



The Australian Finance Podcast Episode Transcript

Episode: My Millennial Career | Resumes, Job Interview & LinkedIn

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Episode transcript:

Kate:

Emily Bowen and Shelley Johnson, welcome to this episode of the Australian Finance Podcast.

Emily:

Thank you for having us.

Shelley:

We're set to be here, Kate. Thanks for having us.

Emily:

Yeah.

Kate:

Awesome. And you're podcast hosts yourselves on the wonderful My Millennial Career Podcast.

Emily:

We are. So we've flipped over to the other side now. I think it's the more difficult side being the guest. I think it's much easier when we get to be hosts, but we'll see what we can do.

Kate:

Yeah, no, it is a little bit scary going from... I mean, in my personal experience, going from host to guest. So hopefully it is a fun episode. And we're talking all about careers today, which is I know a topic people love to talk about, but probably don't have all the resources they need. And it's not something we talk about that much because, I mean, our bread and butter is personal finance. So it's great to get people that are experts in the field, working in HR and recruiting which is not something I have any experience in myself, except being someone that's gone through that process before. So it's good to talk to people on the other side of it, about how they look at it. And so all of our listeners who are potentially job candidates and, I mean, most of us are probably working, can get an idea of what to look for when you're going through that process.

Kate:

Wonderful. Well, to kick off, I'd love to talk a bit about resumes. And maybe it sounds like a bit of a boring topic to start with, but I think most of us will have had to put a resume together at some point over the last few years. And for some people it is just have a set template resume, just send it off without any thought, and maybe once every decade they update it when they apply for a new job. But I'd love to get your approach on what are some of the biggest things that you think people have to explore when it comes to resumes and what are some trends you're seeing that people should be aware of at the moment?

Emily:

I tell you what Kate, if I followed my own good advice, I would definitely keep my resume up to date probably annually just in case I ever needed it, but I absolutely do not do that. So if we can give you your first tip, be better than me. I might just talk to the trends part of your question, and then let Shelley jump in on the rest. Because I think what's really interesting is that you're absolutely right, resumes are a cornerstone to your career and in particular to your job search and when you're active. But what we're seeing is the interaction between resumes and other technology coming into play like LinkedIn. So more and more the majority of the searching that you are doing, or even the looking that a hiring manager or an employer is doing, it starts with LinkedIn.

Emily:

And so something I do too really well and that I would absolutely recommend others do is keep my LinkedIn profile up to date. It's just absolutely a non-negotiable. And even if you're not actively on the hunt, you're still being looked at and you could still have career opportunities opened up for you whether it's a new role or just something else, an extracurricular as I like to talk about or as I like to call them through LinkedIn. And on top of that, the other thing that we're seeing is that so many more opportunities, at least 80% of opportunities out there are coming through what we call the hidden job market. And so that means that those roles are not actually actively or openly advertised on websites like Seek, but instead it's about the network and the connections that you have behind the scenes and how you leverage those. And the resume, sure, it might get asked for at some point, but it's an afterthought to your relationship with that person who has that opportunity.

Shelley:

And I think that's such a good point, Em. Like most jobs we see in our careers are not being... It's not that old school advertising pathway where you jump on Seek if you upload your application. Now that certainly happens. And so to those people who, if you are getting asked to put together a resume, let's just talk about what we would want to see on that, because we can tell you quickly... And I always laugh, because we could tell you really easily, what do we not want to see? We don't want to see your high school education. The only time we would want to see that is if you've just finished high school.

Shelley:

So keep your education levels to the most recent. You don't need to have this huge big backlog of, well, in 2005, I finished my HSC and blah, blah, blah. We don't want that. But obviously that's a very baseline level but some of the things Em and I love is when you see a resume come through and it's easy to follow. So it's structured in a way that's easy to follow. It's not got different, bold fonts, all these different things. It's just simple. Simplicity is good because the recruiter or the HR person, what they're doing on their end is they might look at your resume for max two minutes. Do you reckon two minutes, Em?

Emily:

At best. And that's simply a decision on a first glance. First impression whether you're going in the "no" pile or the "maybe" pile. And if you're in the "maybe" pile, you've got a chance of getting another look, maybe another minute out of them and it's down the track in the process.

Shelley:

And so what we want with that is that your resume is really getting you into that "maybe" pile. So the things that stand out are, we want it to be tailored to the business. We don't want it to be generic. So your little blurb about, maybe you have this, who am I about me? The same sort of thing you have in LinkedIn will be concise, but connected to whatever that role or the business that you're applying for because as the person reviewing applications all the time, we don't like to see generic. We'd like to see that the candidate has been intentional. And so those are the kinds of things we are looking on resumes. And Em, I don't know if you want to add? What are your thoughts?

Emily:

Look, the final thing I'll add, and because there are so many great templates on Google. So let's try and tell you the things that Google want. The final thing I'd love to tack on the end there is particularly if you're in a technical profession, but even if you're not, there's a chance that the first person who's taking that initial look at your resume doesn't actually fully understand what you do. So this is not to downplay their role, but it may be that it's a HR coordinator who is in the first five years of their career and they are responsible for recruiting roles across the whole organisation. Which means that they're not the engineering manager who is recruiting that technical specialist, but there's somebody who has some sort of position description or briefing from the engineer manager who has said, "Can you go and find me this person?"

Emily:

And they're doing a first look in the "maybe" pile and the "no" pile. And then down the track, soon after that, it becomes that pile of "maybe" perhaps sits in front of the engineering manager. And that person is actually able to understand, I guess the technical language or some of that lingo. So I think to the point around making easy to read, it's not just a format and the way you're presenting the information, but it's also talking to the job in a way that keeps it really simple at a glance and really nails those key points so that anybody reading it can see that you've got to offer what they're looking for.

Kate:

And that sounds, that's a really good point because if you don't think about who's actually going to read that resume, you're not going to write it briefly. It'd be very different writing a resume to apply at a startup compared to working at Google. One of those massive organisations that have thousands of recruiters.

Emily:

Totally. Yeah. Absolutely. Know your audience and write for them.

Kate:

And one thing I heard was that a lot of recruiters now, because most of our resumes are going online, not getting posted or handed over manually, they'll use keyword searches and things like that to move resumes from the "No" to the "Maybe" file. Is that something that happens?

Emily:

Oh, Shelley, you jump in, you've worked for a big business, but I'm going to call a little bit of bluff on that and say that it's not something that never happens, but it doesn't happen as frequently as the Internet would like us to believe that fear campaign is certainly out there. I think particularly in Australia, I would put it out there we had a lot of science behind it, but call it gut feel and a reasonable amount of experience in recruitment. I would suggest that's not happening as often as you might think or be it does still happen. And you know what, for me, that keyword search and the idea of a computer doing it versus again, without downplaying their role, somebody who's not technically proficient in the role they're recruiting for, it doesn't matter which of those two things are happening, whether it be the computer or the person you still want to hit on those keywords. So it shouldn't actually change your approach.

Shelley:

What I've heard more than that necessarily has been AOI being used to help remove discrimination or bias. And so that, I think is something that's such a good thing for us to be pursuing. And certainly with the various types of recruitment software, we're seeing that come in more and more of how do we help things like removing names? So removing names, removing anything that might indicate their age or gender. And if we see more of that, that's excellent because as people, we all have our conscious or unconscious bias and so we want to be able to see that stuff start to shift. I guess if we talk about that for a little moment, one of the things we

encourage candidates to do in our podcast is make sure you are conscious of that when you're putting together your resume. So don't put things like your age, your gender, photos, different things like that on there to reduce the likelihood that someone's going to discriminate against you.

Kate:

Yeah. That's a good point. I mean, I hadn't thought about putting a photo on a resume, but might be something that people have done. I know I have seen resumes come through with date of births and things like that and I'm like, that's a lot of personal information to hand over to someone on the internet on the first glance.

Emily:

You get an amazing amount of information from some people, but as far as those trends go, we are moving away from that. I think many years ago it was more typical to see marital status, religious beliefs and many other things on a resume. It's just not the done thing anymore. And so if that is something that any of your listeners are still doing, we would absolutely recommend that they stop. And look, the final thing I would add just on resumes is just around referees. I think some of the advice that Shelley and I will give from our experience that can surprise people is actually to leave your referees off your resume, unless it's specifically been asked for in the instructions, in which case ignore us. And you'll typically see that in government roles. The reason for this is in respect to giving away personal information, you actually can lose some control around who your potential new employer, so who that recruiter or that hiring manager is talking to and when they're talking to them if you put your referees details on there because it means that they can contact them at any time.

Emily:

The alternative is that if you leave them off, then it means that recruiter needs to ask for them and you want to have them there ready to send them immediately. So within that day, you want to say, here you go, and you want to have your referees prepped. The reason why you want to do it that way is so that you can prep your referees, but it's so you can say, "You're going to get a call from this company I expect it to be in this timeframe and here's what I think they're going to ask you about, because they've been the key themes of this recruitment process." But what it also does is give you a really strong indicator that you are in a really good position, because I guarantee recruiters are not interested in spending time doing reference checks, unless you're the top one or potentially top two candidates in that process.

Emily:

So you're really at the pointy end and it just gives you that indication. I'm not sure what it is for other professions, but reference checking for recruiters is just one of those things that it's like a necessary evil. I don't know why it is, but none of us love it. And yet it's actually quite fun when you get on the phone, but when you're coming into a reference check, it's like, "Oh, I can do a reference check," but it is actually a really important final part of a process.

Kate:

Yeah. And I guess your point about being able to prep your referees is really important. I mean, I've had one of those random phone calls, but your friends provided your details on your behalf and you didn't know that.

Emily:

Oh, the worst.

Kate:

And you're just trying to think of something useful to say when they start asking you questions about a particular role that you don't really know what... You want your friend to tell you what they want you to say, don't you?

Emily:

Such a missed opportunity, and yet it's the final hurdle and it's in someone else's hands. Like you are the one that's trying to get the job and you've been going through this recruitment process in control of your own actions and behaviours and what's coming out of your mouth and then you're leaving it up to a third party to do that check. And the best thing you can do for yourself is actually to prep them. Even just make sure that they're not going to be on a train and trying to just get it done half-heartedly because they feel like, "Oh, this is important, but I'm on a train, but I better do it because that person I know needs me too." So yeah, it's kind of good value that can come from just controlling that part of the process by not putting it on your resume up front.

Kate:

Absolutely. And you mentioned before about the shadow job market where there's so many roles that get hired for nowadays that they never end up on Seek or LinkedIn jobs or any of the other websites. How would listeners go about finding some of these roles and making sure they're in the right networks for these opportunities that they won't find in a simple spot on the internet?

Emily:

Let me dub you. And Shelley, you're a perfect example. You've done this yourself really recently.

Shelley:

Yeah, I was just going to say so. I guess my advice would be view anyone in your network as a potential employer, because for me, I've just started a new job. I was working in head of HR role for about seven years and then stepped out of that role into a consulting gig with a client. So when I was working my old job, this person I was interacting with was a client of mine. And so now the dynamic has shifted and I'm working for her and that job purely came out of a network. So her and I sitting down and I guess just having an informal chat of, "Hey, would you ever want to come and work with us?" I'm like, "Yeah, I'd love to. That'd be great." And so we went on this journey, no jobs advertised, no kind of formal, submit an application it's that her and I had worked together in a different capacity for six or seven years.

Shelley:

And so that opportunity came about through relationship and through a recognition that all of my interactions, my network beyond just my immediate employer right now, they could be someone that is going to hire me. And so if I have that mindset, what I do is it changes the way I interact. I don't see these relationships as transactional, I see them as purposeful and meaningful. And then I look at "Okay, can this create an opportunity?" And so looking at your network, where are those opportunities? Where can you build relationship for the long term that could open up doors in the future? What's your thought, Em?

Emily:

So I love that story. I think what I would add to it is we have this real belief particularly on... You'll hear us talk about a lot on our podcast if you come over for a listen and it's this idea of career self-reliance. And if you are purely basing your need or your ability to find a job on what is available in the market at that moment, as in what is available in the open market. So through Seek, or LinkedIn, job boards and things like that, then you're actually only looking at about 20% of the available opportunities and you are competing with probably about 80% of the population who's also looking at that job. So it's about flipping that and really taking control. And that's this idea of career self-reliance. It's taking control of your own destiny of your own invention.

Emily:

Now you still need to do that job search that's more active and it's in the open market. That's absolutely part of it. But if you remove yourself from what everyone else is doing, and Shelley's story is just such a beautiful example of it, and you not only think about what's available to me right now, but what might pay off over the long term, it's that six or seven year ban. It didn't necessarily need to take that long, but it was all the things that Shelley was doing with intent with just thinking, you just never know when I might like to lean on this relationship, or it might open up an opportunity. All of a sudden, she's totally removed all the competition. No one else applied for that job because it never existed on Seek. And on top of that, interviews are really funny things because we don't actually have to interview in our job every day to be good at it and yet it's the main judge of whether or not we get a job when we're going through a recruitment process.

Emily:

So what Shelley has also been able to do and what we see work time and time again, is there's six or seven years of experience that her now employer has had with her, where she's proved she's actually really good at this and she's an awesome employee. So it's a much easier decision as well. Not only is there no competition, but there's a lot more certainty and a recruitment process for an employer is all about increasing certainty and reducing risk.

Kate:

I think we haven't thought about much that if you take the relationship and long term approach to your career, jobs come along that you don't even think about. They just come as a complete surprise, and they're not going to be asking you for your resume and to do an interview possibly and for all your experience because they've already seen you develop over many years. And so,

I mean, they to take a much shorter bet on you because they know how you work. It's not a surprise.

Shelley:

And I guess-

Emily:

You go Shelley. Sorry.

Shelley:

I guess, Kate, that's the interesting thing, because I've worked with people who see... Let's take a supplier for example, they see that supplier as purely transaction. And so they treat them like, I pay you to do this job, you do it and you deliver. And that might be efficient. But if you look at your career in a way of every person I'm interacting with could be an opportunity down the track, you start to treat people differently and that's not being manipulative. It's just being respectful, good human and then knowing that you may actually have a different relationship with them in the future. And so I guess that's for Em and I, we really want to have that long term mindset of how do you build relationships and how do you create opportunities and options?

Kate:

Yeah. I think that's a really good one for people to take under their wing as they approach their career and thinking long term as well, long term investing and long term career planning.

Emily:

Absolutely.

Kate:

When it comes to, say we've found a job that we really want, we've got our resume and our cover letter sorted, and potentially we've been offered to do a job interview, though it's probably on zoom at the moment. What are some of the things that people should do to make sure they present themselves really well for that interview and put their best foot forward when potentially they're just communicating over a computer screen?

Emily:

The first thing that comes to mind for me is do the best you can to get yourself in the mindset or the head space of, this is just a conversation. And the employer that you're meeting with has a problem that they need solved and when you are turning up, they are hoping that you are the person to walk through the door and solve their problem. That is all that they want. They just want this recruitment process to be over. They want the problem to be solved because they've got the new person in the business doing what they need them to do to get the business where it's trying to go. And on top of that, you've got a problem. You know, that might be a lack of satisfaction in your current role, it might be that you're unemployed, or it might be that you're ready for the next thing.

Emily:

And so when you turn up to that interview, you are also looking to have your problem solved and you are really hoping that you're going to vibe with these people and you are going to see that this opportunity is one where you can solve your own problem. So, first thing that comes to mind for me is trying to shift away from the power dynamic that is typically associated with an interview and move into one that is about two adults who are really good at what they do. One representing a business, the other being you, who are having a conversation to try and solve each other's problem.

Shelley:

And I always want to say so good because I love when we talk, and I agree with everything that you just said. And I guess one of the things that I see people struggle with is this element of preparation. How much do I prepare? How little do I prepare? And they get really nervous about what questions are they going to ask me? And I'm going to get stumped. The recruiter or the interviewer is not trying to stump you, they're trying to gauge the fit. And so what I encourage people to do to prep is think about the biggest achievements you've had in your career. So Kate, for you, your biggest achievements, list them out. The project that you worked on that you absolutely nailed, the thing that you delivered that defied everyone's expectations and start to write those things out, those examples. And then what I do is I actually craft those responses towards questions.

Shelley:

So the typical type of questions, tell us about what you've done, an area you've succeeded in. And then I use what I've already prepared, and I just craft it to whatever the question is, so that I'm actually showcasing the best things that I've done, rather than going and preparing for all manner of questions. I kind of think about core things that I've done and achieved and how can I tweak those to fit the interview. And the only other thing I'd say is in your preparation, you always need to prepare for the, "Tell us a bit about yourself?" Because people rant and rave, and go on forever. Just get really clear on that question. You want it to be short and sweet. You want it to have a bit about you as a person, as well as your profession, not just this big long-winded answer.

Emily:

And again, know your audience. So you want to make sure that you have the opportunity to speak to the value that you're going to add the people the sitting in front of you. And you want to make sure that in your preparation while you've been driving around or you're in front of your mirror, whatever you feel more comfortable with, you've practised that out loud because often what makes sense in our own heads, as soon as it comes out of our mouth, it becomes that ramble or we trip over our words or it actually just doesn't sound that good. And so get over that discomfort in your preparation and do practise that aloud.

Emily:

The final thing I thought you were going to go to, Shel, was actually personality. So we talk about this often. Just let them get to know you as a person. Don't be a robot, don't over prepare

so much that what you do say comes out too scripted. Shel said it, they're looking for fit, they're looking for vibe, they're looking for, can I turn up and spend more time with you each day than I spend with the people that I live with and are we going to get along? Does it make sense for you to just come and hang out here? So let that come through as well.

Kate:

Yeah, so it's a mixture of solving their problem because they do not want to do any more interviews than most people that aren't in recruitment, and they're just having to hire as part of their job as a manager in the operations team, do not want to do any more interviews. They just want it over and done with. But it also, as you mentioned, we spend more time with our work friends, like pre COVID than we do with our family. So you've just got to be someone that they're happy to hang out with and have a cup of tea with.

Emily:

Yeah. And usually once they've seen your resume and you've made it through to the interview, they've got a pretty good level of confidence that you can do the role. So they'll spend a little bit of time on that, but primarily they want to understand how you'll do it. And as we've just now touched on what you like.

Kate:

Yeah. And what if you're in a point in the interview where they... I've had an experience before where the hiring person will just... You answer your question and they just kind of sit there and stare at you and go, and they, "Is that all?" And they just stare at you to see if you will keep talking or what you do next. [crosstalk 00:24:46] an awkward question like that?

Shelley:

That is awkward. I think it is good to have questions up your sleeve because what I would do in that situation, if someone's kind of shocked me with a, is that all? And I'm like, what the heck are they? What do they want from me? I would actually put a question back to them. That's going, that's my perspective but why is this of interest to you? Or why is it that is this... So say they asked you a question about delivering project time... Like delivering a project on time. And then they did that, is that all?

Shelley:

If it sounds like they're trying to probe on something, really allowing the question going, "Okay, what is it that is a challenge for you at the moment in this space?" And so you are giving yourself time. You're actually buying yourself time to not feel nervous or awkward or thrown. And actually the interviewers love getting questions because they're sick of asking people questions. But they've been sitting in potentially eight interviews and they're like, "Oh gosh, I don't want to ask someone another question." So putting it back to them would be my strategy. Em, what do you think though?

Emily:

Oh, I think that would be... Yeah, that would be uncomfortable, wouldn't it? So I love this idea of it being more of a conversation, and by asking questions back and forth, you actually create that vibe of more of a conversation. And this plays into your ability to show off your personality, it plays into that power dynamic that we spoke on and how you can actually suss out, is this really the place that's going to solve your problem as much as they're sussing out whether you can solve theirs. On top of that, I would also add that you... Like it's okay... I think this is what you're saying, Shelley, but it's okay to actually ask clarifying questions. And so to be able... Like, don't be afraid to say, "Yeah, that's my perspective. That's how I would summarise that. But is there something that you'd like me to dig deeper into," and try and actually just ask them to explain what they're getting at?

Emily:

We actually can experience good and bad interviewers in our job search. Not everyone is good at interviewing. So the other mind trick or trick that our minds can play on us is that we think that everybody who is interviewing is going to be good at it, and that they've got the easy asking questions. But in reality, you will come across the odd person who is not a good interviewer and that can make life harder. So just finding a place to be more comfortable in the conversation is important. And, Kate, without having been there, I feel like maybe that person wasn't a good interviewer, but we've got to learn how to roll with them.

Kate:

Yeah. And there's definitely people that are having to do the job interviews and they don't want to be doing them. So they might just be quite grumpy and it's nothing to do with you. It's to do with them.

Emily:

It's probably a red flag that maybe that's not the place for you, which is part of that cultural piece that you are sussing out as well.

Kate:

Yeah. I think that's a good thing because you've got to think about you're interviewing them as well. Because if you're going to be spending 40 hours a week in this place, you want to make sure it's going to be a comfortable place to work and you're going to enjoy the people enough. And on the question point before I move on to the next bit, at the end, most people I've spoken to that will always be a question, do you have any questions for us? So do you recommend having a few questions prepared obviously for that point?

Shelley:

Yes. You absolutely need. One of my pet hates, okay.

Emily:

Yeah, she's got to be up. Well, I've been here before, now, she's got to be up.

Shelley:

I just have to say I hate it when I'm in an interview and at the end of the interview we say, okay, so do you have any questions for us? I like, no, I think you've answered it all.

Emily:

Oh, yeah.

Shelley:

Like I haven't answered a single question. I've just listened to you for so long.

Emily:

But also this is a full-time 40 hour a week job for the next five years. We've spent an hour together, how have I possibly told you everything?

Shelley:

Do you know what, the reason it happens, it's not that the person doesn't have questions. It's that they're nervous and they're actually quite tired emotionally and they want to kind of finish it up. That is a mistake. You need to have questions up your sleeve. You don't need to have an endless list, but some good ones that I would encourage you to have is, what is it like to work here? What's the culture like? What do you like in your team? So if the hiring manager is there, I'd be asking them, what are they like as a leader? And what are they like? What types of... What are they looking for from this person in terms of not so much technical, but what are they wanting in the role in terms of culture fit? So some of those questions are really helpful. And what questions do you like to have?

Emily:

Yeah, look, the way I like to categorise them is, and you've just nailed this, Shelley. It's organisational questions. So questions at that org level, team questions and then individual role questions. And absolutely write down those ones, rewind, write down those ones. Shelley's just rattled off, but also make sure that you brainstorm. And again, Google is your friend, but brainstorm a few other questions for each of those categories, because there is a chance that the question that you go prepared with will be answered already through the conversation and you just need to make sure that you've got one or two left at the end. Feel free to write them down.

Emily:

So take a notebook, have them written down, and then at the end, I'm totally comfortable when I see people go, "Yeah, I do have a few questions. Let me just check. I think we've already answered some of them through this conversation." And then they have a look in their notebook and they go, "Oh, here's one that we haven't talked about." I love that. It says you've spent your personal time before you've turned up here preparing for this. That's how important it is to you. And we haven't made this reference yet, but it's an important one.

Emily:

Recruitment process is like dating. And if you were to turn up to a first or second date and not ask any questions of the person sitting across from you having a drink, then they're going to walk away thinking that person's not real interested in me. They're not keen or they're a bit self-absorbed, I spent my whole time asking them questions and they didn't ask me a single one in return. So either way it's probably not going to be a match.

Kate:

No, I love that. And even just taking a notebook, sometimes they'll say something in the interview and give you some additional information about the role that you want to write down. I guess there's something about having a pen and paper that makes you seem very prepared.

Emily:

Definitely.

Shelley:

Yes.

Kate:

Awesome. Well, one of the other things I wanted to talk a bit about, and I know you both are very keen on this is LinkedIn and how to use this as a more effective tool in our job application and career building process because a lot of recruiters now actually reach out to people directly through LinkedIn. I'm not sure if you guys do that.

Emily:

Yeah. It's something that we do as recruiters, which is, I guess, where the world I play in, we do all the time. It's our bread and butter. If we turned up to one of our clients and said that we were going to find them, the perfect candidate by posting a job out on seek, our industry would not exist anymore because they can do that so cheaply and easily themselves. Where the value that we add comes from has to be from finding, turning over those rocks and finding those people that no one else knew existed. And one of the greatest tools for us is LinkedIn. So we're always scouring LinkedIn and increasingly organisations with internal HR teams are doing the same to find great people and then we're reaching out to them that way. I would think about this as another long term investment of your time, because you might not get it approached every day. Depends. There are some professions out there that are in high demand and they're probably thinking, yeah, I do, it gets annoying.

Emily:

And do you know what, if it gets annoying, then that's where the onus is on the recruiter to make sure that they're doing a really good quality approach and you will see those stand out and hopefully you will apply. But to give yourself the greatest chance of being approached so that you miss that great opportunity, you want to make sure that you are investing not only in your LinkedIn profile, but also in your personal brand and how you're presenting posts and commenting on other posts and engaging in that community as well.

Kate:

Yeah. I sometimes think people don't make the most of the... Being able to post and put articles and photos and certificates on their LinkedIn feed. I see a lot of maybe older people in my audience doing it, but lots of people in my age, they don't seem to make use of it. And I think that's a great tool because it's great. It's fun. You like seeing people's achievements and that they finish the school course or they've gone on this particular project and I think that's something else to think about like sharing what you've learned and achieved on your LinkedIn as well.

Shelley:

Yeah. You can really start to create a bit of an audience too, and they get the sense of your, as I mentioned brand. So what is it that you're passionate about? What is it when it comes to work that drives you and motivates you? And I think giving a recruiter or giving an internal HR team a sense of who you are, can then help to work out, how do you align and fit with a potential role or business. And so they might see my LinkedIn and say, oh, she seems pretty fun and authentic in her communication and that's a bit of our brand and culture, she'd be a good fit for this role. And so you're actually working with, how do you align with organisations that maybe you haven't come across yet? So, as I mentioned, the profile is really important and looking at people who are good at this, finding some people out on LinkedIn that do it really well. And then you can kind of cherry pick things that you want to include in your own profile learning from people who are really good on LinkedIn.

Emily:

The other couple of things that are amazing, particularly when you're in a job search mode are actually having a look at who you're going to be interviewing with and following the company page to see the most recent updates so that you can walk into the interview or you can prepare your application in a way that is as current as possible and is really responsive to them. You've got a sense for when you're sitting at interview, you know, what's the career path been of that person. That's a key decision maker in that conversation with you. And the other thing... Sorry. The other thing that I would encourage all the time on top of that is actually to make sure that you're connecting with as many people as possible, who you've met through your career. Even people you went to school with, see what they're doing now, because hacking back to that hidden job market that we talked on earlier, you just never know when someone in your network is going to be useful to you.

Kate:

And that's another thing. By posting and sharing, this person that you haven't spoken to for years because you went to high school just because they're connected with you might see the thing you shared and suddenly it sparks a conversation that you just don't know where it could lead.

Emily:

Yeah. And it's weird how you can have these people that you might not have spoken to five or 10 years. They're a part of your world once upon a time or you met them one time at a

networking event or in a supplier arrangement and there's this weird sense of it's okay to reach out to them at any time on LinkedIn. Like you can totally just send them a message through LinkedIn and say, "Hey, it's been a while. Listen, I thought of you because I've got this problem and I'd love your advice or your recommendation or your perspective." And you might not as comfortably pick up the phone to them or you might not even have their number, but it's totally okay on LinkedIn and people are actually quite flattered by it when their brand is recognised and what they're expert for is recognised as well.

Kate:

And so picking your platform, it might not be appropriate to message them on Facebook because you haven't seen each other for 10 years, but LinkedIn maybe much more appropriate.

Emily:

Totally. Yeah. That's exactly right.

Kate:

Yeah. And the other thing I wanted to talk a bit about was building. In terms our digital brand there's things we want to do proactively to build our brand, but there's also things we want to avoid putting out there because as, I guess, everyone knows now that your future employers going to Google you, how much... I guess from a recruiting perspective, how much do you Google or stroll people online that you might be interviewing or thinking about hiring and what would be some of the red flags you'd look for that listeners should make sure that they're not displaying on any of their online presences?

Shelley:

Can I jump in because I was doing a recruitment not that long ago. And I always Google candidates because I think I want to see what their online footprint is and her the person's LinkedIn photo was her with this wine and she was like, it was her drinking a wine on her LinkedIn profile. I thought, no.

Emily:

Did she work in wine sales?

Shelley:

No. Totally different industry. And I was like, why? Like why? Just you just simple stuff sometimes. And that might sound like it's just simple stuff of having a semi-professional photo makes a huge difference because as I go back to what we were talking about before of bias and discrimination, that happens. So my initial thoughts were, "Oh, you don't like super professional," and it was quite a professional role and immediately rule that person out. And that's [inaudible 00:38:05] you go.

Emily:

Well, the thing is, Shelley, you and I both drink wine, right? And there's probably-

Shelley:

Oh, yeah. I like wine.

Emily:

Yeah. There's a photo out there of us drinking wine. But for me it's the judgement . It's how I'm perceiving that person judgement call in regards to, if that exact same photo was on Instagram, totally fine. They've got all their clothes on. No worries. But if that photo they've made the judgement call to pop that on their LinkedIn, as their one headshot on LinkedIn, like you only get one chance. I'm questioning because it's a professional platform and because it does not make sense with the context. If that person was a wine sales rep, then there's context there that says she needs to show up or this person needs to show up and have a brand of, I love wine because she's selling wine. But when that's not the case totally appropriate for Instagram, lots of other photos, social, cool. Maybe just not the best.

Emily:

And so you draw those conclusions and as much as we try and apply science as far as possible and no bias as far as possible, recruitment processes, I said earlier about solving problems, reducing risks, but it's also about finding reasons to reduce the candidate pool down to one. And unfortunately something like that, there's a chance that it's going to be a reason why they're going to reduce you out of that candidate pool because they've got to get there somewhere somehow and they might be someone else who's got exactly the same experience and looks just as qualified, but has a more fitting headshot on LinkedIn.

Shelley:

And I guess that's an extreme example and most people don't have that right. But if your LinkedIn presence or your... Like, I would encourage you work on that bio, that bio I jump on. I want to read. I want to know about you and if you've got a solid bio, then that's an instant thing of, "Okay. I feel like I know this person." And by the time I get to the interview, I feel like we're actually like someone... Instead of just being a complete stranger, there's an acquaintance there. You're more familiar and that creates warmth and it creates at a better conversation. And so using all those options and opportunities to increase your connection to that potential interviewer, but also do whatever you want on Instagram, but maybe consider putting it on private.

Emily:

Yeah.

Shelley:

Like, I guess that would be my advice.

Emily:

Yeah. Because to think about, well, this question of how often are we actually Googling, LinkedIn's easy to find, keep it open, be open-minded. But keep it appropriate. Instagram, Facebook, those other, I guess, platforms, I'm absolutely looking for you on those, but I can't

see much if you make it private. So I think it's really important to just... Whether you're in the job hunt or not, make sure that you've sort of cleaned up your online self and what everyone wants to represent as far as their personal brand is different. So again, there could be a context where having yourself drinking wine in your LinkedIn profile is totally appropriate and it actually is really on brand, but just make sure that it makes sense to the outside world and it's really intentional decision making.

Kate:

I think we need to meet a wine salesman now.

Emily:

Yeah.

Kate:

Someone who has that photo for real.

Shelley:

We do. Well, and if you do have it and you are on wine, then amazing. And I would like my brand to be connected to wine in some way in the future.

Emily:

Totally. I know.

Kate:

And to round up today's conversation, I'd love to hear from both of you, what your number one tip for job seekers in this crazy COVID, post COVID world, depending on where you are right now in 2021 and beyond.

Emily:

Oh, I wouldn't be me if I didn't harp on about career self-reliance. And so that advice comes from a place that is 2021 and beyond specific, but if you'd asked me 12 months ago, three years ago, I would've said the same thing. And this idea of career self-reliance is all about you take taking ownership of your own career. We talk on our podcast about things like career security, over job security, which is tied into this really nicely as well. And it has that long term mentality and that patience about it. At the end of the day, the person who cares most about your career is you. So treat it as a long game, treat it as something where you are investing in it daily, it may not pay back immediately. You might get some quick wins and you might get some slower wins, but it's totally worth it if you are setting yourself up for success by only relying on yourself and then leveraging everything else around you as well.

Shelley:

I think for me, Kate, it's about how do you build those relationships with people? How do you build... And I think network is a term that sometimes I'm like... Sometimes I don't know exactly what it means, but I want to build relationships with people that create value for them and value

for me. And so how do we see all of our interactions with people in our jobs, in our current employer as potential opportunities going forward? So, that would be my encouragement to your listeners today.

Kate:

I much prefer the term building relationships because network just... I think, it's been overused by now and it just seems like you're just going out and pestering people.

Shelley:

Yeah, it does. You're right. And it's like I don't know what a network is, but I know what it means to connect with people. And so how do I do that more and create opportunities?

Kate:

Wonderful. Well, listeners have enjoyed the conversation today and have become really interested in any of the particular topics. I know that you have covered pretty much everything we've spoken about in quite a lot of detail per episode on your own podcast. So how can we listeners find you guys?

Emily:

So, yeah, we have a podcast called My Millennial Career. We are launching season four mid-October 2021. So depending on when you're listening to this, that could be coming or it could already be there for you to jump on board, but we have a whole draught of episodes, as you've said, Kate, very kindly. We've just about covered everything, but funnily enough with the world of work, it is actually quite an infinite topic. So we've got plenty of more good content to come. We also have a Facebook group, which, Shelley, you should give a plug to because we like to get pretty active on there and it's a really great place to find us as well.

Shelley:

So if you head to My Millennial Money Facebook group, you can join and we have a lot of career chats in there. Or you can find Em and I on LinkedIn as well.

Emily:

Of course.

Shelley:

Shelley Johnson. Search us. You won't see me at this point with a wine photo, but maybe in the future if I get a career change.

Emily:

You're just going to need to see who's in your network in that industry and really start to plug away those relationships.

Shelley:

I will need to start connecting with those people.

Emily:

I only got yourself to rely on. I'm on LinkedIn as well, Emily Bowen.

Kate:

So if people want a wonderful example of what a LinkedIn profile should look like, both of you are out there for the people to have a look.

Emily:

Totally.

Kate:

Wonderful. Well, thank you both for joining me today on the Australian Finance Podcast.

Emily:

Thank you for having us.

Shelley:

Thanks, Kate.