

Job-seeking Tips

Writing a CV

A CV is quite simply an 'advert' to sell yourself to an employer. A CV is the tool you use to get you an interview. You should send a CV to an employer when they ask for one in a job advert, or when you are enquiring if any jobs are available. So the purpose of your CV is to make you attractive, interesting, worth considering to the company and so receive a job interview.

An employer may have several hundred enquiries about a single job, he or she will only choose a few people who appear suitable for interview. Therefore, your CV must be as good as you can make it.

There are two communication principles to remember:

- Keep it simple
- Make them read the important stuff first

Everyone is an individual, and every CV will be different. However, there are some conventions which should be adhered to, and some tips which will help polish your CV's performance.

You don't have to include every job you've ever done on your CV.

The most productive way to approach CV writing is to recognise that you can angle your CV to every individual vacancy, and the way in which you tailor it can involve changing which jobs you choose to include.

Even if you don't decide to omit any jobs, it is generally accepted that only jobs you've held over the past ten years get included in detail in your CV's Career History or Experience section. If you feel you have prior to then, consider pulling it into a Skills section, or incorporating within your profile.

For most people, this more recent experience will supersede jobs gained in the previous years. Therefore, more recent jobs are presented with bullet pointed sentences detailing some duties and responsibilities, earlier jobs are simply listed by job title, employer name and inclusive dates. As always, there are exceptions to this: if an earlier job or skill is more relevant to the role you wish to aim for than a more recent one, you can structure your CV slightly differently to encompass this.

Likewise, if you have very valuable experience gained outside the workplace, this can be included, even if jobs are left out.

You don't have to force content to fit onto a single page

Your CV certainly needs to be concise and to the point. However, if you have had more than one job, it's quite likely that your experience will extend onto two pages. To attempt to squeeze everything onto one page would be a mistake, as it would end up cramped and cluttered. If you need to spill onto a second page, do so, but avoid leaving large areas of blank space – balance out your CV across the two pages and use the "extra" space to add other achievements, or go into additional detail about the existing ones.

Exceptions to the two page maxim are people with little experience, who should aim to fit their information on one page. Those with several management positions behind them may need to extend their CV to three pages.

Employers usually only spend 20 to 30 seconds reading each CV during their initial sieving pass through a pile of CVs, so simply won't have time to read a 10-page CV. For this reason, it is always critical that you include the most important points at the top of your CV, in your Profile and Achievements sections, followed by your Career History section.

It is usually best to try and keep your CV to two or three pages, unless someone specifically asks you for a longer version. If you can't keep your CV to this length, then you probably haven't understood exactly what the employer is looking for. Employers don't want to know all about your whole life history - just enough to decide whether they want to interview you or not.

You don't have to stick rigidly to a standard format

While there are many conventions in CV writing, most of these are guidelines rather than hard and fast rules.

If your career path doesn't show a standard route when it comes to the job you're applying for, or you want to put a greater focus on a particular role/skill, it is perfectly OK to be flexible with formats to show yourself in the best light.

Many people, particularly those who have worked on a succession of projects, use 'hybrid' formats that can accommodate their range of experience better. However, it is advisable to only divert from generally recognised formats when necessary - while you want to show your uniqueness in a CV, do not try to be individual simply for the sake of it.

The CV isn't just a checklist of your jobs and duties.	<p>CVs show that you know how to get results. The jobs you decide to include should be relevant to the vacancy, as should your skills and previous responsibilities.</p> <p>If you have held several similar jobs in multiple locations, particularly if it was some years ago, consider grouping them together eg if you were a sales assistant in 3 stores, you may not need to show this as 3 jobs – include as one job but over 3 locations, amalgamating achievements.</p> <p>Most important, however, are the achievements you include, for these demonstrate that you are able to make a difference to your employer's business or organisation. They show that you are an individual they ought to be interested in. Do shout about your achievements but do not be tempted to “over egg the pudding” – remember that you are indicating areas on which you may be questioned at interview.</p>
You don't need to include hobbies and interests	<p>The focus is now purely professional, meaning that anything you do in your time outside work is your own business, unless you specifically want to include it.</p> <p>You may, for instance, have identified some of your voluntary or community activities to be relevant to the vacancy in question. Even in this case, however, you may wish to include that information under the heading of Achievements or Other Experience.</p> <p>The other exception is students, recent graduates or school leavers, where you have so little work experience that you must include information to provide an impression of yourself. However, group and sporting interests, especially those involving awards and other achievements, are always more important than solitary, more intellectual interests.</p>
Don't end the CV with 'References are available upon request'	<p>Most employers already assume that you are able to provide references – when they require them (usually after offering the job to you), they will ask for them.</p> <p>If they want you to include them at the application stage, they'll tell you so in the job advertisement. Adding this line is absolutely pointless and is a waste of space. If you want to include a sheet carrying your referees' details, then do so. Otherwise, don't mention it, but instead use the space for more vital information that will strengthen your application.</p>
Don't be tempted to put 'white' lies on your CV	<p>If you give yourself better exam results, create qualifications that you never took, give yourself promotions or create any form of fiction in your CV, you must recognise that it could backfire and that when it does, it could cost you dearly.</p> <p>Many employers do checks at some point and this is certainly getting easier. They don't just take up references - many employers now simply look on the internet for informal information that might tell them a little more about a candidate.</p>
Be prepared with a cover letter	<p>Some people seem to think that cover letters are little more than a compliments slip put into the envelope to accompany the CV. In other words, a cursory politeness. Nothing could be further from the truth, as the cover letter has numerous functions.</p> <p>At the very least, it shows you can compose a formal letter and handle the language you are writing in. More importantly, it further emphasises the connection between your experience and the requirements of the vacancy in question.</p> <p>It is your opportunity to really express your commitment and conviction, and in doing so get a bit more of your personality across.</p> <p>If you are sending in a speculative CV, this is your opportunity to say what sort of work you would be interested in eg “I would be interested in working within the Accounts Department”, then include a couple of key points which show why you would be a good fit for that role.</p>
It is unlikely that even the best CV will get the job by itself.	<p>The majority of employers who are offering viable jobs with decent salaries - i.e. not commission only jobs - will want to see you, ask questions to clarify points in your application, find out what you're like as a person and how you interact with others, etc.</p> <p>Your CV's job is to get you short-listed, into an interview, and to indicate areas you can be questioned on.</p> <p>Remember, though, that even the seemingly ideal CV may fail to secure an interview, for the employer may have other unspecified requirements, your cover letter is not strong enough, or sheer numbers of candidates mean that many applications are more suitable than yours.</p>
Have a CV, even if you have contacts	<p>Very, very few people 'just walk into' a job and you should never anticipate that happening. It would be a dreadful loss of an opportunity to successfully network your way to an unadvertised opportunity and then to be asked for your CV, only to have to admit that you haven't got one. You will be seen as totally unprepared and quite unprofessional.</p>

Don't waste time mass mailing your CV	<p>The most successful CVs and applications are those that are tailored towards individual vacancies. That means spending time and effort on every application, tweaking the information here and there, adjusting the focus of the skills and rewriting your Profile or Objective to best impress the employer in question.</p> <p>You may even have two or three 'basic' versions of your CV that are altered for different kinds of jobs, or different industries.</p>
Discuss your CV with other people and take feedback	<p>CV writing entails taking a step back to take an overview of your work experience and skills, before deciding what to include or leave out. The key information must then be communicated in a strong, positive fashion to the recruiter, so that you are 'sold' to them as a prospective employee.</p> <p>So, while you are certainly the best person to research job vacancies and put together your background information, outside input is usually valuable, whether this comes in the form of using a professional service, advice from a website, or feedback from someone with experience in recruitment.</p> <p>This is particularly true if you apply for jobs where quite a number of people will be applying, when the quality and professionalism of your presentation is all that the employer has to go on before deciding whether to invite you to an interview.</p>
First impressions count	<p>An employer may have 200 or more CVs to look through for each job vacancy and only an hour or two in which to make their selection of who they interview. Their initial review is likely to be to simply separate the CVs into two piles: "maybe" and "no" – you don't want to be relegated to the "no" pile just because your CV isn't quite up to the mark.</p> <p>You must make an employer want to invite you for an interview. If you can't tell them quickly why they should do so, then they will move quickly on to the next CV. The first you know is when you receive a rejection letter or, worse still, hear nothing at all.</p> <p>What an employer really wants to know is why they should invite you for an interview. For this reason, a summary of your main capabilities in the form of a short profile towards the top of your CV, followed by a list of your major achievements (supported by specific examples), will really grab an employer's attention, without them needing to wade further into the document.</p>
Keep it concise	<p>You have to impress the reader in just 20 to 30 seconds– hence the importance of the Profile and Key Achievements sections. If you have included too much detail on your CV then an employer may struggle to gain a quick understanding of your experience and capabilities, and simply reject your CV. Including too little or the wrong sort of information on your CV will mean that an employer won't know whether you have the relevant experience and skills to do the job. They will quickly move on to the next CV in the pile.</p> <p>You need to identify exactly what employers are looking for, ensuring you have included the right sort of information about your current and previous jobs, and detailing your relevant experience, abilities and achievements.</p>
Don't overwrite	<p>If you have very long sentences / paragraphs in your CV, this makes it very difficult to read quickly. Time is of the essence if you want to impress the employer and gain an interview. Always try to keep your sentences short and punchy.</p> <p>Use bullet points and 'white' space in your CV to break it into manageable chunks.</p>
Consider your audience	<p>Avoid using jargon unique to your past roles – not every company speaks the same language. Try to make your CV standalone by using generic or industry standard wording. Alternatively, describe what you did, rather than labelling it.</p>
Make sure you have a profile section	<p>Your Profile should be the first section on your CV. It should be written in the third person and give a short summary of what you have to offer an employer, focusing on your key skills, strengths, talents and experience - allowing the reader to gain an overview without having to read your whole CV.</p> <p>Not having a Profile section at all is a major missed opportunity, because it is your chance to sell yourself to an employer. However, having a poor profile is almost worse than not having a profile at all. If you get your Profile wrong then this can cause your CV to be rejected almost immediately by an employer.</p> <p>Your Profile needs to sell, sell, sell, but in a believable manner. If you oversell yourself, then your CV may be rejected as being unbelievable.</p>

Highlight key achievements

After the Profile section, you should have a Key Achievements section, highlighting your best and most relevant achievements. This should make an employer really sit up and take notice of you. This section must focus on what specifically you can do for an employer and should highlight areas you consider to be your successes.

If you don't have a Key Achievements section or don't make the best use of it, then you've missed a real chance to present yourself in a good light and connect with an employer. Employers want employees who get things done. Highlighting your achievements demonstrates to them that you are this type of person.

A Key Achievements section also tells an employer why you should be offered an interview, rather than all the other job applicants. Just as a poor Profile may put an employer off, a poor Key Achievements section will also have the same effect. An employer will not have the time to work through your career history to identify your skills – you need to pull these out yourself.

You must think about what you have achieved in your current and previous jobs. For example: What results have you achieved? What have you changed or improved? If you haven't had the opportunity to directly affect anything yet (eg newly appointed), have you been involved in a project which produced results?

Support achievements with factual data, but avoid quoting numbers without context. Use a metric appropriate to the achievement you are highlighting.

"Increased sales by £30,000" does not give sufficient information to indicate how good that might be. If you achieved it in a small store in a short space of time, it might be a big achievement; whereas achieving it over a full year in a £6m store would be much less so.

A better form might be:

"Increased sales by 5% within 6 weeks of taking control of store" which is much more focused on an outcome you achieved.

You must only include achievements that made a real measurable difference, and don't include irrelevant stuff from a long time ago. Nobody wants to hear about the school swimming certificate you got 20 years ago!

Personal Details

Ensure your contact details are prominent on the first page of your CV – name, address and telephone (often a mobile) are commonplace, but you may wish to include an email address too, particularly if submitted your CV electronically.

Don't put irrelevant personal details (marital status, date of birth, etc), educational details from years ago, or a list of your hobbies. There is also no need for any other personal details such as photographs, religion or nationality (though you may need to be able to demonstrate you have the legal right to work in this country).

Language

An increasing number of recruiters dealing in hundreds of CVs now automatically feed through software to scan and categorise them. To ensure your CV gets the best possible attention, you should take care to avoid "lazy" verbs like 'get' and 'do', and replace them with more descriptive active verbs. Also, try to write in the unattributed third person. For example, "I was responsible for doing the daily report and getting it to the recipients" might become "Generated, produced and distributed daily report".

Key words which may better suit your CV:

Achieved, Administered, Advised, Analysed, Approved, Arranged

Built

Categorised, Collected, Compiled, Completed, Conducted, Controlled, Coordinated, Corrected, Created

Defined, Delivered, Demonstrated, Designed, Developed, Distributed

Established, Expanded

Filed, Founded

Identified, Implemented, Incorporated, Increased, Initiated, Instigated, Instructed, Introduced

Launched, Lead, Logged

Maintained, Managed, Monitored

Negotiated

Observed, Ordered, Organised, Oversaw

Performed, Planned, Prepared, Presented

Recorded, Reduced, Registered, Reserved, Responded, Reviewed

Scheduled, Screened, Solved, Streamlined, Supervised, Supplied, Supported

Updated

Layout matters

It is usually best to use a fairly straightforward layout, using plenty of 'white' space and appropriate headings and section breaks.

Don't try to use fancy borders or graphics, as these often make the file size very large, causing problems when you try to email your CV or print it out. Plus they may detract from your CV's content.

You should normally break your CV down into a number of separate sections, as this makes it much easier for the reader to find information quickly. Typically, you might have the following sections:

1. Profile (or Summary).
2. Key Achievements.
3. Career History (or Work Experience).
4. Education / Qualifications (this may go before the Career History section if you are still studying or have recently left education).
5. Training (may be combined with Education, depending on space).
6. Language Skills (optional).
7. IT Skills (optional).
8. Personal Details (or Additional Information).

Presentation

Type your CV – handwritten copies are not appropriate. If printing copies to send, use a good quality white paper 80gsm or better. Stick to a consistent style – limit the number of fonts you use (try to keep to a maximum of two, one for headings and one for text, ideally from the same family eg Arial and Arial Bold) and consider the “colour” of the page – serif fonts (the ones with bars at the ends of the letters) will make the page look more busy; sans-serif will give it a cleaner look.

Check, double-check, then triple-check for typos, grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. Take particular care with common errors such as misuse of apostrophes or incorrect punctuation.

Avoid contractions (eg they've instead of they have) unless the full form sounds stilted.

Avoid clichés “like the plague” – recruiters read thousands of CVs and will already see a lot of unintentional repetition; you do not want to reduce the impact of your CV by adding to that.

Any errors in your spelling or grammar can detract from an otherwise good CV and make you look lazy or careless - not the sort of qualities you want to portray to an employer. This may give an employer just the excuse they need to reject your CV.

You should carefully read through your CV, checking for errors and do run your word-processor's built-in spelling and grammar checker – check that it's set to UK English, not US English.

Also get several other people to check your CV too, because a spelling and grammar checker won't catch every error.

Example CVs

Chronological CV

Chronological CVs are the most commonly used format, and emphasise continuity and growth. The example below focuses on the individual's recent educational achievements as this overshadows the various elements of work experienced at that point. For someone with a work history subsequent to education, the work information should precede the education section.

Postal Address
Email
Phone number
(If applicable) Nationality/Work permit status

Final year Property with Business student at the University of Westminster, seeking a career in commercial practice surveying. Strong commercial awareness, client facing and technical skills developed through previous employment, including experience at a property management company and in the planning and development department of a local council.

Education

Sep 2005 – Jun 2008 BA (Hons) Property with Business; Predicted 2:1
University of Westminster, London

- Achieved a 2:1 in first and second year assessments.
- Third year projects included a dissertation and group presentation at the RICS in Jan 2008 in which a proposal for a development and investment opportunity was submitted. This assignment was the culmination of the property disciplines studied on the course, notably development and investment appraisal, valuation, property management, landlord and tenant law and planning.
- Business modules included Accounting and Finance, Economics, Marketing, Organisational Behaviour and Business Management.

Sep 2002 – Jun 2004 Copleston & Holywells Sixth Form, Ipswich

- A levels: Business Studies (C), Geography (C), General Studies (C)
- AS levels: Media Studies (A), French (E)

Sep 1997 – Jun 2002 Copleston High School, Ipswich

- Nine GCSEs (A-C), including Maths and English

Relevant work experience

Oct – Nov 2007 Work placement, Property Initiatives, Mayfair, London

- Assisted the director and senior property manager with their day-to-day duties.
- Updated reports for clients, undertook research, interpreted legal documents and aided the valuations team with the proposed acquisition of a development site.
- Developed an understanding of commercial property management by visiting a number of buildings under company supervision and learnt specifically about facilities management, leases and tenancy schedules.

Jun – Sep 2006 Clerical Assistant, Planning & Development Department
Ipswich Borough Council

- Acquired a practical understanding of the planning system through general clerical duties and exposure to the work of the local planning officers.
- Systematically transferred planning documents, such as tree preservation order information to the e-planning system.
- Observed a committee meeting in which a number of development proposals were granted or refused planning permission.

Other employment

Dec 2005 – Sep 2007 Part-Time Bartender, JD Wetherspoon, The Crosse Keys, City of London & The Golden Lion, Ipswich

- Integrated well into a diverse workforce and was able to work quickly and under pressure within a team of six to provide excellent customer service and ensure that close-downs were completed on time.
- Promoted to a supervisory role in a smaller Ipswich pub, overseeing the duties of newer team members.

Aug 2005 – Sep 2005 Data Entry Clerk, Powergen, Ipswich

- Logged customer details into a computer system utilising IT skills and attention to detail.

May 2005 – Jun 2005 Telemarketer, CRU Promotions/CallCare Oz, Brisbane, Australia

- Improved my communication skills through business to customer marketing of mobile phones and health care memberships. Consistently achieved stretching daily call targets under pressure.

Feb 2005 – Mar 2005 Fruit Picker / Farmhand, Various Employers, Mildura, Australia

Sep 2004 – Dec 2004 Warehouse Assistant, Notcutts Distribution Centre, Ipswich

Oct 2002 – Oct 2004 Part-Time Sales Assistant/Cashier, Homebase, Ipswich

- In charge of the garden furniture area during busy periods, ensuring excellent customer service, managing stock and two section staff.
- Promoted to the kitchen, bathroom and interior furniture team during the January sale; processed customer orders, arranged appointments and consistently met store credit card application targets.

Interests and other skills

- Enjoy making the most of opportunities to travel, including six months independent travel and temporary employment in Australia during my 2004/5 gap year.
- Proficient user of Microsoft Office including Project and some knowledge of Super Developer
- Full clean driving licence.
- Enjoy football, regularly visit the local leisure centre and have shown leadership and organisational skills whilst captain of a ten pin bowling team.
- Keen interest in economics and current affairs.

Functional or skills-based CV

This type of CV could be used when you do not have a lot of directly related experience, or you have so much experience that there is not enough room on your CV or you are considering a career change. You will need to find evidence from your experience for the development of skills required by the position: these skills are usually referred to as transferable skills.

Postal Address
Email
Phone number

Final year BSc Information Systems and Business Management student, with knowledge of financial analysis and business strategy, plus proven technical IT expertise. Strong analytical and interpersonal skills developed through academic studies and previous customer service roles. Seeking a trainee financial analyst role in the banking sector.

Skills

Analytical

- During degree studies, analysed business models and developed a new financial strategy for a small, local firm and the McDonalds global restaurant business.
- Constructed complex statistical / financial models to analyse research data using both Excel and SPSS as part of University modules.
- Analysed and improved C++ code to create more efficient programming functions within academic assignments.

Communication

- Established rapport and resolved queries within pressurised customer service and IT support environments.
- Delivered presentations at university, explaining complex business concepts to groups of five to thirty people and prepared written academic reports.

Team Working

- Worked collaboratively with colleagues in a range of work settings, including as Assistant Manager at McDonalds, with responsibility for co-ordinating the work and motivating a team of four front line staff to meet sales targets.
- Experience of working in teams during academic projects involved planning, role allocation and coordination to ensure high quality work was submitted within deadlines. Interaction with peers helped develop the ability to work effectively with people from different cultures and work styles.

Organisation

- Excellent organisational skills applied in IT support role to ensure full resolution of client issues and delivery of a programme to install and train fifty users in new computer software (Microsoft Outlook).
- Experience of organising and prioritising workload to meet tight deadlines, when faced with multiple university projects and work commitments.

Higher education

09/05 – 06/08 BSc (Hons) Information Systems with Business Management (2:1 predicted),
University of Westminster

Relevant business modules studied: Business Strategy, Management Accounting and Financial Modelling, Project Management, Managing Business Organisations, Business Systems Management and Evaluation.

Final year project: Organisational analysis and development of an employee motivation strategy for a McDonalds Restaurant.

Previous education

09/03 – 06/05 BTEC Higher National Diploma Computing (Merit)
Westminster Kingsway College, London

04/03 – 07/03 European Computer Driving Licence, College of North West London
A+ Hardware and software certification, City Computers

Employment

05/07 – Present Customer Service Assistant – London Underground

- Efficient resolution of customer queries. Development and implementation of enhanced procedures for assisting customers with specific needs.
- Responsible for completion of scheduled maintenance and ad hoc repairs of computer operated entrance/exit gates and ticket machines to meet performance targets.
- Carried out regular security checks and showed initiative in ensuring all safety hazards were addressed.

11/03 – 06/07 Assistant Manager – McDonalds Restaurant

- Leadership of four person front line team to ensure efficient and effective customer service, consistently meeting daily sales and service delivery targets.
- Responsible for hiring, mentoring and supporting front line team, resulting in significant improvement in staff retention.
- Management of stock control and ensuring till reconciliation at the end of each shift.

06/03 – 08/03 IT helpdesk – Brotherhood of the Cross and Star

- Front line IT support for fifty employees and associates, ensuring successful resolution of IT queries, plus hardware and software installation.
- Design, delivery and administration of Microsoft Outlook training courses for groups of up to ten people.

Interests

- Strong interest in current affairs and business news. Regular reader of Financial Times and Broadsheet business sections.
- Play piano – regularly perform gospel music at community and church events.
- Enjoy travel – have travelled extensively through Western Europe, West Africa and USA.
- Great supporter of football and try to attend most Arsenal home matches.

Writing Letters

It is important that your written work makes a good first impression. It may be the first contact a busy Employer will have with you so keep it clear and readable without being too wordy. Your skills and talents need to stand out. It's a good idea to write a rough draft of your letter first to make sure you don't miss anything.

There are four steps you can take to help you write better letters:

If you have a disability which makes writing difficult you could submit your application in typed or audio cassette format.

What to include

Underline the skills in the advert and make sure you have shown you have them in your letter. Be positive and emphasise why you are perfect for the job

- First - summarise your skills and experience. Keep it brief and to the point.
- Then - say when you will be free for an interview.
- Be sure to include your name, address and phone number (if you have one) and the date.
- Enclose a copy of your CV.

What to say

- Write clearly. Don't use a long word if a short one will do – it's better to use a short word correctly than a longer one in the wrong context.
- If you have been unemployed for a while, indicate how you spend your spare time, for example voluntary work, study etc.
- Be honest - don't say you enjoy bungee jumping if you get dizzy on the kitchen stool - you will be caught out at an interview.
- Keep to the facts and try not to oversell yourself.

How to say it

- Include a reference number if provided in the job details. Enter it below the opening line e.g. Dear Mrs..... Re: Job Ref 345/94.
- Try to find out the name of the person you need to write to. If you start with: Dear Sir/Madam, end with - Yours faithfully
- If you start with: Dear Mrs Smith, end with - Yours sincerely
- Double check your spelling and grammar before sending the letter.

The end product

- Be neat - whether hand written or typed. Leave plenty of space around the edges and a clear space between each paragraph or section.
- Use decent quality plain paper and envelopes. Write on a hard surface with a good pen.
- Check against your rough copy to make sure you've not missed anything.
- Sign the letter and print your name underneath - to make sure it can be easily read.
- Finally - make sure your letter arrives on time - if it is late it might not even be considered and your time will have been wasted.

Application Forms

Some employers may ask you to complete an Application Form before offering you an interview.

Here are some tips to improve the chances of your application being read.

Preparation

- Read the instructions carefully
- Photocopy the form if possible and practice on a rough copy first

Filling it in

- Use a black pen (it is easier to photocopy) and write clearly and neatly. Keep the form clean and unfolded
- Follow the instructions exactly, for example, complete fully in block capitals if asked to do so
- Answer all questions which apply to you, keeping your answers short and to the point
- Make sure you include any relevant experience and give examples where required
- Avoid short cuts like enclosing your CV and referring to it on the Application Form
- Some Employers may want you to include a personal profile
- Try to avoid using words which might put an employer off, for example, sacked/ dismissed
- Support your application with examples (If you need more space to attach a separate piece of paper - don't try and cram everything into the space provided)

If you have a disability

- You may want to tell the employer in advance of any particular arrangements you need for interview.

And finally

- Check all answers carefully, making sure all dates agree, there are no spelling mistakes and that you have answered all the questions.
- Make sure you have stated clearly which job you are applying for.
- Use a large envelope - don't try and cram your finished application into a small one and spoil its appearance.
- Take a copy for your own records and make sure the form is sent in time - before the closing date. If it arrives late it probably won't be considered and you will have wasted your own time!

Interviews

Be positive and confident, but never appear cocky or arrogant. Be well informed, both about the company and why you want the role.

You can get yourself a long way towards getting the job with the preparations you make before you go to an interview.

If the company has sites you can visit, take time to look at them and observe how they operate. If it is a retailer, visit the stores, do a SWOT analysis, speak to some managers who work for them, etc.

Be prepared to explain how you achieved things you have highlighted on your CV eg if you beat budget sales for 2008 by 5%, how did you do it? Which of your highlighted skills were most useful in this task? Look at your CV and consider what questions they may ask you about it.

Preparation

Find out what you can about the employer and the job - you could ask the employer if they have an information pack or speak to people you know who work or have worked for the company. The library may have business information in directories such as the UK Kompass Register (http://www.kompass.co.uk/info/op_ukk_register.htm)

Try to find out the answer to the following questions:

- What do they do/make/sell?
- Who are their customers?
- What sort of organisation are they?
- Financial information - turnover, profits etc.
- What exactly will the job involve?
- What sort of person do you think they want?
- How can you best fit your skills to match the job?

Planning for the interview

Then think about the interview itself:

- Who will be interviewing? If it is your prospective manager, the interview may be more detailed. If the Personnel Manager is interviewing, it may be less direct or detailed, but could still be testing.
- Will there be a test to take? Find out before the interview, and ask for an example of the things you'll be asked to do.
- If you have a disability, contact the employer prior to the interview if you require any particular arrangements. Check the day before to ensure details have been noted prior to your arrival.

Prepare for questions you might be asked

The following is a list of questions you may be asked at an interview. Some suggestions are given which you may like to use to prepare your own answer.

Thorough preparation will give you the confidence to do your best at an interview.

1. Why do you want to work here?

Mention:

- Good reputation of the firm
- Any other positive information you have about the firm, e.g. their training record
- It will give you a chance to do work which interests you

2. Why did you leave your last job?

Explain briefly and honestly the reasons why your last job ended.

- If there is anything positive to say, say it eg If you left for health reasons point out that you are now fit and reassure the employer that you can do the duties required.
- If you were dismissed, that you take full responsibility for your actions and have learnt from the experience.

3. Have you done this kind of work before?

- Yes - tell them the skills you have and how you can use them.
- No - quickly describe other work experience which will help you learn the job quickly. Emphasise your interest and enthusiasm to learn.

4. What did you do in your last job?

Describe:

- skills and duties relevant to new job
- machines/equipment used
- your responsibilities
- your achievements
- people you worked with
- how long you were there
- if you were promoted

5. What kinds of equipment can you operate?

- Name any type of equipment relevant to the new job
- Your training/qualifications
- Length of time you have operated this equipment

6. How long have you been out of work - how do you spend your time?

Describe:

- Job search activity
- voluntary work
- further education or study
- hobbies

7. Why have you had a) so many jobs? b) only one job?

Mention:

a) so many jobs?

- You wanted to widen your experience in different types of work/firms.
- Many of the jobs were temporary.
- You would rather be in work than out of work.

b) only one job?

- You had several different jobs within your last employment.
- The opportunity to develop.
- Their good record in training and development.

8. Why should I take you on?

- Be ready for this question and answer confidently and positively
- Describe your skills and experience and how they relate to this job
- Reassure the employer that you are hard-working, reliable and capable

9. Aren't you over-qualified?

Emphasise:

- You are looking for something fresh/new/different
- You can take as well as give instructions

10. How do you get on with people?

- Describe how you have previously worked as part of a team
- Mention your ability to get on with people at all levels
- Give examples

11. What makes a good team member?

Describe the skills required e.g.:

- good communication
- flexibility
- adaptability
- co-operation
- sense of humour

12. How do you cope with pressure?

Describe the pressures in previous jobs using a recent example.

For instance, how you had coped with a changed deadline, completed a rush order or dealt with staff shortages.

13. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

They should already know your strengths from your Application Form/CV or they would not be interviewing you, but if they ask about any weaknesses:

- Start by describing parts of your last job that you found challenging but explain how you overcame these problems, emphasising any of your key skills that came into play.
- Be fairly brief but honest, e.g. "I can sometimes be a little too enthusiastic".
- Avoid the clichéd "I sometimes work too hard".

Note: Employers value people who can admit their mistakes rather than blaming their failings on others. Never criticise a previous employer.

14. What would you like to be doing in five years time?

Explain that you would ideally like to be working for the same company but to have developed within it.

15. How often were you absent from your last job?

- If rarely - say so
- If absence has been a problem - explain why

16. When would you be available to start?

As soon as possible! Do not put any barriers in the way.

17. Do you have any questions?

You may like to prepare for this - it is almost always asked at the interview. You could ask:

- Why is the job vacant?
- Why did the last person leave?
- Who would I report to?
- What training will I do, if any?
- What would my first job be?
- How soon will I hear about the result of my application?
- How would I be paid?

Plan your journey

- Consider a "dummy run" before the day of the interview or check how long the journey will take.
- If necessary ask the Employer for directions, bus routes or details of car parking.
- Plan an alternative means of getting there and be prepared for the unexpected.
- Is there somewhere you can park and wait if you are ahead of time?
- If you have a disability, check there are no obstacles which could cause you problems or delays. If you have an special requirements, ensure the employer is aware in advance.

Think about what you will wear

This may depend upon the sort of work you will be doing:

- Give yourself plenty of time to decide what to wear and get the clothes ready the day before.
- You don't have to buy a new outfit! Aim for neat, tidy, clean and uncluttered appearance.
- If you look good it will help you feel good!

Gather together the written information you will need at the interview

- CV, references, certificates, portfolio or examples of your work (if requested by the Employer).
- Any specific items requested for the interview (eg passport photo if required)
- Re-read the job advert to refresh your memory - make sure you haven't missed something.

And finally

- Try to get a good night's sleep!

The day of your interview

Before Leaving

- Give yourself plenty of time to get ready
- Make sure you've got all relevant paperwork, e.g. CVs, invitation letter
- If you are unavoidably delayed, Telephone early to explain, apologise and try to get another appointment

On Arrival

- Aim to arrive about 10 minutes before the interview time
- Give your name to the receptionist or whoever is there to greet you
- Try to relax and keep calm
- Chat to the receptionist or whoever greets you, before going into the interview. This will ensure that the first thing you say isn't croaked out because you haven't spoken to anyone for over an hour!

Your interview

First, accept that the symptoms of nerves - a fast heartbeat, clammy hands and butterflies in the stomach - are natural. These are your body's natural way of meeting a challenge and in small doses can give you the 'oomph' to make a good impression.

You will make an impression in the first few minutes. It takes this time for people to assess someone and store this information. Once an impression has been formed, it's seldom changed. It's important to make first impression work for you.

Nervous tension may make your voice sound shaky. Practice deep slow breathing before you get to the interview. This will slow down your heart rate and help you avoid taking quick, shallow breaths.

Do:

- enter the room confidently
- shake hands firmly - and introduce yourself
- be polite and friendly - look the interviewer straight in the eye as soon as you enter the room
- look interested - ask questions as well as answering
- answer questions as fully as you can - avoid yes and no answers
- provide examples to prove your achievements
- tell the truth
- ask if you don't understand a question
- speak clearly
- sell yourself - get your good points across/be positive
- give a friendly smile (if in doubt don't - it is better to look serious than insincere)

Don't:

- sit until invited
- fidget and slouch in the chair
- swear (even mildly)
- criticise former employers
- interrupt
- draw attention to your weaknesses
- go over the top - stay calm and stick to the facts

Remember, most employers like:

- people who listen
- people who answer questions with examples
- people who come prepared
- people who appear confident

Also remember during discussions (and in your letters) employers look again at people who can:

- Cut costs
- Get it done more quickly
- Avoid potential problems
- Improve appearance
- Organise it
- Increase sales/profits/turnover
- Use old things in a new way
- Provide more information
- Cut down time
- Reduce the risks
- Meet deadlines easily
- Cut staff costs
- Develop staff performance
- Turn round a bad situation
- Introduce new systems
- Improve teamwork and relationships

Other types of interview

Not all interviews will follow the same one-to-one model. You may have to face other interview situations. There are different types of interview.

Panel Interview

The panels are often made up of two or more members, for example Personnel Officer and Head of Section or Foreman/Supervisor.

Try not to be intimidated by this situation. Look at the person asking the question, and glance at the others occasionally as you reply. Remember that in this case, the decision will likely be made by more than one person which in turn could increase your chance of success.

Competency-based Interview

These interviews are designed to allow you to demonstrate your level of competency in key areas of the job. You may be asked to discuss examples of your previous work and achievements. The examples you give should be different from those on your original Application Form. Before the interview you will need to list the competencies needed for the job and think about things you have done which illustrate each one.

Group Interviews

You may be invited to be assessed as part of a group. This is to test how you might work as part of a team. Be prepared to take an active part in the discussion/task and put forward your ideas in an assertive but not aggressive way.

Skills Tests

These are designed to measure the level of your knowledge, or understanding of the job, such as typing test, driving tests, manual dexterity, etc. Find out what the test will involve and try to practice before the interview.

Personality Tests

You could face questions on your thoughts, feelings and behaviour in certain situations. There is no such thing as a right or wrong answer as the overall picture is what is important. The end result is a personality rating used to see if the person fits the job advertised. Analysis of these tests is highly skilled and may be used by larger organisations to supplement other recruitment methods.

Aptitude Tests

These are designed to predict how well you might do certain tasks. They test abilities such as reasoning with words/number/diagrams; problem-solving; following instructions. These are usually set as a test paper which you have to complete within a set time limit.

You can try to improve your ability to do these tests by answering or completing practice tests.

Dealing with the unexpected

The following situations can cause problems but being prepared may help you deal with them if they arise.

The unprepared interviewer

Not all employers have had training or are experienced in interviewing people. They could be just as nervous as you are about the situation. You might find yourself being talked at and given little opportunity to sell yourself. This may mean waiting for a gap in the conversation and taking the lead during the interview (but not taking over!)

Delays and interruption

Don't become impatient if the Employer keeps you waiting. They may have good reasons for this, so try to keep calm. If the interviewer is interrupted - for instance by a Telephone call - offer to leave the room.

Uncomfortable surroundings

If you find yourself being interviewed in unsuitable surroundings such as a busy public area, or noisy part of a factory - again, keep calm and try to do your best. You could ask the Employer if you could go elsewhere but you will have to use your own judgement as to whether this request would be acceptable.

After the interview

While it is still fresh in your mind, think about how the interview went:

- what went well?
- what went badly?
- were there any questions you found difficult and why?

Use a checklist to help you identify areas for improvement.

Did you:

- arrive on time?
- dress appropriately?
- greet the interviewer politely?
- sit well and avoid fidgeting?
- answer the questions fully enough?
- sell myself - stress why I was the best person for the job?
- describe my previous duties well?
- look at the interviewer and smile occasionally?
- thank the interviewer for taking the time to see me?

Try to learn as much as you can from each interview. Aim to become more prepared and confident in the future by looking for areas to improve and developing your stronger areas of performance.

Websites for more information

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/2950896.stm>

<http://www.cvtrumpet.co.uk/cv.htm>

<http://www.homelearningcollege.com/CareerCentre/Recruitment-Process/CV-Writing/Writing-Your-CV>

Research

1. In depth Research

- a. **SWOT analysis** (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats*)
- b. **PEST Analysis** (*Political, Economic, Social, Technological influences*)
- c. **Company website & literature**
- d. **Store visits**
 - i. Interact with managers
 - ii. Survey customers
 - iii. Try to gain an insight into the culture of the company
- e. **Competitor Analysis**
 - i. Which competitors are growing, moving up, closing down, where does the Company sit in terms of market share?
- f. **Internet research**
- g. **Trade Press**
 - i. Read current issue from cover to cover
 - ii. Who's advertising
 - iii. What are the main issues affecting the company & the industry
 - iv. Go on-line to read back issues of the publication so you are fully conversant with recent trends & the evolution of on-going issues and familiar with the main players, spokesmen & commentators

2. Match Yourself to the Job Specification

- a. **Make sure you are familiar with your CV!**
 - i. Think of quantifiable examples that illustrate your experience
- b. **Read through the key accountabilities & competencies**
 - i. What questions might the interviewer ask for each one of these areas to explore your suitability to perform the role
 - ii. What responses can you give that illustrate your depth of experience and your understanding of the requirements
- c. **Perform a SWOT analysis on yourself in relation to the role – in particular know your weaknesses and think through a development plan to improve on these areas.**

3. Fully Understand the 6-point Interview Plan

1. **Introduction.** When you greet the interviewer they will decide whether they like you or not during the first 10 seconds. A firm handshake, good eye contact & confident greeting are imperative.
2. **Understand the role.** You need to understand the important factors in the position, the day-to-day difficulties and what attributes the interviewer feels are important. **“What are the difficulties typically encountered when doing this role?”; “How will my success be measured?”**
3. **Match Ability** You need to demonstrate to the client that you have the attributes that he or she is looking for. Use the preparation you have done in matching yourself to the job spec and back up each statement with real life examples
4. **Seek Out Any concerns** Before you leave the interview you need to identify any potential obstacle that would prevent you from being considered for the next stage. **“Imagine you offered me this job today and I started on Monday. We then had a review meeting in 3 months, what problems could you foresee me having during that time?”**
5. **Overcome / Eliminate Any Concerns** Most reservations are just a lack of information or understanding the interviewer has about you and in most circumstances you will be able to reassure the interviewer and overcome the reservation by giving real life experiences.
6. **Business Like Conclusion.** You need to establish where you are in the running order and if the interviewer is considering you for the position or the next stage. **“I really like the sound of this position and would like to take things further, what's your thoughts about me at this moment in time?”; “What is the next stage?”**

Competencies

Adaptability	
Flexible in adapting to changing circumstances. Receptive to new ideas and able to respond to differing needs of individuals.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about a project that you have been involved in which has not run according to plan? What happened and what did you do to overcome the problems? • When have you had to change your behaviour to meet the needs of others? • Give me examples of when you have had to approach several individuals for support, co-operation etc, whom you considered quite different to one another. How did you handle it? • Can you give me an example of a situation where you had to copy with a last minute change to something you were working on. What was your initial reaction? What steps did you take to understand the reason for the change? What was the outcome? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reacts well to change • Happy to take a fresh approach • Not set in their ways/behaviour • Is open to different ways of doing things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is rigid in approach • Reacts unfavourably when asked to change • Resists new ideas • Is frustrated and uncomfortable with change
Analytical Ability	
Able to quickly and accurately identify and analyse relevant information relating to work tasks. Makes accurate use of logic and considers all relevant facts to make rational, realistic and sound decisions.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about a complex task that you had to complete. What was the task? How did you approach it and what was the outcome? • Tell me about a piece of research you recently carried out. Where did you start? What sources of information did you use? • What is the most difficult decision that you have had to make? What made it so difficult? How did you go about making the decision and how long did it take? What was the outcome? • What work related problems have you faced recently? How did you approach the problem? What was the outcome? Would you do anything differently? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets criteria • Gathers data • Analyses data against criteria • Draws conclusions based on analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only uses one source of information • Fails to check detail • Analyses things at inappropriate level • Makes unreasonable assumptions
Communication Skills	
Is able to express ideas effectively using oral and written communication. Adjusts tone and language accordingly to convey ideas.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give me an example of a time you had to communicate in writing. Did it feel comfortable? How did you ensure you got your message across? • Tell me about a time you couldn't get your message across. What was the problem? How did you overcome this? • In your previous job, how did you go about establishing relationships with your colleagues / customers? • Tell me about some of the most complex processes/situations/products that you have had to explain to other people? How have you done this? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly articulates ideas and information • Is able to establish relationships at all levels • Is credible and confident in influencing others • Displays active listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks clarity in speech • Unable to communicate on different levels • Fails to use appropriate language or terminology
Decision Making	
Demonstrates a readiness to make decisions takes initiative and originates action.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the last time you had to make a spur of the moment decision. What were the consequences? • How do you describe your preferred method of decision making • Describe a time when you referred an urgent decision upwards. Why did you need help? • Tell me about a time when you took responsibility for making a key decision. How did you defend your decision? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes decisions easily • Takes responsibility for own actions/decisions • Commits oneself quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of making decisions • Relies on others to make things happen • Believes decisions are the remit of his/her Managers.

Drive & Determination	
Demonstrates self-motivation and drive and shows determination to achieve goals.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you worked especially hard. Which aspect of the situation motivated you to work hard? Give me an example of a task that you least enjoy? How do you motivate yourself to carry out this task? Tell me about the last time that you exceeded your personal targets. Tell me about a really demanding goal that you have set yourself. Why was it demanding? Did you achieve it? Tell me about a really demanding task or project that you have been set. Did you successfully complete the task? What difficulties did you meet and how did you overcome them? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gets things done, whatever the task Sets tough goals Sees things through to the end Always looking to better themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefers simple tasks Not very interested in acquiring new skills Less motivated than others to achieve Prefers not to take on new responsibilities
Influencing Skills / Persuasiveness	
Uses appropriate interpersonal and communication skills to gain acceptance of an idea, plan or activity.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a piece of work that you have undertaken recently that required the support of others, how did you gain their support, how did you overcome resistance, what different techniques did you employ, what was the result? What was the best idea that you sold in the last twelve months and to whom? How did you present the benefits of the idea? When have you needed to persuade a variety of people to accept your view? How were the individuals different and how did you adopt your approach? Can you give me an example of when you have had to communicate a decision that you knew would be unpopular? How did you approach this? Can you give me an example of a time when no one has seemed to agree with you, what were the reasons, how did you react, what was the outcome? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explores underlying needs and concerns of others Adapts own behaviour Uses a variety of influence techniques Pursues other avenues when met with resistance Identifies points of argument and disagreement Reviews successes, continuously improves influencing style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to assess the needs of others Cannot tune in to underlying motives Unable to adapt approach to meet individuals needs Uses only one / inappropriate influencing style Gives up when met with resistance Fails to review / evaluate relationship
Initiative	
A bias for action, to think ahead, to take advantage of opportunities and to address challenges.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time you identified an opportunity at work. What was the opportunity? What action did you take? What was the outcome? Tell me about a time that you took action without being prompted by your Manager. Why did you act? How did it feel? Tell me about a time you made an important decision. Why was the decision needed? What was the effect? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks for current opportunities and problems that need addressing and takes prompt action. Is proactive, takes action before being forced or directed Recognises when a decision is needed and commits to act Can be relied upon to act when something needs doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overlooks opportunities and problems to avoid increasing workload. Fails to think ahead Doesn't take action or does only when prompted Avoids making decisions and/or acting on them
Innovation	
Creates new and imaginative approaches to work related issues. Identifies fresh approaches and shows a willingness to question traditional assumptions.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a situation when you produced an imaginative solution to a problem at work Can you describe a situation you had to handle in which old solutions didn't work? What did you do? Tell me about a time when you questioned or challenged a way of working. 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence of being creative Generates a large number of new ideas Approaches tasks in unusual ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefers to stick to familiar approaches Lets others generate ideas Prefers implementing to originating

Leading people	
Sets vision for others, motivate and empower others to reach organisational goals.	
Example Questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about the most recent experience you have had of leadership. For whom were you responsible, how did you help this group establish their goals, how did you ensure that there was common understanding, how did you inspire action, what was the outcome? • Tell me about a time when your input motivated others to reach a team goal? • When have you been disappointed in the results of those you have led, what was the cause, how did you react, what was the outcome? • What opportunities have you had to identify development opportunities for others? What action did you take? What impact did this have? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates vision, identifies end goal for and with others • Inspires action in others • Helps other achieve goals using variety of techniques • Handles conflict • Monitors performance against goals and takes corrective action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers team no vision of the future • Fails to empower, inspire others to achieve goals • Does not use variety of management techniques • Avoids conflict • Does not check progress or seek continuous Improvement
Planning & Organising	
Is well planned and organised in approach to work. Establishes a course of action for self and others to accomplish specific goals. Establishes procedures to monitor results and to achieve desired objectives.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give me an example of a project that you have planned, organized and seen through to completion. How did you manage this? What was the outcome? • Tell me about a time when you have been really busy, how did you keep a track of items that needed your attention? • Tell me about a typical day; what was your workload like? How did you organise this? • Give me an example of a time when you had to prioritise your schedule to meet the demands on your time. How did you determine what was a top priority? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes objectives and milestones • Reviews progress against objectives • Acts on reviews and puts actions in place to ensure objectives are achieved • Sets priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to check progress • Cuts corners • Has to repeat tasks to meet required standard • Fails to allocate available resources
Relationship Building	
Aware of own interpersonal style and that of others and able to adapt style to build effective working relationships	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we start by discussing your current job and in particular your key customers? Who are the key customers, how did you go about building a relationship with them, how do you measure a successful relationship? • Tell me about a really successful business relationship that you have developed. Why is it successful, what things did you do to make it work, what have you learned and how could you improve this? • Tell me about a difficult work relationship, why is this difficult, what have you done to overcome these difficulties? • Talk me through a piece of work that you have undertaken recently that has involved input from a variety of sources, who did you have to involve, what steps did you have to take to get buy-in, what was most difficult, what was the output? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive to the needs of others • Aware of own impact on others • Able to adapt behaviour to enhance impact • Pro-actively seeks opportunities to build relationships • Tackles difficult relationships • Reviews and assesses relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaware of different needs of others • Unaware of personal impact on other people • Unable to adapt style to achieve impact on others • Waits till other initiate relationship • Creates / fails to solve conflict • Does not reflect on / assess relationships
Resilience	
Overcomes obstacles, maintains effective behaviour in difficult situations in order to achieve goals	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you give me an example of a major setback at work – perhaps a piece of work that did not go to plan, how did you react, what was the result? • Tell me about some of the obstacles you have overcome in your daily job. • What have been some of the most pressurized situations you needed to handle at work? How did you cope and how well did you do? • When have you received negative feedback? What was the situation? How did you react and what action did you take? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains calm and in control in stressful situations • Maintains performance under pressure • Accepts criticism without becoming over-defensive or hostile • Overcomes obstacles and pursues goals despite setbacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress negatively affects performance • Overly hostile to criticism • Unable to handle difficult / demanding people • Gives up in the face of obstacles

Risk Awareness	
Understands the concept of risk, why some decisions are riskier than others and the importance of control.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe some recent decisions that carried more than the usual element of risk Tell me about the riskiest decision you have made in your current/previous role. What were the results? Tell me about a time you identified a risky business practice. How did you address the problem? What did you change? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands levels of risk Takes appropriate action to mitigate or minimize risk Handles risky situations with a mature attitude Clear Evidence of being involved in high risk situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No understanding of different levels of risk No commercial awareness Doesn't take steps to minimize risk No evidence of being involved in high risk situations
Self Confidence	
Believes in their own capabilities, communicates assertively and is calm under pressure.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time where your self confidence permitted you to take action others might have avoided In what situations do you feel most confident? Have you ever been in a situation where you have had to challenge a decision made by your boss. How was this done? Describe a recent time when you had to deal with an angry or impatient person? What did you do? How did they react? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear about own strengths Speaks clearly and in a style appropriate to the situation. Doesn't lose control or over-react 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has inappropriate confidence in own ability Overlooks own limitations Arrogant
Strategic Thinking	
Demonstrates a broad-based view of issues, events and activities and a perception of their longer-term impact or wider implications.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you took a broad view of your own work. Why was this necessary? How useful was this approach? Give me an example of a time when you could have taken a more long-term view. Why was this important? What did you learn? What do you see as the main threats to our business in the long-term? What can we do to ensure long-term success? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sees long term objectives Identifies future goals Understanding of threats to the business Searches for short and long term results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term view of business Does not set long term objectives and goals Can't identify threats to the business Seeks only immediate results
Teamwork Skills	
Works effectively within team and with peers to accomplish goals through supporting others and sharing information.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a project that you have worked on in a group environment. What was the project, what role did you take, what worked well and what was the outcome? Tell me about a team that you have worked in that has not worked well? Why do you think this happened and what would you have done differently? Give me an example of a time you have had to rely on someone else. How did you feel? What was the outcome? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchanges information freely Builds relationships Asks for help and supports others in team Supports group decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withholds information for own gain Fails to encourage ideas from team Dislikes relying on others Rarely praises colleagues for their input

Values

Vision	
Create and communicate a vision of the future and leads others towards it	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about your vision for your future? What plans do you have in place to help you achieve it? Where do you see yourself in 12 months time? Where do you see yourself in 3 years time? Tell me about a group you have led? How did you get all the members on board? Give me an example of when you have had to inspire. How did you do it? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates the vision and communicates it with passion Builds consensus around what needs to be done Inspires others to reach the goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers to the team no vision of the future. Demands high individual performance without revealing big picture. Fails to motivate individuals or teams to deliver results
Customer facing	
Build long-term relationships with clients by putting their interests first	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time you have delivered excellent customer service? What was the impact? Give me an example of a time when you have identified opportunities to provide new or additional services to a client How have you ensured that you deliver continuous improvement in the service you provide to clients? What was the effect? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and anticipates client needs and priorities Focuses on continuously improving client service levels Leverages the resources of the Firm to clients' benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to form relationships with clients and to identify client needs Is complacent about current levels of client service Limits client offering to own areas of expertise
Diversity	
Foster diversity, respect and development	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time that you recognized an excellent piece of work by a colleague. What did you learn? Describe an occasion when you took other opinions into consideration when tackling a work related issue. What effect did this have? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciates and seeks to create diversity in work Listens openly to, and values the ideas/views of others Is committed to personal, individual and team development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is partial or prejudiced in dealings with colleagues Is dismissive of contrary ideas, views and opinions Fails to create opportunities for the development and growth of team members
Integrity	
Act always with personal and professional integrity	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone breaks rules sometimes. Can you give me some examples of when you have had to do this? What was the outcome? In order to make it in the world, people have had to alter their standards a little. What is the farthest you have had to bend your standards in order to succeed? Do you consider yourself to be more honest with clients or colleagues? Why? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts with honesty and integrity without reference to a personal agenda Represents the Firm's values to clients and colleagues Is fair in all dealings with clients and colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in unethical or personally opportunistic behaviour Seeks to make personal progress at the expense of other members or the Firm Is unprincipled or arbitrary in dealings with clients or colleagues
Ownership	
Take personal responsibility for the overall success of the Firm	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time you took personal responsibility for a problem? What did you learn? Tell me about a time that you helped someone outside of your immediate team. How did they react? What was the outcome? Describe a situation where, through your own initiative, you saved time or improved a task, process or procedure? Tell me about a time you made a mistake. How did you rectify the mistake? How did you ensure it did not happen again? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative Behaviours:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes responsibility for issues and problems outside of own area Takes the lead in resolving conflicts of interest across the Firm Drives to improve overall efficiency and competitiveness of the Firm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is indifferent to issues and problems beyond own area of interest Operates in a functional silo Fails to take account of the wider interests, objectives and aspirations of the Firm

Shared success, shared failure	
Build mutual accountability in the team	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time you have worked with a team that has been really effective. What did you do personally to make this effective? What did you do to encourage co-operation? Give me an example of a team that you were part of that didn't work well. Why did this happen? What would you have changed? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative Behaviours:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes personal responsibility for team success and for team failure Acts to promote co-operation and team working both within own team and across the wider organization Celebrates and rewards each individual's contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attributes blame to individual team members Builds barriers to cooperation either within own team or across the wider organization Undermines team processes by withholding information, resources or rewards for success
There always a better way	
Seek opportunities for innovation and improvement	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you questioned or challenged a way of working. Why did you question it? What alternatives did you suggest? To what extent were your ideas used? When have you used creativity to solve a problem at work? How did it turn out? What did you do differently than your predecessor in that position? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges the status quo in the interests of improvement Looks for new ideas internally and externally and creates new business insights Creates a climate for learning, creativity and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is complacent of the status quo and accepting of inefficiency Fails to seek or recognize opportunities for improvement Stifles the learning, creativity and innovation of others by suppressing all questioning of the status quo

Knowledge and Skills

Commercial Awareness	
Understands and applies commercial and financial principles. Views issues in terms of costs, profits, markets and added value.	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What sort of opportunities have you had to identify cost savings in the past? Give me an example Tell me what you understand to be the main undertakings of the (business group) department. How do you think we add value to Citigroup? Give me an example of a time when you have spotted a good business opportunity. Why did you think it was worthwhile? What was the outcome? What do you know about the competitors in this industry? 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear evidence of managing and saving costs Good understanding of adding value to the business Good knowledge of competitors Has good knowledge of current markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No evidence of managing costs Not responsible for managing a budget Minimal knowledge of competition and current conditions Poor business acumen
Technical Knowledge and Skills	
Has the required technical knowledge and skills and keeps these up to date	
Example questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about the extent of your knowledge of [product /market / system / etc.] What do you see as the current trend in [product /market / system / etc.]? How did you learn about [product /market / system / etc.]? How do you keep your knowledge of [product /market / system / etc.] up-to-date How do you ensure that you have cutting edge knowledge of [product /market / system / etc.]? How do you ensure that you share your knowledge of [product /market / system / etc.] with your colleagues / clients 	
Positive indicators:	Negative indicators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possesses the relevant knowledge / skills for the role Takes necessary actions to keep skills and knowledge up to date Finds ways to keep knowledge up to date Assesses and reflects on knowledge / skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have relevant skills / knowledge for job Demonstrates a lack of motivation to acquire relevant skills Does not reflect on skills / knowledge Takes no action to share knowledge Takes no action to keep skills up to date

Agencies and Recruitment Websites

Agency	Contact no	Website address
Monster		http://www.monster.co.uk/
Totaljobs		http://www.totaljobs.com/
Job Centre Plus		www.jobcentreplus.co.uk
Adecco		http://www.adecco.co.uk
Careers and Jobs UK		http://www.careers-jobs.eu/
Careers Seeker		http://www.careers-seeker.co.uk/
CV Library		http://www.cv-library.co.uk
Detail2Retail	0845 274 3444	http://www.detail2retail.com/
Discover Retail	0844 669 3335	http://www.discoverretail.co.uk/
Executives Online		http://www.executivesonline.co.uk
Guardian Jobs		http://jobs.guardian.co.uk/?setHome=GB
Hays		http://www.hays.com/
Imagine		http://www.imaginerecruitment.com/
Inretail		http://www.inretail.co.uk/
Jefferson Maguire	0800 298 5335	http://www.jeffersonmaguire.co.uk/
Jobnut	0870 760 7753	http://www.jobnut.co.uk/
Mandeville Recruitment	01628 669 345	http://www.mandevillegroup.co.uk/
McCarthy Recruitment		http://www.mccarthyrecruitment.com/
Michael Page		http://www.michaelpage.co.uk/
Profilescreative		http://www.profilescreative.com/
Quest	0845 071 2111	http://www.questsearch.co.uk
Recruitment Personnel Solutions	0870 240 1896	http://www.rpsltd.co.uk/
Reed		http://www.reed.co.uk
Retail Careers	020 8347 2869	http://www.retailcareers.co.uk
Retail Moves	020 8222 0590	http://www.retailmoves.com
Retail Recruitment		http://www.retailrecruitment.net/
RHR	0870 850 1911	http://www.rhr.co.uk
Talisman	020 7812 6430	http://www.talismanretail.co.uk
The Grocer		http://jobs.thegrocer.co.uk/
Top Jobs		http://www.topjobs.co.uk/
Workcircle		http://www.workcircle.com/
Your Retail Jobs		www.yourretailjobs.com

Opportunities Across the UK

Company	Position	Salary	Apply
The Clinkard Group	Branch Manager Warwick Store	Unknown	Apply sending a CV to: joanne.jackson@clinkard.co.uk
John Lewis	Accept Speculative CV's	Unknown	Claire.Purrett@johnlewis.co.uk State current salary and roles interested in
Th Disney Store	Retail Management positions through UK	Various	Send CV to: The Recruitment Advisor The Disney Store Limited EDC Harrier Parkway Magna Park, Lutterworth LE17 4XT
Footlocker	Manager in Training: Bristol, Lakeside Southend, Belfast Manchester, Birmingham Assistant Manager Chester, Leeds, Camden, Fulham, Clapham, Croydon Store Manager/Manager in Waiting Lakeside, Thurrock Romford, Central London	Various	Send CV to: Mr Louis Requena Human Resources Foot Locker UK Ltd Lovell House 271-273 High Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1LQ Or email to: : lrequena@footlocker.com
East	Sales Advisor Roles	Unknown	Apply at local branch level M.Gray@east.co.uk Molly Gray
Jaeger	Branch Manager Brighton Manchester Trafford Selfridges Kildare	Unknown	Send CV to: Amy Dawkins Resourcing Manager Jaeger 57 Broadwick Street London W1F 9QS www.jaeger.co.uk
Jaeger	Assistant Manager High Wycombe Wilmslow Kildare	Unknown	Send CV to: Amy Dawkins Resourcing Manager Jaeger 57 Broadwick Street London W1F 9QS www.jaeger.co.uk
Jaeger	Sales Consultants Kildare, Canterbury, Croydon Allders, Bridgend Outlet, Bristol HoF, JLP Bristol Cribbs Causeway, Leamington Spa, Newbury, Beverley, Nottingham, Norwich Jarrols (womens), Shrewsbury, York, Meadowhall, Bicester, Cambridge, Oxford, Milton Keynes, Reading Outlet Manchester Selfridges Exchange, Manchester HoF, Newcastle Fenwicks	Unknown	Apply at local store level www.jaeger.co.uk

Head Office Opportunities

Company	Position	Salary	Apply
Hackett	Receptionist	Up to £20k	Apply with an email to: jo.curley@hackett.co.uk
Hamleys	Designer (Web design and store graphics)	Unknown	AMills2@hamleys.co.uk 02074797323
Hamleys	Artworker (In store Signage)	Unknown	AMills2@hamleys.co.uk 02074797323
John Lewis	Accept Speculative CV's	Unknown	Claire_Purrett@johnlewis.co.uk State current salary and what roles interested in
Jaeger	Garment Technologist - Menswear Assistant Garment Technologist Production Technologist - Accessories Merchandiser Buying Manager Franchise Administrator Design Assistant - Womenswear	Unknown	Send CV to: Amy Dawkins Resourcing Manager Jaeger 57 Broadwick Street London W1F 9QS www.jaeger.co.uk