep my own notes and calendar entries. I think that's a very - because self-management is a very important tool, I think and mind maps really help as well, using mind maps and that kind of technology. People - I've even got a diary, I can use a diary when it comes to note-taking in the room, so a mixture of pen and paper and note-taking within the system, but then with the project, we also have to document a lot of things, so our job, well, my job, and my colleagues' job is to write knowledge-based articles in the manner that people can understand, so that's another form of documentation, and writing for the audience that we have to take.

Q: Yeah. Okay. So the next part of the whole information skills set is analysing information of the quality of information you get and I mean, you get a lot from peer, you said or Yammer or social networks, so how do you assess the quality of information?

P: Through verification I'd say, you know, like, if I gotten some information from one particular source and it's just, you know, if it's hearsay, if there's no (12.50) coming from the academic background of psychology, I know things need referencing and things need validation. You can't just make a claim and have nothing to back it up with. So, if it's just something to do with, you know, what's changed in the university, I'll seek, you know, and seeking

information from the source of the change or the source of the, you know, outage or whatever that might be, but yeah, constant revalidation is necessary. Otherwise, you're going to end up with a lot of - big data obviously, (13.23) people can have so much information being captured you need to filter through what you need, because back in the day, it was, you know, say, books and stuff, you've got to go through a limited resources of books. Find the book you need and perhaps there's a chapter that you might want, and now with information technology, when you do a Google search, there's 65 million results that show up. You need to have the ability to filter through that and find what's good for you and what's validated, you know, what you can validate. Google Scholar is a good example of that, where you can see how many citations there are on a particular - - -

Q: That's one way of assessing, yes, quality, how much (13.55) reference.

P: Exactly, yeah.

Q: So do you think your degree or course has given you the skills?

P: Absolutely.

Q: It sounds like it; from what you're saying.

P: Yeah, yeah.

Q: The mindset of, yeah.

P: Yeah, I'd say it's got a huge impact - so when I did start my work xxxx, I was a computer technician, I fixed computers and I fixed, you know, your desktops or ran warranty jobs and installed new machines. I transitioned to this role

because of that psychology background and, you know, there was a position that was available at the time. So it's, kind of, one led after the other. But yeah, absolutely, what I've learnt, the different characters that I, that I study with, that's a vast experience between, that's why I think that the online learning component, there is a certain amount of advantage or convenience. However, there is a social knowledge that you need to learn; how to talk to people, how to deal with people, how to interact with people, how to present to people. I'm starting to find myself presenting a lot more and it's one of the most nerve-wracking things I think anybody can do, a presentation, but that's again, another, once you do a few of them or, you know, do it regularly, you gain that ability to judge, well, not judge, assess your audience and know who you're talking to, how to talk, or control as to how you deal with them, and I think it's very important. When it comes to an interview for example, it's all based on your first - that impression that you've given there. So you can be a great analytics person, but you presented in an interview in a much different way.

Q: And they don't know.

P: No, exactly.

Q: Just going back to your point on big data thing, and the volume of information, which is our library world or librarians are, sort of, aware of that, and the information overload and rejigging a little bit about our role, and not just pointing people to books on the shelf.

P: Yeah.

Q: It's a lot of, sort of, that assessing of online information. Do you think that's a big part of our role, could be or should be?

P: I think so, I think, yeah, there's absolutely a need for that. I think when you think of library in this situation, it's not the sense of book and person, here you are, and if you need any questions, more so, you being - not the gatekeeper to information but a pathfinder to it. Right, because there's different, like, for example, in the library system the e-resources you've got, you've got psyche info, you've got e-articles, you've got - I can't remember what other journal subscriptions we have, but there's others too. There's, for one thing, information technology journals, there's other journals that people, as a student may not be aware of, and so those various networks that you would be, you know, privy to, would really help a student get that article that they can't find. (? Pupil Scholar) is another good example. Technology can only do so much. You can put three words into a search bar and it will present something, but then that - that insight, I think is where the library services would help fleshing your idea or your investigation further, working through that concept, white-boarding it, you know.

Q: And you were, kind of, fortunate in the situation to be able to access a lot of it still.

P: Yeah, absolutely.

Q: The limited access ones you get out in the workplace.

P: Exactly, yeah. And that's why I think, I don't know, I don't know what the university's viewing is on this, but I don't think students should lose access. I think once you're an alum, you know, alumni from the university, you should - that will - you become a graduate of the xxxx University, therefore your ability and your knowledge and your concurrentness is going to factor in every day from thereon in, so that - - -

Q: Yeah, so that feeds into your workplace.

P: Yeah, your role, like, you know, this guy from xxxx University is so ahead and knows everything that is going on because he's got that resource, he's got access to it all the time.

Q: There is a swathe of alumni databases - it's about twenty, you know, it's not across the board.

P: But I don't know what the situation is, but that has changed I think in a large way, you know, you finish university, you go on, and then you end up in a career, you work your way up the ladder; it's just not how it is anymore. Information is power.

Q: Okay. I like that quote. [Laughs] all right. So the last part of this is the ethical issues around information and a lot more prevalent these days, in terms of copyright, privacy and all that.

P: I think education around this is minimal, yet very important, like, I had to - when I had attempted to trademark (18.51) xxxx, I had to like find out quite a bit of information there myself, just spending my time on the computer, Googling it, and then again, like you say, it comes to how trustworthy, I can't tell; I've just got to look up several websites and find this information myself. So the library as a curator of current issues and challenges is a great ideal sort of thing, like when it comes to patents and copyrights and what you're allowed to and what you're not allowed to, like, easy to learn or easy to understand sort of guide would be really handy for this day and age where, you know, every second kid is probably thinking about, you know, or student or (19.31) or whatever it may be, how they can develop something or what

they can do with that, how can they change their (? worlds around), what does it require to start up a business or register a business name.

Q: Yeah, that's something I'm aware of there, we need to be supporting entrepreneurs a bit more, and how we can sort out the resources, yeah.

P: But that information should really be, would be worthwhile to – I borrowed a book recently from the library called - it was like to do with IP, it was like a simple, a real thin book, all based on IP, but that was good, at least I had access to that. I just - it's called *Easy IP*; that was it, *Easy IP*. A little thin book written by someone somewhere in Brisbane, I think, and it was just basics about IP and what you should do.

Q: It wasn't an e-book version?

P: I didn't find an e-book, no, it was just a physical, very thin book, I finished it in, I don't know, a day, something like that.

Q: Lucky you. I wish I had time to finish a book. All right. So the phrase information literacy, which is our project title, is commonly used in the library world, but not so much in the business world, people tell us; is that a phrase you're familiar with?

P: It's not a phrase that I've heard thrown around very often. What I, probably tell you what I understand from information literacy is the ability to know what to do with the information and what information actually is, is information the sign posts that you see about, you know, something that's happening on the weekend, on the billboards or is information the masses of data that you're contributing to when you're part of Facebook for example, like, what can you see data to be, where the boundaries of information are, do

you know what part of the information you sit in. I think that - it's actually, literacy (? is important and) my translation is understanding and cognition.

Q: One of the graduate attributes, and you mentioned information literacy, how important do you think information literacy is for graduates in your business?

P: This day and age, it's almost paramount because technology is changing so rapidly, so you've got to learn where the sources of information need to come from; this is where I'm driving back again to graduates already having access to the new and greatest and the latest and the TED talks, you know, for example, something like that. Forums where people can throw around ideas and I think in essence, it's an old concept of having forums of, you know, what's changed, what's new in the world; however it's quite vital. Q and A sessions, I mean, I love *Q and A* on the ABC, and that's something that's - - -

Q: Brown lunch?

P: Yeah, brown lunch, yeah, exactly, yeah, it's that engagement with people and that to stay current is probably the most challenging thing in this day and age. Like, you know, before you're developing an app for one version of software, and the next one is already on its way out, so you're not - if you're not - if you don't see that in the horizon then you lose, everyone else is sorry you didn't see it. So, yes, absolutely, that ability to know where information resides and how far are the lengths that you can go to seek information and what sources are valid and what sources are, you know, Hollywood magazines. That's an essential trait, I think, that separates you from who knows what they're talking about and who just parrots.

Q: Good quotes. All right. So when you were interviewed for your position, was information skills part of that change role?

P: The change role, yes, in some ways, yes, it was - it was - the question wasn't asked, the information literacy they understood my background of tech understanding and what they were curious about is my level, what my influences can be, how do I influence groups, how do I influence my colleagues, how do I influence the work around me, do I participate in, you know, constant evolution of change, constant improvement, service improvement, that sort of thing. I could honestly - information being part of it all, I'm going to go on some training in about a week or two for that, to learn more about change management and to get certified in the world standard of change management that there is. I say my work values information, I'm going to another course that, you know, Management and Development are running called The Psychology of Influence; I think that's in a week or two. And that's again about knowledge (24.16) the more you know, the better you are at what you do. It's not just rote information, it's real life application.

Q: Yeah, spot on, yeah. Do you find that in terms of information skills you're well prepared to work in your business?

P: I feel now, but it took a lot of working getting to where I am, and it's, you never - with how the landscape, like, with everything changing so often, you'll never be an expert, you'll always be a student, and that's always the key to remember, that you always need resources like we're talking about now to know what's going on, so you don't, if you're talking about something that happened two years ago, you're going to sound like an idiot, really, in a sense, because that was two years ago. Things have changed so much in, like, the last three months and in my research, we were talking about this, the difference between myself, I'm a xxxx-year-old, myself and my teacher, not

much, they learnt on a blackboard, I learnt on a blackboard, right. There was a metre ruler in their room and there's a metre ruler in my room. The difference between myself and the 19-year-olds that come to the school is paramount; it's huge, because we've gone through this huge jump – this incline in technology and change, and so that's changed too. You can't just be traditional, you've got to be contemporary, you've got to know exactly who you are.

Q: Keep up with the kids.

P: Yeah, it's a good gauge, if you can vaguely understand what they're talking about, you're probably current enough.

Q: And I like your bit about learning, we're always learning. I'm still learning.

P: The moment you feel that you've mastered it, then the glass is full, you're not going to learn anymore.

Q: Yeah, exactly. So what are the most important skills - so this is the generic one, which students graduating from universities should have mastered when entering the workplace?

P: The most important skills personally to me is not, I mean, you can do great in an exam, you can do great in your textbooks, you can do great in theory; it's really that one-to-one collaboration skill, right, whether it be talking to one person, whether you're talking to three people, and it's the ability to be able to know how to talk to different people, because not everyone is the same, not everyone comes from one cookie cutter. Everyone deals with life differently; everyone comes from different backgrounds. Some people are process driven, some people are, you know, crude, anti-literate and to be able to talk to people

on those levels is I think the most appealing trait. You can know a little and talk well and speak well and collaborate well, and you'll probably go so far, and you can know the world and rub people up the wrong way and get nothing.

Q: Yes, communication across - - -

P: Yeah, and be a part of information, not just - not just take from information but contribute to information. It's just give and take.

Q: Yeah, know your stuff kind of thing.

P: Yeah, and that's a good way to do it is when you talk about something, you've got to know what you're talking about.

Q: Yeah. The next one is a broader one in terms of broader skills and knowledge, were you well prepared for working in your business?

P: I wouldn't say I was well prepared, but I wasn't finished either. So I'm probably not a good example; I'm not finishing this year, I'll be a graduate, technically graduate by the end of, I'll graduate in April next year, so I'm not finished yet, but - - -

Q: Do they do enough around communication?

P: They did, they did, well, what happened, was someone was going on leave, on extended leave and that was when the (? Rebound) was starting, so they needed someone in that role to communicate with all the other schools and all the other - IT was changing everything; emails, everything and that's why I needed to get in there, so I, kind of, hit the ground running (? halfway).

Q: And in terms of the degree, the (28.01) did they cover that?

P: Change management?

Q: Did they cover the communication skills?

P: Yes, yes, well, we have to write a lot of papers, did a lot of paper writing and that made me not just be academic, but it can also be just collaborative when you do group, group study sessions, that kind of thing. I don't know, I think the situation, kind of, gravitated to one another, I found, us older ones, kind of, gravitated, we did a lot of group study sessions together, and I think that's a really handy feature. You know (28.27) you might offer two. Working with people on the one object is, it seems simple but it's not always, you know, working towards the same thing in a teamwork fashion. I did a lot of that with my team and I felt that really helped us learn and it also helped me in my current role, working in a team.

Q: Yeah, I think you're right about, it's one good thing that will hopefully come out of it; people working together.

P: Yeah, and the real world is like that; you're not going to a job that you - you aren't the only person in the company, there's going to be a hierarchy that's involved, there's always going to be a hierarchy involved.

Q: Yeah, the Deputy Dean said that recently in a meeting, none of our business graduates are going to go to work yet by themselves in a little room. They need this teamwork stuff, the soft skills.

P: Yeah, and even just being a part of, I think me being at university really helped, just me being here and working here, firstly it primed me for what to expect in a place of learning, place of advancement, a place of growing and building, so I think for this school – for the school (? I’m visiting) if they immerse their students in that kind of environment; I actually have - I have two other small IP projects that I’m running with the school that’s, well, they’re third year students of the School of xxxx and they’re doing apps for me, they’re doing a little development project for me, but that collaboration I think is a very handy thing for them. I’m just getting small prototypes little (? products) coming out with them, but they’re learning how to deal with the customer, and I’m trying to treat them that way, trying to expect them to communicate with me, have a web conferencing meeting with me, give me a minute, minutes after the meeting, that real life experience I think is really helpful to them once they leave the university.

Q: Well, it probably helps you too, in terms of, with clients (30.16).

P: Yeah, it does, it does, and the one thing I do notice the most is confidence, is there’s a lack of confidence, they’re constantly seeking reassurance from me or approval from me, and that’s fair enough, but, you know, eventually they’ll start to generate that ability confidence in their ability to do it themselves.

Q: Yeah, exactly. All right, we’ll wrap it up because we need to. What else do you think Western Sydney could do to prepare graduates to work?

P: Yeah, I think - I think back to that idea of keeping information in the library resources available to students, all students who have moved on, I think that’s a valuable feature the university could offer. I don’t think - I think the universities follow quite a traditional model sometimes when it comes to, you know, once you move on, you’ve left, you’re (31.07), go fly. I don’t – I think

that engagement is very important with universities to stay in touch, stay in contact and keep libraries as a place, you know, meet and - - -

Q: Yeah, it does tend to be a bit insular, yeah. So that's - - -

P: Yeah, I think that would really help and just that real life - world experience, I think is important, learning in a class room only gets you so far.

Q: Yeah, the business school is trying to do more of that, which is good.

P: I've heard good things about what our graduates are like, expected to be hard workers, achievers, you know, go-getters, that kind of thing. I think it's a great attitude that we have on this side of the world. I think we just grow and build on that like the School of xxxx really, you know, we could - we are looking future entrepreneurs from the future, you know, think tanks could be coming from that and identifying people out there or people with that characteristic and putting them together and having, you know.

Q: Yeah, a bit of nurturing maybe (32.09).

P: Yeah, mentoring, yeah.

Q: All right, thanks, xxxx.

P: No worries.

Q: That was brilliant.

P: Not a problem.

Interview data from a project investigating information literacy (IL) and employability skills in the workplace for employers and business graduates in greater western Sydney

Graduate xxx (G3) - Organisational Change Manager in University IT Department and start-up entrepreneur

END OF RECORDING: (32.14)