

FINDING THE INFORMATION YOU NEED

You need many different types of information in your job, either for yourself or to pass on to customers or others in your workplace. Examples include:

- Statistics about a particular recreation activity/ sport
- Information on the best places to publicise an event
- Details about your workplace's products and services
- Health and safety rules
- Venues available on a particular day
- New job opportunities

Information is all around us, such as in work memos and notices, policies and procedures, newspapers, books and magazines and on the internet. You can't keep all this in your head, but you do need to know where to find it.

Before you start looking for any piece of information you need to think about exactly what you need and the most logical place to look for it.

Remember these tips. Ask yourself:

- Exactly what am I looking for? What is the topic?
- How much information do I need? Just a general idea or a lot of detail?
- What is the best place to look for it? Where can I get the most up-to-date facts?
- What do I know already? Is this correct or should I check that I am not just making it up?

One of the best ways to start looking for information is to ask someone. Ask your supervisor or a senior colleague for their advice if you don't know where to start.

Always start with the simplest and most direct method. The information you need may already be in your workplace.



WHERE TO LOOK

Here are some ways you could find information:

- Find out what documents are available in your workplace, such as policies and procedures, annual reports or plans for the organisation.
- Look in the phone book or a business directory. If you want to find addresses outside your locality, use the White or Yellow Pages on the internet.
- Ask your local council. They will have information on resources in your community.
- Check out your local library. Talk to the librarians if you need help.
- Visit or phone other local sporting or recreation organisations. They may be able to provide local and national information on a wide range of topics relating to recreation and sport, including links to other organisations.
- Read the newspaper and special-interest magazines and journals. Remember though, that overseas journals may have details that don't apply to New Zealand.
- Use the internet to search for local, national or international information - the world is at your fingertips!



EXAMPLE

Tui is on the committee of her local running club, which is organising a half marathon. Before the big day they need to get sponsorship, arrange media coverage, get permission to close the road and arrange for emergency services to be provided.

They also need to find volunteers to act as marshals and time keepers, and to distribute water.

Tui uses the local phone directory to find out how to contact people she needs on the day of the half marathon. She also contacts the local police and St John's for information on relevant regulations and safety requirements.

She also looks through past issues of specialist running magazines for practical tips on managing the event.

USING THE INTERNET

The internet allows you to access local, national and international information. The advantage is that some information is more likely to be up to date than in printed material.

If you don't have access to a computer at work or home, go to your local library where you can pay a small fee to use their computers.

Work out exactly what you are looking for before you start so you can make good use of your time.

Many local bodies, government departments, sports and cultural organisations have websites that provide loads of information. The easiest way to find these websites is to use your computer's search engines (such as Google) to find them.

Join an online discussion group. Many groups and organisations have groups or forums where people share their ideas, opinions, experience and knowledge.

TIPS FOR SEARCHING THE INTERNET

If you have little or no experience of searching the internet, ask for help.

If you need to search for information often it would be a good idea to go on a course or get lessons from a friend or workmate.



If you know the address of the website (the URL) you can type it in and it will take you straight to that site.

Make sure you copy the address exactly – use lower case letters (not capitals) where appropriate and don't leave any gaps between sections of the address.

If you don't know the address you can use a search engine or a search directory to help you find information on a topic. To use a search engine you need to decide on some key words to direct your search.

To revisit a useful site you can bookmark it (this is called Favourites on Internet Explorer.) If you are using a public computer that doesn't allow bookmarking, make sure you note the address.

EXAMPLE

Tony manages the sports shop in a large sports complex. It sells mainly rugby, netball and cricket gear. He's keen to cater more for the older people in the area and he wants to find out what older people like to do in their leisure time.

To do this, Tony uses the internet to access the results of some recent surveys that tell him what activities people of different age groups like to do.



KEY POINTS

- Know what you are looking for before you start looking - that will save a lot of time.
- As the people you work with first - they may have the information you are looking for.
- Think about the best place to get the information you need - it may your workplace, your local library, the council, another similar organisation to your workplace, a professional organisation you belong to, a book or magazine, or the internet.
- Don't make it up - check your facts before you pass any information on to other people.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

Bookmark *Saving the location of a web page so that you can go back to it later without having to remember the address. Bookmarks are also called 'favourites'*

Forum *A discussion area on a website where members can post comments and read/reply to posts by other forum members; also called a message board, discussion group, or bulletin board*

Logical *Sensible, reasonable*

Media *Ways in which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are shared; examples are newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, direct mail, telephone, fax, and internet*

Search engine *A web site that collects and organises content from all over the internet so you can use it as one central point for searching for information - common search engines include Google and Yahoo*

Statistics *Figures, numbers, data*

URL *The internet address of a specific web site or file; URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator; an example of a URL is <http://www.skillsactive.org.nz>*

This table shows some of the places you might find particular types of information. Fill in the blank spaces to remind yourself where you might look for information you need in your job.

Type of information	Where you might find it
Workplace rules and policies	
Evacuation procedures	Noticeboards, staff manual, signs around the building
Legislation (laws) that relate to your job (such as the Health and Safety in Employment Act)	On the internet, on this website: www.legislation.org.nz All our national laws are listed there in alphabetical (A -Z) order
Contact details for your local council	
Statistics and facts about a particular sport or recreational activity	

This fact sheet will be useful when you are being assessed for **Unit Standards 4864** *Demonstrate knowledge of recreation needs of target groups* (Level 3, 4 credits) or **6896** *Demonstrate knowledge of recreation* (Level 3, 3 credits), or whenever you need to search for specific information.

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