

Networking Really Pays Off

An employee's perspective - Meisam Ziaei,
Senior Draftsman/Project Manager, Concretec NZ Ltd

'Give it a go! Get out there and build any networks you can. It really does pay off.'

This is Meisam Ziaei's message to new migrants seeking employment in New Zealand.

Meisam Ziaei is an architect. In 2014 he migrated to New Zealand with his wife who is currently undertaking a PhD in Psychology at Auckland University. Meisam registered as a client on www.newkiwis.co.nz in late October of 2014.

Job offers don't always happen immediately so while Meisam was actively job searching he volunteered his services with a local architecture firm in Auckland who were happy to work with him while he was searching for a fulltime position.

'A friend told me to register on the New Kiwis website and I took part in a workshop at the end of last year. The tutor was very helpful. I learnt how to network, call people and send out a CV that is suited to New Zealand employers.

'By working as a volunteer with the architecture practice, I also gained valuable Kiwi experience to refer to when I was applying for fulltime positions and this definitely overcame that first major barrier to entry which is always – what local experience have you got?'

Learning to network with different people is what helped me to get the voluntary position. I had started calling businesses that I thought might be potential employers and I was following up by sending my CV.'

'I knew that it was important to make myself important to them, so I always asked to speak with the head of the company and this got me a job more quickly.'

'It is a really good idea to build your networks as soon as you can,' advises Meisam. 'By working with a firm in the area I was interested in, I was able to meet potential future employers and I was comfortable talking about my skills and background.'

Recently he was offered a position at Concretec NZ Limited based in Mangere. 'It is a very good job for me,' says Meisam. 'I am using all my experience to date and it has definitely helped to have had work experience in New Zealand before I started. This is a good start for my future.'

'First I called Concretec NZ to ask for more information about their company. Then I wrote my cover letter and sent my CV to their director. I have found that speaking to someone in charge really speeds up the decision making. Next I telephoned to follow up and was able to talk by phone with the director I'd sent my CV to. As we discussed my background, he was impressed with my experience and suggested I come in for a meeting. In the first meeting we discussed my past positions and then we set up a second meeting for me to meet the other directors,' explains Meisam.

Meisam also highly recommends using LinkedIn where employers and candidates maintain their profiles and search for contacts or future employees.

Interview with Meisam Ziaei conducted by Taryn Ellis, Auckland Chamber of Commerce, in August 2015.



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The New Kiwis website and service is a nationwide employment initiative designed to connect new and returning Kiwis with employers via the Chamber of Commerce brand and networks. The website can be used autonomously or additional support and services for both job seekers and employers can be accessed by calling **0800 709 907** or email newkiwis@chamber.co.nz.

New Kiwis initiative is a partnership between Immigration New Zealand and the Auckland Chamber of Commerce.