



Mums at Work!

There are vacancies and opportunities for mums who want to return to work...

In the past, women who have taken maternity leave have faced difficulties when returning to work. However due to the recent skills shortage, employers are now aware of a new, untapped candidate market – one made up of *professional mothers and semi-retired workers*.

The future looks bright for those mums looking to re-enter the work force, as many employers now offer flexible work practices and hours, childcare, refresher courses and/or time off for study and family commitments.

Increasingly, employers are looking more favorably at “job sharing”, which in the past has been perceived in a negative light. Additionally, flexibility and family-friendly policies are being implemented in more workplaces to lure mothers back into the work force.

This is encouraging news indeed, however according to Sinead Hourigan, Robert Walters’s expert on women in the workforce, it’s still important for mums to do their research and properly prepare themselves to ensure they’re joining the right company.

She offers the following advice and suggestions:

- Take gradual steps when returning to work. Part-time or reduced-hours employment is best as it allows you to maintain work-life balance and strengthen your work skills especially if you have been away from work for a number of years.
- Stay engaged with the business community and to be aware of any changes to workplace legislation.
- Maintain good relationships with employers and colleagues while on leave.
- Maintain professional memberships to keep abreast of industry developments.
- Seek out family-friendly work places and understand a company’s policies before applying for a position.
- Complete a computer refresher course if required. Check your local libraries, TAFE, and colleges for courses.

Naturally, the first step to making the smooth and successful transition to the work force is to have a first class resume that makes you stand out from the crowd as a ‘must ring’ candidate.

There are a number of techniques you can use to minimize any employment gaps in your industry, although it is always best to be honest with your potential employers, so you can both prepare for any of your future needs as a mother and an employee.

Try a combination functional and chronological resume, with a high impact opening statement, highlighting the skills, personal attributes and expertise you can offer an employer, regardless of when you held your last job. Concentrate on your strengths!