

Profile: **David Graham**

Funeral Director/ Arranger Conductor
Invocare—Simplicity Funerals



WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I love my job because it is so different from every other job that I had even considered. Although it's great to be able to come into people's lives and help them during a difficult time, the sensitivity, empathy and understanding of people's needs gives you a high sense of purpose through the grief that they are experiencing and my capacity to deal with this in a caring way.

CAREER HIGHLIGHT:

It would have to be being a part of a great team and working alongside some great people in this industry.

MOST USEFUL SKILL ACQUIRED:

The most useful skills that I have learnt are how to work with people under stress, and arranging and conducting funerals. I have also developed a greater understanding of people's needs and I have become more confident when talking to people in both my professional and my personal life.

My overall communication and organisational skills have also been developed.

STUDY/TRAINING:

My employer offers a great induction program and on-the-job training, ranging from driving and maintaining funeral cars to admin and arranging funerals.

Most of the training for Funeral Services is conducted in-house in WA. To get the most extensive and on-going training, I found it to be more advantageous for me to join a larger corporate company that would give me a greater opportunity for growth and advancement within the Industry.

CHECKING ON COURSES

Some courses are clearly promoted as being based on a training package, but others are not. To find out whether a course is based on a training package, you can contact the training provider and ask. Obtain any written course information you can from the training provider. You could contact them to request an information pack, and/or check their website.

- *Check this information to see if it makes it clear that the course will lead to a **Nationally Recognised Qualification or Statement of Attainment.***
- *Make sure that the organisation is a registered training organisation for the relevant qualifications or units of competency.*

To find more information, visit: www.training.gov.au

Choose a Career in

Funeral Services



*compassionate, empathetic
and sensitive?*

consider. . . .

Funeral Services

Why consider Funeral Services. . . . ?

The Funeral Industry is acknowledged and respected as one of the most sensitive but highly regarded professions.

Given the diverse nature of the industry you will develop excellent service ethics. Successful Funeral Directors need to show compassion and empathy in all of their day-to-day dealings with the community.

A career in Funeral Services offers many different positions that can be challenging but extremely rewarding. Each of these will help you acquire exceptional communication, people skills and creativity.

There are many career-path opportunities available within the Funeral Services Industry. Initially there is the operations side with progression into the operational management or in the administration management areas within a family business or a large corporate identity.

A job in the Funeral Industry can ensure a successful lifetime career that will enable you to have employment mobility.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Funeral Directors may perform the following tasks:

- ◆ Co-ordinate and supervise funeral workers including drivers, receptionists or clerical assistants.
- ◆ Help to assist families and relatives to discuss style of funeral, coffin/casket, cars, flowers and costs.
- ◆ Generally assist and support family through ceremonies and other aspects of the funeral process.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR ASSISTANT

A Funeral Director Assistant assists in the preparation of funerals, the transportation and placement of coffins and funeral ceremonies.

A Funeral Director Assistant may perform the following tasks:

- ◆ Collect the body from the hospital, morgue or place of death and drive passenger vehicles, mortuary vans and hearses.
- ◆ Assist in preparing the body and placing it in the coffin.
- ◆ Escort mourners to funeral chapels.
- ◆ Arrange floral tributes and distribute and collect attendance and tribute cards.

MORTUARY ASSISTANT

- ◆ Mortuary Assistants work in funeral homes and support the work of Embalmers and Funeral Directors
- ◆ They also assist the Embalmers in preparing bodies for viewings and burials

GRAVEDIGGER

Gravediggers perform a range of tasks involved in the burial of bodies.

Gravediggers may perform the following tasks:

- ◆ Use a range of tools such as hand tools, power tools and small plant equipment to dig graves and maintain cemetery grounds
- ◆ Repair damaged and collapsed graves
- ◆ Re-open graves and perform exhumations

Even though Gravediggers have less personal contact with clients, they must be sensitive to the bereavement of others when dealing with death.

Employees in the Funeral Industry need a mature and responsible attitude, given the sensitive situations they deal with. They are generally working with clients who are emotionally vulnerable, so they need excellent communication skills and an understanding of how people deal with grief. Physical strength to lift coffins, a good driving record and a well groomed appearance are also prerequisites.

It is not essential to have formal qualifications in order to work within the industry, however formal training can help build your skills and your career options.

There are a number of nationally recognised qualifications available within the industry:

Certificate II in Funeral Operations

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in assisting Funeral Directors to conduct funerals or to undertake Mortuary Assistant duties, depending on the qualification stream chosen.

Certificate III in Cemetery and Crematorium Operations

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in a range of roles in a cemetery or crematorium depending on the specialist stream and elective options chosen.

Certificate III in Gravedigging, Grounds and Maintenance

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in a range of cemetery operations requiring specialised practical skills and knowledge in either gravedigging or grounds and maintenance activities.

Certificate III in Funeral Operations

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in a range of funeral operations or mortuary work roles depending on the specialist stream and elective options chosen.

Certificate IV in Funeral Services

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in a range of funeral services activities and functions requiring funeral services industry management knowledge and skill.

Certificate IV in Embalming

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in a range of embalming activities requiring a strong theoretical knowledge base and practical procedures.

Diploma of Mortuary Management

Provides the skills and knowledge for an individual to be competent in a range of management activities requiring planning, implementing and monitoring mortuary practices and procedures.