



Christchurch

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State of the nation

Welcome to the August edition of the Catalyst newsletter. The country remains on a high after the London Olympics with New Zealand equalling its most successful medal haul at any Olympics with 13 medals (6 gold, 2 silver and 5 bronze). Of course as a POM I was also enjoying the success of the British team and singing along to all of the tunes at the closing ceremony, much to my wife's dismay!

New Zealand still remains in the grip of winter but there are indications that spring's arrival is not far away with temperatures between 17 and 19 degrees over the past few weekends. Of course with the improving weather comes the start of the civil season (October) and hopefully an increase of activity throughout the country. Christchurch remains the focus and on a trip down there last Wednesday (22nd) the mood was optimistic. There is a degree of frustration resulting from the stop start nature of work, but there is also a recognition that by the end of 2012 and the start 2013 there should be a significant lift in activity. Therefore, most civil contractors are planning further recruitment but because they have seen a number of false starts, they will not push the button until the work is actually there – then it will be all on! However, there are some positions starting to appear so keep your eyes on the Catalyst Job Board for when they do.

The consultant engineers remain in a similar position as last month with much of their workload distributed throughout the rest of the country. However the need remains for structural engineers with seismic experience, geotechnical engineers and senior water engineers. Completion of the city blueprint is also likely to have an impact in this sector and so it's only a matter of time before a new raft of work comes into play and further recruitment takes place.

The rest of the country remains quiet for both contractors and consultant engineers but most clients are optimistic about an increase in activity. Certainly throughout the country a number of maintenance contracts are up for renewal and once awarded companies will need to increase their capability.

As always we encourage you to keep in touch with us – especially regarding any changes to your plans so we can assist in any way. We have put together a comprehensive list of our team and the sectors they cover so you can build a relationship with the most appropriate consultant (see below).

As usual – we have regular updates on the blog that keep you informed of the happenings throughout our industry, www.catalystrecruit.wordpress.com. If you follow this link – you can click the 'follow' button down in the right hand corner and you will be sent regular updates in your email rather than having to visit the blog every day. Our Linked-In groups are also busy with numerous discussions focussed on the move to New Zealand and everything connected to that move. If you haven't joined already follow the link, www.linkedin.com, and search on our two groups, Christchurch Rebuild Jobs and Information and Construction & Civil Engineers moving to New Zealand (or ask your Catalyst Consultant for an invite).



The Christchurch rebuild

On 30th July the CCDU (Christchurch Central Development Unit) released the blueprint for the new Christchurch CBD. Smaller, more compact and framed by Green Space – the blueprint has been greeted with international acclaim.

The Press (The South Island's daily newspaper) published a series of articles explaining the key components of the blueprint. We have put these together into a simple booklet. Click on the link to open an email addressed to Andy and

requesting the link to the document. Once you send that email – my computer will reply with link (assuming my computer doesn't fail me). If there are any issues – the email will be sent in my am.



Overall

- Smaller CBD
- Rich heritage of Avon honoured
- Major land purchase needed to make blueprint a reality

Project

- New \$600 Million Hospital
- Convention centre
- Sports stadium
- Metro sports facility
- Cathedral square - heart of the city
- Performing arts and music hub
- New location for courts of justice
- Exchange pavillion for busses
- What next for the CCDU?



Preparing your CV for the New Zealand market

Make your CV work for you! It is likely that your CV is the first contact you will make with a company (employer or recruiter), so the time and effort you spend on your CV now is one of the most important steps in securing the position you want in NZ.

We read hundreds of CVs every week, and it is those candidates who have taken the time to work on their CV to include as much relevant information as possible who stand out and therefore have an increased chance of getting work. Writing 2 or 3 lines for a position you have held for the past 5 years, for example, is simply not enough.

There is a general consensus globally that CVs should be 2 pages or less. In New Zealand, a 5-7 page CV is not out of the ordinary, it is expected. Any recruiter, with candidate and client care in mind, will advise you to re-write or add to your current CV to emphasise your skills and experience. If there is a particular position you are applying for, you may be asked to tailor your CV specifically for that position to focus on the knowledge and experience which you can bring to the role. Potential New Zealand employers are not likely to know the companies you have worked for, or projects that you have worked on, therefore you will need to provide more information than you would in your current location.

There should be the following main sections on your CV:

- Name and contact details
- Profile/Summary: your chance to sell your experience in a paragraph or two. Describe the position you are looking for and your preferred location. A bullet point list of achievements is also acceptable here.
- Education/Qualifications/Training: include all relevant academic, industry training and vocational courses with dates and institute or company name. Professional memberships can also be listed here.
- Skills list: the knowledge and skills you have gained over the years, your strengths and abilities. A bullet point list of achievements is also acceptable here.
- Work History: must be in reverse chronological order (most recent first) and will ideally be laid out like this:
Dates
Company name, location

Job title

- Brief Company summary & website link
- Project name, Value and Location (photos of major projects can be useful if not too large)
- Day to day responsibilities
- Customers/stakeholders
- Reporting lines
- Delivery targets
- Problems and/or issues you've faced and overcome
- Achievements

• Interests

Golden CV rules:

- Use only one font and one colour: preferably Arial or Times New Roman size 10-12. You can use different font sizes, bold and underlining for your name and section headings. Do not use italics. Do not use highlighting or Comic Sans.
- Run spelling and grammar checks.
- Include as much relevant experience as you can for positions held within the past ten years. If you have more than ten years experience, it is useful to provide a summary of your work history prior to that. You might not think particular experiences are relevant, but potential employers might do.
- If you have boxes or dividing lines on your CV, remove them. They are unnecessary.
- Do not lie about anything on your CV, about any aspect of your experience or background. It is likely you will be caught out.
- You can include a photograph if you like, but please ensure you are well presented in business attire.

If you have already registered your CV with us and feel that an updated CV is in order after having read this article, feel free to submit one for review.

If you have any questions regards this, please do not hesitate to contact us.



“I would not be anywhere else right now. Professionally it is the best thing I could have done. Personally it is exciting but not easy.... don't miss out on this amazing country. There is so much to see and do.”

Dan Ashfield

Case study of moving to NZ

Current Employer: Tonkin & Taylor

Dan arrived in New Zealand on a working holiday visa and made contact with Catalyst as he was interested in obtaining a short term work contract in Christchurch for the duration of his initial stay in New Zealand. Not an easy feat in a country where contracting is not a usual form of employment within the engineering sector! Nevertheless Catalyst quickly arranged several interviews and within a week Dan obtained and accepted a temporary 4 month contract with Tonkin & Taylor. Dan has enjoyed both his time with Tonkin & Taylor and Christchurch so much that he has decided to put on hold his plans for further travel and has accepted a continuation of his contract with Tonkin & Taylor.

What inspired you to consider moving to New Zealand?

I did not actually plan to stay this time around. Friends who had travelled and worked here told me what a wonderfully wild and friendly place NZ was. It looked like an exciting place to indulge in my outdoor hobbies. With professional progression stunted by the economic troubles in Europe I had already decided to look for work further afield and rumours of opportunity in NZ were rife amongst my UK colleagues, so when I received an invitation to a wedding in the Catlins it just seemed like the right time to take the plunge, sell up and head to NZ. I had planned to do a few months contract work in NZ for experience of the country before going travelling and thinking through my next move, but it is all going so well here with the company I work for in Christchurch that I intend to stay now and work for some time to come.

Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

That's a hard one to answer. I came to NZ as a traveller looking to experience working here for a possible return in the future if I liked it. Working long term in Christchurch is quite a departure from any of my original holiday plans. I had expected to find contract work a quite normal practice but it is relatively uncommon. Based on information from friends who travelled here years before, I thought the cost of living would be lower than the UK but in hindsight I think it balances out. Overall it is the exciting work available here, the landscape and the availability and variety of outdoor activities that will not disappoint regardless of prior expectation.

How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

Life has changed beyond recognition and I suppose that is what I was aiming for, however things have changed in an unpredicted way. My working life is fantastic. I really like the company I work for and every day I feel I am learning and developing professionally. The projects I am involved with are challenging, exciting and very different from anything I have previously been involved with. Privately I am spoilt for choice in terms of outdoors things to do and I find I am trying many new sports. My social life is a different story as I have found making friends in Christchurch not easy, you really have to work at it. It's a mixture of the tight knit feel to the city which is hard to break into and the lack of a city centre due to earthquake damage. It is a strange place to be right now and you have to be proactive to meet anyone.

What one thing would you have done differently?

If I had planned on coming to New Zealand specifically to work I would have preferred to have interviewed with potential employers prior to my move. Many of the people I met during interviews were friendly and helpful but also honest about what it's like to live and work here and that kind of information would have been useful before my arrival. Also I would have paid for more baggage on the flight over. Clothing and particularly sporting gear is expensive in NZ.

What one thing do you wish you had known about before moving?

How good it is here – I'd have moved years ago! But also I wish I had known what it's like in Christchurch at the moment and how best to go about meeting people, settling and making friends.

What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

It's not as easy living here in Christchurch as it may first seem and if you are not very outgoing and keen on the great outdoors then it's probably not for you in the longer term. Some people are unable to deal with the small but on-going earthquakes so be sure you can accept these as part of daily life before boarding the plane. Be flexible with your location and meet with as many potential employers as you can to really get some idea of who you want to work for. They are all a bit different. Finally don't miss out on this amazing country. There is so much to see and do.

Looking back with hindsight, do think you have made the right move for you?

I would not be anywhere else right now. Professionally it is the best thing I could have done. Personally it is exciting but not easy.

Useful facts

1st interview to offer	13 days
Offer to arrival	0 days
Time since arrival	134 days



Fear remains of working in the city

A Christchurch law firm has adopted an open-wall policy to reassure staff and clients of the safety of its new central-city office.

Malley & Co Lawyers this month moved from temporary premises in Riccarton to a multi-storey office in Colombo St.

It has helped ease concerns by showing the building's extensive strengthening work through an open boardroom wall.

The 115-year-old firm occupied the 10th floor of the now-demolished Grant Thornton building in Cathedral Square until the February 2011 earthquake.

Partner and acting general manager John Shingleton said being at eye level with the cathedral tower as it

collapsed was an experience staff would not forget, and it created fears about a central-city return.

The new building's ground-floor tenant, ASB Bank, had also exposed the steel reinforcing.

"The wall has been left open and a section of the reinforcement of the superstructure is exposed, allowing everyone to understand the engineering behind the safety work the building has undergone," Shingleton said.

The brightly painted design was "quite arty".

"It was to show how the building has been structured, but also we thought, 'Why not make it like a piece of art?' It's



turned out better than we thought actually."

The decision to return to the central city was not made lightly.

"You got used to being in the suburbs and it was like the 'new normal', which was the word being bandied around," he said.

"It's been a process of gradually talking about it and staff saying, 'Hey, we'd rather we were all back together again'."

Other building owners and tenants should consider a similar approach, Shingleton said.

"We can't pretend that this wasn't traumatic,

and we can sit down and look at plans and percentages of the [building] code, but the reality is for businesses to come back to the city you need employees who are happy to go and clients and customers who feel secure enough that they'll come into the building," he said.

"You can do all the advertising to say it's safe, but there's nothing better than seeing it with your own eyes."

Source:

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The Press

Marc Greenhill marc.greenhill@press.co.nz

The Catalyst Team



Andy Hopkins

ahopkins@catalystjobs.co.nz



Phil Ponder

pponder@catalystjobs.co.nz



Mireille Verdonkschot

mverdon@catalystjobs.co.nz



Fran Stevenson

f Stevenson@catalystjobs.co.nz



Sam Phillips

sphillips@catalystjobs.co.nz

Address:

20B Landscape Road
Mt Eden
Auckland 1024
New Zealand

Phone:

+64 9 307 6111

UK freephone:

0808 234 3587

Fax:

+64 9 307 6110

Website:

www.catalystjobs.co.nz

Who works in your sector?

Here at Catalyst we want to make sure that you only have to deal with one person within our organisation (leaving the running around to us). To do this – we have specialists who work with clients in particular sectors. Therefore for you to ensure that you gain the best value from your association with Catalyst – you need to identify the most appropriate consultant. To help you – we have categorised our desk coverage below. (The notable exception being Buildings/Construction that Fran and Sam cover together).

Construction and Contractors

Phil Ponder
All Civil Contracting roles

Fran Stevenson
Buildings/Construction

Sam Phillips
Buildings/Construction & M&E

Engineering Consultants

Andy Hopkins
All other disciplines not covered below

Mireille Verdonkschot
Structural and Geosciences

Sam Phillips
M&E

