



# DEVELOP YOUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

and your networks

When you apply for jobs with New Zealand employers, they will expect you to have good English language skills. Great English language skills will give you a competitive edge when looking for work.

The best way to develop your skills is to find opportunities to interact with other people. Engage in a broad range of activities with people from outside of your own language group, and talk to them in English. This will give you a greater understanding of New Zealand culture, and you will get better at communicating in English.

## **Here are some ways you could do this.**

- ▶ Take short courses and workshops offered by your education provider (or other groups in your network) to improve your pronunciation and writing skills.
- ▶ Practice conversational English daily at home and out with your friends.
- ▶ Expand your network. Join and participate in clubs and societies, and watch your confidence in social settings grow.
- ▶ Work with a diverse range of people through a part time job, or on your next group assignment. Practise working with others in English is highly valuable, and you'll also get to meet new people and develop a range of transferable skills.
- ▶ Join and participate in networking groups such as your local business 'After 5' meetings.

- ▼ You can find out about local business meetings in your area here:
  - ▼ Manawatu - [www.ceda.nz](http://www.ceda.nz)
  - ▼ Taranaki - [www.venture.taranaki.info](http://www.venture.taranaki.info)
  - ▼ Whanganui - [www.whanganuiandpartners.nz](http://www.whanganuiandpartners.nz)
- ▼ If you want more formal training, consider joining a public speaking group such as Toastmasters.

There are also some other ways to practice your English listening, speaking and writing.

- ▼ Immerse yourself in English media. Read the local English newspapers or news websites, listen to the radio, podcasts or audiobooks, watch films and TV.
- ▼ Get to know some local slang. Familiarise yourself with cultural norms. Ask your English speaking contacts about words you don't understand when you hear them.
- ▼ Observe as other students communicate with their lecturers/teachers. What do they do?

All these things will enable you to gain confidence and help you feel comfortable communicating with all types of people from different contexts. That confidence and skill will clearly show to prospective employers during job interviews!

## Practise your listening with podcasts

Podcasts are recordings of people speaking. You can use them to practise your English listening skills. If you choose podcasts with kiwis speaking, you can also get practice at listening to the New Zealand accent. You can listen to podcasts on your computer or on your mobile phone.

If you are using your phone, you will need to use an app that plays podcasts. iPhones have the Apple podcasts App. For android phones search the Play store for 'Podcast app' - common apps people use to listen to podcasts include Spotify, Audible, and many others.

Once you have got an App on your phone, try searching for 'New Zealand podcast' to see what you can find.

## New Zealand podcast providers to try

### Radio New Zealand

Radio New Zealand are a radio broadcaster funded by the New Zealand Government.

You can find a range of news and podcasts they provide by:

- ▼ going to the podcast section of the RNZ website: [www.rnz.co.nz/series](http://www.rnz.co.nz/series)
- ▼ using the search function of your podcast App – enter the letters RNZ

Radio New Zealand have also made a short video to help you learn how to listen to their podcasts: <https://youtu.be/AFKmuTCNxeo>

### Podcasts New Zealand

This website includes New Zealand produced podcasts on a range of different topics – from food to news to parenting: [www.podcasts.nz](http://www.podcasts.nz)

New Zealand Business Podcasts is a subpage on [podcasts.co.nz](http://podcasts.co.nz) that focusses on podcasts about business issues: [www.nzbusinesspodcast.com](http://www.nzbusinesspodcast.com)

## Networking options

Here are some networking options for people based in Manawatu, Whanganui and Taranaki. These might be groups set up to support migrants and international students, business networks or volunteering opportunities.

### **In Manawatu you can find out more about local groups and organisations here:**

- ▼ Welcoming Communities in Palmerston North work with the migrant community and international students [www.pncc.govt.nz/council-city/what-were-doing/ongoing-projects-and-programmes/welcoming-communities/](http://www.pncc.govt.nz/council-city/what-were-doing/ongoing-projects-and-programmes/welcoming-communities/)
- ▼ ‘Student Connect’ events are run throughout the year, co-ordinated by CEDA, PNCC, tertiaries and secondary schools. Follow @StudentCityPN on Instagram to keep up to date.
- ▼ Global Ambassadors [www.pncc.govt.nz/council-city/about-council/international-relations/global-ambassadors/](http://www.pncc.govt.nz/council-city/about-council/international-relations/global-ambassadors/)
- ▼ Manawatu Chamber of Commerce and the Young Chamber are great networks to be a part of, where you can join into Business After 5 events and meet local businesspeople. Find out more about which group suits you best [www.manawatu-chamber.co.nz/young-chamber](http://www.manawatu-chamber.co.nz/young-chamber)

### **In Taranaki, you can find out more about local groups and organisations here:**

- ▼ [www.newplymouthnz.com/Council/Community-Partnerships/Taranaki-GROUPS-Directory](http://www.newplymouthnz.com/Council/Community-Partnerships/Taranaki-GROUPS-Directory)
- ▼ [www.southtaraki.com/our-community/community-groups-and-organisations](http://www.southtaraki.com/our-community/community-groups-and-organisations)
- ▼ [www.sporttaraki.org.nz/support-and-development/regional-sport-organisations/](http://www.sporttaraki.org.nz/support-and-development/regional-sport-organisations/)
- ▼ Taranaki Young Professionals [www.typ.co.nz](http://www.typ.co.nz)

### **In Whanganui, you can find out more about local groups and organisations here:**

- ▼ [www.organisations.communityhouse.org.nz](http://www.organisations.communityhouse.org.nz)
- ▼ [www.sportwhanganui.co.nz](http://www.sportwhanganui.co.nz)
- ▼ [www.whanganui.govt.nz/About-Whanganui/A-Whanganui-Welcome](http://www.whanganui.govt.nz/About-Whanganui/A-Whanganui-Welcome)
- ▼ Community news and events [www.whanganui.govt.nz/Your-Council/News-Notices-Events/Community-Link](http://www.whanganui.govt.nz/Your-Council/News-Notices-Events/Community-Link)
- ▼ Whanganui Chamber of Commerce [www.whanganuichamber.net.nz](http://www.whanganuichamber.net.nz)