

A young man with curly blonde hair and light skin is looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a plain white t-shirt and dark pants. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

WHAT'S NEXT
FOR ME?

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Introduction

Waiting for your results can be extremely nerve-wracking, especially this year. There have been some big changes so do check with your school or college just to make sure you are clued up. Just remember no matter what results you receive, there are plenty of opportunities that will enable you to make informed decisions.

We've created a handy guide filled with everything you need to know to put your mind at ease. You will find out about the post 16 options available to you, what you can do if you didn't get the grades you hoped for and what you can do going forward. You will also be able to pick up valuable advice about the employability skills you'll need to gain and sustain employment; information on the changing world of recruitment; as well as some handy tips to help your application stand out.

How do I stand out from the crowd?

I got better grades than expected, what else can I do?

In five years' time, which skills will be in demand?

I didn't make the grades I needed, what are my options now?

EXAM DATES

A-Level: Thursday 13th August 2020

GCSE: Thursday 20th August 2020



My grades

UK schools and colleges have witnessed exams being scrapped because of the global pandemic and many students are uncertain about what this means for their futures. It has been confirmed that teachers will use homework, mocks and coursework to give students GCSE and A-Level grades this year rather than a formal assessment.

Please bear in mind employers and admission teams recognise the hard work and sacrifice you've put in. Below you can find some key information regarding your results.

A-Levels

I didn't get the grades I wanted - New for 2020 is Clearing Plus, this is aimed at anyone who is unplaced or who is applying for the first time for a place in Clearing. If you are in Clearing, click on the button in Track marked 'View Matches' to see courses which UCAS considers would be good for you, given both your original choices combined with your qualifications and grades. If you see a course you like, you can click 'Interested' so that university or college can contact you. But remember, courses in Clearing fill up quickly, and you may not always receive a call so also look for courses in Clearing using the search tool. Remember, saying you're interested in a course through Clearing Plus doesn't guarantee an offer.

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education-and-careers/0/a-level-results-day-2020-what-time-guide-timings-changes/>

Done better than expected? - You may consider applying through Adjustment, which gives you the opportunity to 'trade up' to another university or course without losing your current offer.

Want to defer your offer until next year? - You will have to call the university and ask if this is possible. It is worth having a good reason in place to support your decision. Maybe you plan to take a gap year that will support your studies, or plan to get work experience in your chosen field. Even if you are very confident, it can't hurt to have a plan B in place. Revisit other course options and look at your personal statement again. You could even practise mini-interview situations to prepare for the possibility of a Clearing phone call.

Source: <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/clearing-results-day/a-level-results-day-grades-what-to-expect>

GCSEs

I didn't get the grades I wanted - If you've narrowly missed the required entry grades, your chosen sixth form/college may still offer you a place, particularly if extenuating factors could have affected your performance. They could also allow you to transfer to a different course or subject, or recommend other colleges and sixth forms which might suit you.

Appeals - Usually, if you need a specific grade to be accepted to college, sixth form or university, you can consider having your paper remarked. However, this year exams have been cancelled so this isn't possible. What previously used to be known as 'remarks' is now called Reviews of Results (RoR). To get your paper remarked, this would have needed to be discussed with your school and teachers who will be doing all the paperwork alongside the relevant exam board.

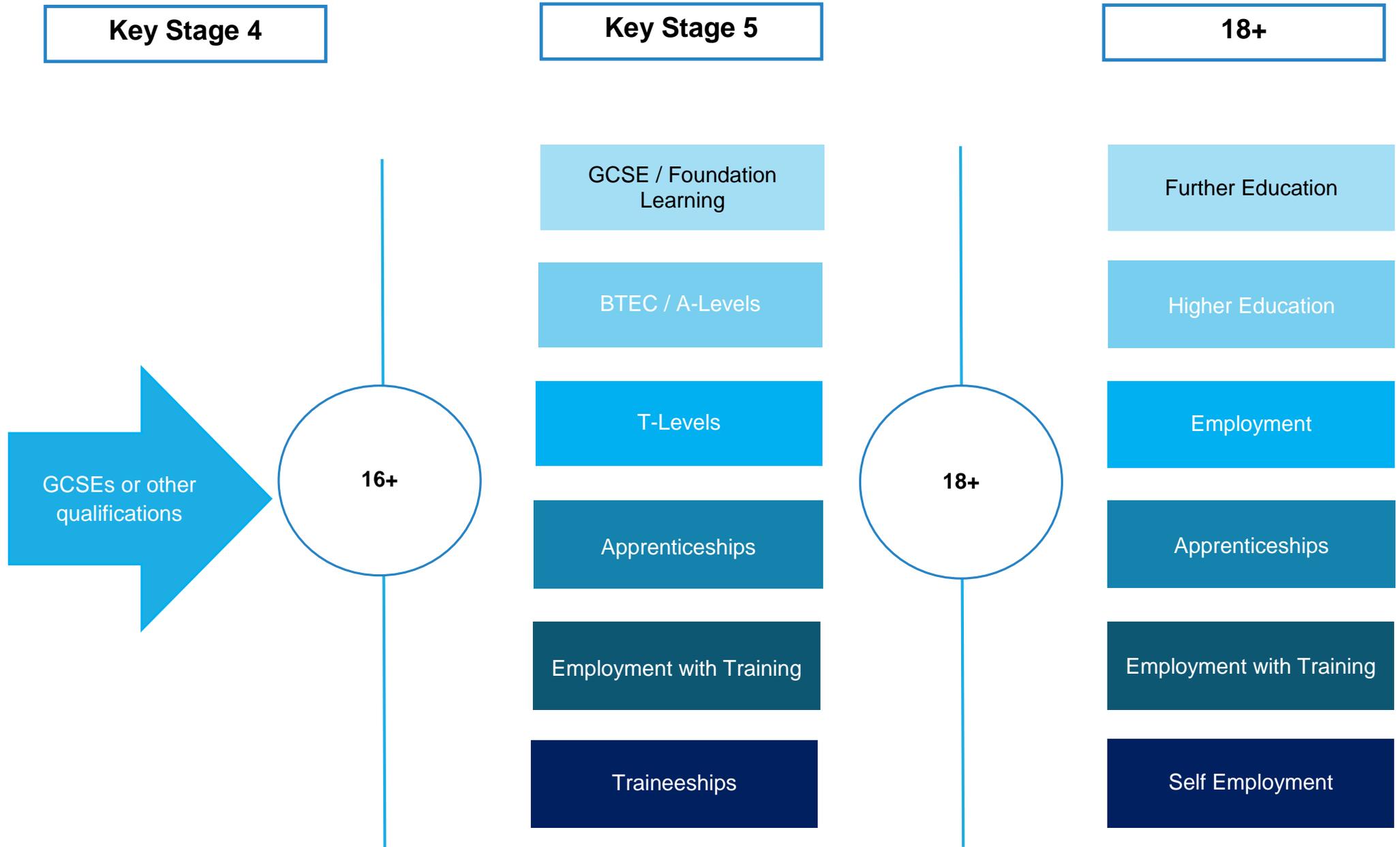
Source: <https://careermap.co.uk/gcse-results-day-guide-need-to-know/>

Did you know?

"When recruiting school and college leavers, businesses value qualifications as demonstrating effort, capability and readiness to learn, but mostly they either have no particular preference between academic and vocational qualifications (48%) or prefer recruits to hold a mix of both (31%)."

Source: <http://www.cbi.org.uk/index.cfm/?api/render/file/?method=inline&fileID=DB1A9FE5-5459-4AA2-8B44798DD5B15E77>

What are my options?



Learning styles

Your style of studying could very well determine the path you decide to take towards achieving your intended career goal. The table below displays some of the skills and behaviours that could be useful to you in an Apprenticeship or whilst studying A-Levels/Vocational courses.

Possible skills and qualities for different pathways		
Apprenticeship/Traineeship	Study A-Levels	Study a BTEC, NVQ, T-Levels
<i>Fast learner</i>	<i>Research skills</i>	<i>Combine practical learning with theory</i>
<i>Enthusiasm</i>	<i>Independent learner</i>	<i>Hands on approach</i>
<i>Interpersonal skills</i>	<i>Organisation skills</i>	<i>Lead to specific jobs</i>
<i>Work ethic</i>	<i>Academic/theoretical study</i>	<i>Commitment</i>

Academic Route

“A-levels are exam-focused, and the benefit is that you pick three or four different subjects in your first year, so you don’t need to commit to studying just one area. These are well established, have an academic focus and are recognised by all universities across the country”

- Jamie Bradford, De Montfort University.

Source:
<https://www.theguardian.com/careers/what-employers-look-for-apprentices>

T-Levels

“Now, more than ever, it’s vital that young people across the country have access to high-quality technical education to provide them with the skills they need to succeed and employers with the workforce they need for the future.”

- Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson

Source:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-accelerates-t-level-roll-out>

Apprenticeships

“Nobody understands the skills employers need better than the employers themselves. That is why we are placing them in the driving seat. They are designing apprenticeships so that they focus on exactly the skills, knowledge and behaviours that are required of the workforce of the future.”

- The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP & The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP

Source:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/484209/BIS-15-651-english-apprenticeships-our-2020-vision-executive-summary.pdf

My journey

Take a few moments to consider how you will achieve your ideal career. What qualifications will you need? Will you need relevant experience along the way? Start by filling in the box at the top titled '**Where do I want to get to?**' and then work your way up from the bottom to see how much you know about your intended career path.

In the **Where am I now** box located at the bottom of the page, you could for instance write '*apply for work experience at a local art studio*' or even write down the results you received e.g. 5 GCSES 4-9 including Maths & English or the course(s) you are due to begin.

Where do I want to get to?

Where do I want to get to?

Where am I now?

Where am I now?

Skills check

If you're looking ahead to starting your career after you finish school or college, you've probably heard a lot about the importance of employability skills. Employability skills are personal qualities that make you "employable". They can be the difference between gaining and maintaining a job, simply getting a foot in the door to advancing through to a career. They also translate to virtually every part of your working life.

Activity:

The exercise below is geared towards providing a snapshot of how you see yourself. Place an 'X' in the box that best describes your skills and add up your total for each column at the bottom.

How Good Are You At...?	Brilliant	Good	OK	Poor
Planning your own learning				
Adapting to different environments				
Being clear about which skills you need to develop and improve				
Timekeeping and attendance				
Actively listening to others				
Producing high quality work on time				
Communicating in a way that is appropriate to the situation				
Working well with others				
Making use of help and support when working with others				
Knowing what digital skills are in demand from employers				
Writing CVs, letters and job applications				
Presenting yourself effectively at interviews				
Know how to motivate others around you				
Taking prompt and appropriate action when facing a problem				
Analysing and translating useful information				
TOTAL				

The skills companies need most in 2020



Top 5 Soft Skills

- 1 Creativity
- 2 Persuasion
- 3 Collaboration
- 4 Adaptability
- 5 Emotional intelligence



“Last year, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and analytical reasoning led LinkedIn’s global list of the most in-demand hard skills.

They’re all on the list again this year, but a skill we weren’t even looking at a year ago — blockchain — tops the list of most in-demand hard skills for 2020.

Recruiters have a front-row seat to the ever-changing mix of skills most prized by the business world.

Understanding what those skills are early on can give you a leg up on the competition.

While the soft skills valued by companies tend to change gradually, the most sought-after hard skills evolve quickly, pushed largely by the ever-changing world of modern technology.”



Top 10 Hard Skills

- 1 Blockchain
- 2 Cloud computing
- 3 Analytical reasoning
- 4 Artificial intelligence
- 5 UX design
- 6 Business analysis
- 7 Affiliate marketing
- 8 Sales
- 9 Scientific computing
- 10 Video production

The difference between hard and soft skills

Hard skills concern an employee’s ability to do a specific task, and soft skills are more about the way they do them — how they adapt, collaborate, solve problems, and make decisions.

Hard skills include specialised knowledge and technical abilities, such as software development, tax accounting, or patent law expertise

In looking for soft skills, companies are focusing on candidates with emotional intelligence. They range from embracing criticism as a learning opportunity to exploring the “why” in every situation.

How to future-proof your career

Candidates need to aim for skills that can be updated, renewed or ditched as jobs change at lightning speed. Even university degrees can have a short lifespan. In some sectors, such as technology, skills can be outdated almost before the ink is dry on the diploma.

“Read, learn about and stay up-to-date with trends and news in your industry,” says Jodie Roxborough, manager of the technology division at recruitment specialists Venn Group. “Ask your employer for training courses, or even teach yourself new technologies and processes. Don’t think your role will be the same in 2030 as it is in 2020.”

Below are the sectors likely to be in demand over the next decade:

LEISURE roles are quite difficult to automate, such as hairdressing, sport, entertainment, travel and tourism. These all need a personal touch, so it will be a long time before they see the same dramatic changes that have happened in retail.

AUTOMATION will mean increased technological unemployment, but areas that work alongside or complement the automation process, rather than being in competition with it, will see growth.

CREATIVE roles will naturally be more resistant to AI. Digital, marketing, UX (user experience design) and UI (user interface design) are safe for a while longer.

DATA is more sought-after than ever. This trend continues to create more and more roles. Repetitive reports will increasingly be handled by analysts, whose focus will shift towards data visualisation and interpretation.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE will continue to penetrate further into everyone’s lives. This will not only mean more roles utilising and creating products with AI but also roles that will be tougher to predict.

Source: <https://jobs.telegraph.co.uk/article/the-future-proof-jobs-to-get-into-in-2020/>

“a third of young Britons and Americans want to be vloggers”

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/youtube-vlogger-career-job-children-astronaut-space-china-poll-a9010086.html>



Daniel Middleton, YouTube's "DanTDM." YouTube

DanTDM is one of the highest-earning YouTubers of 2020 - making £12.7m this year, according to Forbes magazine.

28-year-old Daniel Middleton, otherwise known as TheDiamondMinecart, is a popular YouTuber focused on the game Minecraft.

He's got more than 16 million subscribers and has had more than 10 billion views of all his videos. He started posting videos, which were aimed at the under-10s, while working in Tesco.

Source: <http://uk.businessinsider.com/highest-paid-youtube-stars-2017-12/#no-1-daniel-middleton-dantdm-165-million-10>

In the boxes below, list two skills that you might need to become a top Youtuber like DanTDM?

Social media etiquette

When we think of Social Media, there are loads of apps that you use (Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Snapchat etc..). Have you ever thought about the things that you post before posting them? Below are just a few things for you to think about before you post on Social Media.

Anyone can see what you post online, even if you think no one will
Potential employers and college or university admissions staff often browse social-networking sites. What do you think people will think of you seeing your social media pages?

Do not post your location
It's just not safe for you.

Anything you create or communicate can be cut, altered, pasted, and sent around.

Social
Media



Watch the clock
Hours and hours can go by, which isn't great for getting homework done, practicing sports or music, or reading.

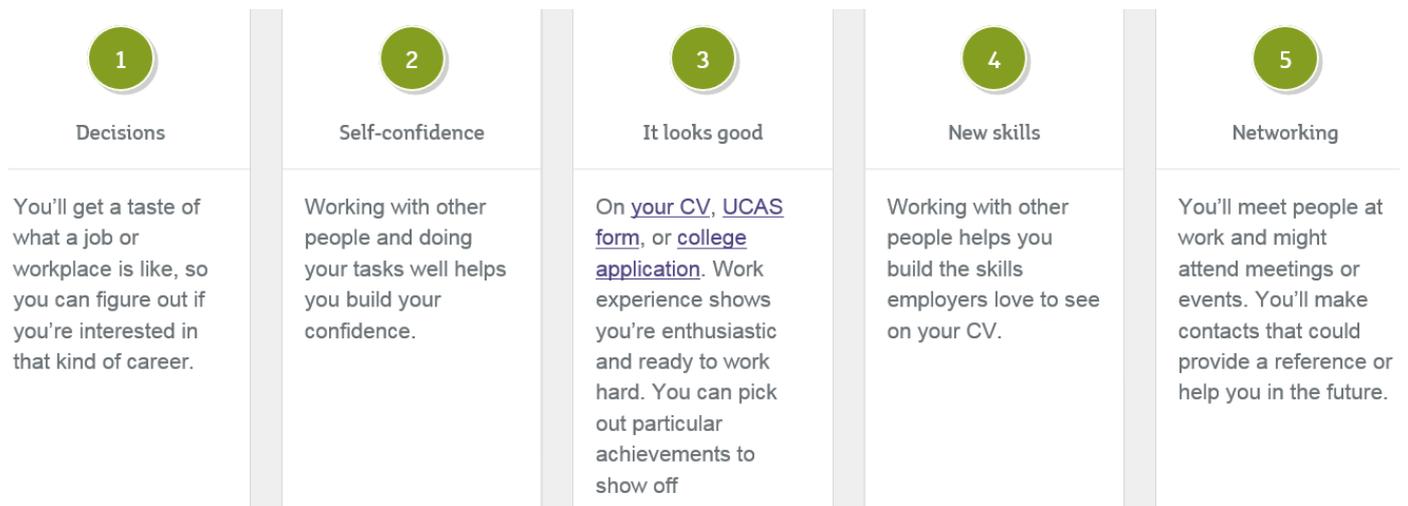
Once you put something online, it's out of your control and can be taken out of context and used to hurt you or someone else. Remember, anything you post online can last forever.

Avoid drama
Don't forward harmful messages or embarrassing photos, and don't impersonate other people by using their accounts or devices or create fake pages.

Source: <https://www.common sense media.org/social-media/what-are-the-social-media-basics-for-high-school-kids>

Work experience

“How do I get work experience without a job?” – That is an all too common phrase voiced by many young people looking for work. Below are five reasons for why work experience is important.



A report published by UKCES shows that employers rate **Work Experience as the biggest deciding factor** when assessing potential new recruits. The Employer Perspectives Survey asked the views of 18,000 employers across the country.

There are several types of work experience available to young people including:

Work shadowing - Shadowing someone at work to understand what they do and how they do it. It gives you a taste of what a job is like. Work shadowing is usually unpaid and lasts no more than two weeks.

Work placements - This can mean any formal work experience scheme. It usually runs for a set period of time and includes specific tasks and training.

Sandwich placements (for college and university students) - Some courses include a year-long placement with an employer. The placement forms part of your course work and you will generally be paid a wage. It gives you a chance to learn on the job.

Volunteering - You can pick a project you care about and give as little or as much time as you can. While it's unpaid, volunteering can help you develop your skills, learn new things and meet lots of people.

Internships (for college and university students, and recent graduates) - Lots of companies offer summer internships to college and university students. Many also offer graduate internship schemes.

Extracurricular activities - Being part of a sports team or another club or group such as a theatre group or choir. Involvement in the Scouts or Guides, or Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

Personal projects - If you've designed and made something under your own steam, such as a DIY or craft project, a website or a blog, you may well have developed the problem-solving and creative skills that employers look for.

Source: <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/getting-job/work-experience>

Applying for work experience

A well-written work experience letter could make all the difference when it comes to being considered for your ideal placement, not to mention help you to stand out from a number of other applicants. Below is a template you can adopt to start your journey into the world of work.

	(Your name)
	(Address)
	(Postcode)
(Date)	
(Employer's Name)	
(Full Address)	
(Postcode)	
Dear Sir/Madam (or name),	
I am a (year group) student from (school/college name), studying (list of subjects).	
I'd like to enquire about a potential work experience placement at (company name), which I will be available to carry for (amount of time) from (start date) to (end date).	
I'm keen on gaining some practical work experience in (chosen field of work), because (reasoning for pursuing a placement with this specific company and field). I'm a (relevant skills and attributes), which can be shown in my (real-life examples that demonstrate your skills). In my spare time, I like to (list relevant hobbies and interests), also I've also had some experience in.am a member of (list any groups/clubs/other work experience).	
As an enthusiastic student with a keen interest in what your organisation does, as well as a passion to progress within this industry, I would be very grateful to be considered for an opportunity at (company name).	
I look forward to hearing from you soon.	
Yours (sincerely/faithfully)	
(Your name)	

Opening paragraph - Always double-check to make sure you've got the right address and name, and don't forget to edit it for each organisation you send your letter to.

Second paragraph - Give the employer a brief outline of who you are, what you're doing (e.g. at school, university, or working), and explain what you're looking for. Include relevant subjects to the sector you want to going into.

Third paragraph - This section should express a genuine interest for your chosen company and field of work, which should coincide with your career goals and ambitions. To really stand out, show you've done your research, and express an interest in the company's recent developments and successes.

Fourth/fifth paragraph - This is your chance to sell yourself. List all of your relevant skills, and think of a real-life example to back each of them up. The examples can be from any area of your life (work, school, university), but it's important that they accurately quantify your skills.

Closing the letter - Reiterate. Close the letter by summing up your suitability and interest in the field, and always express your gratitude for their consideration.

Extracurricular activities

Have you ever thought about how your hobbies and interests can boost your short and long term career prospects? Getting involved in sports, volunteering or taking up a new hobby is a great way to develop new skills. Extracurricular activities can also make you a better candidate for jobs by providing you with lots of practical examples you can use on job applications and in interviews.

Below are a few activities that can provide you with a multitude of skills:

ACTIVITY	SKILLS GAINED
Football	Teamwork, Leadership, Perseverance, Time Management
Netball	Problem-solving, Teamwork, Stamina, Decision-making
Computing	Communication, Evaluate, interpret and use data, Adaptability, Teamwork
Drama	Oral Communication, Commitment, Working Independently, Adaptability and Flexibility
Swimming	Concentration, Determination, Teamwork, Coachability
Art	Observation, Focus, Self-expression, Collaboration
Music	Creative Thinking, Problem Solving, Responsibility & Dependability, Time Management
Book club	Teamwork, Writing Skills, Vocabulary Expansion, Memory Improvement

As well as seeking opportunities in your own time, it might be worthwhile speaking with your teachers/tutors to see what activities are happening within your school or college.

Below is an example of using Extracurricular activities on a Personal Statement

“I am a student in Year 11. As well as having good communication skills, I am responsible, well-organised and outgoing.

I have obtained a basic Food Hygiene certificate and a Red Cross Babysitting qualification.

I have taken part in many extra-curricular activities. I am a keen member of the school’s Dance and Athletics club.

I have enjoyed being involved in a number of charity events – including organising a successful swimming marathon in aid of the British Heart Foundation.

In the last three years I’ve held positions as a senior prefect, school council representative and house sports captain.”

Volunteering

Young people who volunteer can gain a lot of benefits from the experience; including the chance to meet new people and satisfaction from helping others. There are a lot of volunteering opportunities out there for you to develop the skills you need for a job in the 'real world'.

NADFAS

It is a national organisation that supports local fine arts and decorative societies. If you are committed to arts, you are the right candidate to join.

Visit <https://theartsociety.org/young-arts>

Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust

The charity is dedicated to helping women who have been affected by cervical cancer as well as providing support to their families and loved ones.

Visit www.jostrust.org.uk/get-involved

Red Cross

You can volunteer in most of their services from age 15. There are opportunities to raise money, run a university group or do work experience with them.

Visit <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/opportunities-for-young-people>

ReVitalise

It is a London-based organisation that provides breaks and holidays for disabled and visually impaired since the early 1960s. They welcome anyone who would like to help with personal support to their guests at their Centre, providing them companionship, and help organise activities, entertainment and excursions.

Visit <http://revitalise.org.uk/volunteer/>

Team London

Volunteering is open to everyone! Give back to your community while building new skills and help to make London a better place.

Visit www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/volunteering/search/

PDSA Vet Care

PDSA Vet care helps pets of the people in need and promotes responsible pet ownership.

Visit <https://www.pdsa.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-for-pdsa>

CharityJOB

CharityJOB is the UK's busiest site for charity jobs and volunteering opportunities. They regularly have more than 1000 voluntary, internship and trustee positions available across 27 job categories.

Visit <http://www.charityjob.co.uk/Volunteer-Jobs>

Hands on London

Our goal at **Hands on London** is to bring a variety of volunteering opportunities for local charities and community partners to as many busy Londoners as possible, in a flexible and manageable way.

Visit <https://www.handsonlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Covid-19-Volunteering-Opportunities.pdf>

vInspired

vInspired is the UK's leading youth volunteering charity providing 14-30 year olds with volunteering and social action.

Visit <https://vinspired.com>

Internships

www.creativeaccess.org.uk/
www.internship-uk.com/

www.gov.uk/find-internship
www.e4s.co.uk/internship-jobs

www.studentjob.co.uk/internship
www.prospects.ac.uk

Is a Traineeship right for me?

Traineeships are short periods of training and work experience designed for learners who aren't ready to take an Apprenticeship or start work.

They are an ideal opportunity for young people, aged 16-24, who are motivated to get a job but lack the skills and experience that employers are looking for and is for those who have not achieved a GCSE Grade 9 – 4 or equivalent.

Functional Skills

Level 1 and 2 English
and Maths support

Work Preparation Skills

CV writing
Employability skills
Interview Techniques

Work Placements

High quality placements
lasting from 6 weeks to 6
months

Source: <https://ngtc.co.uk/traineeships/>

What are T- levels?

T Levels are an alternative to A levels, apprenticeships and other 16 to 19 courses. Equivalent to 3 A levels, a T Level focuses on vocational skills and can help students into skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships.

Each T Level includes an in-depth industry placement that lasts at least 45 days. Students get valuable experience in the workplace and employers get early sight of the new talent in their industry. An industry placement of at least 315 hours must be provided.

Source: <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/>

What are the main components of a T-Level Qualification?

Technical qualification

The main classroom-based element part of a T Level where students will learn about their chosen sectors.

Industry placement

Runs for at least 45 days and will give students practical insights into their sector.

English, maths & digital provision

This is built into the classroom-based element of the T Level and is there to ensure students have these transferable skills.

What are apprenticeships?

An apprenticeship is a real job with training so you can earn while you learn and pick up some nationally recognised qualifications as you go. They take between one and four years to complete and cover over 1,500 job roles in a wide range of industries, from things like engineering to financial advice, veterinary nursing to accountancy.

Eligibility - Anyone living in England, over 16 years old and not in full-time education can apply to be an apprentice.

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	HIGHER	DEGREE
5 GCSE, 4+	2 A-levels	A foundation degree or above	A Bachelor's / Master's degree
What qualifications can I get? Level 2 NVQ, Diploma, National Certificate	What qualifications can I get? Level 3 NVQ, National Certificate, BTEC	What qualifications can I get? Foundation degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Level 4-7 NVQ, Higher National Diploma	What qualifications can I get? Foundation degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Level 4-7 NVQ, Higher National Diploma

Source: <https://utcw.co.uk/apprenticeships/>

Wages - The national minimum wage (NMW) for apprentices is £4.15 per hour as from April 2020. However, wages can go up very quickly. Some of the UK's top employers in banking, accounting, engineering and law offer very well paid apprenticeships. Below are some of the highest paid UK apprenticeships in 2019/20 by industry.

POSITION	INDUSTRY	AVERAGE SALARY
1	Banking / Finance	£21,799
2	Accountancy / Actuarial	£20,828
3	Energy / Utilities	£20,482
4	IT & Consultancy	£19,211
5	Insurance, Asset and Investment Management	£18,431
6	Business & Other	£18,360
7	Engineering / Manufacturing	£18,298
8	Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism	£17,388
9	Construction, Real Estate and Property	£17,233
10	Retail / FMCG	£16,862
11	Science & Pharmaceuticals	£16,200
12	Government & Not for Profit	£14,946

Source: <https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/advice/students/highest-paid-apprenticeships-uk>

Working hours - The minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on the apprentice working 30 hours a week or more, including any off-the-job training you undertake. However, this does not apply in every circumstance. For example, people with caring responsibilities or people with a disability may work reduced weekly hours.

Find apprenticeship vacancies
at
www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

Higher apprenticeship universities and professions

At a glance: higher and degree apprenticeship sectors

Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care	Engineering and Manufacturing
Arts, Media and Publishing	Health, Public Services and Care
Business and Administration and Law	Information and Communication Technology
Catering and Hospitality	Legal, Finance and Accounting
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	Protective Services
Creative and Design	Retail and Commercial Enterprise
Digital	Sales, Marketing and Procurement
Education and Childcare	Science and Mathematics
	Transport and Logistics

In detail: subjects and professions

Academic Professional	Construction Site Engineering Technician
Accountancy / Taxation Professional	Control/Technical Support Engineer
Actuarial Technician	Conveyancing
Advanced Clinical Practitioner	Creative and Digital Media
Advanced Dairy Technologist	Cyber Intrusion Analyst
Aerospace Engineer	Cyber Security Technical Professional
Aerospace Software Development Engineer	Data Analyst/Scientist
Agriculture	Dental Practice Manager
Aircraft Maintenance Certifying Engineer	Dental Technician
Animal Trainer	Digital and Technology Solution Specialist
Architect and Architectural Assistant	Digital Learning Design
Assistant Technical Director (Visual Effects)	Electrical Engineering
Associate Ambulance Practitioner	Facilities Management
Aviation Operations Manager	Fashion and Textiles Product Technologist
Banking and Finance	Financial Services Professional
Bespoke Tailor and Cutter	Food Industry Technical Professional/ Engineer
Brewer	Geospatial Mapping and Science
Broadcast and Media Systems Engineer	High Speed Rail & Infrastructure Technician
Broadcasting Technology	Hospitality Manager
Building Services Engineering	Housing and Property Management
Business and Professional Administration	Human Resources
Business Analyst	Improvement Practitioner/Specialist
Business To Business Sales Professional	Insurance
Care Leadership and Management	Intelligence Operations
Chartered Manager/Surveyor	Internal Audit Practitioner
Children, Young People and Families Manager/Practitioner	Investment Operations Specialist
Civil Engineer	IT, Software, Web & Telecoms Professionals
Clinical Trials Specialist	Junior 2D Artist (Visual Effects)
Commercial Procurement and Supply	Laboratory Scientist
Community Energy Specialist	Learning and Development Consultant/Business Partner
Construction Management	Legal Services

Universities

Ada, the National College for Digital Skills	University of Bedfordshire
Anglia Ruskin University	University of Bradford
Aston University	University of Cambridge
Bath Spa University	University of Central Lancashire
Birkbeck College	University of Chester
Birmingham City University	University of Chichester
Bournemouth University	University College Birmingham
BPP University	University of Cumbria
Brunel University London	University of Derby
Buckinghamshire New University	University of Durham
Canterbury Christ Church University	University of East Anglia
City, University Of London	University of East London
Coventry University	University of Essex
Cranfield University	University of Exeter
De Montfort University	University of Gloucestershire
Edge Hill University	University of Greenwich
Harper Adams University	University of Hertfordshire
Imperial College Of Science, Technology And Medicine	University of Huddersfield
Kingston University	University of Hull
Leeds Beckett University	University of Keele
Leeds Trinity University	University of Kent
Liverpool John Moores University	University of Lancaster
London Business School	University of Leeds
London Metropolitan University	University of Lincoln
London South Bank University	University of Newcastle Upon Tyne
Loughborough University	University of Northampton
Manchester Metropolitan University	University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Middlesex University	University of Nottingham
Nottingham Trent University	University of Plymouth
The Open University	University of Portsmouth
Oxford Brookes University	University of Reading
Plymouth College Of Art	University of Salford
Queen Mary University Of London	University of Sheffield
Ravensbourne Limited	University of Southampton
Sheffield Hallam University	University of Suffolk
Southampton Solent University	University of Sunderland
Staffordshire University	University of Warwick
Teesside University	University of West London
The Royal Agricultural University	University of the West Of England, Bristol
University of Bath	University of Wolverhampton
University of Bedfordshire	University of Winchester
University of Birmingham	University of Worcester
University of Bolton	Writtle College
	York St John University

Source: <https://www.ucas.com/file/301156/download?token=lkr35v3v>



Hannah, a chartered manager degree apprentice studying towards her degree at Aston University, gives an overview of her typical week. I'm Hannah and I joined Microsoft as a chartered manager degree apprentice in September 2017. I work there full-time while studying towards my degree at Aston University. Here's a sneak peek into a typical week of my life as a degree apprentice.

Monday

The office is usually busy on a Monday, I settle down and check my emails from the Friday before and start my to-do list. A typical Monday will consist of lots of meetings. At the moment, most of them are focused on re-branding a training website for our partners, which I have been given responsibility to lead. This involves talking to web designers to create the best user experience and working with subject matter experts to get the right event information transferred over. My day finishes at 16:30pm so I have enough time to travel home and prepare for our uni webinars that take place from 7pm to 8pm. The webinars give me an opportunity to collaborate with other students on the programme and apply the set reading to real life examples.

Tuesday

On Tuesday mornings, I always take a look at my university work and plan for the next deadline. When deadlines are approaching, my manager and I have regular catch ups to make sure I am on top of everything. After my meeting, I start working on the Inspire campaign, which is a Microsoft event for our partners. My role is to pull the registration data and compare it against our targets and send a weekly update to the event organisers. I try to always make time once a week to catch up with the other apprentices at Microsoft usually for lunch or a coffee. There is a really supportive culture at Microsoft that stresses the importance of good relationships with your colleagues so I have made lots of new friends through my apprenticeship so far.

Wednesday

It's now the middle of the week and on Wednesdays I usually work on the Microsoft Partner Community. This is a platform for our partners that we are currently updating, so this has taken up most of my time recently. I work closely on this project with another degree apprentice in my team and we have regular meetings to discuss content and timelines. We also use this time to write new posts and track membership. We typically have these meetings on the swings in the 'Connection Room'. This is an area on campus where we can get creative and discuss all things customer/partner related. It's a really fun place to catch up with colleagues and I love spending time here because it gives us the space to be creative.

Thursday

This is the last working day of my week so I spend my time checking I have nothing outstanding on my to-do list. I have a weekly Skype meeting with colleagues about another big project I'm working on to monitor progress and implement calls to action for the week ahead. My manager has given me responsibility to be the topic specialist for any internal queries on this project. This goes to show that as a degree apprentice you are also given a lot of responsibility and respect within the company. There are endless opportunities available for both my career and personal development.

Friday

This is my university day where I get to completely focus on my studies. I still do a 9-5 day, but instead of focusing on my work projects, I am catching up with reading or working on upcoming assignments. These assignments are designed to use the theory from the modules and put it into practice in relation to my job, this makes it much more engaging as each assignment is unique to your company and role.

Testimonials

"I chose the apprenticeship route initially because I was not sure if I would be able to get into a university with the A-level courses I was doing. However, after I started to have a look at what some of the apprenticeships were offering, my mind started to change, and I was actively looking for an apprenticeship in the field that I wanted to have a career in. I would recommend apprenticeship to anyone. Being able to work, earn money and go to university to get a degree at the same time is a great opportunity, especially in the field you want to work in."

- Jo-Neal Lewis, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, Advanced Therapies Scientist, Level 5

"I have benefited from my apprenticeship by gaining the knowledge and skills to service and repair HG vehicles, which has led to me securing a full time job after my apprenticeship finished.

This has given me financial security in my life and allowed me to do things that others my age may not be able to afford, like save for a deposit for a house."

- Dextor Truscott – HGV Technician apprentice

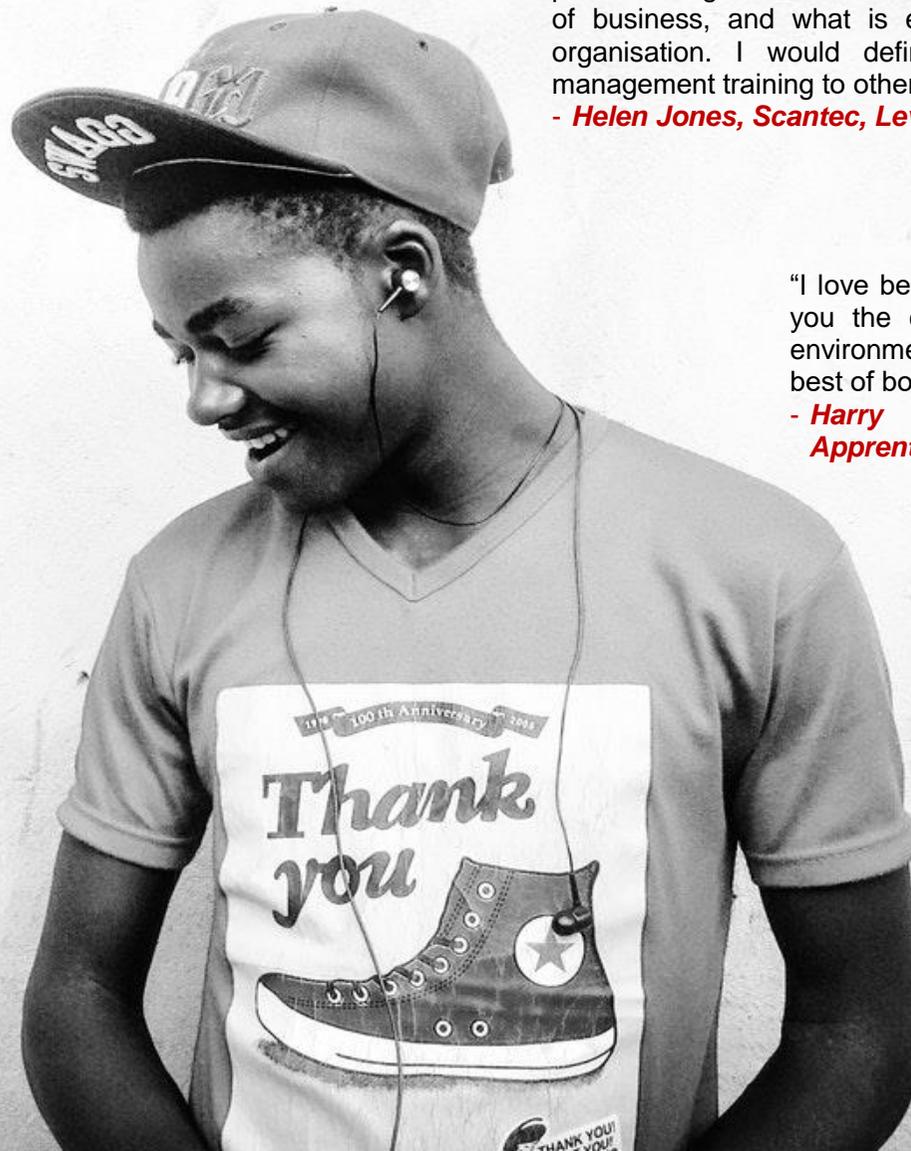
"One of the main benefits of the Level 3 Management training is that it has increased my self-awareness. I have been able to reflect on how I am as a leader, and even to consider how I might have done things differently in the past, as similar topics come up in the modules.

I have also benefitted in terms of being better equipped to plan. I have gained a better understanding of the principles of business, and what is expected of a leader in an organisation. I would definitely recommend Level 3 management training to others."

- Helen Jones, Scantec, Level 3 Management

"I love being an apprentice as it gives you the chance to be in a working environment as well as college. The best of both worlds!"

- Harry Corder, Commis Chef Apprentice, Strattons Hotel.



What do Employers think?

There are a huge variety of apprenticeships available across England offered by leading businesses of all sizes, including Lloyds Banking Group, Rolls Royce, BBC, IBM, Unilever and Airbus. Below are just a few of the many companies that appreciate how beneficial apprentices are to their business.



'Ryan started at Green Lighting doing a level 2 apprenticeship, he's since gone on to do a level 3 and 4 and is now an Operations Manager within his own team.'

- Green Lighting, Energy sector

'The structured Apprenticeship programme provided by Greene King has helped Isabelle Pearson progress from part-time bar staff to managing her own pub in just three years, proving there is an exciting and rewarding career path in hospitality.'

- Greene King, Hospitality sector



'Apprenticeships provide individuals with essential skills and education and as such it is a key part of our talent and development strategy. We are proud of our commitment to provide 1000 Apprenticeship opportunities each year.'

- Lloyds Banking Group, Finance sector

'Apprentices can create a community of practice and we need more fresh insight from young people to question how we do things. We hire them because we know that they can help the company.'

- Unilever UK Limited, Consumer Packaged Goods

Choosing the right apprenticeship

THE VACANCY

Level: To maximise the benefits of an apprenticeship, make sure you begin in a level that teaches you new skills.

Sector: Decide which sector you want to work within, this helps you to narrow down your options.

Employer: It is essential to choose an apprenticeship that satisfies your workplace environment needs and monetary expectations.

Training Programmes: Evaluate the quality of training programmes when considering apprenticeships.

Career Path: Look at the overall picture and ask yourself whether you believe a particular apprenticeship can help you reach your goals.

CHOOSING AN EMPLOYER

Work Environment: Apprenticeships take some time to complete, so choose an employer with a work environment that you can tolerate.

Company Size: Larger companies tend to hire more apprentices while smaller companies may only hire one or two.

Pay: While the UK maintains a minimum wage for apprenticeships, some employers offer higher pay.

Progression: It is vital to acknowledge whether a company offers progression routes after the completion of the apprenticeship.

Company Reputation: Your apprenticeship carries weight on the job market, so choose a company that is respected in the field.

Training Pace: Choose an employer that offers an apprenticeship that aligns with your training needs.

BEING AN APPRENTICE

Technical Training: An apprenticeship equips you with the technical skills employers look for in a potential employee.

Financial Savings: You earn money during an apprenticeship and do not have the high costs that accompany a traditional education.

Networking: During an apprenticeship, you develop relationships with professionals in the field.

Study Time: Most apprenticeships allow time for in-class study.

Support: Because you work with a professional in the field, you have support throughout the learning process.

Career Prospects: The completion of an apprenticeship gives you an advantage over other job seekers who have less experience.

Paid Holidays: Apprentices are treated like real employees, meaning they also get paid holidays.



Reading between the lines

When you read a job description, really try to understand the role – are you clear about what is required of you and how your skillset relates to the role? It's hard to do a great application if you don't understand these basics. Reading a job description correctly will allow you to not only make the best application you can, but also stand out from the crowd. Below is an example of an Intermediate Level (L2) Apprenticeship which be found at www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship. Remember, pay careful attention to the requirements.

Business administration apprenticeship

BETH CAMILLERI SALON LIMITED

to carry out all general office duties and office admin. to work under the manager learning key office skills

[Return to search results](#)
[Print this page](#)

[Sign in to apply](#)
Closing date: 31 Oct 2019

Apprenticeship summary

Weekly wage £174.00 - £328.40 Wages explained	Duties to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Front of house• Filing and basic bookkeeping• Social media• Take/change bookings• PA work• Creating invoices• Answering phones
Working week Tuesday - Saturday 10-6 Total hours per week: 40.00	
Expected duration 52 weeks	
Possible start date 01 Nov 2019	

Requirements and prospects

Desired skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good communication skills• Confident	Future prospects Permanent position in the company with the chance of future training
Personal qualities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Polite• Reliable	Date posted 6 days ago
Desired qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades are a bonus but not essential	Reference number VAC001582539
	Distance 0.3 miles
	Positions 1 available
	Apprenticeship level Intermediate

Self-evaluation - Ask yourself?

- Does my application present me as a candidate who really wants to work for this company or as someone simply looking for a new job?
- Have I discussed my key achievements?
- Have I outlined my key strengths and illustrated them with evidence and impact?

A good apprenticeship application

What are your main strengths?

Please provide examples of when you have demonstrated your strengths

One of my main strengths is my ability to communicate effectively. Whilst doing my work experience placement with Barclays bank, one of my main duties was to greet customers and clients, take phone calls and book meetings for consultants.

Another of my key skills is my ability to work in a team. For example, during my Business Admin course I went on a 2-day entrepreneurship course, I had to work in team of 4 for a "Dragons Den" themed project. Our task was to design our chosen product; which meant I had to be both reliable and able to listen to ideas from my colleagues.

(Shortened version) – Ideally you would add another 3 or 4 competencies/paragraphs

4000 characters remaining

What are your hobbies and interests?

Remember to include any personal achievements

My main hobby is playing football; I play once a week for a Sunday league team for whom I have been the captain for almost 2 years now. I also enjoy cooking dishes for my friends and family as it relaxes me and allows me to socialise with them.

4000 characters remaining

What personal skills would you like to improve?

I would like to have the opportunity to develop on my team working skills as I do not have much experience in that field. Whilst I was doing my course at Sample Training I had two projects to work on as part of a team. We were tasked with coming up with an idea for a Dragons Den project. So I would like to improve on my team working skills or build on it, because working in a team is just as important as working on my own.

I would like to improve leadership skills, as school prefect I was given the opportunity to gain some basic management skills. I would like to learn how to use my time more efficiently and effectively.

Using my time to the maximum capacity will enable me to improve my productivity whilst balancing a healthy lifestyle. I would also like to improve on my sales skills, upselling a product and really knowing how to sell to an audience.

4000 characters remaining

Remember...

Research the apprenticeship thoroughly

Make a list of your experiences, hobbies, and interests

Make sure you tailor your application to the job you're applying for

You'll need to be able to write about yourself

Talk about your skills and qualities, not just your hobbies

The application form will be similar to a job application

CV sorted?

Whether you're thinking of applying for work experience, an entry-level job or a school leaver training programme, chances are you'll need to put together a CV. This is a standard part of the application process and helps to give employers a clear idea of whether your written communication skills are up to scratch. Your CV needs to be easy to read and understand; it should cover all the necessary information and shouldn't include any errors, such as spelling mistakes that will put the recruiter off.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name
Telephone numbers including mobile contact details
Email address

Do not include any further personal details including marital status, gender, and nationality as this does not add any value and may impede your application. You should use Calibri or similar business font and the size should be 10.5 or 11.

PERSONAL PROFILE

This section should include a brief history of your school career and qualifications gained. This section should never be in bullet point format and should be no more than 8 to 10 sentences long. This is your opportunity to present your unique skill set and the value you can bring to an organisation; this will focus on what makes you stand out, your skill set (excellent communication and organisational skills etc.) and the value you bring to potential employers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

This section should include a list of achievements and should be presented in bullet point format.

Example: Acted as school prefect from 2001- 2005. Captain of the school rugby team.
Supported fundraising initiatives within the school including organising sponsored walk.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Start with most recent first and include details of any employment (even if not in your current chosen field). You should also include details of voluntary work including supporting fundraising activities or memberships of societies etc...

Title held, name of company **Dates of employment**
Insert further details of your key duties and responsibilities. Remember to use active verbs including sold, solved performed etc.

Sample duty

X "Moving boxes all day"

✓ "Responsible for completing all paperwork involved in receiving, transferring and controlling stock levels."

EDUCATION & TRAINING

School/College **Dates of attendance**
List any qualifications gained including A levels, GCSEs or BTEC qualifications. University Name, dates (if applicable)

KEY SKILLS

- Include details of all skills you have to offer potential employers.
- Example: IT Skills: Bilingual, First Aid qualified, Typing speed 50WPM.

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Include brief details of interests if you have the space on your document however avoid phrases such as, 'partying' etc. Try to make your hobbies relevant to the role and demonstrate skills the employer is looking for.

REFERENCES

Available on request

Use character references if you don't have work experience. One of your references should be a current or former employer and the second referee can be any person in a professional position e.g. former co-workers, coaches,

You should update your CV for each job application and adapt it to show you have the qualities and qualifications the employer is looking for.

CV types

People often create one CV and then send this out regardless of the job or employer. This is a mistake and it could lead to you missing out on an interview, or even a job offer. Your CV should highlight skills which match the recruiter's needs and sometimes you may need to use a different CV template to achieve this.

Chronological CV

Sometimes known as a traditional CV, a chronological CV is used to match your qualifications and work experience with the requirements for the job role. The CV is structured in reverse chronological order i.e. the most recent qualifications and experience are listed first. It's important to include:

- Qualifications and work experience - match these to the role you're applying for.
- Additional skills and knowledge - cover essential criteria for the role.

Skills-based CV

The skills-based CV can be used if you have gaps in your employment history, have limited experience or are applying for a job which is unrelated to your current field of work. The skills-based CV allows you to focus on the skills you have developed in various areas of your life. It's important to:

- Match your skills with the role profile and use the same headings.
- Provide evidence of how you've used your skills in a real life situation.

Academic CV

Focused on educational achievements academic CVs are used when applying for lecturing or research-based roles. It's important to keep your CV concise and targeted to the role's requirements, with each section in reverse chronological order. Your academic achievements, research interests and specialist skills should be placed on the first page.

Include details of your specialist skills, research outcomes, potential future developments, and any funding or grants that you've received, conferences that you've attended, professional memberships that you've gained and publications that you've been featured in.

Hybrid CV

A hybrid CV is a mix of the chronological and the skills-based/functional CVs - The hybrid CV can be a good option if you want to draw attention to specific skills or achievements that would help you stand out as a candidate.

- Not suitable for those with little experience or achievements.
- Not suitable for those with employment gaps.

Technical CV

Mostly needed for IT roles, the technical CV provides a format for highlighting specific technical skills relevant to the role (e.g. programming languages, systems, platforms) alongside the all-important 'softer skills' that all employers are looking for.

Creative Industries CV

With the expansion of digital and creative industries over recent years, CV formats have become more imaginative in these sectors. A highly creative CV format can be suitable for some roles in creative and artistic sectors such as marketing, design or journalism where it could help you stand out from the crowd.

Stand out from the crowd

Activity

Ideally you should tailor your Profile for each employer and role, highlighting those areas of experience most relevant to the specific job and ensuring your career aspirations exactly match the role on offer.

1 Specific job title

Elias Applicant
100 Ordway Street, Boston, MA 02215
(123) 555-1234
elias.applicant@email.com

2 Number of years of experience

3 Hard skills

4 Soft skills

OVERVIEW

Driven guidance counselor with 10+ years' experience teaching and advising high school students. Fluent in Spanish; skilled at communicating and developing relationships with ESL students and their families. Developing knowledge of American Sign Language. Excellent written and oral communication skills.

When writing your personal profile, ensure it is:

- ✓ Short (no more than 6 lines);
- ✓ Relevant to the job you are applying for
- ✓ Contains some real-world examples and relevant achievements.

Source: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/resume-profile-examples-2062828>

Below are three examples of personal profiles:

Generic

"I am a hard working individual who is reliable, who has an excellent time keeping and attendance record. I can work as part of a team or on my own initiative I am an intelligent, trustworthy, responsible and highly motivated individual with good interpersonal skills, I am always willing to do my best in any type of work or jobs I may be asked to do."

School leaver

"An ambitious school leaver with eight strong GCSE passes and a commitment to pursuing a career in retail. Completed an enjoyable period of work experience at John Lewis, demonstrating a natural aptitude for interacting with customers and providing service with a smile. Played a key role in the school's successful netball and hockey teams. Keen to secure an entry-level role with a fashion retailer, which will provide opportunities for further development and progression."

Project Manager

"I am an energetic, ambitious person with a PRINCE2 qualification in project management who has developed a mature and responsible approach to any task that I undertake, or situation that I am presented with. As a graduate with three years' of experience in management, I excel in working with others to achieve a certain objective on time and with quality."

Source: <https://www.cvplaza.com/cv-personal-profile/how-to-write-a-personal-profile-statement/>

Exercise: Stand out from the crowd

Consider your chosen industry and create a personal profile of about 4 or 5 lines.

So what?

Activity

Spend a few minutes thinking about past or present volunteering experiences, school projects or any clubs/organisations you have been a part of; try and identify any skills you have gained.

But I haven't worked, what can I say?

- Raising money for charity – quantify the money raised and what you did to raise it
- Serving on a community or student committee – what role did you play and how did you make a difference?
- Leading a student team on a project – what size was the team and what did it achieve under your leadership?
- Awards won – don't just list the awards, elaborate on what you did to win them.

The "What? / So What?" Formula

Successfully writing the achievements section of your CV is perhaps the most difficult part of your CV. The simplest means of doing this is to employ the 'What? /So What?' formula, a two-step process that asks:

- What did I do?
- So what? What was the quantifiable result?

Examples of Achievement Statements

- Responded to over 85 customer calls daily and solved 90% of their concerns.
- Served customers in a positive way, receiving two customer service awards in the past year.

Individual vs Team Achievements

If some of your best results were achieved as part of a team you can certainly still include them, for example:

- 'Member of a high-performing team which won the regional support award last year'
- Highlighting team performance demonstrates not only that you're a high-achiever, but also that you're a good team player. However, it doesn't tell a prospective employer how you contributed to the team's success, so for maximum impact you need to make sure that you include specific details of the role you played.
- Don't leave the person reading your CV to guess what your contribution was.

Source: <https://www.wikijob.co.uk/content/application-advice/cvs/achievement-focused-cv>

Exercise: What are my achievements?

Think about any voluntary, school or project work you have done in and outside of school. E.g. Cadets, Youth club work.

List your achievements	
1	
2	
3	



CV Dos and Don'ts

While most of us have some idea of how to write a CV it's surprisingly easy to make basic mistakes - and if you're not aware of these errors, they could cost you your dream job.

1. Poor formatting

- CVs that aren't clear and easy to read are a huge turn-off for employers.
- Recruiters spend an average of just 8.8 seconds reviewing each CV that they receive.
- Avoid confusing layouts, and beware of using too many fonts or font sizes.

2. Failing to tailor your application

- When it comes to CVs, one size doesn't fit all. Evaluating which of your skills match the job specification to give you the best chance of success.

3. Spelling errors

- An error-free CV is vital in showcasing your precision and attention to detail.

4. Lying

- The facts on your CV are easy to corroborate so never assume that recruiters won't make enquiries to do so.

5. Lack of evidence

- However, failing to effectively evidence your skills, achievements and experiences can be a fatal mistake.
- Quantify your successes whenever possible

6. Not explaining 'why'

- It isn't enough to just state your credentials; you need to prove them by justifying why you've chosen to undertake certain activities in terms of your personal and professional development.

7. Ignoring gaps in your work history

- Any unexplained absences of this length will be looked upon with suspicion by potential employers.
- Don't be afraid to let recruiters know that you took some time out to volunteer e.g. travelled the world.

Using a cover letter

Writing a cover letter is more like introducing yourself. It gives you an extra chance to sell yourself and show some personality.

A good cover letter should include:

- An opening statement that briefly introduces you to the reader.
- A main body that highlights qualities and characteristics you have that are relevant to the job.
- A closing paragraph asking to arrange an interview.

Other things you can mention in your cover letter include:

- Key strengths and contributions that show you are a stand-out applicant.
- School work experience or volunteer work that demonstrates your strengths and attributes.
- Any hobbies or interests that are relevant to the job or demonstrate your professional experience.

The sample cover letter below demonstrates the kind of things you need to address.

Mr Allan Moyle
Moyle Retail Solutions
Phone: XX XXXX XXXX
Email: enquiries@moyleretailsolutions.com.au

23 April 2015

RE: Application for Casual Retail Sales Assistant position

Dear Mr. Moyle,

As a highly motivated and dedicated student with strong communication and interpersonal skills, I would like to apply for the position of Casual Retail Sales Assistant.

As a student I have been extensively involved in my school community, which has allowed me to develop strong interpersonal skills. My involvement in various events, including drama eisteddfods and sports carnivals, has allowed me to work closely with my peers while supporting the school community as a whole.

These experiences have allowed me to develop strong time management and organisational skills, which I see as being very important when seeking to work in casual employment while continuing to study.

Personal attributes that I believe make me suitable for this position include:

- **Motivation:** Volunteer participation and school results demonstrate high motivation.
- **Customer Service:** Assisting with the sale of products at community events has allowed the development of customer service skills.
- **Communication:** Acting in drama performances and working as an MC for school events has allowed the development of communication skills.

My teachers and educators have commended me for my willingness to participate and my dedication to helping out where possible. I enjoy working with others and believe that my strong communication skills will ensure that I can meet the expectations of this role.

I am aware that you will receive a large number of applications for this job, but I would very much appreciate the opportunity to demonstrate my capabilities to you in person.

I believe that I have a lot to offer your organisation. I am keen to develop my professional skills and look forward to discussing my application with you at an interview. I have enclosed a copy of my resume for your consideration. I can be contacted at all times on the details provided above.

Thanking you in advance for your time,

Joanne Tint

Buzzwords

Employers will sometimes have to sift through dozens or even hundreds of applications and many will be very similar in appearance. Try to use language which is direct, positive and appropriate in your application.

RESPONSIBILITIES

“A formal account of an employee's tasks & duties”

In charge of...
Employed to/handle...
Project managed...
Supervised/delegated...

SUCCESS

“the accomplishment of an aim or purpose”

Promoted to...
Successful in/at...
Instrumental in...
Delivered...
Proven track record in...
Experience involved/included...

ROLES

“A job role” is a description of what a person does”

Managed...
Presented...
Initiated...
Analysed/evaluated...
Established/created/designed...

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

“quality or characteristic of a person”

Enthusiastic user of...
Committed to...
Confident
Thorough...
Actively sought...

EXPERIENCE

“having gained knowledge or skill in a AA field over time.”

Demonstrated skills in...
Knowledge of/experienced as/proficient in...
Provided assistance to...

ABILITY

“A talent, skill, or proficiency in a particular area.”

Trained in...
Working knowledge of...
Coordinated...
Organised...
Expert at...

Food for thought

Be clear and concise

- Nearly half of all CV's that are more than two pages long are discarded.
- On average, recruiters will spend no more than 5-7 seconds looking at your CV.

Exude professionalism

- 43% of CV's are discarded because they are written in third person and 1 spelling or grammar mistake and your CV will be thrown away.
- 76% of CV's are ignored if you have an unprofessional email address.

Be aware of your competition

- Did you know that for any given position there is an average of 118 people that apply for the position, but only 20% of applicants get an interview?
- Only around 35% of candidates who apply for jobs are actually qualified for the role. Make sure you are applying for jobs that are on your level.
- SEO (search engine optimise) your CV. Many CVs will never see a human being, says portfolio marketing officer Kat Thornberry. "Employers are increasingly using ATS [applicant tracking systems] to filter the CVs. Just as you would put keywords into, say, your LinkedIn profile, you need to check keywords on the job specification and include them."



Supporting statement

When applying for certain roles, employers will often request you send a 'supporting statement' along with a CV or application form. A supporting statement should never simply repeat information from your CV and needs to be written specifically for a job application.

You have one shot at securing yourself an interview – to convince the panel of:

- What you have done in the past
- What you are doing in your current role that is useful to them
- Your developing skill set
- Your vision for the future
- How your strengths and skills can add value to the new school
- How your experiences to date can be used in the new context

General advice:

- Carry out the instructions to the detail
- No more than 2-3 pages
- Spell check
- Ask someone else to re-read and check for errors – fresh eyes can often see better
- Do not reduce your font size below 10
- Break up with lots of paragraphs to make it easier to read

Consider a 3-part statement:

- Opening
- Evidence
- Conclusion

Include examples that will encompass a number of the identified criteria and your impact - e.g. a section from a person specification, indicating where each criteria will be assessed. Be clear, concise and direct, indicating how you have led, developed and worked through others, managed change, taken initiative and made a significant impact.

The employer will appreciate that you work as part of a team but you must tease out your individual role and impact as clearly as possible.

Source: <http://www.hays.co.uk/features/supporting-statement-advice-4446>

Below is an example of a job description detailing which competencies could be assessed during a recruitment exercise. The 'X' shows at which stage your abilities will be tested.

RESPONSIBILITIES / DUTIES	ESSENTIAL	APPLICATION	INTERVIEW
1. You will be responsible for a wide range of general administrative experience	X	X	
2. You must have experience of Diary Management Using Outlook	X	X	
3. Experience of working within a team	X	X	X
4. Communications Skills: Written and verbal	X	X	

Supporting statement example

Below is an example of correctly matching your skills to a job description.

1. A wide range of general administrative experience

I have worked in an office environment for over four years and have extensive experience in a wide range of administrative duties. The duties I have carried out in my previous and present role are carried out on either a daily or weekly basis and consist of the following:

- Answering phones, photocopying, scanning, message taking, word processing of letters and general correspondence, assisting with travel arrangements, organising and preparing the boardroom for meetings, booking restaurants, diary management to name but a few.

2. Diary Management Using Outlook

I use Outlook on a daily basis for organising and arranging meetings for the Director, which often involves many high profile civil servants. One of the recent meetings I arranged was for the Oliver Tambo event, as this is a very important event for Haringey Council and these meetings were urgent they had to take place on a weekly basis and involved up to 10 people.

3. Experience of working within a team

I have a willingness to assist and help others in the office. A most recent example of this was helping my colleague with the organisation, collating and copying of the Budget Challenge Meeting papers for the Director of Finance.

My colleague and I discussed plans before we received the papers, she did the first part of the job by organising the folders and dividers and I did the second part which was photocopying and collation of all the papers. We needed ten copies of each paper, and then my colleague, Line Manager and I inserted the paper work into the folders, in the correct order as instructed.

4. Communications Skills: Written and verbal

On a daily basis I write standard letters and emails to internal and external bodies. These letters and emails have to be accurately typed and well presented.

An example of this is customer complaints; the information taken over the phone and put in writing has to be accurate with as much attention to detail as possible. These letters and emails will be passed onto the appropriate departments for consideration and have to be clear and concise.

Self-evaluation - Ask yourself?

1. Does my application present me as a candidate who really wants to work for this company or as someone simply looking for a new job?
2. Have I discussed my key achievements?
3. Have I outlined my key strengths and illustrated them with evidence and impact?
4. Do I sound as though I actually want this job, more than any candidate?

Assessment centres

Assessment centres are designed to allow employers to see candidates in a variety of situations. You will be measured on your performance against a set of competencies that the employer is looking for. This means that if you don't do so well in one exercise, there are other opportunities for you to shine. Activities that you could be presented with could be: competency based interviews, behavioural interviews, role plays, in trays, group exercises, preparing and delivering a presentation, ability tests, personality testing and the list goes on.

Assessment criteria

Group exercises typically assess a candidate's behaviour in a group, and the overall group dynamics involved in the exercise.

Typical factors assessed in a group exercise include:

1. Team working ability.
2. Social skills, confidence and communication skills.
3. Business acumen.
4. Leadership potential and influence.
5. Capacity to deal with deadlines under pressure.
6. How compatible a candidate's skills and behaviour are for the role.
7. Interpersonal skills, i.e. Listening skills, persuasion, diplomacy, composure, patience



“75% of assessment centres use group exercises”

Psychometric tests

If you apply for a place on a graduate scheme with a big graduate employer, chances are you'll be asked to take psychometric tests alongside a first interview, possibly with a second interview or as part of an assessment centre.

The psychometric test is a level playing field: employers value them because they are a fair way of comparing different candidates' strengths regardless of educational background. Ability tests measure either general or particular skills, capability and acumen. This category of test can include:

- **Numerical reasoning tests**

How well you interpret data, graphs, charts or statistics. Can test basic arithmetic.

- **Verbal reasoning tests**

How well you understand written information and evaluate arguments and statements.

- **Abstract reasoning tests**

How well you follow diagrammatic information or spot patterns. Can check spatial awareness. Diagrammatic or abstract reasoning tests are sometimes described as **inductive reasoning tests**.

- **Logical reasoning tests**

How well you follow through to a conclusion given basic information, or using your current knowledge or experience. These include deductive reasoning tests; in which you are given information or rules to apply in order to arrive at an answer.

Below is a sample question from an Inductive Reasoning Test that could come your way. You can find more practice examples at <http://www.jobtestprep.co.uk>

Typical Components of an Inductive Reasoning Test

The screenshot shows a test interface from AssessmentDay. At the top, it says 'Question 11 of 22' and 'Time remaining for test: 24:15'. The question is 'Which comes next in the series?'. Below the question are five options labeled A, B, C, D, and E. The options are arranged in two rows: the first row has five square boxes with different internal patterns, and the second row has five square boxes labeled A through E. The patterns in the first row are: 1. Empty square, 2. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom, 3. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom and a black rectangle at the bottom, 4. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom and a black rectangle at the bottom, 5. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom and a black rectangle at the bottom. The patterns in the second row are: A. Empty square, B. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom, C. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom and a black rectangle at the bottom, D. Empty square, E. Square with a horizontal line at the bottom and a black rectangle at the bottom. At the bottom of the interface are 'Back' and 'Next' buttons. Red arrows point from text annotations to various parts of the interface: 'Check how many questions you need to answer' points to the question number; 'Keep an eye on the time limit' points to the time remaining; 'You have to spot patterns and work out what comes next, or what image is missing from the sequence' points to the question text; 'Look for logical patterns in the sequence.' points to the sequence of boxes; 'Numbers and letters rarely used; these tests are language-independent.' points to the options A-E; and 'Some tests allow you to go back and forward through questions.' points to the 'Back' and 'Next' buttons.

Interview types

The more you know about the interview, the better you can prepare. Below are different types of interviews you might encounter.



PHONE SCREEN

ONE OF THE INITIAL INTERVIEWS AN EXECUTIVE WILL COME ACROSS. IF YOU RECEIVE A SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT CALL, ASK TO SCHEDULE A MORE APPROPRIATE TIME.



TRADITIONAL

MOST EXECUTIVES HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THESE. FOCUS ON HIGHLIGHTING HOW YOUR SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS PROVE YOU ARE THE BEST CANDIDATE FOR THE ROLE.



VIDEO

SAVES THE CANDIDATE AND COMPANY MONEY ON TRAVEL COSTS, BUT STILL ALLOWS INTERVIEWERS TO OBSERVE THE CANDIDATE'S CHARACTER. PREPARE FOR THESE AS YOU WOULD FOR AN IN-PERSON INTERVIEW.



GROUP

THE HIRING TEAM INTERVIEWS A NUMBER OF CANDIDATES AT THE SAME TIME. THIS IS NOT VERY COMMON FOR MOST EXECUTIVE ROLES.



PANEL

PANEL INTERVIEWS CONSIST OF NUMEROUS INTERVIEWERS ASKING A CANDIDATE QUESTIONS. THESE INTERVIEWERS BRING VIEWPOINTS FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS WITHIN THE COMPANY.



LUNCH OR DINNER

THIS INTERVIEW IS MEANT TO SEE HOW YOU FIT WITH THE REST OF THE TEAM, NOT TO PROVIDE YOU WITH A FREE MEAL. EAT SOMETHING LIGHT AND CLEAN SO THAT YOU ARE NOT DISTRACTED.



STRENGTH-BASED

UNCOVERS WHAT THE CANDIDATE "LOVES TO DO" INSTEAD OF WHAT THEY "CAN DO." COMPANIES CONDUCTING THESE WANT TO BE SURE THE CANDIDATE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT THE ROLE.



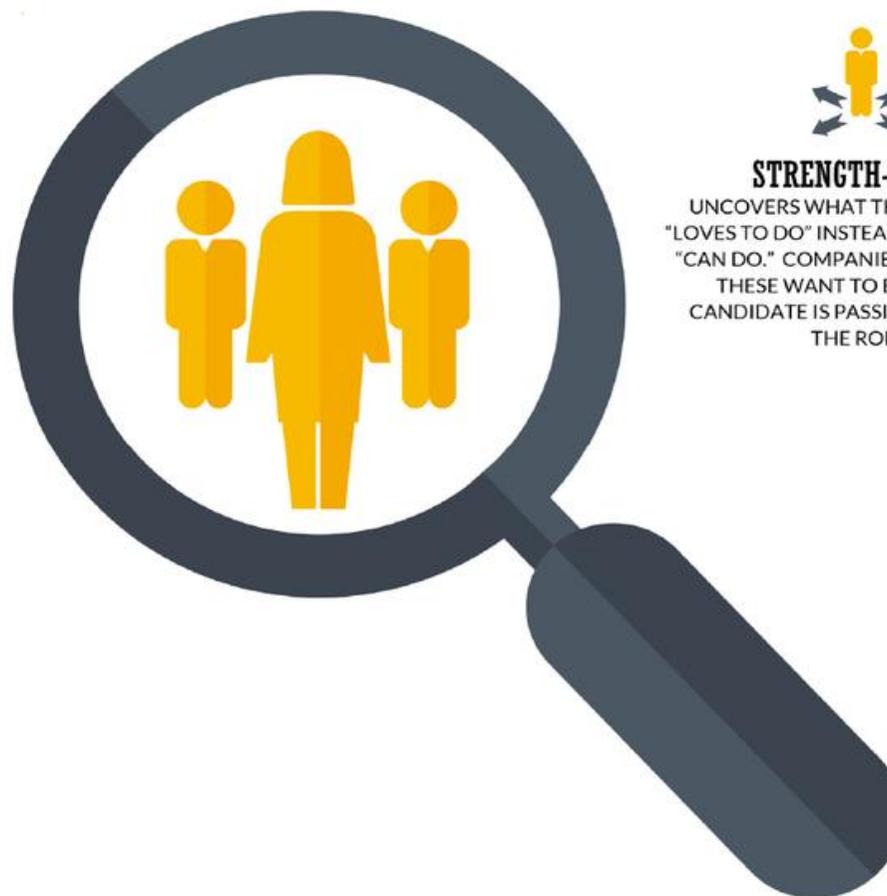
INFORMATIONAL

INVESTIGATIVE MEETINGS WHERE THE CANDIDATE IS NOT BEING CONSIDERED FOR A PARTICULAR ROLE. OVER-PREPARE, KEEP YOUR EXPECTATIONS LOW, AND APPROACH THE CONVERSATION WITH GRATITUDE.



BEHAVIORAL

TESTS YOUR SELF-AWARENESS BY FOCUSING ON WHAT YOU HAVE DONE IN DETAILED SCENARIOS. THE INTERVIEWER'S MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO TRY TO UNCOVER HOW YOU SOLVE PROBLEMS.



Source: <http://onwe.bioinnovate.co/types-of-interview/>

Star technique

Competency questions make up a large part of most job interviews and from a business's point of view they allow an objective assessment of a candidate's experience, and the qualities that make them suitable for the job. The image below breaks down the 'STAR technique' which is a great way to answer interview questions.



Source: www.rightattitudes.com

A lot of interview questions will require you to think about past work experiences you've had. For those who are applying for internships, apprenticeships or have no previous work experience, you can talk about extra-curricular activities, what you achieved while being a member of a university society, or school projects you have been involved in.

Below is an example of how you may want to phrase a competency answer:

<p>SITUATION This is about setting the scene, giving a context to the situation</p>	<p><i>"I was working for Waterstones as a sales assistant during the Christmas holiday period while the store was going through a rebrand"</i></p>
<p>TASK Build on the background you've given, and outline the task at hand</p>	<p><i>"As the store steadily became busier throughout the Christmas season, I was working in the children's department. My job was to ensure smooth running of the rebrand while also providing consistently good customer service at the same time, as well as maintaining order on the shop floor."</i></p>
<p>ACTION What did you actually do to resolve the situation?</p>	<p><i>"To support the rebranding in the children's department I had regular meetings with the store manager. This meant I was aware of when new stands or shelves were coming in and was able to manage my time effectively to help set these up in time for the reopening, while also fitting in time to work on the shop floor, manage customer service and keep the store tidy."</i></p>
<p>RESULT The result should be a positive one, and ideally one that can be quantified</p>	<p><i>"We achieved record sales during the Christmas period, a 50% increase on last year, while the rebrand continued with no issues. I was presented with employee of the quarter in recognition of how I worked with the team."</i></p>

Source: <https://www.ratemvapprenticeship.co.uk/advice/students/star-interview-technique>

Interview prep

Plan ahead

- ✓ Check where and when – sort out any travel and accommodation you need.
- ✓ Be ready for questions – about your application, as well as your chance to ask about the job role.
- ✓ Know your stuff – show you know the latest in your subject area, and keep up to date with the news.

What might the employer ask me?

- ✓ Why are you the best person for the job?
- ✓ What relevant experience do you have?
- ✓ What do you know about this company?
- ✓ Why do you want to work for this company? – don't say...MONEY!!!

Know your company

- ✓ What is the companies' history and its values?
- ✓ What do they really do?
- ✓ How long have they been around?
- ✓ What additional services do they provide?

Preparing for a video interview

Video interviews are often used in the early stages of the interview process to filter out large numbers of candidates. They can vary in style and length. The obvious benefits are the money and time savings for both you and the company. It also means that the recruiter and their colleagues can watch the interview again rather than just relying on notes.

Video Interview Tips

- Find a quiet, private, well-lit place, free from possible interruptions.
- Ensure your internet connection is stable.
- Check that your computer's audio is working.
- Test your computer's webcam.
- Close any unnecessary web browser tabs and applications.
- Dress professionally and avoid bright colors.
- Have a pen, notepad and copy of your CV on your desk.
- When listening, nod and smile to show you are engaged.
- Use hand gestures when appropriate.
- Place your phone in silent mode.



Interview obstacles

Sometimes in an interview situation, you might be asked a question which takes you by surprise such as ‘what is your greatest weakness?’ it could be that the employer wants to see how fast you can think. Consider how you might answer some of the questions below:

What is your greatest weakness?

This is a very common question to be asked, and it doesn't take much time to prepare for it. But, you do need to be prepared! These answers are not what you want to be saying:

- I don't have any. (*Amazing and unbelievable!*)
- I have so many; it's hard to pick just one.
- I'm not a good speller. (*secretarial job*)
- I hate dealing with difficult people. (*customer service job*)
- I'm bad with maths. (*analyst job*)
- I'm not very good with the newer versions of Microsoft Office, I like Office 97 best.

Why should we hire you?

This question is an opportunity to make a personal sales pitch, focused on the benefit to the employer, not the benefit to you for having the job (the employer understands how you will benefit). Most of these answers are worrisome:

- I don't know. (*Neither will the employer.*)
- No one else will hire me.
- I need the money.
- I need a job.

Tell me about yourself

This question is not an invitation to confess your greatest hopes or your biggest sins. But it is another opportunity to show the employer how your skills and experience match up with the requirements of their job. Having nothing to say may be interpreted by the employer as lack of interest and/or lack of preparation.

There's not much to tell. (Professional spy?)

“My real job is rock musician. I'm the drummer. But our agent quit, so we don't have any gigs scheduled the rest of the year. We're looking for a new agent, and I hope to get back to that soon. That's what I really do.”

Do you have any questions?

Applicants often shoot themselves in the foot with this question, as you'll see in these responses. Would you want to hire the people who gave any of these answers? Neither would I. Yes, you should have questions! But not these:

- Will I need to pass a drug test before I get hired? How much notice will I have?
- How often do people get salary increases here?
- Do you cover sick days? How many can I have each month?
- How much annual leave will I get?
- How big is the employee discount? Is there a limit on how much I can buy? Is it OK to resell?

Checklist: am I job ready?

1. I can list at least 3 employability skills I possess (list below)

List your skills below	
1	
2	
3	

2. I can provide quality examples of my employability skills

Skill 1	Skill 2
List skill: Write example below:	List skill: Write example below:

3. I know how to create both a CV and cover letter

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

4. I know what an apprenticeship is...

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

5. I know the difference between apprenticeships and higher education

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

6. I know how to effectively apply for vacancies and work experience

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

7. I know where to find apprenticeship vacancies

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

8. I know how to conduct myself in job interviews

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

9. I am aware of how my digital footprint can impact my career prospects

Not a clue! A bit worried Unsure Should be okay Confident

Notes

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Tasks

Remember

- Set realistic timeframes for your tasks.
- Be honest with yourself.
- Make your task specific e.g. spend 20mins extra per day revising fractions and percentages.

Actions to be taken	How will I achieve this action?	To complete by

