

## Forestry Graduate

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Written by: Vanessa Woods, Special Projects Officer

Name: Katie Littlejohn

Company: Willmott Forests

Graduate Year: 2000

University: Australian National University (ANU)

1. What was your first position in forestry?

I accepted an Assistant Forester position with Willmott Forests, Bombala NSW. This position includes work with the health and nutrition of the plantation estate, where I monitor and report on a series of trials to gather information to improve the growth rates of the trees. I am also involved with establishing and monitoring permanent sample plots, as well as assisting the other foresters with different management tasks, such as producing maps using a geographical information system (GIS).

2. How did you attain that position?

I submitted a comprehensive resume that outlined my work experience and skills and in due course I attended an interview. I found it important during this process to be aware of the skills that I was good and bad at so that I could specify why the company should employ me.

3. How long after you graduated did you find that position?

I completed my degree last June and at the time I wasn't actively seeking work. I began working at Willmott Forests in December shortly after deciding to vigorously pursue forestry employment rather than go stale in a "no brain required" job.

4. How did you find your current position (jobs in between)?

I found summer work experience to be an excellent opportunity to improve my chances of getting forestry work after graduation. Throughout my degree I took every opportunity available to do voluntary and paid summer work experience. It was a great way to meet people in the industry, as well as learn what areas of forestry I enjoyed the most. I was also more aware of the career alternatives available. During this time I decided that I would prefer to work with a private organisation. Luckily for me the Willmott Forests position came up and I was accepted. I would definitely recommend that a graduate makes contact with people involved in their interest areas and send out their resume, even if there are no advertised positions available.

5. Is working in forestry different to what you expected? How?

Perhaps the only thing that I didn't expect is how differently forestry actually operates outside of the ideal scenario learnt at university. Everything is profit driven and as a result, the best operational methods may be useless if they're more expensive than other options.

6. What do you enjoy most about forestry?

I find the forestry industry challenging and constantly evolving. There is always a better way to do something and a further constraint to consider. It has also helped me to meet a diverse group of people, particularly as the industry is so topical. Put simply - I love it!!

7. What are the biggest challenges?

Working for a private company in itself is quite challenging, but very stimulating and rewarding. There doesn't seem to be as much room for error and through the entire process of the work I am doing I constantly ask myself, why do I need this and does it warrant the integration of legislation with making it worthwhile in terms of profit. It can be done, and that is what makes forestry so interesting!