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How can you effectively use social media for your job search to stand out from the crowd? Lindsay Scott has a few tips on the best ways to attack Web2.0 in project management hiring?

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Arras People to Exhibit at BPUG Congress



Arras People are among a select few exhibitors on display 9-10 February at the third annual International Congress for Project, Programme and Risk

Greetings!

Social media, Web 2.0 and PM 2.0 tools are not as daunting as you might think. Quite the contrary: In many ways these new entities of communication could become a project manager's best friend. That's why we intend to scale through the scope of work-related social media in the first Project Management Tipoffs edition of the Teens.

We at Arras People have consulted with some key figures in both project management and social media. Our lead story delves into five essential tips for the modernised job hunter. The Project Shrink, aka Bas de Baar, gives his take on social media for the project manager, then answers some of our questions in a one-on-one interview that can shed light on how project managers should effectively utilise these tools.

We still need your help this month in determining the project management climate in 2010. We invite you to take part in the leading survey among Project Management personnel nationwide - the 2010 Project Management Benchmark Survey. Guest book reviewer John Greenwood provides an insightful, expert look at *Practical Schedule Risk Analysis*. Capping it all off is our Q&A session, in which one military veteran elicits our views on how servicemen and women can transfer their wealth of project experience into a successful career of managing projects.

Career Development: Social Media and the Five Tools for the Professional Job Hunter

"You need to stand out from the crowd if you're going to find your ideal job". How many times have you heard this over the last few months? The real question job seekers must be asking themselves now is, "OK, so how do I do this?"



CVs and cover letters have now received a welcome boost from the switched-on job hunter; the use of "social media" tools can help bring alive the skills, experience and personality of an individual. In other words, these tools, when used effectively, can allow them to stand out from the crowd.

For each job hunter there should be five tools in your job seekers bag: a well-developed CV, an individual cover note, a professional profile, an open social media account and a place to share your thoughts. Using these five tools will not only enable you to connect with others in the right circles but also allow future employers to see what you really have to offer.

Let's look at the five tools in turn;

- A **well-developed CV** is one which has received attention and has been fine-tuned. Once you are happy with your CV it becomes much easier to make those minor adjustments that are a must as you apply for an individual role. Job seekers that don't invest this small amount of time when they apply for a new position will definitely see a drop in their application-to-interview ratio. Job seekers must make sure the required depth of information is there on the CV and that it reflects the essential criteria on the role specification. Sound like common sense? Yes it is, but still the crowd doesn't do it.

- Read more on "[Applications and What They Tell Us About You](#)".

Management, A Best Practice User Group Event.

The networking event, to be held at [Royal Lancaster](#), London, aims at senior staff from a variety of backgrounds including project & programme management in both the public and private sectors. This year's Congress will include present-day case studies, focused workshops on relevant work issues, keynote sessions from acclaimed practitioners and core topics that all project, programme and risk management professionals are facing in the Teens.

Fees for the two-day event are £550 (or £650 for non-BPUG members) or £250 (£300) for just one day.

Go to the [BPUG website](#) for more information about the conference and registering.

Quick Links...

[The Arras People Website](#)
[Job Vacancies](#)
[Careers Advice](#)
[Careers Clinics](#)
[Arras Profile](#)

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Social Media Roundup

Blogs / Articles

- [Honey Bucket and the Power of Effective Naming - Strategic PPM](#)
- [100 Personal Branding Tactics Using Social Media - Chris Brogan](#)
- [53 per cent of Employers Use Social Networking Sites to Research Job Candidates - CareerBuilder](#) (via

- An **individual cover note** to accompany the well-developed CV is a professional approach to applying for a position. Just because the application is being made online, on email, or through a job board, the business etiquette remains. Once you're ready to apply, don't hit the send button straightaway. Sit back, read it and imagine you are the recipient; would you be standing out for all the wrong reasons?

- Read more on "[To cover note or not to cover note](#)".

- A **professional profile** is a great accompaniment to a strong CV and cover note application. At the moment, LinkedIn seems to be the strongest online professional community in the UK and you should become part of it. You can inform your job hunting audience that you are a member by including links in your CV and as part of your email signature. The online profile is so much more flexible in allowing you to share details about your career with interested parties. Create a profile which allows a certain amount of detail to be shared without someone having to link to you to view it. You can share details about your career history and use a completely different language to that of your CV; convey your experiences much more naturally, share a profile picture, add PowerPoint slides, show which professional groups interest you, etc.

- Read more on "[Using Social Networking Sites to Find a Job](#)".

- Using an **open social media account** is taking the professional profile to the next level by expanding your reach into other's circles. An open social media account is one which is open to public readership without people having to ask your permission to read it. Creating accounts* on Twitter or Facebook are great for instantaneous communication and connections. You can share your IDs on CVs and email signature and invite others to reach you directly. The interesting thing about this relatively new way of making connections with people is that you never know where the benefits may come from. Sure, new jobs are posted everyday via Twitter, employees of organisations provide shout outs of new vacancies within their own companies and you meet people with similar backgrounds and experiences to yourself so you're automatically networking without even knowing it. Twitter is a great way to share your experiences, thoughts on skills, your sector knowledge and your project management competency. In the job hunting process, this allows prospective employers to find out more about you and this shouldn't be seen as a negative step. The horror stories of social media being used by companies as a vetting tool in the hiring process are only horror stories if you allow too much of your life to appear online. Keep it professional and respectful and make the tools work for you, not against you.

- Click the link for more information on the "[Thriving project management community on Twitter](#)".

**Consider creating a professional account if you already have personal accounts where you're connected to friends and family*

- A **place to share your thoughts** takes things like LinkedIn and Twitter to the next level by utilising free tools like blogs or websites. More and more project managers are sharing their approach to work, the skills they have acquired, stories about projects and even thoughts on leadership. Blogs are the easiest to start up and you can be online within minutes. Blogs are about having a little fun too, so don't worry about a lack of journalistic skills. Blogs are about sharing your thoughts in a more informal setting as well as having the opportunity to market your abilities to readers. A well-maintained blog (at least one post a month) can then be used in conjunction with your professional profile and your social media accounts. For more information on Project Management blogs, see the "[Top 25 Project Management Blogs](#)".

- Where to start with a blog;

<http://www.blogger.com/>
<http://wordpress.org/>

RealWire)

- [Audience characteristics and social media use - B to B Online](#)
- [Make it Easy for Recruiters to Find You - Guardian](#)

From Arras People/How to Manage a Camel

- [Applications and What They Tell Us About You](#)
- [To Cover Note or Not to Cover Note](#)
- [Using Social Networking Sites to Find a Job](#)
- [Thriving Project Management Community of Twitter](#)
- [Top 25 Project Management Blogs](#)

Websites

- [pposig](#)
- [Project Offices](#)

Places to Create a Blog

- [Blogger](#)
- [WordPress](#)

Podcasts & Vodcasts

- [Project Shrink](#)
- [The PM Podcast](#)
- [PM411](#)
- [PMThink!](#)
- [PMO Podcasts - BOT International](#)

Arras on Twitter

- [projectmgmt](#)
- [PM_StrayDogg](#)
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Latest News from Arras People



Arras' Survey Still Needs Your Input!

» Take Part Today

The UK's Largest Project Management Benchmark & Salary Survey Report

[Take the Survey](#)

It has often been said, and said a lot by me, that finding a new position is like a marketing campaign, and the product being marketed is you. The CV and cover note might take the form of the brochure and press release, but does a marketer only use these two tools? No, and that's why the job hunter has to look beyond the traditional methods and find out more about tools which are better suited to world we live in today.

From the Arras Benchmark Survey - Four Per Cent of Job Seekers Use Social Media for Searches

Early returns from the [Arras People 2010 Project Management Benchmark Survey](#) show that **only four per cent of project management job seekers use social media to find new vacancies**, a stark contrast to the number of employers using the new medium to cull candidate information.

The four per cent figure places job candidates at great odds with how employers are using social media sites to find future hires. A recent [CareerBuilder study](#) found that more than half (53 per cent) of all employers are using these sites to screen potential employees and do background research of job interview candidates. In their press release, CareerBuilder encouraged job seekers to "leverage social media in advertising their skills and experience". The importance could prove staggering to candidates - half of the employers surveyed by CareerBuilder "reported they have found content on social networking sites that caused them to hire the candidate."

The leading sources for new job opportunities are online job boards (53% of all participants), recruitment agencies (21%) and personal networking opportunities (20%).



Social Media and Project Management: If It's Good For Communication, Use It!



from Bas de Baar

If you hold the opinion that "communication" is the most important aspect for a Project Manager, everything that improves or effects communication is worth looking at.

I actually never talk about PM 2.0 - I always refer the use of social/new media in projects. About the PM 2.0 thing, let me try to clarify my opinion on this. It's not about what used to be done was always bad, and this version is perfect. If what you do works, stick with it. Always learn new tricks just in case. But if it doesn't provide value, don't do it. That's always the case for everything.

Generically speaking, the 2.0 suffix refers to the capabilities web 2.0 technologies bring us. They introduce a different way of communication and involvement to a mass audience. Yes, there were some isolated tools before that allowed this, but they didn't have a mass adoption like web 2.0 does. They have "cut out the middleman" in some cases. They have improved virtual communication and have lowered threshold for communicating at all. And I can fill an entire blog about other reasons (wait...I did!)*

So where in some cases hierarchy was needed to facilitate communication, 2.0 made the hierarchy for that purpose unnecessary. It allows people that were not part of the primary information flow to be active in that flow.

This doesn't mean the primary principles of good PM have changed. It does mean that bad management that survived because of information monopoly is taking a hit. And I applaud everyone that

Back for its fifth installment, the 2010 Arras People Project Management Survey will soon be ready for project managers eager to share the extent of happenings and issues faced by the PM industry today.

Over the last five years, Arras People's renowned annual surveys have used information culled from project managers throughout the UK to determine the trends and issues faced by the project management field. Cited by a variety of field experts as a commendable and reliable source of what project managers are thinking at present. Previous survey questions have addressed issues including work/life balance, the contractor job market, the permanent job market, age groups, PM accreditation, ageism, salaries, day rates and bonuses and many other professional issues.

PPSOSIG to Host Premiere 2010 Event at Milton Keynes



the programme & project support office specialist interest group

The Programme & Project Support Office Specialist Interest Group (PPSOSIG) will host their first conference of the new decade this March.

The PMO-focused group's one day conference, entitled "PPSO Competence and Competencies: High Level Performance", will take place 19th March at the Open University, Milton Keynes from 9.30am - 4.30pm. Details and information on booking a spot at the conference are available below.

The 17th conference from the PPSOSIG is focused on competency and how competencies affect careers within the PMO. The conference features peer consultations, presentations and interactive sessions combined with networking

hasn't operated in a "bad management environment", but the people that have are happy to have found "a way out". So basically 2.0 has provided a new tool to turn "bad" into "good" again. And yes, you can also try to change bad practice head on (which you should), but you are not always in a position to do just that.

It becomes more than just a tool. Once you open up the info flow to everyone, you get closer to the principles of the agile manifesto in more complex scenario's (read "traditional"). Once you liberated the communication flow, you reduce some risks associated to non-deterministic situations.

The problem here is that, yes it is "just a tool", but it is also a risk mitigation measurement that reduces some of the human risks, eliminates bottlenecks and opens doors for processes that traditionally were to risky to be considered.

People enable what you can do in a project. If tools enhance the abilities of people, those tools become more than "just tools".

"Bas explains his general idea in his Project Shrink post ["Why Bother Looking At Social Media For Use In Projects"](#). Furthermore, in a comment section at [PMStudent](#), he explained his interpretation of PM 2.0. The interview below delves further into his thoughts on the naming of social media within the Web2.0/Project dynamic.

Bas de Baar is a veteran Software Project Manager based in the Netherlands who has earned international renown for [Project Shrink](#), a blog that features videocasts, writings and podcasts revolving around Project Leadership and Social Media. A member of the PMI New Media Council, de Baar is uniquely qualified to address matters concerning both project management careers and candidates hoping to use 2.0 tools to market themselves.

Following Up: Arras People Interviews Bas de Baar

Arras People had some follow-up questions for Bas regarding project management and social media. Here is the interview pieced from some emails we exchanged earlier this month.

Arras People: Thomas Friedman once said, "To name something is to own it." Judging the names of the leading websites (Slate, Whats on When, Genes Reunited, Doodle, Rotten Tomatoes, etc.) suggests that some names stick in the memory and don't let go. Project Shrink has that kind of feel, too. What was the thinking behind such a name? Explain how lessons in naming are translatable to Social Media endeavours.

Bas de Baar: Wow. I am honored you view the name in such a way. In 2007 when I started blogging I wanted to find out why projects really operate as they do. Not a framework of how things should be, but a deeper understanding of the inner workings of projects. My fundamental belief has always been, and still is, that "people", and especially people interacting in groups, are the fundamental element in projects.

So, I started looking at psychology, sociology, organizational behavior, complex adaptive systems, communication theory and whatever might help me out. So why "Project Shrink"? Because I want to emphasize "human behavior" in projects and have difficulty pronouncing "Project Sociologist". It started out as an experiment with Personal Branding. One day I started using it. And before I know it, people remember Project Shrink instead of your name.

AP: Attention spans wander so frequently that the newest phenomenon, Twitter, gives you a mere 140 characters to work with. But doesn't that reinforce the tried and true communications method of "clear and concise"?

BdB: It depends. For every medium is an audience. For every occasion a suited medium. Many times in our communication we need short and precise. But communication has also a huge social component. The short messages also lower the threshold/make it easier for someone to contact another person. Not everyone has much to say, and not everyone is comfortable sending a huge white sheet of paper with only "Hi" written on it.

Together with Dave Prior I do a weekly video podcast called "[Project Potion](#)". It is long form (30 minutes) video. It is a social conversation between two Project Managers talking about their profession and their interests. Certainly not clear and concise. There is an audience for that. A lot of people will not like the format, but for some people it will feel like coming home. Every medium has a specific audience and purpose.

and discussion groups on key topics such as competence frameworks for the PMO, role profiles in the PMO and how competence and competencies are viewed and used in the real world. Each delegate will receive their own individual competence assessment and a copy of the APM Competence Framework. Feedback and discussion from the completed assessments will also be on offer during the conference.

"This is our first recession-busting conference for 2010," said Lindsay Scott, Director of Recruitment for Arras People, a long standing sponsor and member of the PPSOSIG. "The event is being hosted at the Open University and members from their PMO will also be sharing their experiences of devising a competency framework for PMO. The event is excellent value at £100 for a conference day packed with experts in the field of PMO."

The PPSOSIG usually holds at least two conferences per year and has previously been graced by the presence of practitioners including Sue Vowler, Rod Sowden, John Zachar, Craig Kilford and many others.

Information about previous events and the upcoming March event is available on the [PPSOSIG web site](#).

NOTES ABOUT PPSO COMPETENCE AND COMPETENCIES

DATE: Friday 19th March 2010, 9.30am - 4.30pm.

VENUE: Open University Campus, Milton Keynes.

PRICES: £100.00 (Early Bird Rate to 1st February) £115.00 after.

BOOKING: Download the [booking form](#) and email to the address provided in the form. any industry.

Scott Serves as Expert for Guardian Jobs Forum

[guardiancareers](#)

AP: Regarding video casts and podcasts, the "free" nature of them spikes popularity. Do you see this changing? For the better of the users or for the worse? If it doesn't change wholesale, can the bigger download entities like iTunes keep offering such products for free? What would the removal of 'free' do for the millions of individuals who try to get their "casts" out to the masses?

BdB: The technical cost of creating video casts and podcast are extremely low. It's the labor that is expensive. If you are the host, the expert, the editor and the webmaster you can easily offer this for free as you can make money on opportunities created by the podcast, or keep doing this next to your job. If you are going to use expensive crews and production facilities, have experts on the payroll, now that would be something different. Only the future can tell how revenue models are going to work for high end shows.

AP: Keeping with the Friedman quote and, what would you have named Project Management 2.0?

BdB: I think more in the line with Enterprise 2.0: Project 2.0. It's not about the management, but it's about the interactions between members.

AP: Are there any specific rules you would suggest to a 2.0 rookie should adhere to when marketing themselves and their skills in social media forums?

BdB: Engaging in the Web 2.0 sphere is about personal development. It is about learning. Learn publicly. Talk to people while you are learning. By doing this, people will learn from you. The marketing part is where you make it easy for people to follow your progress. And the most important rule of all: this is the web. You don't know any of the people (me included). If advice sounds logical to you, follow it. But always have some level of skepticism. Balance that: not everything is a scam.

Book Review - Practical Schedule Risk Analysis



Author: David T. Hulett

Length: 240 pages

Publisher: Gower

See details below about the 20% discount offer available only to Tipoffs readers from Gower Publishing.

In his preface, Dr David Hillson describes David Hulett's book as "how to actually apply the statistical techniques of Monte Carlo analysis in a way that combines intellectual rigour with practical realism". This book is all that, and more. It provides a structured development of ideas for modelling all random and systematic effects on the schedule.

Practical Schedule Risk Analysis describes the inherent difficulty in scheduling, and observes that project scheduling is unevenly practiced in delivery organisations. It discusses the varying attitudes taken by senior management to the information provided by the schedule; unrealistic constraints and completion dates, the assumption that the estimating exercise provides definitive answers, the power imbalance between management and schedulers, and the resultant fudging to create artificial schedules that meet demanded dates.

The complete build-up of the statistical analysis is taken step-by-step, the first consideration being a probability distribution for the estimates of a single task - in essence, if a large number of similar project teams undertook the same task, how would the durations taken compare? This is developed into a simple project comprising four sequential activities, showing how statistics combine across a project. This model is used to introduce the S-curve, to show that there is increasing probability of delivery with increasing duration. This vital step takes us away from considering the truth to be represented by the single-valued, deterministic schedule normally produced by a scheduler with one of the common tools available, to a model that quantifies the uncertainty of delivery.

These ideas are extended into more complex schedules with parallel paths and merge points common in most schedules, e.g. when the

Lindsay Scott, Director of Recruitment at Arras People since the company's 2002 inception, served as one of four renowned experts for a Live Q&A session presented by the Guardian Careers website Tuesday, 12th January.

Noted for her expertise in project offices and project co-ordination recruitment and skills, Ms Scott previously worked for Hewlett-Packard as a Project Co-ordinator and later as a Project Office Manager. Her service with HP led to the development of skills working with a variety of markets, including e-commerce, retail, telecoms, public sector and defence. As Project Office Manager, Ms Scott established and fine-tuned the UK project office for HP while also guiding and supporting the company's European project office functions.

A tireless student & expert on project office support issues, Ms Scott is also an active member of the Programme and Project Support Office Specialist Interest Group (PPSO SIG). This endeavour has allowed her to provide voluntary assistance in areas such as web development, media and conference arrangement.

"As a project management recruitment specialist we provide advice to job seekers everyday so taking part in the Guardian Careers Forum was an extension of that", Scott said.

Ms Scott's expertise has been in demand in recent years. She has contributed worldwide to periodicals including Project Manager Today, Project Management Institute (PMI), Project Magazine and PM Network, as well as

products of sub-projects are brought together for integration into a system. The model is used to elaborate further on the strengths of Monte Carlo analysis and to point to the shortcomings of the traditional Critical Path Method in complex schedules; an area that is developed further in an appendix.

Analysis includes Risk Management, where some activities within a plan may only be executed in response to a set of conditions, as is the case with contingency plans. The effects on the schedule of risks affecting many activities are also discussed, with explanations for how these are modelled.

The logical and structured development of the ideas is slightly impeded by the uneven editing of this book. Although all chapters finish with a summary, not all have an introduction. The chapter addressing the fundamentals of good scheduling, which would have been useful at the beginning, does not appear until part way through the development of the approach to analysis. The reasons for using large numbers of iterations in a Monte Carlo model are not well presented, and the development of ideas on correlation seems complicated for a practical guide.

In summary, this is an extremely important book, which presents a depth of understanding of estimating and scheduling rarely seen in industry. It explains the techniques used in a number of schedule analysis software packages, and encourages a more mature approach to understanding the information presented by a project schedule.

It should be required reading for all project managers, schedulers, and risk practitioners; and also for programme managers, sponsors, and all staff involved in contracting for project delivery.

- Reviewed by John Greenwood, PMP

ABOUT THE REVIEWER: *John Greenwood has around fifteen years of project management experience gained in the engineering and IT industries, and has been an active member of the PMI UK Chapter. He holds a degree in Physics from the University of Birmingham, and has worked for a number of years as a Systems Engineer, where he has used Monte Carlo techniques to analyse and predict the performance of radar systems.*

Get 20% off the regular price from Gower Publishing
Practical Schedule Risk Analysis is available from Gower Publishing's [website](#) at 20% off the regular price. Available only to Tipoffs readers, simply quote reference code **G9BRL20** for the discount when ordering.

Q&A

Having been a member of the Royal Navy for several successful years and finding myself back in civilian life, I've decided that project management would be the right career path for me. Yet I'm uncertain on where to begin or how my Naval experience can translate to projects. I hear a lot about qualifications like PRINCE2, but I'm not sure if its the best methodology out there. What would you recommend? - Andrew

Thanks for your questions and comments. One thing we have found over time from recruiting project managers is that military personnel like yourself tend to make solid project managers. Quite often, we place people with military experience into the variety of roles we have on offer. Diligence, transferable work experience and innate focus to detail and performance in a deadline-wracked environment give them the upper hand over many civilian life newcomers to the project industry - yours Andrew is a level of experience many other qualifications and methodologies can't buy.

blogging regularly at Arras People's project management weblog, How to Manage a Camel. That demand results in large part due to the success of Arras People's annual Project Management Benchmark Report, a survey of UK project management professionals on the trends and issues currently affecting the profession. The 2009 report covered matters including salary, rates, experience and working climate in the recession. Data from that survey revealed that 84 per cent of PMs feel that they have a significant role to play in helping the UK economy out of its current economic difficulties.

The 2010 report, the fifth annual edition of the survey findings offered by Arras People, is due out on February 1.

"The report has been a really useful guide to project management professionals in the UK over the last four years," Scott said. "It's particularly useful for people wanting to gain a deeper understanding of the current project management marketplace and the salary or contractor rate levels for the sectors."

Other panellists included Tarquin Bennett-Coles, director of RSA Interims; Fergus O'Connell, founder of ETP; Steve Armstrong, lecturer and chair of the project management course at the Open University; Dr Stephen Simister, head of the project management MBA at Henley Business School; Howard Teale of Indicia Training; Peter Johnson of APM; and Nick Eaves of Badenoch & Clark.

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Arras People have been working with Job Centre Plus across the country to

What can separate the "civilian" from the military personnel entering the project workforce is twofold. Firstly it all comes down to how you display your experiences to date and that one small detail - domain terminology. All too often, someone with your background may have excellent project management experience already, but your experiences don't translate well to interviewers because you don't 'speak the language', as it were. Prejudicial? Sure, there's a little bit of that. But the interviewer, especially someone with experience of interviewing potential project managers will be looking to connect with you and know that your project experience matches what they are looking for. These people tend to know project managers and the catchphrases, vocabulary, tasks and everyday things that come with their work, in other words the common language of project management. If the interviewee doesn't speak about projects on a similar wavelength to the interviewer, it's legitimate that they might have concerns about whether the job will be done effectively.

The second point is how you translate your forces project experience into that of the business or organisation you want to work for. You may feel you possess all the project management competencies and skills needed to carry out a project manager role back in civvy street but there is an obstacle to overcome. More and more we are seeing tight requirements for positions, specifically where an organisation is stipulating where the project manager must have gained their experience. This can be tough to overcome initially, so in the first instance consider concentrating your job hunting on those industries which may be more flexible and accommodating. Sectors like security, defence, central government or if you had specific experiences within the Navy in areas such as engineering, IT, logistics, etc. I'm making the assumption you also have access to training funds that help with your transition and it may be more beneficial to look at the [APM qualifications](#) as the first step. These courses are much better for the "how" of project management rather than the one methodology approach (PRINCE2). Once you have started to understand more about where your future opportunities through research and use of your own network you will begin to build up a clearer picture of what your own development should entail moving forward.

For more examples like this and/or further help & advice regarding extending your search and creating professional and effective cover letters refer to our [Careers clinic](#) / [JobSearch Support Services](#) / [Careers Advice](#) pages.

Got a question for us, [contact us](#) today.

Sincerely,

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"Generally informative and professionally led discussion with some good tips - Many Thanks!"

"A highly professional service offered by experts in their specialist sector. With the job market providing so little feedback to enable candidates to revise their approach to be successful, the Arras service is invaluable!"