



City of
Portsmouth
College

EMPLOYABILITY WORKBOOK

Hints and tips to help build your unique CV and
be interview ready to start your career.

Introduction

This employability handbook is aimed to help you write your CV, help you figure out your soft skills and strengths, prepare you for an interview and help you look for a job.

The careers team at COPC know that it can be hard or intimidating to find a job, but this workbook is aimed at making it a lot easier and provide step-by-step support.

Additional Support

Sign up to the E6 Employability enrichment programme that runs multiple times throughout the year across campuses

- ✉ Highbury or North Harbour Campus: **tina.kenyon@copc.ac.uk**
- ✉ Sixth Form Campus: **alex.healing@copc.ac.uk**
- ✉ General information: **careers@copc.ac.uk**

We can also put you in contact with the National Careers Service for those over the age of 18.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

1. Preparation

A well-prepared CV is often the key to a successful job hunt, and it must do justice to your abilities.

It should be a concise, carefully thought out and well-presented document that provides the employer with an indicator of your potential worth. It should be an honest but positive reflection of your skills, experience, achievements, and goals. In short, it should make the reader want to find out more as opposed to consigning your details to the bin!



Presentation

The look and feel of your CV should be as simple and clear as possible, and although there is no hard and fast rule, you should aim to fit all your information within two pages of A4. Presentation counts for a great deal, and consideration should be given to details such as the typeface used, correct spelling and layout. Generally, it should be conveyed in an ordered and professional manner.

Structure

There is no single, standard way of structuring a CV, but the main components are as follows:

- **Personal details**
- **Personal profile**
- **Core skills**
- **Employment history**
- **Education and training history**
- **Interests that are professionally relevant**

Two particularly important sections are your personal profile and employment history (though the others should not be neglected), and it is worth discussing these sections in a little more detail.

Your personal profile section should very briefly detail the type of position (and possibly the type of company) that you are seeking and why you are right for the role. It also allows you to highlight the key strengths and attributes that you could bring to the role.

Your employment history section provides key employment information, such as, company, dates, responsibilities, skills and behaviours, and should demonstrate a clear development path right up to the present time. The whole section should link with and offer justification for your personal profile.

Employment history tips

Your employment history breakdown should always start with your current or most recent company listing your latest role within that company first. Greater detail should be provided about more recent and more significant roles. Whatever the role, concentrate on highlighting your achievements within it rather than simply describing your responsibilities.

It is often helpful to bullet point your achievements. You will find that sentences that start with words such as 'responsible' or 'accountable for', or 'initiated' or 'co-ordinated', for example, strike the right note. Remember that you should discuss your achievements in the employer's terms (i.e. how you actually helped your company) rather than purely your own.

Avoid the temptation of padding out your employment history section unnecessarily. If you are a recent graduate or you are applying for one of your first jobs, it is better to place a little more emphasis on other aspects, such as your qualifications and training. Avoid glossing over employment gaps. Long, unexplained career gaps can count against you, so, wherever possible, explain them in a positive light!



Final points

When you have completed your CV make sure that you re-read it on your own and preferably with a friend. Think about how well you have tailored it to the position on offer. For example, if the position is in an industry sector new to you, have you emphasised your transferable skills? If it is in the same sector, have you emphasised your industry knowledge? In a competitive situation, the attention you give your CV is vital. It is also important to name your document appropriately.

CV support

You may want to consider making a LinkedIn account that reflects the information on your CV, as a lot of employers will research you once they have received your CV. LinkedIn is a great place to show off your professional skills! It is also worth ensuring all of your social media accounts are set to private to stop employers digging further than you would like! It is always worth remembering that a job advertisement will get lots of responses, so the person hiring will not have a lot of time to spend reading each CV, and therefore you should make your CV as easy to read as possible and always be straight to the point.

There is no right or wrong way to write a CV, but these are some pointers that most companies agree on.

Saving it as 'CV' won't help employers find your CV quickly, so ensure to save it 'Your Name CV'.

CURRICULUM VITAE

2. Writing Essentials

It is always worth remembering that a job advertisement will get lots of responses, so the person hiring will not have a lot of time to spend reading each CV, and therefore you should make your CV as easy to read as possible and always be straight to the point.

There is no right or wrong way to write a CV, but these are some pointers that most companies agree on.



The font and format

- **Use a basic font, such as Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman**
- **Make sure your text is black and between size 10 and 12**
- **Don't print your CV on coloured paper**
- **Use the same font and format throughout the CV**
- **Make sure the layout is clear and easy to read; otherwise, your CV might not even get read**

Include a personal statement or profile

Use a short personal statement or profile to explain why you are THE person for the job. Only put personal interests if you can relate them to the role. Don't put down anything that might make you sound unreliable or lazy, such as socialising with friends or sleeping! Take the time to tailor your statement and change it for each job role that you apply for. Research the company, use the job advert and person specification to work out EXACTLY what skills you should point out to them. They will notice the extra effort. This should be the only part of your CV, not bullet-pointed.

Your name and contact details

- **Your name and contact details**
- **Your name should be larger than the other text so it stands out**
- **Always include your location, telephone number and email address**
- **If you don't have an appropriate one, consider opening another email account**

Date of birth

You may include your birth date if you wish. However, it is no longer necessary since the 2006 Employment Equality (Age) Regulations Act made age discrimination illegal in the recruitment process. If you're having issues getting interviews, try removing it from your CV to see if it has a positive impact.

Nationality & gender

You should not put your nationality on your CV. The Race Relations Act 1976 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, or nationality (including citizenship, ethnicity or national origin).

Work experience

- **Start with your most recent first**
- **Include Employer name, job role and dates**
- **When listing responsibilities, ensure you include vital skills learnt and behaviours developed**

Education experience

- **Start with your most recent first**
- **List school/college/university AND professional institutes / If you are applying for a job in the same sector in which you have educational or professional qualification, it is a good idea to specify which modules your course covered / Talk about how experiences on that course have helped you prepare for the job for which you are applying**
- **When listing your education grades, always put your highest grade at the**

top of the list. If you have a bad grade, you can leave it off your CV only if it is NOT in English, maths or a relevant subject to the role

- **When listing responsibilities, ensure you include key skills learnt and behaviours developed**
- **It is also important to name your document appropriately.**
- **Just saving it as 'CV' won't help employers find your CV quickly so ensure to save it 'Your Name CV'.**

Don't leave gaps

If you have a gap in your employment history, it will get noticed. But don't panic. Put a positive spin on it. Did you do any unpaid work, complete a course or develop soft skills in communications or teamwork? Find something and shout about it! Loudly!

Keep it current

Keep your CV up to date even if you are not looking for a new job. Make sure you update every significant career event soon after it happens. Don't let it slip because it's harder to remember the details later.

The error of your ways

Even small mistakes look very bad, and employers will use them to dismiss your application. Get someone else to read it through and use spell-check to check for grammar and syntax errors. Don't ruin a chance at a dream job due to an avoidable error.

Be honest

Lies on your CV will get found out!

The maths

It isn't exciting but backing up your achievements with numbers will be very well received. If you were responsible for an increase in sales, then quantify it! '70 % increase in sales' sounds so much better than 'increased sales', and state how you made those improvements.

Look good

Image is everything! Right? A CV should be no more than 2 pages of A4 paper long. Use bullet points and keep sentences short. Use the graphic design trick of leaving plenty of white space around text and between categories to make the layout easy on the eye. Obviously, it is a CV, so no need to put CV or Resume as a title! A great looking CV will also show off your IT skills.

Make it keyword friendly

Keywords are very important. Buzzwords can make your CV stand out. Try typing the job title into Google and see what words are commonly mentioned. Job sites like Reed, Totaljobs or Indeed use keywords to match your skills to employers.

CURRICULUM VITAE

3. Strengths and soft skills

There are a variety of ways you can describe yourself and your strengths.



I am...**Fill in the examples****Skilled at....****Excellent at...****A skilful...****Able to...****Competent in...****Very good at...****Extremely good at...****Talented at...****Familiar with...****Qualified to...**

Able	Consistent	Enjoy a challenge	Independent	Polite
Accurate	Cooperative	Enthusiastic	Innovative	Positive
Adaptable	Cope under pressure	Fast learner	Initiative	Practical
Alert	Creative	Fast worker	Intelligent	Pro active
Ambitious	Decisive	Flexible	Intuitive	Punctual
Analytical	Dedicated	Focused	Keen	Rational
Articulate	Dependable	Friendly	Knowledge	Reliable
Assertive	Desire to succeed	Good communicator	Leadership skills	Resourceful
Astute	Determined	Gifted	Loyal	Responsible
Bright	Diplomatic	Hard-working	Mature	Supportive
Capable	Diverse	Helpful	Methodical	Tactful
Calm	Drive	Highly motivated	Motivated	Team player
Confident	Dynamic	Honest	Objective	Tenacious
Committed	Educated	Imaginative	Organised	Thorough
Common sense	Effective	Impressive	Patient	Trustworthy
Competent	Efficient	Insightful	Perceptive	Versatile
Computer literate	Energetic	Interpersonal skills	Persistent	Willing

Now you have practised describing your strengths, look at the examples below of how to showcase your soft skills to employers.

Soft skills are a combination of people skills, social skills, communication skills, character or personality traits, attitudes, career attributes, social intelligence, and emotional intelligence that enable employees to navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills.

Soft skills	
Time management	Manage time effectively, prioritising tasks and able to work to deadlines
Flexibility	Adapt successfully to changing situations & environments
Planning & organising	Able to plan activities & carry them through effectively
Written communication	Able to express yourself clearly in writing
Drive	Determination to get things done. Make things happen & constantly looking for better ways of doing things
Initiative/self motivation	Able to act on initiative, identify opportunities & proactive in putting forward ideas & solutions
Analysing & investigating	Gather information systematically to establish facts & principles. Problem solving
Commercial awareness	Understand the commercial realities affecting the organisation
Teamwork	Work confidently within a group
Verbal communication	Able to express your ideas clearly and confidently in speech

Motivation will almost always beat mere talent.

– Norman Augustine

CURRICULUM VITAE

4. Template

There are a variety of ways you can describe yourself and your strengths.



Name

Phone number

Email address

Personal profile

Add the skills and qualities you have. Add things that employers want to hear as the person who employs you. Remember to target the job with examples of things that you have that they want; the person specification should help here. Don't go too long, 8-10 sentences are about right.

Core skills

Anything else you want them to know but don't know where to put it. You can also include any key achievements as long as they are professionally relevant.

Example: Good IT skills, can use the full range of Microsoft Office Software, communication, leadership, presentation skills.

Work experience

Previous work or work experience or volunteer work, from most recent to oldest. Make sure to include key skills learnt and developed, not just your responsibilities

Example:

September 2016
- July 2017

Customer Assistant - PC World

List your roles responsibilities and duties:

- Assisted customers to make purchases, enabling me to develop my commercial awareness
- Followed customer data confidentiality policy
- Cleaned the public areas developing attention to detail
- End of day banking, developed financial acumen
- Adhered to the Health and Safety policy
- Rotated stock in line with company promotions
- Undertook training in PC troubleshooting
- Dealt with customer complaints and issues, growth of customer service skills, especially when under pressure

Education

Include all the education, qualifications and any training even if it was not at School, from most recent to oldest.

Example:

September 2016 - June 2017 **Level 3 BTEC IT** City of Portsmouth College

Level 3 Pass

September 2011 - June 2016

GCSEs - Any School

Maths Grade 5, English Grade 5, History Grade C, BTEC Level 2

Interests

Discuss relevant hobbies and interests here.

References

Available on request

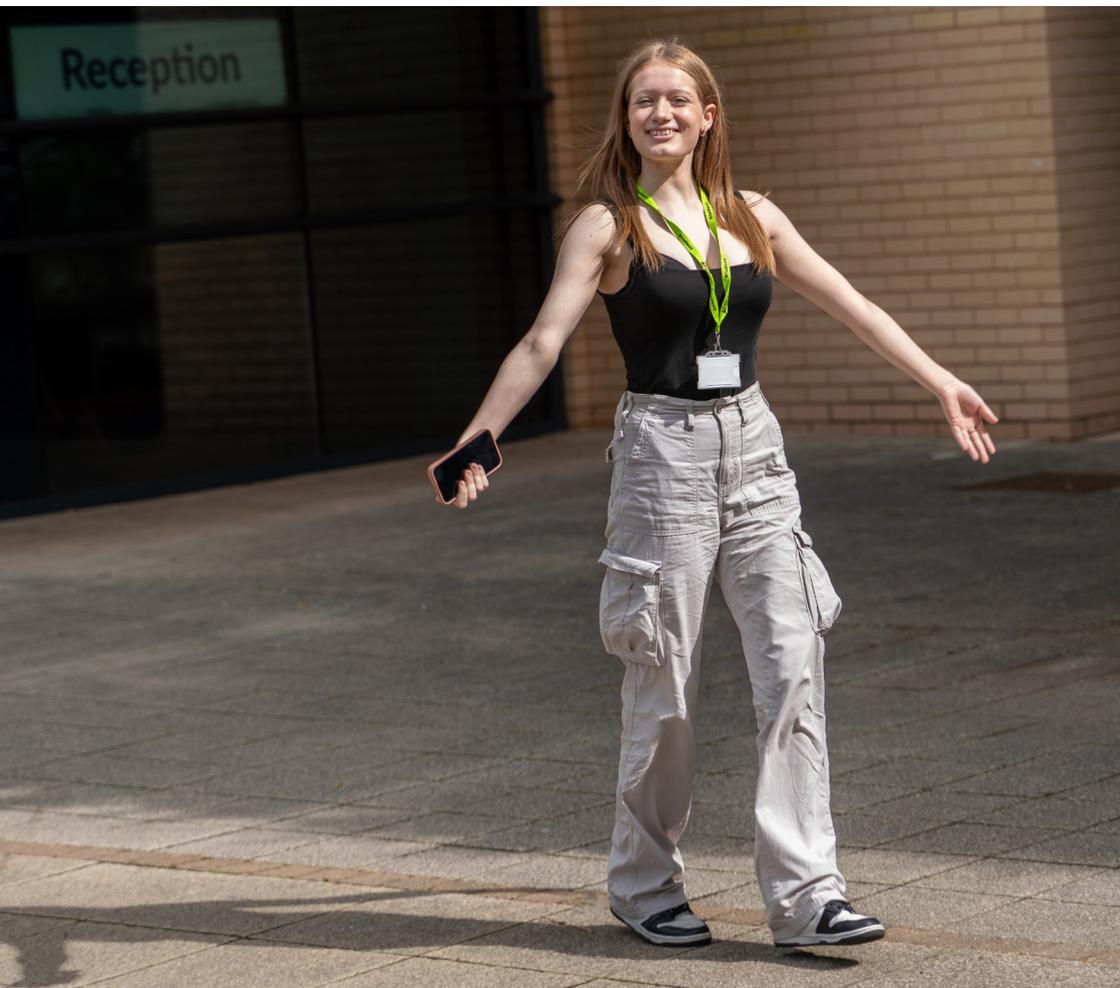
Don't give out the details of your references just yet! Make sure that the two people you want to use are aware and are happy for you to ask them.

It is also important to name your document appropriately. Just saving it as 'CV' won't help employers find your CV quickly so ensure to save it 'Your Name CV'.

5. How to find a job?

Whether you're a student, have recently graduated or are employed and considering moving on, looking for a job can take time.

Focus on these essential steps to landing a suitable role.



Start your job search

Do this by making good use of the following resources:

- **Careers fairs and events**
- **Gov.uk for their find a job service**
- **Jobs boards**
- **Local and national press**
- **Recruitment agencies**
- **Sector-specific websites**
- **Social media**
- **University careers and employment services.**
- **National Apprenticeship Service**

Gain experience

Once you've decided on the type of role you're aiming for, gaining some relevant experience will not only introduce you to the skills you'll need and help you to develop them. You'll also be proving your commitment to working in the area and making contacts as you go.

This experience can take several forms, including:

Internships - last anywhere from a few weeks up to 12 months; an internship is a fixed period of work experience that is focused on giving students and graduates relevant expertise in their field. Interns are classed as workers and are paid at least the National Living Wage - see Gov.uk for the National Minimum Wage rates.

Volunteering - if you've got the time to spare, you could give your time to a worthy

cause to develop your skills and learn more about working as part of a team.

Work placements - if a work placement is a compulsory element of your degree, it's likely to be formally assessed through completing tasks and projects. If it's not compulsory, you can arrange your own by contacting employers to enquire about your options.

Work shadowing - by observing a professional in their role for just a day or two, you'll gain valuable insight into what their job involves.

During the pandemic, virtual work experience replaced many traditional methods, but work experience and internship opportunities are becoming available again.

Network

The saying 'it's not what you know, it's who you know' may spring to mind here. By making yourself and your ambitions known to those already in the industry, you'll be considered for future job vacancies or work experience opportunities.

You'll need confidence and a proactive attitude to approach employers, but try not to feel intimidated - they've all been in your position before and know how it feels.

You can start networking from home - your first point of call should be your friends, family and colleagues, before attending relevant events - discover how to make the most of careers fairs. You can also connect with professionals and organisations through platforms such as LinkedIn, apprenticeship providers, previous employers, previous teachers or tutors.

Prepare for the interview

Receiving an invitation to interview may at first sound daunting, but taking the time to prepare beforehand will help you speak clearly and confidently, and leave the interviewer with a great first impression.

You can prepare in a number of ways. It's important to research the company and its achievements, as well as current affairs within the wider sector, but you could also plan answers to typical interview questions, and think about the questions you would like to ask the employer.

For more advice on how best to prepare, whether you're attending a video, phone or face-to-face interview, see these interview tips.

Alternative routes

Although these are the steps you're likely to take in your search, this isn't the only way to find a job.

For instance, if you'd like to work for a specific company that isn't currently advertising a vacancy, you could contact them directly with a speculative application. This shows confidence and initiative, and even if there are no positions available, you may be signposted to opportunities elsewhere.

If you've got the initiative, knowledge and passion to drive your ideas forward, you could consider starting your own business or becoming an entrepreneur.

[Click here to discover how COVID-19 has impacted the self-employed and get a complete overview of self-employment in general.](#)

Another route to consider, if you're still studying, is to apply for a graduate scheme - many of the UK's largest companies offer them in a range of specialisms such as finance, HR, healthcare, engineering and IT.

Top tips on how to get a job

- Don't feel disheartened if you're turned down for a position, either at the initial application stage or after an interview. You'll likely be competing against a large volume of applicants. Get in touch with the interviewer or company for feedback to determine how you can improve for future interviews.
- Signing up for job alerts will save you time and introduce you to opportunities you may not have previously considered. The more detail you give about what job you're looking for, the more likely you are to receive vacancy alerts that excite and motivate you.
- Register with recruitment agencies - they're well-connected and will put you forward for positions requiring your skill set. Building a good relationship with your job agency will help you land an appropriate and satisfying role. The key to success in interviews is PREPARATION. The best way to prepare is to make a 'bank' of answers to interview questions. This will help you ensure that you have some good answers, and you can practice them when you have an upcoming interview, which will improve your chances of success! These are generic common interview questions. You should also conduct some additional research on interview questions based on your career choice.

Things to consider before your interview:

- Research what the company/organisation does
- Think about why you would like to work for this company/organisation
- Use concise, unambiguous language during the interview
- Do not make false claims; honesty is always the best policy
- Stress your past accomplishments and the skills you used to get the results you Achieved (e.g. extracurricular activities, sports, volunteering, work experience)
- Dress appropriately for the type of job you have applied for (e.g. For an office job, consider wearing a suit)
- Speak articulately and think about your answer before you start talking - it's okay to pause before giving your answer. Always ask for clarification if you don't understand the question!
- Prepare two/three questions to ask the interviewer at the end of the interview (e.g., ask about any training/personal development opportunities, if there are any upcoming projects you may be involved in).



6. Key interview questions

Whether you're a student, have recently graduated or are employed and considering moving on, looking for a job can take time.

Focus on these essential steps to landing a suitable role.



Question	Examples
Tell me a bit about yourself	Here you will briefly talk about your background (School/ College courses if relevant) and talk about your career ambitions.
What are your career goals?	Remember to be positive, be keen and motivated to succeed in this area, and be as specific as possible!
What subjects do you enjoy most at school and why?	Do you enjoy it because it's: Theoretical Creative Practical Makes you think Do you enjoy lab work? Do you like reading?
Why have you applied for this particular role?	Explain your interest in the job/sector and any work experience completed
What skills do you think you need to have for this role?	Good time keeper - Being punctual - Good communication skills - Flexible - Good listener - Problem solving - Leadership potential - Motivated - Committed - Good at research - Team worker
Can you give me an example of when you worked in a team?	Examples: Captain of a sports team Lead in delivering a presentation/assembly Duke of Edinburgh event Chair of a committee
What was your role in the team and how did you contribute?	Be clear and quantify your answers.
What qualities do you think a good team leader needs?	Aim: Work together to achieve shared goal/succeed. Organise Encourage Good communication skills Confidence Work under pressure

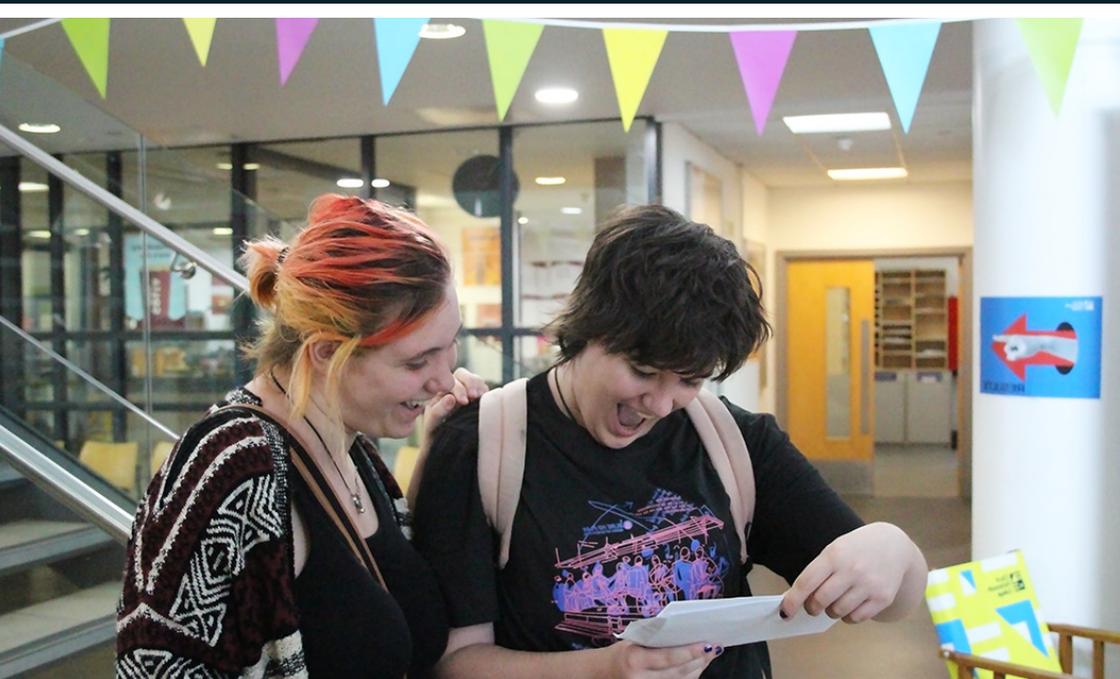
Question	Examples
<p>Can you give an example of a time when you took the lead in a team?</p>	<p>Make it relevant and provide details of how you led.</p>
<p>Tell me how you prioritise your homework?</p>	<p>Plan - Prioritise - Organise - Set deadlines How do you do this – to do lists, use planner?</p>
<p>Why is planning and organising important?</p>	<p>Helps to be more: Effective - Productive Helps prioritise activities and set deadlines Reduces stress as you know what you are doing</p>
<p>Can you give an example of organising an event at school or at home?</p>	<p>Cake sale - Charity collection - Rock Challenge - School trip/event - Duke of Edinburgh</p>
<p>Tell me about a time when things at school or home did not go to plan. How did you learn from this?</p>	<p>Flexible - Positive - Resilience - Perseverance - Motivation - Determination to succeed - Work under pressure/stress - Learn from mistakes</p>
<p>Tell me about a time when you have needed to communicate with a challenging person.</p>	<p>They are asking this to judge if you have good communication skills.</p> <p>You could use different scenarios; this could be working with a difficult person on a group project in school or college, having a problematic person in your band/ sports team, or a demanding customer in a work experience placement or part-time job.</p> <p>It would help if you used the STAR interview questions technique to ensure a comprehensive answer. Try to avoid being negative about the individual.</p>
<p>What are your key strengths?</p>	<p>List your top 3 and give examples.</p> <p>Discuss your strengths that are suited for the role. For example, if you're being interviewed for a Retail job, discuss people skills, communication skills etc. If the job is in Administration, discuss being organised and your IT skills.</p>

Question	Examples
<p>What are your weaknesses?</p>	<p>Hint – don't say 'I'm terrible at time keeping' or anything else that can put the interviewer off you!</p> <p>Be positive and constructive. Say things like 'I don't have much experience in retail; however, I am keen to learn, and I am very enthusiastic, so if I am employed, I will be focussed on developing myself.'</p>
<p>What areas do you feel you need to develop? Why?</p>	<p>Keep this positive and relevant to the role.</p>
<p>What has been your greatest achievement to date?</p>	<p>Rock Challenge Fund raising activities Sport, music, drama dance activities Activity outside of school: caring for animals</p>
<p>Why should we give you the job?</p>	<p>Talk about any experience you have.</p> <p>If none, talk about your enthusiasm for this career and the relevant skills and qualities you have that the employer is looking for (should be listed on the job advert or person specification).</p>
<p>Have you got any questions?</p>	<p>Questions you may want to ask:</p> <p>Is there a fixed period of training for the role? Is there a career path in this role? Can you give me further details about the training available? Where will I be based? (office, mobile, client-side) Ask about the team, equipment and facilities that you will be working with. What does the company's growth strategy look like, and how does this role fit that? Is there a probation period? Will I have regular appraisals with my line manager/mentor?</p> <p>An interview is also the time for you to decide if you want to work for this company. Do you like what you see? If you have any concerns or queries, this is the perfect opportunity for you to raise them.</p>

7. Telephone/virtual interview

The telephone or virtual interview is a perfect time for you to sell yourself and make the interviewer want to meet you in person.

Times can vary for this - some can be 20-30 minutes and some up to 45 minutes. Always makes sure you have enough time available. The client will ask for examples of achievements in your previous roles. They will want to get a feel for you, your personality, and your aspirations. First things first, be ready and waiting for the call! If, for any reason, there is a hold-up, please let the employer know.



Be prepared

Make sure you are well-rested and mentally prepared. Who is it that you are attending an interview with? Check out the website and know it inside out (flicking your eyes over their site will not cut it). Ensure you read up on the company and Google them to see what's happened recently- this shows you are passionate about working with them. We want you to make sure you know everything you can learn about the company so when asked; you can impress with your knowledge. Google the company owners - How long have they been going? What products do they offer? What is their target market? Find out as much background information as you can. If you know about the company, you have much more chance of demonstrating how you can help and succeed. Make sure you get up and dress as you would for a face-to-face interview, consider where you will sit and make sure the background is suitable, and you have a quiet space in which you won't be disturbed. Also, ensure your internet connection and phone signal is strong.

BE YOU

Your interviewer will want to hear about you and your personality, so don't be afraid to show it. This type of interview is a chance for the company to listen to how you communicate with customers or suppliers, and it's essential to portray how confident you can be dealing with questions over the phone.

Enjoy the call

It may sound silly, but if the interviewer asks how you are, ask them as well. First impressions make an impact, so be polite, friendly and be yourself.

Question time

You will, of course, be asked questions during the interview. Take your time and consider your responses. The interviewer will be looking for clear and composing answers.

A few areas to think about: Why are you interested in this role? What made you apply?

What benefits can you bring to the position and the company?

How do you deal with challenging situations?

Why did you/do you want to leave your previous/ current position? Towards the end of the interview, you will likely be allowed to ask any questions that you may have.

Always prepare at least two questions in advance. Here are some areas to think about. What is the company's strategy/ future plans?

What does the position entail?

How will the position develop?

Top tips

Listen to the question and digest it before you answer. The interviewer will be looking for clear and composing answers. Speak with a clear and steady voice.

Practise with someone, so you feel comfortable with over the telephone or on the relevant virtual app. Have two questions prepared at a minimum.

Stay positive throughout the interview and thank the interviewer for their time. Make sure you get post-interview feedback and always treat it as a learning experience.

8. Face to face interview

Know where you are going

This is obvious, but it is vital to check out where you need to be, including the parking situation if you are driving. It's sometimes worth doing a test run, which will make you feel less flustered on the interview day.

What to wear

Appearances shouldn't count as much as they do, but that first impression is vital! Make sure you look the part and feel comfortable. A few pointers:

Neat hair and no chipped nail varnish.

For gentlemen, the best option is to wear a shirt and tie.

Don't smoke before the interview as the smell is off-putting for many.

Wear plenty of deodorant, especially if it's hot, as you will perspire more in an interview.

Take off any casual jackets or hoodies before going in.

Retain your style.

Preparing for your interview

It will help if you start by understanding the company and what they specialise in and value. You can never do enough research before an interview, and company information updates all the time. Also, research the role you have applied for. Think about why you are applying for it to convey your passion and interest in it. If it's in a new sector, try to think about how your skills transfer.

Know your CV

It's time to remind yourself of your CV and your achievements. What you have done and what you enjoy. The interviewer is likely to focus on your CV and delve into your experience and career development. You may be asked about problems you have encountered and how you have dealt with them. Remind yourself of any career gaps or why you left any previous roles. Think about why you are building towards this new challenge. You will need to be positive about previous employers as your future employer will want to know that you are a team player.

Timings

Aim to walk into reception no later than 10 minutes before the interview time. This will give you enough time to get checked into reception in case you have to sign in. Don't be late under any circumstances but also don't be too early. There is nothing worse than waiting for ages in reception, and your interviewer will not be any more impressed. Take any extra time to breathe and relax.

The greeting

Greet your interviewer with a warm smile and shake hands firmly (Covid dependant!). Make sure you make eye contact and, above all, stay relaxed.

Introductions

Interviewers are people just like you, and they will want to put you at ease. Listen carefully from the start as the format of interviews can be flexible. However, your interviewer will typically start by introducing you to the company and the job role. You will sometimes be asked to describe yourself or be asked what you know about the vacancy or the company. It is good to prepare a top-line summary of your skills, and what you can offer so you come across as confident and self-assured.

Answering questions

Try to answer questions fully with examples without over talking. One line answers will not get you very far, but some people talk too much when they are nervous, which can be

just as distracting. Think of your answers to questions as short paragraphs rather than short sentences or essays.

When using examples of past accomplishments, make sure they are positive ones that demonstrate your clear thinking and the results you achieved for your employer.

A few areas to have a think about;

What do you know about the company?

What do you expect from them?

What can you bring to the team?

What do you know about the work culture?

Expect some tough questions in your one-to-one interview, but it's nothing personal. The interviewer may want to see how you think on your feet and can prepare for everything. It is ok to take a few seconds to formulate an answer, and this is often preferable to answering immediately.

Have a think

You will always be asked, "do you have any questions?" at some point in the interview. Anything to do with salary and benefits is a no-no at this stage. Do, however, ask questions when you are genuinely interested in the answer. Most people want to know about the role and environment they will be working in and the team vibe and company culture. It is also wise to ask about the future direction of the organisation. You should have more than one question prepared if any of your questions are covered during the interview.

