

1 11-25 Archaeological Consultant. Self-employed archaeological specialist.  
2  
3 1 At the moment I live in [city X]. I do consulting work but not much of it is in  
4 [the city where I live]. At the moment I'm looking at a [collection of artefacts]  
5 from the X region in [a different state]. [SC: Do you run a sole practitioner  
6 consulting business?] Yes but it's not a very big business. I don't do that much  
7 work. I sub-contract or work as a casual for different companies. Ideally sub-  
8 contracting. [SC: Is analysis of [artefacts] what you mainly do?]. The work that  
9 I've mostly been involved in over most of my career as an archaeologist is  
10 [artefacts analysis] or mostly [field] survey work in the X region, in the Y region  
11 in [a different state] and in other places in Australia. And excavation work  
12 associated with those subsequent to survey work.  
13  
14 2 Private business  
15  
16 3 - 1  
17  
18 4 - 100%  
19  
20 5 - Small  
21  
22 6 - State X  
23  
24 7 Currently it's [a different state from the place I live now].  
25  
26 8 Um - no. Not with the current work that I'm doing.  
27  
28 9 Heritage management. I guess to some extent it's research as well as I'm  
29 looking at new assemblages and doing analyses on them. But it's mostly heritage  
30 management.  
31  
32 10 - n/a  
33  
34 11. - Sometimes.  
35  
36 12. - No. I have done in previous jobs but not at the moment.  
37  
38 13 No  
39  
40 14 The only experience in teaching would be in a role as manager or supervisor  
41 of other archaeologists. So obviously I'm not in that role at the moment, but I  
42 have been in the past. [SC: Do you want to say more about that? You said you  
43 used to work with bigger companies or something?] Yes I worked for [X  
44 organisation] for a couple of years [consultancy company] which you probably  
45 have heard of. After that I worked for about three years with a [different] fairly  
46 large environmental consulting company. I was the main archaeologist in the  
47 [region Z] office for that company. For quite a while there I was supervising and  
48 managing other archaeologists. In that role I guess I was involved in training but  
49 in a fairly informal way. And I have no qualifications in training.

50

51 15 N/A

52

53 16 Same sort of answer. I worked for [a large minerals company] for about three  
54 years in [a different state]. And in that role I did once or twice have media  
55 [people coming to visit] and I took them around [an area with a lot of  
56 archaeology and Indigenous places]. So I've dealt with them in a large company  
57 but no I would never do any of that sort of stuff with work that I do for myself  
58 now.

59

60 17 Look I think it was a really positive experience when you can talk to the  
61 media and try and sort of communicate. In this case it was mostly about heritage  
62 management issues but I guess to really get to those issues you need to talk  
63 about the significance of the heritage that you're managing. So you're trying to  
64 communicate that to media. That's pretty good and I guess it has all its problems  
65 about communication and understanding technical aspects and that sort of thing,  
66 but generally it's positive. I haven't done it very often but when I've done it  
67 communicating about heritage values to people who aren't specialists is  
68 generally positive – yes. [SC: And was that TV, radio, newspapers or print  
69 media?]. Newspaper. [SC: Was that national, regional, local or?] Was [a major  
70 state-based newspaper] – would have come from [state capital city] I think.

71

72 19/20

73

74 21 Okay – um. [Pause]. In general I communicate in order to explain the results  
75 of surveys or excavations or whatever and often or more importantly to try and  
76 explain the significance of heritage items or heritage places. That's obviously  
77 necessary in terms of the process to manage places. Also for outside of  
78 archaeology I guess I'm explaining management strategy things that we are  
79 doing to manage sites or salvage them or things that we've put in place I guess if  
80 you need to attend to something or not attend to something. Those sorts of  
81 things. They are not really archaeological issues, they're management issues but.  
82 They're easier to communicate in my experience than communicating  
83 archaeological ideas about significance is very hard particularly when your doing  
84 it with people with limited knowledge of archaeology or with limited education.  
85 so like landowners and Aboriginal people can often be quite challenging. But  
86 those sorts of things.

87

88 22 All I've got here is "Limited!" with an exclamation mark [laughs]. Yes like  
89 archaeology can be hard enough to communicate with other archaeologists  
90 sometimes so when we're dealing with other people if it's not really required  
91 sometimes I'll just try and avoid it.

92

93 23 Okay the first tick is [Aboriginal community organisations] and the second  
94 tick is resource extraction companies and their employees. I've also ticked  
95 tourism and travel organisations. At [company X where I worked] the same sort  
96 of thing I described earlier – I've taken government people from the tourist  
97 department or whatever in [city X] Perth around [a region with cultural heritage  
98 and archaeology]. I've ticked archaeologists working for government heritage

99 organisations and in other government organisations. Throughout my sort of  
100 career as an archaeologist it's a common thing to have to deal with the  
101 government archaeologists or government bureaucracies as often I'm working  
102 on behalf of clients to get permission to do things and that sort of stuff.  
103 Indigenous or Aboriginal traditional owners of land or cultural property and of  
104 course – not all – but almost all of my work in the field will be done with  
105 Aboriginal people whether they be considered traditional owners or whether  
106 some sort of custodian. It's pretty much an ethical issue but it's also required in a  
107 lot of cases. Archaeological consultants or consultancy companies – I've got a  
108 number of ticks there so it's obviously a big part of what I do at the moment and  
109 I've also ticked other government organisations. [SC: So what would they be –  
110 what sort of organisations?]. Don't know what I was thinking when I ticked that.  
111 I've worked for the government I suppose and actually some jobs I've got are for  
112 different government departments who are actually wanting to...[SC: So they're  
113 like the client?]. Yeah – yes. [SC: So no other groups? Do you deal with the  
114 public?]. Very rarely. The only time I remember when we were dealing with the  
115 public was when I worked at the [x museum] at an Open Day and I was involved  
116 with that. But that was quite a while ago now. [SC: Do you deal with non-  
117 Aboriginal landowners?]. I have done – yes – but not that often.

118

119 24 Aboriginal communities.

120

121 25 26 At the moment I'm doing specific work for the company that either can't or  
122 don't have the resources to do it at the moment. I do analysis of the artefact  
123 assemblage. So there's quite a lot of work. I'm looking at about 10,000 artefacts.  
124 And so I'm communicating there with people who understand the issues and  
125 may even be able to do the work themselves. And so I'm doing the work and  
126 sending off the results to them and – I haven't started doing this yet – but I'll  
127 write them an analysis of the digital data. That will be communicating with  
128 people who should and I think will totally understand where I'm coming from  
129 and what I'm trying to say and there'll be some sort of a discussion and  
130 agreement about where the analysis should be heading and the sorts of things  
131 they'd like me to talk about. So that's a pretty good example for 26.

132

133 25 and or 27. I probably left [company X] a couple of years ago now but a lot of  
134 my work was trying to communicate issues about archaeology to people in the  
135 company who had no background at all in archaeology. Even though the  
136 company is a big company with lots of guidelines and lots of sort of you know 'do  
137 the right thing' kind of regulations that they are supposed to follow, a lot of  
138 people don't even care about heritage and so it's very – you know - quite  
139 challenging sometimes to communicate archaeological significance. And that's  
140 the crux of most of what we do as heritage managers is to try and identify what's  
141 significant and then explain that and then try and protect it I guess. And that was  
142 a big role at [company X]. They have a whole raft of I think they've got maybe ten  
143 or twenty archaeologists on at the moment in [places A and B]. So their job is  
144 really to well um - a lot of it is just to facilitate the approval processing and that  
145 sort of thing and run systems, but essentially they should be trying to  
146 communicate what's important for the company and archaeological issues. [SC:  
147 And do you have time where you are the expert?] Well all the time! And in that

148 context we are supposed to be experts in terms of giving advice about what  
149 should be done, for instance whether a survey should or shouldn't be done so we  
150 are supposed to be experts in heritage management and the legal side of it in a  
151 way as well as the typical archaeological side of things. Yes we're often  
152 considered the experts like the same as a biologist in the environmental section –  
153 we're an expert in heritage.

154  
155 28 Um that's a pretty tricky sort of question I think [laughs]. In terms of what I've  
156 mostly done in my life as an archaeologist and in heritage management I guess  
157 you could say that successful communication is when there are good outcomes –  
158 that result in good outcomes for managing heritage. But I think probably a better  
159 way of understanding it is communicating and making other people understand  
160 what we are saying, and where the significance comes from and why you are  
161 actually doing particular things. And that – as I said before – can be pretty  
162 difficult. And I've just written in this box 'Average to Poor' as being typical of my  
163 communication generally [laughs]. Like sometimes it's great – you know it's very  
164 variable in terms of how successful I think I've been. But often it's difficult  
165 because it requires some sort of knowledge of archaeology and Australian  
166 prehistory to really get a handle on why something is significant or not. So you  
167 can't really expect some landowner or miner or even Aboriginal person who may  
168 not have that interest in it to appreciate the sorts of things you are saying. So on  
169 that level the communication can be poor but in terms of coming up with a result  
170 and people accepting what's going to happen and being happy with it then that's  
171 a bit of a different issue but generally I would rate communication a little better  
172 if you look at it in those terms. [SC: Yes this is a tricky question. I'm getting some  
173 interesting answers to that one anyway.]

174  
175 29 [SC: We won't do 29 – unless you want to (sorry I'm rushing through).]. Well I  
176 have written a little comment here..[SC: Sorry! – please go ahead.] I was just  
177 going to look back to my [company X] experience and that was that the  
178 organisation judges the effectiveness based on access to land and the ability to go  
179 ahead and do the work and that would apply to developers generally and other  
180 people who want approval to do something. So there was a little bit of a – it's not  
181 quite the same kind of idea of what's effective or what's good from the  
182 archaeologist's perspective..[SC: Yes that's a very good point you made there as it  
183 depends on the aims of the communication where an archaeologist at one level  
184 might want to make people understand better about the past and why it's  
185 important and how archaeology can contribute to it – that thing about the  
186 process you're right in the heritage management process. Sorry – I'm just.. that's  
187 a really useful comment cos you've clarified that for me. Other people have  
188 brought that up a lot. It's not – I mean – yeah – so that's really.. yep – thank you  
189 for that.]

190  
191 30/31 [SC: So do you use digital technologies?] Yes to a varying extent to do with  
192 different jobs but currently I don't think an archaeologist would get by without  
193 using some computer or something either [laughs]. [SC: Yes I think it would be  
194 hard, wouldn't it?]. So at the moment with the current specific job that I'm doing  
195 I'm using – the only thing I'm using is Excel. And I've actually given advice to the  
196 people I'm working for that that's not the appropriate programme to be using.

197 But - so using Excel. And obviously I'm mostly communicating via email or Skype  
198 or whatever to people in [a different state]. [SC: Or phone? as somebody said "I'm  
199 using"]. [SC: Can I just ask - you said you are using Excel but you would prefer to  
200 be using something else? Can you say more about that?] Oh yeah. Excel - it's a  
201 kind of a database I guess but it's really a spreadsheet and when you are  
202 inputting data that data is not really protected in the same way as if you'd used a  
203 full blown database like Access for example. Or you could even use some GIS  
204 software as a database. So what you would do is you basically have a much better  
205 dataset which is protected because each entry can be corrupted. You can sort a  
206 field in Excel and destroy your whole data in a couple of minutes really. [SC  
207 [laughs] - I know!]. When you've got 10,000 artefacts you want to make sure the  
208 data are protected in a way that you can't really do in Excel. Well I've used Access  
209 before and because Excel is so much easier to use sometimes I've transferred all  
210 the data into an Excel spreadsheet and then you can do stuff with it - or with  
211 some other programme - but generally I'd put it into Excel. But I don't think it's  
212 good practice to be having large amounts of data and putting it into Excel. I think  
213 it should be put into a database - a proper database. [SC: So can I ask you - why  
214 has that arisen? Why are you having to do that?]. That's just their preferred way  
215 of doing it and they've actually - you know - I haven't designed their form so  
216 they've asked me to follow their standard method of recording artefacts. Which  
217 is fine - I've had that same sort of thing happen to me before. It wouldn't be how  
218 I would do it exactly but it's a good idea to be consistent within a company. So  
219 they're giving me a template and that template is in Excel. [SC: What would you  
220 change about it - sorry - do you mind me asking you that? I do faunal materials  
221 sometimes and shell and I'm often - well I've actually written about data  
222 standards for that type of material and often the consultant wants you to record  
223 something which is nonsense. I guess with lithics people probably have a better  
224 understanding of it, but. Do you think it's not going to help you with research  
225 questions or?] No I don't mind. I'm not going to tell you say who the client is. [SC:  
226 No, no and also I'm protecting everybody I won't mention anybody's names or  
227 the company or the state - I'll change your gender or something.] Well I don't  
228 think it's well put together. It needs to be - well it's not too bad. I wouldn't do it if  
229 it was really bad but - with stone artefacts and I assume with other types of  
230 analysis in archaeology you need to do - to have - variables which are replicable.  
231 If another archaeologist comes in they would produce something that's quite  
232 similar to me and some of the variables - some of the fields that they have in  
233 their template - I just think are really without careful definitions for what they  
234 mean, which they don't have. It's problematic so that's one of the general issues  
235 with what they're using.. um.. There's a few sort of things but I think with a lot of  
236 things you'll never get two archaeologists agreeing on how to record things - so  
237 there's a lot of it's that as well [laughs]. [SC: Well I've spent a lot of time in the  
238 past discussing data standardisation - mainly in historical archaeology but it's..].  
239 [SC: Do you use GIS? You mentioned GIS software.] I don't have it on my  
240 computer at the moment. I used to use it every day when I worked at [company  
241 Z]. That was their database. I wasn't a particularly proficient user. Well I was  
242 good enough to use it how I needed it so I could use it but I wasn't an expert in  
243 GIS or anything like that.  
244

245 32. No. [SC: Do you want to say why not?]. Actually – that’s not true as I found  
246 your thing on the OzArch which you could call social media. [SC: Well yes – that’s  
247 like a discussion list.] Apart from that no – like I don’t use Facebook or Twitter or  
248 anything like that and never have for archaeology. [SC: Do you use them for non  
249 archaeology?] Yep. [SC: Alright.]. [SC: Can I ask why you don’t use them for work  
250 – apart from OzArch.]. Um. I’ve just got no reason to use them I don’t think. I can’t  
251 think of a reason – particularly with what I’m doing now – doing small jobs as a  
252 sole trader – I wouldn’t really need to use them.

253

254 33 I’ve got a question mark on 33.

255

256 34 On 34 I’ve got um – there aren’t. Look the challenges are just general  
257 challenges that everyone has using programmes that they’ve not got specific  
258 training in. I’ve actually had training in Access and in GIS as a part of my work as  
259 an archaeologist. Various companies I worked for sent me off to do training. But  
260 sometimes you don’t have any training in a specific programme and you just  
261 have to work it out yourself. So that’s sometimes a bit challenging but that’s just  
262 the way the world is these days with computers. You just have to get in there and  
263 work out how to use them. I think that’s – I guess maybe another challenge I’m  
264 just thinking of now is that to really communicate and to deal with issues as a  
265 group or with other people you need other people to understand the  
266 programmes as well. So if they don’t – that can be a challenge. [SC: Yeah – well  
267 that example that you just gave about Excel which is about people not  
268 understanding that it’s not a database which I think is a very common  
269 misunderstanding. I mean our students go out into the world and.. yes..the same  
270 thing. Do you have other examples of that?]. The other example I have is not that  
271 serious it’s for example – not that Excel is that serious – but with using MapInfo  
272 which is a GIS software that I used we were often within the company we would  
273 swap data – we’d make maps for ourselves with using the software. And some  
274 people were better at using it than others and some people were just hopeless.  
275 So they couldn’t really – you’d have to do things for them. It’s an example that  
276 you’ve got some software there that you could use and it’s not being used so it  
277 would be more effective for a team if everyone you had used it. So it’s a challenge  
278 in a way that not everyone can use it well. [SC: Good comment – it’s about  
279 computer literacies.] I’m maybe getting a bit old. Like I think everyone is  
280 computer illiterate now. [SC: A lot of people have said that to me – they said you  
281 should have asked people their age which I haven’t done by the way. But a lot of  
282 people have said ‘I’m too old to use FB’. I don’t know that it’s that straight  
283 forward.] [SC: Do you like anything about using computers or was it all just a  
284 question mark? (Q 33)]. Yes - look. Yes - I guess so. It’s good to use in a lot of  
285 ways. It enables – I don’t know if I’m going to - probably not. One of the issues  
286 I’ve got particularly with GIS - because archaeologists are constantly saying that  
287 they use it – and they do use it – but they don’t really use it anywhere near the  
288 extent that they could or should. Often it’s only being used as a way of plotting  
289 points on a map or producing maps which we could do with a bit more difficulty  
290 but without that programme. The strength of those things is to use it as a  
291 database and to use it work out queries and come up with information which  
292 would be almost impossible to do without it. I’ve never really seen GIS – I’ve read  
293 a few GIS books on archaeology and there are examples out there particularly in

294 universities but in a heritage management context in the industry I've not really  
295 seen it used in the way that it could or should. But having said that it's really  
296 useful to be able to pop things into and make little maps yourself in a pretty - in a  
297 very accurate way if the data's accurate of course. But I don't feel that it's added  
298 anything in the general field of heritage management - what I've been involved  
299 in. It hasn't added anything to archaeological analysis or report writing or  
300 understanding the archaeology. [SC: That's a good point - I think that's coming  
301 out. I was just thinking about that this morning - the way technologies can  
302 enhance what you do - actually add value - rather than obviously doing things  
303 more efficiently - though maybe not always - but exactly taking that next step to  
304 be able to visualise things or do statistical analyses or something which you  
305 couldn't do if you didn't have the computer. So you've actually just said that -  
306 that's good! Thank you for that.]

307

308 35 I've just said 'Average'

309

310 36 Well at the moment I obviously don't have any support so that would come  
311 through online support with anything that I might have. I'll just work it out  
312 myself. Previously obviously there have been IT people in the companies that  
313 I've worked for who would deal with problems, but at the moment I don't have  
314 any. [SC: Do you think that's a problem like as a smaller company or on your  
315 own?]. GIS for example I know how to use to some extent but if I wanted to  
316 produce something nice to put in reports - so it's a bit of a superficial aspect of  
317 what we do - but it's also important for consultants. It was very easy to give all  
318 the information to a specialist and they would produce a map for me and it  
319 would fit nicely into a report. But now I can't do that so I've got to sort of work  
320 that out myself. In terms of support and working out how to use programmes it  
321 hasn't effected me as I haven't really needed to produce anything.

322

323 37 Is there a real purpose for having done this - will it add to a specific area or?  
324 [SC: Well I'm interested in the impact that technologies are having on  
325 archaeological practice mainly in the area of communication but also in data  
326 sharing. It's looking at how is that transforming our practice - if it is. It has a lot  
327 of potential to communicate with the public and with clients. Also I'm mapping  
328 out where is the 'coalface' of the communication. I mean all archaeology is about  
329 communicating and a lot of archaeology is undertaken in the heritage context so  
330 people like yourself are constantly talking to the public and professionals. Where  
331 is it happening and how does technology sit on top of that. So that's really what it  
332 is about and it's got some data - rather than just anecdotal. And I'm also involved  
333 in developing digital archives - we got a grant for that.] Good luck with it.