

# CAREER VIEW

## MANAGEMENT

All organisations from the local sports club to large corporate enterprises have the following in common: they are made up of people, they have a structure and a purpose. They are also all part of a world that is experiencing accelerating technological, social, environmental and cultural change. As a response traditional companies are having to undergo often radical change, and new types of organisations are emerging as entrepreneurs grasp emerging opportunities. They all need people who can lead and manage them through this myriad of challenges.

Management has been defined as the function that coordinates the efforts of people to accomplish goals and objectives by using available resources efficiently and effectively. It is a human activity that involves interpersonal, analytical and technical skills. It is a highly complex set of activities that stretches across all walks of life and contexts. In today's workplace, how you behave and relate to others is just as critically important as financial or technological skills.

Along with needing to be able to lead, influence and inspire people, managers also need to plan, organise and exercise control. This means setting standards, measuring the actual performance of teams and taking corrective action so that work is completed to agreed standards and time frames. What that means is 'doing things right' as well as 'doing the right things' with other people and through other people. The study of management can be seen as both an art and a science. It includes theoretical approaches and areas of focus such as strategy and leadership, organisational growth and development, management of operations, systems thinking and organisational behaviour. It provides an insight into how people behave in organisations, how decisions are made and where innovation comes from.

Strategy and leadership - Strategic management is the set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the longer term performance of an

organisation, based on an analysis of the organisation's environment and resources at its disposal. Leadership is the process of influencing in the organisation to achieve those goals. It is not exclusively the domain of senior managers as it can be argued that almost every role has a leadership dimension to it.



Organisational development - As organisations innovate in response to change, managing people throughout that change is the focus of organisational development. Techniques to improve the nature and quality of interpersonal work relationships include professional learning and development, understanding organisational politics, team building between teams to break down miscommunications, process consultation and survey feedback.

Career View explores how degrees and courses relate to employment opportunities and to life/work planning. It includes graduate destination information and current employment issues. Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed.

Wellington Careers and Employment.  
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Operations management is the design, operation and control of the process that converts the organisation's resources: its people and tools, into goods and services. Within that is supply chain management (all parties involved in producing a product or service) and value chain management (the parties that work together to gain competitive advantage in a market).

Systems thinking includes the systems within the organisation and those of its external environment. These can be depicted as dynamic models that are highly complex and evolving. Having a systems approach helps to anticipate and plan for ambiguity and volatility in the outside world.

Organisational behaviour focuses on the actions and behaviours of people at work and looks at aspects such as motivation, leadership, trust, teamwork and conflict management.

### WHY STUDY MANAGEMENT?

If you are leading or supervising people or processes, then the skills required for management are as crucial as any of the technical or specialist skills specific to your role. Because of the complexities of today's organisations and the systems they are set in, there is increasing recognition of the need for specific management competencies. The key functions, organising, planning, controlling and leading are common to all levels of management, whether a team leader in hospitality or chief executive of a large organisation. There is, however varying emphasis on each depending on the type of role and level in the organisation. As managers move into more complex leadership roles, they tend to do more planning and less direct supervising.

Because the practice of management spans so many aspects of daily life, it can complement most other areas of study. In any industry, understanding organisations, strategy and human behaviour is essential. The study of management theory and practice can lay down the foundational skills and knowledge for managing and leading in workplaces across a wide range of sectors. It can prepare you for future roles and while studying, enhance your performance in part-time

or student summer employment, be it hospitality, retail, administrative support, sales, customer service, help desk support or product development. It also provides a theoretical base for further study such as postgraduate qualifications or certification in specialist/technical areas.

### WHAT SKILLS DO MANAGEMENT STUDENTS DEVELOP?

During their degree studies students develop a range of transferable skills, attitudes and knowledge that are sought by employers.

**Technical skills:** Management graduates can apply a range of analytical tools and models in a logical and systemic way to lead to organisational decisions. Often these are combined with specialist skills from another area of study or work experience in a particular field such as information and communications technology, web development, finance, policy analysis or marketing.

**Critical thinking and conceptual skills:** Learning management theory is not just interesting: it also develops thinking skills, such as the ability to conceptualise and think about abstract situations and apply new constructs, models, theories or frameworks to complex business problems, events or situations.

**Problem-solving and ability to innovate:** Also described as 'intellectual horsepower', this is the ability to think imaginatively, be curious enough to seek out new information and create solutions where others may not have gone before. When working on case studies, students are required to bring a range of different tools and models together to reshape



and devise new strategies for organisations.

**Communication**, both verbal and written is developed through writing reports and assignments, presenting information clearly, succinctly and persuasively to groups or pitching ideas to a critical audience. They could be anyone from a group of peers in a seminar or a panel of judges in a mock Dragon's Den exercise. The need to listen is just as crucial, as any workplace communication must be backed by an understanding of why people in organisations behave the way they do in different contexts.



**Research:** As they progress through their studies, Management students are required to do research for either group or individual assignments and projects, often focussing on real organisational problems and issues. Students develop valuable transferable skills from gathering, understanding and analysing data and applying theoretical models to organisational problems that are often complex and highly ambiguous.

**Interpersonal skills:** The study of management encourages and extends what was once known as 'soft skills' but are now increasingly seen as crucial to all levels of management and described as 'human skills'. Students have the opportunity to practice and reflect on how they work with others in a team in group projects or seminars. From this experience, they sharpen their understanding of and ability to collaborate with other people.

**Leadership:** Management students develop an understanding of the characteristics of a good leader and principles of leadership while having the opportunity to practice leadership in group projects and assignments.

## WHERE DO MANAGEMENT GRADUATES FIND WORK?

Management graduates can be found in almost every sector including banking and finance, business, retail, hospitality, manufacturing, infrastructure, primary industries, information and communication technology, public and education sectors. Their skills can especially add value in organisational development areas such as process improvement, change management and business development.

Sometimes they come into an organisation through entry level, vacation or part-time roles, or through structured graduate management trainee programs. To prepare for that next step into management, it is common for graduate management trainees to rotate around different roles in the organisation, supported by further academic or work-based learning.

Management graduates are also well prepared for **project management**, whether that is part of other roles in an organisation or in a full-time capacity. They can be in support roles such as project co-ordinator or leading a project workstream in areas such as organisational development, change management, knowledge management or IT/web developments. To progress to project leadership roles, they may complete specific on the job training or further qualifications in project management methodology.

**Management consultancies** are most commonly the destination of management graduates with previous work experience, or a conjoint/double degree or postgraduate degree in a complementary specialist subject. However some management consultancies recruit high calibre graduates from any discipline, among which the study of management provides an excellent grounding. Management consultancies, such as Boston Consulting Group, L.E.K. or McKinsey & Company are multinational organisations that offer opportunities overseas for high calibre graduates. Some consultancies offer internships that are an excellent opportunity for management students to put their learning into action.

**Independent consultants** are normally experienced management graduates with postgraduate qualifications who operate as independent business



consultants and work on contract for universities, research organisations, government agencies or private companies.

**Financial services** such as stock brokerages, investment funds, credit unions, banks, credit card, insurance and accountancy companies often recruit graduates into tailored management development or generalist graduate trainee programmes and can also offer summer internship programmes for students from a range of disciplines. A double major with subjects such as Economics, Finance or Accounting can be an advantage, as can experience in front-line customer support roles.

**Retail or customer services.** Many large retail companies have management programmes, and either support relevant study on the job or recruit graduates into sales, support services, business planning, people development, operations and customer care. Some retail or customer service organisations have a franchise model, with roles in franchise support such as organisational design, business planning and training for the more commercially-focussed management graduate with retail or customer service experience. Contact centres to support customers are a growth area which provide opportunities for management graduates to transition from customer support to team leader and management roles.

**Public sector and local government.** Larger organisations such as the Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Ministry for Primary Industries

(MPI), Department of Corrections, Department of Internal Affairs as well as regional and city councils often have structured student internships and/or graduate programmes. Other public sector organisations may also recruit management graduates directly into organisational support functions such as human resources, employee relations, procurement, ICT, website and communications or business development. Some roles require additional qualifications in areas such as law, public policy, information systems, human resources and industrial relations or international business.

**Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)** are not-for-profit groups organised on a local, national or international level that perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions. NGOs can provide excellent opportunities for management students to apply and practice management skills and leadership qualities through volunteering. Volunteer roles can sometimes lead to paid positions, and management graduates are well suited to roles in volunteer co-ordination, fundraising, policy advice and service management.

**Information and communications technology companies.** Management graduates with a double or conjoint degrees in computing or information systems may work as software and web developers, usability designers, software trainers, management consultants or business analysts. Their critical thinking and communication skills can also lead to roles in IT service management, starting out as user support or helpdesk administrators.

The number of **entrepreneurs** is on the increase in areas such as social development, business services, communications and technology, and management graduates are among them. Along with a good deal of their own creativity, drive and hard work, there are a number of grants and programmes available to support new business ventures that show potential.

They often start out as part of a business incubator or in collaboration with other entrepreneur start-up companies. Such graduates will usually hone their skills while they are students, often working on more than one start-up at a time.

**Tertiary Education.** Universities and polytechnics employ lecturers and tutors to teach in their management departments. Teaching at university level usually requires a PhD. Graduates can advance their research and teaching skills by undertaking a Master's degree or PhD and may have the opportunity to tutor undergraduate students. Many students also go overseas to study. Other roles in tertiary institutions include academic advisors, career consultants, trainers or HR administrators.



## GRADUATE PROFILES



### PROFESSIONAL BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Professional bodies and associations can provide both valuable learning and networking opportunities.

- Institute of Management New Zealand (IMNZ) provide professional membership, learning and development frameworks and networking opportunities to support current and emerging leaders.
- New Zealand Chambers of Commerce provide training, advice, information and support for business in four regions around the country.
- Project Management Institute New Zealand (PMINZ) is the professional membership association for the project, program and portfolio management profession.
- The Institute of Public Administration New Zealand (IPANZ) promotes improvements in public policy and in administration and management across New Zealand's public sector.
- The Human Resources Institute of New Zealand (HRINZ) is the professional association for HRM practitioners.

### JOB TITLES

The following is a sample of job titles taken from our graduate destination surveys. Some roles may require postgraduate qualifications and training.

Administration manager • administrator • analyst  
 • assistant advisor • business analyst • business consultant • business development adviser • business manager • customer services representative • duty manager • employee relations adviser • human resources adviser • lecturer • management trainee • management consultant • manager; retail, strategy, planning • organisational development adviser • performance adviser • programme co-ordinator • project co-ordinator • project manager • researcher • team leader • training and development adviser • tutor.

#### Blair Wilson

Store Manager  
Mitre 10 MEGA



When I was at school I decided that I wanted to be a commercial lawyer. Television portrayed lawyers leading a glamorous lifestyle and rolling in money... the reality is probably very different. I started down this path by enrolling in a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Management, and a Bachelor of Laws. Very quickly I discovered that law wasn't for me but I really enjoyed studying management.

I knew that when I left university I would need some practical experience in management to stand out from the masses to have any chance of getting an exciting job. I had heard when younger through a few people that McDonald's had one of the best management training programs in the world so I thought this would be an excellent way to complement the theory in my degree.

The skills and knowledge I learned in my Management major at Victoria University of Wellington transfer very practically into the real world of management and leading teams. For example, the communication course where we were taught about senders, messages, barriers, receivers and feedback allowed me to understand what was going wrong when I wasn't getting the results I wanted – especially in a noisy, hectic environment like McDonald's. The combination of studying management at Victoria and having somewhere to practice and test all of the theory I was learning allowed the knowledge to become 'real' and for me to see the effects of decisions through different critical lenses.

This foundation of management knowledge and skills allowed me to work my way up to running five McDonald's stores and then transition into retail. I'm now running the second busiest Mitre 10 MEGA in the country while studying towards a MBA. Not only am I enjoying this, the practicality of everything we're studying relates to the day-to-day activities of running a business.

To anyone who is considering studying management I would highly recommend giving it a go. It's a very fulfilling career path and nothing beats seeing your team achieve something they didn't think they could. I would also recommend complementing your studies with some practical experience as it will help you to stand out from the crowd.

## Michelle Young

Team Administrator (Policy)  
New Zealand Permanent Mission  
to the United Nations

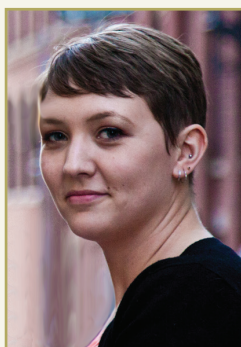
I always knew I wanted to study commerce and as I progressed through my science and commerce degrees, I chose management over cell biology. Applying management theory and models in the real world has been exciting, interesting and challenging as it's all about people, and people can be unpredictable.

When I finished my Honours year I was fortunate to be recruited as a business analyst with the local team of a multinational management consulting firm. I drew on what I learned from change management and operations research studies to help build a resource/profit model for a large government client, including workflow process improvements.

I was keen to travel and I saw a role at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) as a team administrator. Within a few months I had taken up a three-month secondment to support the Ministry to deliver its operational portfolio, programmes and projects. This involved mapping all the business processes, recommending improvements, then managing change. I found my studies really helped again here, in connecting day-to-day operations with strategy and anticipating how people could respond to having to change behaviours and processes.

Right now I am Team Administrator for the New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York. I co-ordinate visits for VIPs, including itinerary and security details, so it's all about project management and event planning. When New Zealand's presidency month of the Security Council comes around or there is a visiting delegation, it is really pressured and there are high levels of responsibility.

Looking back, I can see that there are so many ways to branch out. Management consulting without the insight gained from work experience can be a stretch. I found I had to be disciplined and driven but discovered the importance of pacing myself and stay mindful of work-life balance, and asking for help when I needed it. One thing that I have learned is that you can have all the technical skill in the world but it comes down to how you interact with other people. The key is to influence and earn trust in order to collaborate to get things done.



## Elizabeth Beall

Consultant to the International  
Fund for Agricultural Development  
and Advisor on Sustainability for  
Global Counsel, UK

My journey to deciding on a degree in Management was a circuitous one, starting from a career in environmental advocacy for an NGO, followed by structuring technical assistance on climate change for the Inter-American Development Bank. As I progressed working on topics such as deforestation, climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture and unable to pick just one area of focus for the long-term, studying Management meant that I was building skills and expertise in how to think about and approach a wide variety of topics.

During my studies and the preparation of my thesis, which focused on Māori management strategies in the context of climate change, I enjoyed the combination of classroom learning about management theory on strategy and systems thinking, with the ability to engage with real-world companies making day-to-day decisions.

My Master's thesis provided me with skills in quantitative and qualitative research methods, an understanding of business ethics and strategy development, and an ability to approach problems using integrated systems thinking. As a result of focusing my thesis with Māori, I also developed skills in cross-cultural and participatory research methods, and learned a lot in terms of management styles, techniques, and engagement with people.

After leaving Wellington, I took a role with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization as a consultant providing research, analysis, and project management on topics ranging from bioenergy, food security, responsible investment, climate smart agriculture and youth engagement. In my role with the UN I have worked with governments, private sector, civil society organisations, and local communities. My experience at Victoria prepared me to work with a diverse, and often contentious, range of views in order to develop collaborative and holistic strategies for sustainable development.

A degree in Management can provide you with the necessary skills and theoretical building blocks for any topic you choose. Trained managers who are able to navigate across sectors and break down silos are needed to solve the increasingly interlinked challenges before us.





## Darren Lee

Senior Consultant  
Assurity Consulting



I'd always thought to myself that it would be great to complete an MBA degree as a personal challenge. I kick-started my career in the Information Technology (IT) sector as a software test analyst through Assurity Consulting's graduate training programme. Three years in, with a number of IT projects under my belt, I was given the opportunity to lead an internal team of test analysts. This gave me an insight into leadership, management, and coaching of a team.

What I appreciated most from my MBA studies was the people. In particular, the lecturers and guest speakers with international and consulting experience. But most of all, the networks created and the friendships forged through debates and discussions. Having a pragmatic and practical approach, I enjoyed the professional development aspects of the MBA. This included a Dragon's Den exercise, a not-for-profit consulting project, the international study tour, and consulting for local Wellington businesses. The business research project allowed me to explore and apply what I have learned from my area of interest: innovation in professional services firms.

Juggling the MBA and work has helped raise my profile, which is important in the early years of a career. My employers and clients have the confidence to engage me in more consulting work beyond software testing. My practical IT experience combined with knowledge of the commercial world, means I understand the client's context and can add more value.

I have the self-confidence and the strength to back myself and my capabilities. I further developed my time management, consulting and presentation skills, as well as the ability to process and prioritise information a lot faster. I can collaborate with people with diverse backgrounds, skills and expertise. But most importantly, I now have a greater appreciation of downtime and the need to spend time with the people most important to me.

The key is to shift your mind set from the transactional to the relational. Just putting in the hours to get the results you want from your studies will not be sustainable. I learned to shift my focus to prioritising my wellbeing and enjoying the MBA experience: being present and mindful of each discussion, experience, and lesson learnt. It's a hard slog, but well worth it.

## Rebecca Bednarek

Lecturer in Management  
Birkbeck University of London



I was one of those students who chose courses based on my general interests rather than with a specific job in mind. I pursued Political Science and International Relations majors in an Arts degree and was drawn to the Management side of commerce.

Management was a great choice: management courses do not necessarily teach you how to be a manager, but do something much more important. They teach you to think: to work through complex problems. I loved using the new ideas and theories I was learning about to understand real-world dynamics better. I had lots of chances to apply theories to address tangible social and business issues both individually and with my fellow students.

As I did well academically, I became even more curious about asking and investigating my own questions, so postgraduate study seemed like a natural next step. I had already enjoyed tutoring with the School of Management and it was a supportive and stimulating environment within which to continue my own research. I had a lot of fun investigating the strategies New Zealand science organisations use to navigate a plethora of competing demands (for instance, commercial and social objectives) from different stakeholders. I benefited hugely from the wealth of insight of my superb supervisors in the School of Management.

A week after completing my PhD thesis and armed with everything I'd learnt at Wellington, I jumped on a plane to the UK for a research fellowship with a Professor in Strategy at Aston Business School. This time I got to study the risk-trading practices in the reinsurance market as they unfolded in real-time. My current role as Lecturer in Management at Birkbeck, University of London is a combination of research and teaching. I remember all I learnt and the help I got from my lecturers at Victoria and now have the opportunity to create fulfilling experiences for my own students.

It's been a long journey but it's been worth it. I'd really recommend a Management degree; it's such a versatile foundation to head out in the world with. And who knows, you might enjoy it so much that you stick around and do a postgraduate degree.