

GETTING A JOB OR AN APPRENTICESHIP



Helping you get the
job you want



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What skills do employers want?

All employers look for job applicants who have:

- a range of **employability skills** – the skills you need to do any job well and show employers that you would make a good employee

job-specific skills – for example a games designer would need creative design and technical skills, whereas a doctor would need scientific, medical and technical skills. These are the skills that you mainly develop once you have finished full-time education and are doing a job. Most employers are keen to offer training to the right person – for example as part of an Apprenticeship or a work-based training programme. The important bit is being willing to carry on learning once you leave school, college or university

- **qualifications** – as they are evidence of personal, functional and employability skills.

Personal learning and thinking skills show that you are:

- **a good self-manager** – you can organise your time and yourself, show responsibility, cope with challenges and persevere when the going gets tough
- **an independent enquirer** – you can research information, work out what it means and use it to make well-thought out decisions
- **a reflective learner** – you can evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, judge how well you've done and make changes where necessary
- **a creative thinker** – you can find different ways to tackle a problem, come up with and develop new ideas
- **an effective participator** – you play(ed) a full part in the life of your school or college and the community and act responsibly
- **a great team worker** – you work confidently with others, take responsibility for your part of the work and take account of others' views.

Functional skills are:

- **being able to use English well** – writing and communicating clearly, understanding meaning, and setting out information in a logical order
- **being confident with maths** – measuring, calculating, estimating quantities and recording data
- **using ICT** – operating a computer, using basic systems, learning new applications and using telephones and other technology to communicate.

Top
Tip...

People with good employability skills are in short supply – so if you've got them you'll increase your chances of success when you apply for a job. In a competitive job market – when many people are applying for few jobs – **employability skills are more important than ever before!**

What work options do I have?

There is a world of work out there... including a few choices you may not have considered!

FULL-TIME JOBS

With training: good employers offer training opportunities. This is sometimes called 'on the job' training. You may have a chance to get work-related qualifications and certificates. A properly trained workforce is vital to an employer. You will benefit because your skills will improve and will be useful in future jobs. Training may offer you better job security and improve your chance of being promoted.

Without training: it may be tempting to take a well-paid 'easy' job with no training. Your wages might stay at the same level for years. You may not have the opportunity to get qualifications or to be promoted.

Work-based learning/Apprenticeships

An Apprenticeship offers you a great opportunity to earn AND learn at the same time. After finishing an Apprenticeship, the majority of people will stay in employment (85%), with two-thirds (64%) staying with the same employer¹.

Apprenticeship opportunities are found on the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service via: **www.apprenticeships.org.uk**. Current local Apprenticeship opportunities are also listed on your local website: **www.connexionsdudley.org**

PART-TIME WORK

You may need a job to fit in with study or family commitments. There are rules covering young workers and part-time jobs – especially if you haven't reached your official 'school leaving' age. For more about 'children's work rights' see **www.worksmart.org.uk**.



Temporary jobs: can last from a few weeks to over a year. They may be advertised as fixed or short-term contract, casual work or a holiday/seasonal job. Recruitment agencies or local newspapers often advertise temporary jobs.

You may find holiday job vacancies listed on some 'gap year' or volunteering websites. You may only be paid expenses (bed and board) but could have the opportunity to travel and learn new skills. Try these websites:

- **www.gapwork.com**
- **www.yearoutgroup.org**

WORKING FOR YOURSELF/SELF-EMPLOYMENT

The Prince's Trust (**www.princes-trust.org.uk**) gives advice about running your own business.

VOLUNTARY WORK

will add to your CV and might be a way into paid employment. Look for opportunities on these websites:

- V: **www.vinspired.com**
- Community Service Volunteers: **www.csv.org.uk**
- Volunteering England: **www.volunteering.org.uk**
- Worldwide Volunteering: **www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk**

Ask in local charity shops to see if they need any extra helpers.

WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS

You can ask an employer about unpaid work experience. This may be especially useful if it is something which fits in with your long term career or learning plans (for example if you want to study Veterinary Medicine or go into teaching).

¹Taken from the National Apprenticeships website: www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Where to look for work

Connexions Dudley lists current local Apprenticeship opportunities on the website: www.connexionsdudley.org.

Vacancies are updated weekly.

You will be able to talk to an Adviser from Connexions Dudley at an access point across the borough. Please email connexions@dudley.gov.uk or call: **01384 811400** for an appointment.

JOB CENTRES – have information on jobs for all ages and skills.

Jobcentre Plus has a wide range of digital services to help with your job search:

- Universal Jobmatch is available on www.gov.uk/jobsearch
- the Jobcentre Plus phone service is available on 0345 606 0234. If you find it hard to speak or hear clearly a textphone is available on 0345 605 5255.

NEWSPAPERS

- the Express and Star and the Birmingham Mail have special job supplements, usually on Thursdays. They also have jobs on their websites: www.jobs.expressandstar.com and <http://midlands.fish4jobs.co.uk>
- for links to other local newspaper websites go to www.newspapersoc.org.uk
- national newspapers advertise vacancies in the West Midlands and beyond
- you can look at local newspapers in public libraries. Libraries may also have some national newspaper titles
- newspapers have stories about companies or organisations moving into your local area. They may write about new shopping centres or if an employer is taking on more staff. Use this information to apply to those companies before they advertise.

Top
Tip...

You need to contact employers quite quickly after you see a job advertised in a newspaper – try to get hold of the earliest edition of an evening paper which will give you a good chance of being one of the first to apply for a job.

TRADE OR SPECIAL INTEREST MAGAZINES

Look in the back of any magazine linked to the area of work you are interested in – they may have job adverts in them. Try your local public library to see if they have **up-to-date** issues or check through the magazines on coffee tables of wherever people may be kept waiting – for example your hairdresser, barber, doctor or dentist. It probably isn't a good idea though to try reading the magazines in your local newsagent!

SHOP WINDOWS / IN-STORE ADVERTS / VACANCY BOARDS

Many shops, supermarkets and fast-food restaurants advertise full-time, part-time or seasonal vacancies in windows or in-store. Look at the 'Customer Noticeboard' usually located behind the tills in large supermarkets.

Newsagents and Post Offices may advertise local jobs in their shop windows.

Factories and industrial units often have a vacancy board outside their main entrance.

CAREERS FAIRS / JOBS FAIRS / RECRUITMENT CONVENTIONS / JOBS EXHIBITIONS / SKILLS EVENTS

If you see any event advertised using a combination of the words above, try to get along to it! You will be able to pick up valuable career tips and may also find employers who are recruiting for staff.

THE INTERNET

The majority of recruitment companies advertise their vacancies online. In some cases, this is now the only way that employers fill their vacancies. Choose from general job search sites, employment agencies, individual companies, businesses and newspapers. Always check that the information on a jobsite is up-to-date.

Set up 'alerts' on careers/recruitment sites to notify you when new jobs appear. Many companies and organisations have this option. If you set this up on your phone so that you get a text or an email alert, you can quickly check the details and get to a computer to make an early application if you are interested.

If you 'Google' the word 'jobs' you find over 927,000,000 sites (that's almost 1 billion!). If you don't *quite* have the time to check out all those links, go straight to **www.alljobsuk.com**

It is important to be able to access the internet and have your own email address. If you have access to the internet at home, then it's easy. If not, try these places:

- your local public library (access is free but you may have to pay for printing)
- a UK Online Centre: ring 0800 77 1234 or visit **www.ukonlinecentres.com** (they may also be able to help you to update or improve your computer skills)
- friends or relatives who may be happy to let you use their computer for your job search.

Top
Tip...

DON'T GET CAUGHT UP IN A SCAM! Be careful if you are posting your CV to an internet site promising to match you up with an employer. These sites work well for many people – but make sure that you can keep your personal details, for example your email address, away from public view. Real employers will contact you through the site. One young person was almost drawn in by a direct email from a CV that she had posted publically – she was asked to provide her bank details so that she could start a job with high earnings that were far too good to be true. Fortunately she showed it to a careers adviser before sending in her details who warned her not to be taken in by the scam. **REMEMBER** – *if an offer seems too good to be true or dubious in any way – show it to someone else for a second opinion.*

WORD OF MOUTH / ASKING EMPLOYERS

Some employers don't advertise their jobs anywhere. They rely on 'word of mouth' and speculative applications. You can try walking into a shop or to a reception to ask if they have any vacancies. You may be able to leave your CV with a manager. If you are going to do this:

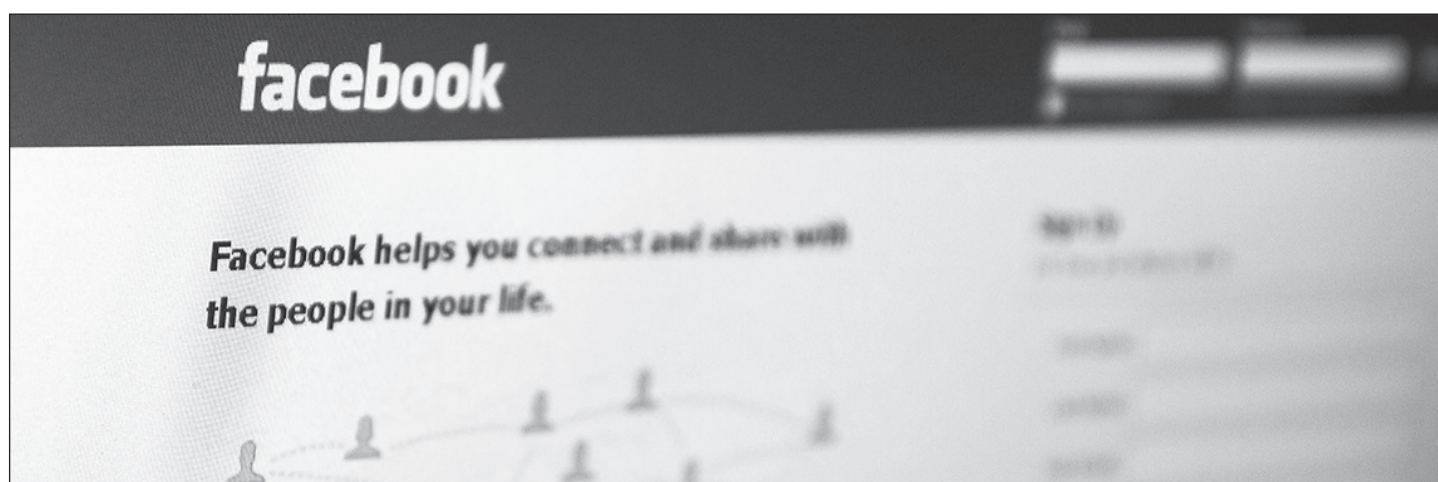
- make sure that you dress smartly
- be prepared to answer questions about yourself – just in case!

USING CONTACTS – NETWORKING

Ask friends, neighbours and relatives about jobs at the place where they are working. Some schools and colleges have links with local employers, who may ask them to recommend students for jobs.

USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES TO FIND WORK

Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are all important for finding contacts and opportunities.



www.facebook.com – most people use Facebook for connecting with friends – but it can be an effective networking tool. If you are going to use it for other than social purposes then you need to decide what you want business contacts or prospective employers to see – and what you don't!

For job searching:

- create a simple profile – including your previous work experience. Put in key words to your 'interests', linked to your job goals
- cut down the number of photos you post
- only put in updates relevant to jobsearch or your career so far
- choose your friends wisely – your links to professional friends may lead them to the pages of your regular 'mates' where you have no control over what is posted.

www.twitter.com – allows you to connect with people you don't know, based on your common interests. It is a good idea to mention your job search, or the type of job you are looking for, and:

- use your own name for your job search Twitter account
- use a professional looking avatar (picture) on your bio (profile).

Where to look for work

www.linkedin.com – is a business-orientated social network site. It allows you to connect with people you know – and then from that, to people they know (i.e. their network) which may include professionals or companies useful for your job search:

- some Human Resources (HR) managers add their own profiles to LinkedIn to try and make connections with potential candidates for jobs
- as a young person, you may think that you won't have much to put on your profile – but think about any work experience or volunteering you've done, do you have responsibilities in a sports club or because of your hobbies or interests?

There are also new online recruitment sites such as **www.twitjobsearch.com**. You may even be able to search on these sites using your mobile phone.

Top
Tip...

It is really important that your online personality is professional and **presentable**. It doesn't matter if you have made sure that you are connected, linked and networked to hundreds of potential employers if your information is full of spelling mistakes! Treat social networking opportunities as seriously as a written letter, email, phone call or job interview.



EMPLOYMENT OR RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Employment or recruitment agencies offer specialist and general job vacancies. Many of the jobs are temporary. Some agencies will ask you for a CV when you register. They will also need to see proof of your identity and your qualifications.

You may need qualifications and experience for some of the jobs. Ask your school or college's careers adviser for advice. An agency may offer you a job at very short notice and they can also finish temporary work with little or no warning.

All recruitment agencies must meet certain standards². They must give you information about terms and conditions. They cannot refuse to pay your wages because they haven't been paid by the employer. They should not charge you fees for finding work – although there are some exceptions for example modelling and some entertainment agencies.

Details of employment agencies are available in phone books or on the internet. Some agencies are listed on **www.rec.uk.com** along with plenty of advice on how to get the most out of your relationship with recruitment agencies.

Agencies will contact you if something suitable comes up. It is always a good idea to ring or visit them on a regular basis because you may just be in the right place when a new job comes to their attention. Listen to any advice they give you about improving your chances of getting a job.

² Employment Agencies Act 1973.

LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK?

There are a few extra things to think about if you are looking for a job that fits in with study or family commitments. Most importantly, think about the hours and days that you have available. If the employer needs someone for 20 hours a week and you can only work on Saturday, then it is unlikely that you will be considered. Some practical tactics for searching for an opportunity include:

- think about how far you are prepared to travel. Looking locally in your area will limit the jobs you will find – but don't forget about applying to small businesses close to home
- do you know anyone who has a part-time job already? How did they get that job? Would they mind asking their manager about any other opportunities?
- are you prepared to go in and ask for a job? It is true that many jobs are advertised online – but some people will get a job because they made the extra effort to call in and ask for more details. Sell yourself – be confident and friendly!
- make sure your online search is efficient – make sure you include the word 'jobs' – searching for just the company name may take you just to their sales or information page – for example searching for 'jobs Next' takes you to that employer's careers page, but just typing in 'Next' will take you to a sales page where you may be tempted to spend rather than earn money!

And remember, if you have taken part-time work to fit in with something else – for example, while you are studying, then make sure that your prospects of high grades and greater earning potential in the future are not suffering because you have taken on too much.

Some universities discourage students from taking part-time employment. Some students decide themselves that sacrificing that bit of extra cash they would have used for a night out or new clothes is worth it because they know that they will have extra time to complete assignments and study for exams – as one of our local students reports below:

"I guess that I'm lucky to have a good part-time job with a large department store. They have been fair to me; I've been able to return to work with them after the summer break and the wages are decent. Trouble is, I'm obviously a valued employee and they always want me to work more hours. I've tried to balance it with my studies but you reach a point where you have to think about the long term. So I decided that I'd have to talk to my manager about reducing my hours or quitting completely. That discussion went far better than expected – they want to keep me, I've cut the hours right down, I have time for my studies – and even a tiny bit of extra time to chat with my house-mates who I've hardly seen in the dash between university and work!"

Top tips from professional, local advisers...

- the secret to getting a summer or holiday job is to be willing to consider any type of work. Target any business that is dedicated to entertaining children as they may be busy in the summer
- shops and fast-food restaurants that are open long hours need more part-time staff. Ask in local convenience stores, DVD hire shops, supermarkets and DIY stores as well as anywhere that serves chips, pizza and burgers! Try to avoid going into shops and asking for a job during their busiest time from 12pm to 3pm
- a large hotel may have work cleaning rooms, serving food, collecting glasses or working behind the bar (over 18s only for the last job)
- swimming pools need attendants with life-saving qualifications. Contact your local council's leisure services department to ask about vacancies.

Replying to a job advert: phone calls



Some young people worry about telephoning an employer to follow up a job advert. Here are a few simple rules which will help you:

- choose somewhere quiet and private to phone from
- if you are using your mobile, make sure you have enough credit
- gather together the following:
 - details of the job you are calling about and the name of the person or department you want to speak to
 - your CV or a list of your qualifications – just in case your telephone conversation turns into a mini-interview. Sometimes an employer will use this first conversation to make sure it is worthwhile you applying for the job
 - **a pen and paper – essential!**
- decide what you are going to say – practise your opening lines with a friend or a family member
- speak clearly, not too quickly and keep to the point – try to sound confident even if you don't feel it. Don't try to change your Black Country accent into a fake telephone voice – just be yourself!
- before you hang up, make sure you know what is going to happen next:
 - must you wait for an application form to arrive? Will the form arrive by post or will they email it to you? Do you need to send in your CV?
 - have they invited you for an interview? If so, WHO are you seeing; WHEN is your interview and WHERE do you need to go? Write it down!
- if you reach an answer phone, make sure you leave a clear message, including your name, contact details and which job you are interested in. The message will usually ask you to spell out any difficult or unusual names
- always thank the person you spoke to for their help.

Writing for more information and covering letters...

GENERAL POINTS FOR ALL LETTERS

- if you are writing to a named person, finish your letter with 'Yours sincerely'
- if you do not know the name of the person you are writing to, start the letter with 'Dear Sir/Madam' and end with 'Yours faithfully'
- keep the language clear and simple – don't use long or difficult words if that isn't how you speak in everyday life
- always include your full address
- at the end of the letter print your name and sign it
- use the same quality paper and font as your CV
- keep a copy of any letter or email you send, add it to your job search file.

GENERAL POINTS FOR ALL EMAILS

- check that you have the right email address. If you spell it slightly wrong, the email will not arrive!
- don't use 'text speak', all capitals or abbreviations
- if your email does not have a spell checker, draft it out in a word processor first
- use the subject line to describe the email content – for example 'Job Application'
- never just send a blank email with a CV attached, at the very least you need to write an explanatory email about why you have sent it and mention the job you are applying for – you should aim to write your email to the same high standards as a letter
- if you attach anything to the email – for example your CV – make sure you save it in a 'compatible' version of a well-known word processing program so it can be opened by most computers.

TIPS FOR MANAGING YOUR JOBSEARCH EMAILS

It is a good idea to set up an email address that you keep only for your applications or for registering on the National Apprenticeship site (www.apprenticeships.org.uk) and which is different to your 'social' email because:

- you probably have dozens of emails in your social account including plenty of spam items that you never read or delete – this makes it really difficult to pick out replies to applications
- you should always make sure that the email address you use for jobsearch is suitable for employers or training providers. Don't make a bad impression with 'lazy@provider.co.uk', 'fluffybunny@provider.co.uk', 'carthief@provider.co.uk' etc!

WRITING FOR MORE INFORMATION

A job advert may ask you to write for more information or to request an application form so:

- remember to include the title of the job you are writing about AND the reference number on the advert if there is one
- mention where you saw the vacancy advertised
- check the advert to see who you need to write to for more information. If there is a named person, make sure you start your letter with Dear Mr/Mrs and also address the envelope to that person
- if you are asked to request details by email, you should take just as much care with it as you would with a letter.

WRITING COVERING LETTERS

A covering letter is usually sent with a CV therefore:

- keep it short and to the point. Remember that most of the important information is already in your CV
- include the title of the job vacancy and where you saw it advertised
- try to show how the skills and experience on your CV make you the best person for the job.

Template for a letter requesting an application form:

Your address line 1
Your address line 2
Your address line 3
Telephone number(s)
Email address

Contact name
Name of employer

Date

Dear (contact name or Sir/Madam)

*First paragraph – what is the letter about – “I am writing in response to”
– “You have a vacancy advertised in the Express and Star for...” “The reference number is...”*

*Second paragraph – “Please could you send me an application pack/
application form because I am keen to apply for the vacancy”.*

Thank you.

Yours (sincerely or faithfully)

(Your signature)

Your name

Top
Tip...

Your letter will look far more professional if it is word-processed. You should always sign letters by hand though.

Writing for more information and covering letters...

Template for a covering letter for a CV:

Your address line 1
Your address line 2
Your address line 3
Telephone number(s)
Email address

Contact name
Name of employer

Date

Dear (contact name or Sir/Madam)

Job title (and reference number)

First paragraph – “I would like/am keen to apply for the above vacancy advertised in the Birmingham Mail on date...”

Second paragraph – match up your skills and experience to the job on offer – have you just completed a course or qualification(s) which will be useful, what work experience do you already have?

Third paragraph – “I am/I have always been/I enjoy/I have a keen interest in”. Why do you want to work for this particular employer?

“I have enclosed a copy of my CV for your attention. I am available for interview at any time and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you.

Yours (sincerely or faithfully)

(Your signature)

Your name

Enc: Curriculum Vitae

Curriculum Vitae (CV) tips

A CV is a way of advertising yourself so that employers will want to meet you and should be sent out with a covering letter or email.

WHAT SHOULD A CV INCLUDE

There is no right or wrong order for a CV but you normally start with your contact details. Include your:

- name, address, email address and telephone number(s)
- personal profile/career aim/self-marketing statement
- education and qualifications
- skills and work-experience, including paid work, work-experience or voluntary placements (most recent first and then work backwards)
- particular skills, for example if you have a First Aid certificate or passed your driving test
- hobbies and interests – particularly if these highlight responsibilities and skills that are relevant to the job you are applying for
- references (or 'References available on request').

DON'T

- put in negative comments, bad exam results, awful experiences, wage expectations or jokes
- put your age, date of birth or whether you are married/in a Civil Partnership – the law says that none of these can be taken into account when selecting employees
- include a photograph.

If you are sending your CV in response to a job, or an Apprenticeship you have seen advertised locally, make sure that it emphasises the skills and experiences that are relevant to that position.

Top
Tip...

Many companies scan CVs to pick out certain words that are relevant to the opportunity on offer – and if they don't see them then they don't read the CV. This seems harsh – but just think how many hundreds of CVs may pass through a busy Human Resources (HR) Department and you will probably understand why they need a short cut to find the right person. You can help your application to get picked out by making sure that your CV includes words occurring in the job description.

PERSONAL PROFILES

This is what real young people wrote about themselves³:

Example 1:

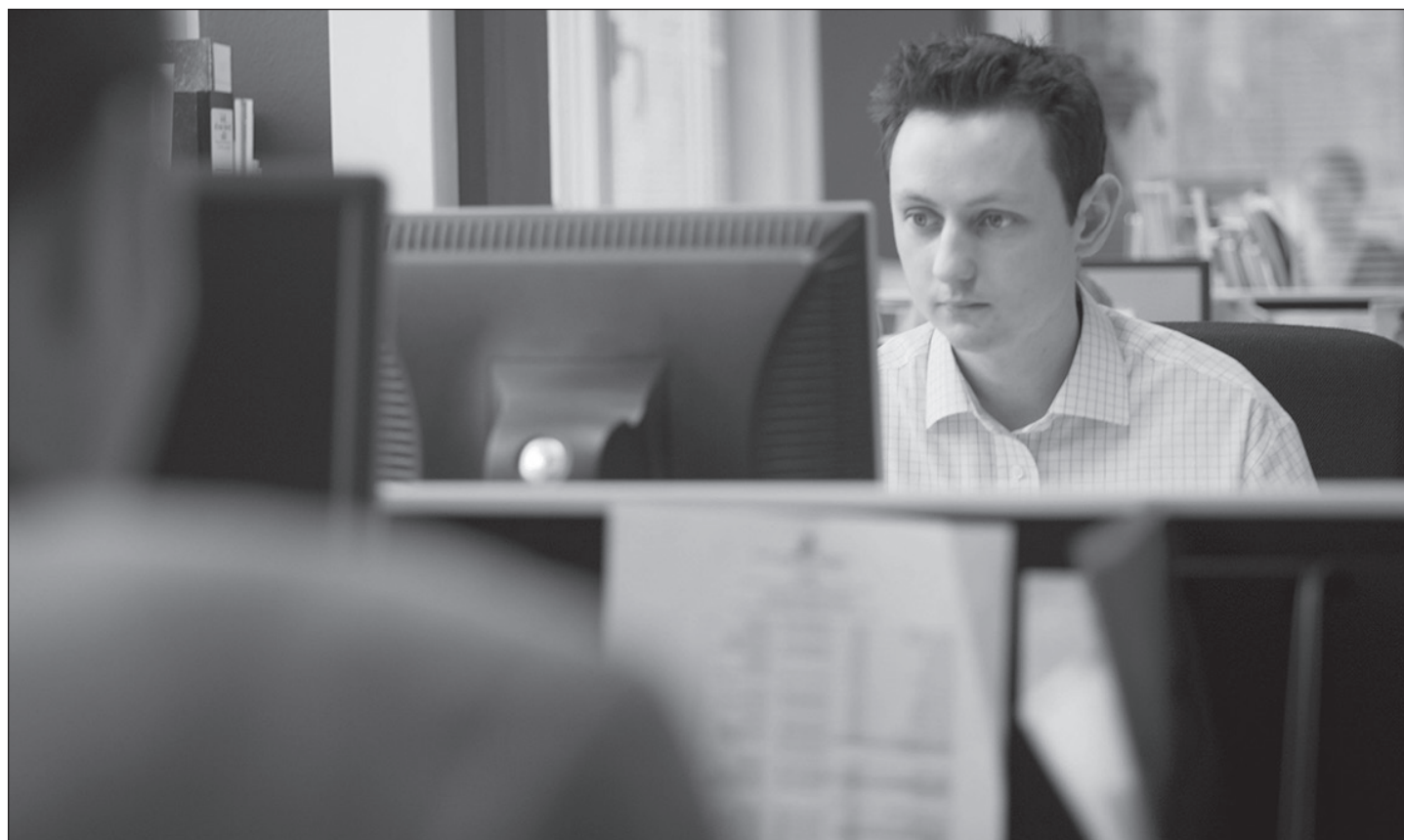
I am a hardworking, reliable and highly motivated college student who has completed a level 2 qualification in Domestic Natural Gas Installation and Maintenance, which has given me some basic knowledge required for a Gas Engineer. Currently I am seeking to secure an Apprenticeship placement which will allow me to continue onto level 3 qualifications. I am honest, trustworthy with a polite friendly manner and good communication skills.

Example 2:

An organised, reliable, and hardworking school leaver with good IT skills. Able to work well as part of a team, good interpersonal and communication skills. Seeking an Apprenticeship in administration. Very keen and willing for the opportunity to gain new skills and qualifications.

Example 3:

Reliable, hardworking school leaver with a strong interest in cars is seeking to gain an Apprenticeship in the motor vehicle trade. A basic knowledge of motor vehicle maintenance developed through helping father with car maintenance. Able to work quickly and methodically, keen and willing to train to develop skills and gain recognised qualifications.



³With thanks to young jobseekers from the Black Country area.

WHAT SHOULD A CV LOOK LIKE?

Your CV must always be word-processed and you should:

- keep it short, no more than 2 sides of A4 paper
- make it look neat and tidy
- check your spelling and grammar (anyone can use spellcheck and mistakes make it look like you haven't made any effort)
- stick to a simple font and choose a size which is easy to read – for example Arial size 12
- try not to 'jazz up' your CV with different fonts, bright coloured paper, borders or clip art. If you want to make your CV stand out, try going for an off-white or cream paper
- keep sentences and paragraphs short.

Make sure you save it in a 'compatible' version of a well-known program so that it can be opened by most computers. You will be able to update and adjust it without having to start all over again.

SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE ABOUT CVs FROM REAL EMPLOYERS

About the content:

- don't use text speak – we will throw your CV away
- don't use large fonts – it makes us think that you have nothing to say and are just trying to fill the page
- don't just write one block of text with no paragraphs – we might receive hundreds of CVs for one vacancy – if yours is too difficult to read, we will not bother
- add any voluntary work you've done – if you are struggling to get a job, anyone can volunteer to get more work experience
- put something in about absence, attendance and punctuality – if you had really good attendance at school then tell us – we need reliable people
- show that you are flexible – tell us what hours/days you can work
- tell us about your interests – don't just write 'I play football' – we want to see your interest and dedication.

About handing it in:

- make sure you look smart when you hand a CV in – we do notice
- if you want to work in a fashion store, then show us that you are interested in fashion by the way you dress – both when you drop off your CV and at the interview
- never ask your parent or carer to hand in a CV for you; it looks like you can't be bothered to do it yourself
- don't just walk in and drop off your CV, try to choose a time when we are not busy and ask to speak to the manager. Talk to us, we want to see your personality.

Example 1...

Thomas Friend
4 London Street
Dudley
West Midlands
XXX XXX

Telephone (mobile) number: 07777 123456
Email: Tom_friend @cloud.com

Personal Profile

I am a smart and well-presented individual with an excellent timekeeping and attendance record. I have an outgoing personality with good verbal communication skills. I am able to work on my own initiative but also enjoy working as part of a team. I am willing to work hard and undertake further study and training to improve my skills and gain new qualifications.

Education and Qualifications

Old School, Top Street, Dudley, West Midlands XXX XXX
GCSEs (July 2013)
Maths (D), English (D)
COPE (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness) Level 1 Award

Skills and work-experience

I did my school work-experience in Big Store in the retail park. While I was there I worked in the warehouse where I helped with stock rotation, receiving deliveries, checking paperwork, stocking up the shelves and helping customers to take heavy items out to their cars. I received an excellent reference from the manager which stated that I am a good team worker, I completed all my tasks and that I am reliable.

I often take care of my nephews who are aged 2 and 4 while my sister is out at work in the evening. She relies on me to look after them. This is a very responsible position and I need a lot of patience but I also enjoy it.

Hobbies and interests

I am a member of our local boxing gym and intend to fight at a higher level if I can in the future. Boxing helps me to be disciplined and fit. My trainer has recently asked me to take on the responsibility of showing new members around, making sure they know how to use the lockers and talking to them about how they should behave.

References:

Mrs D. Tutor
Head of Year 11
Old School
Top Street
Short Town
Postcode

Bernie Thump
Trainer – Box-Big Club
Community Centre
Top Street
Short Town
Postcode

NOTE: You may want to put 'Names and addresses of two referees available on request' if you don't want the employer to contact them before you've had an interview.

LEARN HOW TO USE 'CV SPEAK'...

You may feel that you haven't too many positive things to put into your CV – you haven't got good qualifications, you haven't done any volunteering, you are not a member of any clubs, you don't have any special responsibilities at school or college and you haven't had a full-time job ... yet. You may believe that you haven't got **any** skills to include – but that's unlikely!

'Transferable skills' are those that you probably use every day – at home, school, college – in fact everywhere. An example is 'being a good communicator' – shown by someone who is a sympathetic friend, a good listener and able to help others to sort out their problems. This same skill is needed for a range of different jobs, at different levels – for example a doctor, shop assistant or a teacher.

Look back at Thomas Friend's CV – he hasn't got fantastic exam results, but he has emphasised his transferable skills – for example he doesn't just say that he takes care of his nephews, he emphasises how it demonstrates responsibility and patience.

But what if you don't have babysitting responsibilities, or not a member of a boxing club? Think about what you're good at, how others would describe you, things that you are proud of and what your day to day life involves. Then think about the transferable skills that these demonstrate and turn these into 'CV Speak'. You can even turn things that don't seem to sound too good into positives. Here are some ideas to start you off:

THIS IS ME...	CV SPEAK...
A good laugh	Gets on well with people of all ages
Sociable, chatty, bubbly	Good communicator, confident
Bossy	Has leadership skills
Likes to be the centre of attention	Confident
Easily distracted	Open to new ideas and suggestions, flexible worker
Bit of a daydreamer	Creative thinker
Helped to build a garden shed	Construction skills, planning and budgeting skills
Play for a local football team	Teamwork skills, shows commitment/reliability

Curriculum Vitae (CV) tips

THIS IS ME...	CV SPEAK...
Babysits for family	Childcare skills, happy to take on responsibility
Helps out with household chores	Organised and efficient, food preparation/catering experience
Took part in school play	Presentation skills, confident in front of an audience
Enjoy computer games, using the internet	Good ICT skills, enjoy researching information
Enjoy fixing my car/bike/scooter	Excellent practical skills, technically minded, problem solving skills
Like to do things my own way	Innovative, self-motivated
Like to be told how to do things	Able to follow instructions accurately, methodical worker
Attended school on time, every day	Good attendance records, punctual and reliable
Didn't take many exams at school but regret it now	Willing to train and gain further skills and qualification
Good at getting friends to do what I want them to do	Able to organise and motivate others, effective negotiation skills
Always hand homework in on time	Able to meet deadlines, excellent planning skills, effective time manager
Friends come to me to talk about problems	Sympathetic, good listener, caring attitude
Worked in a school shop	Experience of cash handling, happy to take on responsibility
Enjoy drawing and sketching at home	Artistic and creative, has a flair for design
Sell things on Ebay or at car boot sales	Commercial/business awareness, entrepreneurial skills
Use Facebook to meet new people and keep in touch with friends	Excellent networking skills, good ICT skills and awareness of Social Media
I'm a laid back kind of person	Able to stay calm and work well under pressure
I always got my homework done before going out	Able to prioritise effectively
I was a runner at school, sending messages for staff and visitors	A range of customer services dealing with adults and peers

Top Tip...

Target your CV to the job, or type of job you are applying for. See the examples over the next few pages. Notice how, in example 2, Bea has mentioned that she has 'a keen interest in a career in retail' and gives quite a lot of detail about her work experience in Big Clothes Shop. She has also mentioned running the fund-raising shop for her youth club under hobbies and interests. This CV would be good to send/hand out to outlets in her local shopping centre. *How could Bea slightly rewrite the CV to target it towards a job working in a sports or leisure centre? Take a look at the other skills, hobbies and interests she could emphasise.*

Example 2...

Bea Real

68 Named Street
Halesowen
Postcode

Telephone / mobile number: 0121 111 1111

E-mail: breal@provider.co.uk

Personal profile

I am hardworking with a keen interest in a career in retail. I am looking for a part-time position to fit in with my A level studies. I can work on my own initiative, am eager to learn new skills and enjoy working as part of a team.

Education and Qualifications

New Academy, Long Road, Town, Postcode

GCSEs taken June 2012. Grades in brackets

Maths (B), English (A), History (C), Textiles (B), Art (C), Geography (C), Citizenship (B)

Taking A levels Summer 2014 in English, Art & Textiles and Maths.

Skills and work-experience

I have a First Aid qualification taken at youth club. I am now working towards the first level of my Sports Leader Award.

In July this year I had a 2 week work-experience placement with Big Clothes Shop in the city centre. I worked on the tills, serving customers and taking cash and card transactions. I worked on the customer service desk dealing with exchanges and refunds. I also worked on the shop floor helping with displays, restocking and tidying and was involved in the special summer merchandise promotion.

Hobbies and interests

I represent my school at basketball. I enjoy mountain bike riding and going to the cinema. I also enjoy going to our local youth club where I have recently been given the responsibility of managing our fund-raising shop.

References

Mrs L. Teacher
Head of Year 11
New Academy
Long Road
Town
Postcode

Mr Y. Personality
Youth Leader - Town Youth Club
Community Centre
Short Lane
Town
Postcode

NOTE: You may want to put 'Names and addresses of two referees available on request' if you don't want the employer to contact them before you've had an interview.

Example 3...

Sally Jane Smith
27 London Street
Kingswinford
West Midlands
XXXX XX

Telephone: 01384 111111

Skills, Abilities and Experience

- Good communication skills
- Punctual and reliable
- Able to use a computer
- Work well as part of a team
- Willing to train and gain qualifications

Education

2005-2010 Academy Technology College

GCSEs gained in 2010

- English Grade C
- History Grade D
- French Grade D
- Maths Grade D
- Science Grade C

Work Experience

September 2011 to August 2012

Retail Assistant, Big Shop
Mall Centre

- Assisting customers
- Cash handling
- Working as part of a team

July 2010 to September 2011

Assistant Cashier, Superdrug Stores
Mall Centre

- Serving customers
- Cash handling
- Keeping shelves stocked
- Health and Safety

Interests and Hobbies

In my spare time I enjoy socialising with friends, reading and keeping fit.

References

Names and addresses of two referees available on request.

Example 4...

Jo Worker
30 Number Street
Stourbridge
XXX XXX
01384 111111
0721 321 321
jworker@anyprovider.co.uk

Personal Profile

A hard working, reliable school leaver with good communication skills, who is able to work well both independently and in a team. Work experience at a local newsagent has taught the value of punctuality and following instructions accurately. Also developed confidence and ability to handle day-to-day problems appropriately. A person who has a particular interest in retail work who would welcome a position that provides the opportunity to continue to build further retail skills and experience.

Key Skills

- Serving customers
- Cash handling
- Replenishing shelves
- Stock rotation
- Good school attendance record
- Keen and enthusiastic

Education and Qualifications

2008-2013 Town Secondary School

GCSEs achieved:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| • English | C |
| • Mathematics | D |
| • Science (Dual) | D |
| • Geography | D |

Work-experience

July 2012 General Retail Assistant Village Newsagent

I had the opportunity to do two weeks work-experience at the above newsagent, my duties included:

- Sorting stock ready for display
- Filling shelves
- Serving customers
- Handling cash payments
- Till operation

Interests

I enjoy watching and playing football and currently play for United Rovers under-18 football team. During my spare time I enjoy keeping fit by attending the gym twice a week. I also enjoy going to the cinema and listening to music.

References:

Available on request.

WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING TO SEE IN YOUR APPLICATION?

- that you have highlighted your achievements, not just the tasks you carried out
- that you have included comments about:
 - **working under pressure** – getting tasks done on time – how do you cope with being busy?
 - **working with other people** – did you feel that you were an effective team member? If you worked in a successful team, what part did you play?
 - **working with other people** – customers or clients – did you have to deal with any difficult situations, for example complaints?
 - **work and routines** – how did you cope with repetitive tasks?

Top
Tip...

Never use any combination of the words; bored, boring, boredom, dull, fed up, time dragging, tedious, sent to sleep... at ANY stage of a job application!

Is it a good idea to use certain words and phrases to emphasise positive points?

YES! Use positive words: sometimes you will see these called 'buzz' words

capable	friendly	enthusiastic	calm and relaxed
reliable	well-motivated/ keen to learn	self-motivated	punctual
honest/trustworthy	good team worker	hard working	competent
responsible	organised	committed	adaptable

Use sentences starting with

I enjoy	I successfully	I learnt to	I took part in
I improved	I won	I am interested in	I set up
I was chosen to	I organised	I was fascinated by	I wish
I have experience of	I can	I passed	I was congratulated on
I am good at	I am a keen	I raised money for	I have good
I want to	I helped	I learnt that I am	I was thanked for

Curriculum Vitae (CV) tips

Include phrases like

taught me	take responsibility	learnt how to deal with equipment
helped me	act appropriately	learnt how to follow instructions
negotiating with	made me aware of	work as part of a team
dealing with problems	made me realise	use my initiative
new challenges	gave me the opportunity	be self-disciplined
know how to deal with money	communicating with	seek help where appropriate
can travel independently	giving advice to	opened my eyes to
understand how to respond to requests	answering questions	made me determined
work on my own	learnt how to deal with people	discussing with

Emphasise your good qualities

sense of humour	hard working	neat and tidy
quiet	energetic	punctual
generous	careful	caring
like trying new things	friendly	thoughtful
fit and healthy	enthusiastic	supportive
smart appearance	willing to learn	enjoy a challenge

Include experiences as appropriate

work-experience	school plays/performances	responsibilities at home or school
hobbies	part-time work	fundraising
dealing with difficulties	clubs	sports

Are you offering any special skills?

reading	working under pressure	listening
helping others	organising events	telephone skills
computer skills	map reading/navigating	communication skills
languages (indicate whether you have fluent, intermediate or basic skills)		

Curriculum Vitae (CV) tips

Can you include skills you have developed in your social life or out of school activities? Make a list ready for your job applications – but try and work out the positive benefits, for example:

Activity	Developed skills
Work-experience	punctuality; responsibility; team working
Socialising with friends	initiative; conversationalist; ideas person; peacemaker
Hobbies	self-discipline; commitment
Sports/music/arts/drama	skilful; curious; refreshing; dedication; patience; team player
Computers	manual dexterity; coordination; competitive; technical
Reading	knowledge; imagination; concentration; calmness
Travel/holidays	inquisitive; knowledge; planning; budgeting; organisation; cultural sensitivity; leadership; languages
Looking after relatives (older/younger)	patience; responsibility; sense of humour
Prefect	confidence; diplomacy; responsibility
Voluntary work	social conscience; reliability; motivation; caring
Languages	intellect; cultural interest; written/spoken ability; interpreter; sensitivity; communicator
Driving	competent; careful; conscientious; safe
Youth Club/Scouts/Guides	discipline; loyalty; commitment; group member
If you are a member of a church or mosque or if you regularly go to a temple, think how that may also show your skills of discipline, loyalty and commitment.	

Top
Tip...

USE ANY FREE HELP AVAILABLE!!

Try the CV Creator tool on the Connexions Dudley website: www.connexionsdudley.org

Try CV Builder from the National Careers Service:
<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Beef up your CV with Volunteering Activities

Top Tip...

Employees are asking for candidates with experience but I haven't had a job yet so I can't show them that I have any experience and I can't get a job because employers are asking for candidates with experience... so why don't you get experience by doing a voluntary job?

Look back at that practical advice about CVs from real employers on page 16 and the comment 'if you are struggling to get a job, anyone can volunteer to get more work experience.'

Why would anyone bother to volunteer their time without being paid? You may not be making money – although most voluntary occupations offer help with expenses – but you will be helping yourself when you do any voluntary work.

If you volunteer you will:

- build employability skills
- discover personal strengths
- get work experience
- learn new skills and get extra qualifications
- have fun!
- develop confidence
- feel valuable
- strengthen your CV
- support a good cause

But don't just take the word of the writers of this booklet – read about the experiences of a real young volunteer...

You could say I'm a bit of a serial volunteer having given up my free time to help 4 different organisations – but I'm also living proof of the benefits as I had quite a full CV even before I got my first proper full-time job. This is my story:

I first volunteered while I was at university. I worked in a P.D.S.A. charity shop, mainly working out front on the tills. The opportunity came about through my mother, who thought it would help to build my confidence and develop my work skills. I tend to listen when she says that sort of thing; she's been a professional Careers Adviser for years so ought to know what she's talking about! The shop needed someone who would be confident with handling money; quite a lot of volunteers would rather work behind the scenes than at the till so I could offer them something different.

I finished my degree but still didn't know what I wanted to do apart from a vague idea of working in finance. I was caught in that cycle of constantly applying for jobs only to lose out to someone less qualified than me, who could offer 'experience.' So I fell back on volunteering activities and started working in a local Hospice charity shop. There I added more general, teamworking skills to my repertoire – helping with tidying, pricing and again working on the tills. I found that my confidence increased even more and I was happy to talk to customers.

I decided that I needed something extra to add to my CV, so I approached our local Volunteer Bureau where there were plenty of vacancies on offer. I applied for a few – and ended up with a two day a week position working in administration for the Age UK Charity. This was a great opportunity! They were really appreciative and gave me plenty of staff development and my first employer reference. Since then I've also volunteered to help with finance for a youth service provider in a city centre. And now I have a full-time job...in finance!

continued...

Beef up your CV with Volunteering Activities

Everyone is different – but I know just how much I've got out of volunteering. At my first ever job interview, I was paralysed with nerves, without a clue how to answer the questions. No surprise when I didn't get the job. Since then I've grown up and:

- *have confidence and can talk to anyone*
- *have worked well outside my comfort zone (and conquered my fear of answering the telephone)*
- *can prove that I have commitment, great attendance and 'stickability'*
- *can evidence a range of real work skills and experiences.*

And how do I measure how far my volunteering journey has taken me? Well my CV is now full of work experiences and proof of my employability skills, it got me that all-important interview for a vacancy working in finance (where I had plenty to say for myself) and, of course, I got that job!

WHERE TO LOOK FOR VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES:

There are some excellent websites that you can use for your research – we've given you a few to get you started:

- 'V' – www.vinspired.com
- Community Services Volunteers (CSV) – www.csv.org.uk/volunteering/youth
- Volunteering England – www.volunteering.org.uk
- Worldwide Volunteering – www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk

And don't forget where our young volunteer got her 'great' opportunity – try your local Volunteer Centre:

- www.volunteeringcounts.org.uk – but please note, quite a lot of local opportunities may be for over-18s only.



Speculative approaches.

Not all vacancies are advertised. You can try writing to a company or organisation that you are interested in working for, to ask if they have anything suitable. If there is no vacancy, they may keep your letter on file and contact you if anything comes up. Approaching employers in this way is usually called 'speculative' because it is a gamble which does sometimes pay!

MAKE SURE THAT YOU:

- keep the letter clear and simple
- include details of the type of job you are interested in
- send a copy of your CV with the letter
- try and find out the name of the best person to contact and send the letter and CV to them
- if you don't have a name, address your letter to 'Human Resources.'

YOUR LETTER SHOULD:

- make it clear that you are asking if they have any vacancies at the moment – or in the future
- say what sort of job you are looking for
- sell the skills you have on offer
- tell the employer why you want to work for them. Show that you know something about the company or organisation.

If you can include a stamped self-addressed envelope, it may encourage an employer to reply.

Sample template for a speculative letter...

Your address line 1
Your address line 2
Your address line 3
Email/Telephone number(s)

Contact name
Name of employer

Date

Dear (contact name or Sir/Madam)

First paragraph – what is the letter about? – “I am writing to enquire” – why are you applying? – “I am keen to apply for possible vacancies in...” – why do you want to work for this employer?

Second paragraph – what are YOU offering? – “I can offer” – your skills, experience, qualities. You need to show this employer that you are exactly what they need!

Final paragraph – what are you hoping to get out of this approach? – “I enclose my CV – I would love the chance of a meeting/an interview with you.”

Yours (sincerely or faithfully)

(Your signature)

Your name

Enc: Curriculum Vitae

BEFORE YOU START

- read the instructions! You may be asked to write in capitals and in black ink
- read any information you have been given about the job. The more you know about the vacancy the better your application will be
- photocopy the blank form to practise on. Your school, college, post offices and libraries will help you with photocopying
- ask someone to check your practice form before you do it for real.
- if you are due to take some exams or are waiting for results, include your predicted marks or grades
- under 'employment' put down any jobs you have done, including any part-time work or voluntary work
- explain any gaps in your employment history
- if you need to continue on a separate sheet, write down your name and title of the section
- there may be a section called 'interests or hobbies' – see page 25 for the skills you can include here.

FILLING IN THE APPLICATION FORM

- make sure that your spelling is correct and that there are no crossings out
- do not use 'text speak'
- write neatly and keep the form clean and tidy
- do not use any abbreviations – write words out in full
- complete all sections. If a question is not relevant to you, write N/A (not applicable)
- check for a section called 'extra or supporting information.' This important part of the form gives you the opportunity to sell yourself
- read the information you have about the job and match your skills and abilities to those that the employer is looking for
- make sure to give your full address, postcode and telephone number
- under 'education,' list secondary schools/academies and colleges. You should not include your primary school
- under 'qualifications' list any exams you have taken and the grade(s) you were awarded. Be honest, you may be asked to show your certificates

BEFORE YOU SEND THE FORM IN

- read it through slowly and carefully to check that you have completed all the sections with no mistakes
- take a photocopy! If you get invited to an interview you can remind yourself of what you said
- use a large envelope so that you don't have to fold it too many times
- use the correct postage
- post it in time for it to arrive before the closing date
- if you are emailing an application, add a 'received' or 'read' receipt so that you know it has been delivered at the other end.

ONLINE APPLICATION FORMS

Many employers now ask that you fill out an application form online. If you need to do this, make sure you are prepared by having your CV to hand. Online applications can get 'timed-out' so preparation is vital before you start.

Follow the instructions very carefully. Remember that you still need to follow the same rule as when you're applying on a paper application form.

Before you click 'send' **take a copy!** You may be able to save the form to your computer or print off a hard copy for checking. Use it to prepare if you are offered an interview.

There are practice online application forms at www.selectsimulator.com

ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Top
Tip...

Follow the advice of the National Apprenticeships Service about online applications for Apprenticeships...

The National Apprenticeships Service has produced a guide to help you to use their online vacancy matching and application service effectively. It is called 'Don't dream it. Do it.' and is available to download from the Apprentices section of www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

The guide takes you step by step through using the website – including how to register, search and fill in their version of an online application form. There are also some great, extra tips to help you to make your application stand out, including:

- Use the job advert to find out the skills and attributes that the employer is looking for, and the Vacancy Description to see the kind of tasks you would be expected to complete.
- Use the question 'what personal skills would you like to improve?' to link directly to the job you are applying for. The guide lists a few clever examples; from a Hairdressing Apprenticeship applicant who would like to 'improve their knowledge of the latest cutting and colouring techniques being used within the fashion industry and how these could be adapted to suit high street fashion trends' and an IT applicant interested in improving their knowledge of developments in IT in the workplace to 'increase efficiency and decrease costs to the employer'
- Remember to target your application form sensibly – change the emphasis to suit the vacancy. See the two examples from the would-be Hairdresser and/or IT Programmer above – we have no evidence that these are not from the same person. Imagine the confusion should an IT employer read that a would-be programmer would like to spend their time getting better at cutting and colouring hair!
- Be careful if you are including information about your hobby or interests, don't make things up or exaggerate. The employer may ask you questions about it at the interview stage.

Application forms

- There are also some tips from real employers – including one for anyone who feels that their qualifications and experience of the workplace is not going to be good enough to get an Apprenticeship: ‘...we do look to see if the applicant has the desired GCSE results. However this isn’t the only thing we look at. If the applicant can demonstrate that they have taken the initiative to set up and undertake work experience to add to their skills then this is sometimes enough to get them through to interview’
- That last point about taking the initiative and setting up work experience is echoed in this publication – see the top tips from real employers on page 16 and the experiences of our young volunteer on page 26. The National Apprenticeships Service advises that you should not rely on the work experience you may have had at school but to offer to work one day at the weekend or during the holidays to get more experience.

DO YOU USE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES?

Then be careful – employers may look at social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter to check out job applicants so:

- make sure that any photos and personal news that you post on a social networking site don’t go against you. A survey⁴ in April 2012 reported that 56% of employers check applicants’ Facebook or Twitter accounts
- there may be a problem if they check and what you put on your site doesn’t match up with the image you present on your CV, application form, or in your interview.

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME (LAST NAME FIRST)

PRESENT ADDRESS

PERMANENT ADDRESS

PHONE

ARE YOU 18 YEARS OR OLDER?

☐ YES ☐ NO

APT. NO. CITY

APT. NO. CITY

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

EMPLOYMENT

MAY WE INQUIRE
PRESENT EMPLOYER

⁴ Reported in April 2012 on online technical website www.zdnet.com.

Interview tips: be prepared!

If you get a letter or email inviting you to an interview, make sure you reply to confirm that you will be attending. Find out as much information as you can about the employer. Read any information they have sent you and check in trade directories or libraries. Look at their website to see – what sort of organisation are they? What do they do, make or sell? Who are their clients or customers?

Keep an eye on the news, for example on the Express and Star website: www.jobs.expressandstar.com or watch Midlands Today on TV – is there anything important happening which may have an effect on that employer? Look at the application form and the job description, and think about what questions they might ask you. Try to think of suitable answers to these examples and practise them with a friend or a family member.

Tell me about yourself. What sort of person are you?	What have you been doing since you left school or college?	Have you had any experience of this kind of work?	What can you bring to the job/company?
Why should we employ you?	Why have you applied for this position?	Why do you want to work here?	What skills do you think you need to do this job?
Did you do any work-experience at school? Where? When?	What kinds of equipment can you use?	Why did you leave your last job?	What you know about this company/organisation?
What interests you about our services or products?	Can you give me an example of when you worked in a team/on your own?	How do you cope with pressure?	How often were you absent from your last job/school/college?
What was your favourite subject in school – and why?	What do you do in your spare time?	What was your greatest success at school/college/ your last job?	What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Top Tip...

TOP INTERVIEW TIPS FROM REAL EMPLOYERS...

- we will ask 'why do you want to work for this company?'
- we always ask – 'if you notice that everyone else in your team isn't working as hard as you, how would you feel?' We *don't* want to hear you say that you feel that you'd work less hard too!
- we know that you may be nervous in your interview – but we expect eye contact and smiles. If you can't look at us, how will you be with our customers?

Think about your body language and how you want to look – do you smile naturally? What will you do with your hands?

PREPARE A FEW QUESTIONS OF YOUR OWN AND WRITE THEM DOWN TO TAKE WITH YOU

- what sort of training will I get?
- when do you want the person who gets the job to start?
- how would I know if I am doing well – how will my progress be reviewed?
- will there be opportunities to take on more responsibility in the future?
- is this a new vacancy or was someone doing the job before? Has this vacancy arisen because of expansion? Was the previous person promoted?
- what are my prospects for getting promoted?
- are there any new developments planned for the organisation?
- what is the salary? (but ONLY ask this if it is not mentioned in the advert or information you have been sent and then only at the end of the interview).

Interview tips: be prepared!

Make sure you know how to get there and how long it will take you. If possible have a trial run at a similar time of day. Print out and take a map of the local area with you. If you are going to drive, or are having a lift, find out where the car park is. Sort out everything you need the day before:

- make sure your clothes are clean and ironed and your shoes are polished – choose something smart but comfortable
- gather together anything you have to take with you – certificates, identification, references etc.

Make sure you know whether you will have to take a test or make a presentation.

You will always be asked if you will need any special arrangements for interview day – for example access for a wheelchair or a Guide Dog. Employers will be pleased to make reasonable adjustments so that all candidates have the same chance of getting the job.

Try to have a relaxing day before your interview – and go to bed in time to have enough rest.

INTERVIEW DAY

- make sure your appearance and personal hygiene is good – hair well groomed, nails clean
- keep any jewellery, perfume/aftershave and make-up moderate
- take the documents you need with you – certificates, Record of Achievement or Progress File, references. Take a copy of your CV or application form with you
- take a pen. You may need to fill in forms on the day of the interview – be prepared
- check that you know the name of the person you are seeing at the interview
- turn off your mobile before you arrive
- get to the interview 15 minutes before it is due to start
- make sure the receptionist knows that you are there as soon as you arrive
- don't chew gum or smoke. Don't swear, even mildly
- be polite and friendly to **everyone** you meet and be prepared to shake hands
- don't sit down in the interview until you are asked to. Don't slump in the chair – sit comfortably with your hands in your lap and your bag or folders at the side of your chair
- make eye contact with the interviewer and **smile!**
- If you don't understand a question you've been asked, say so. Ask the interviewer to explain what they mean
- try not to give just yes or no answers to questions. If you don't know the answer to a question they are asking it is OK to tell the interviewer (try not to do this too many times though)
- be **honest** with your answers
- try and treat the interview like a normal conversation. Remember, interviewers are not trying to catch you out. They are trying to find the right person for the job and that could be you!

Top
Tip...

It is often said that it only takes 7 seconds for someone to form an initial opinion of you – their first thoughts about what you are like as a person are based only on the way you look and your body language. This means that following all the interview advice on these pages is really important to create that vital good first impression.

Tests and other types of interviews

You should be warned in advance if there is to be a test of your ability.

Skills tests

- you may be tested on your knowledge or skills for that job. For example you may be asked to word-process a short piece to test your typing skills.

Aptitude tests

- larger organisations may use 'aptitude' tests where they try to predict how well you may do in certain tasks. You may have to sit a test paper which has to be completed in a certain time.

Personality tests

- you may be asked questions about how you might think or behave in certain situations. There are no right or wrong answers. Employers use the overall picture to see how you might fit into the job or organisation.

Competency-based interviews

- as in Skills tests above, these are designed to try and find out about your skills and experience of a particular job. You could be asked to talk about examples of your previous work and achievements.

Group interviews

- you may find that you are assessed during a team activity along with others who are being interviewed for the same job. Make sure that you take an active part in the task.

SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE ABOUT INTERVIEWS FROM REAL EMPLOYERS

We run group interview sessions, 30 people at a time split into smaller groups – and then we watch as they take part in team exercises. We don't want people who dominate – or those who sit back and say nothing. You need to show that you can listen to others, take part in the team activity and get on with the others.



After the interview

You will get a phone call, an email or a letter. If you are offered the job, make sure you let the employer know that you are going to take it.

If you didn't get the job:

- try not to let it get you down
- try to turn it into a positive experience – practice for the next time
- contact the employer and ask for feedback to help you through the next interview.

A few basic tips about starting work

Make sure you are reliable and turn up on time for work every day and that you:

- know what you need to do to let your employer know if you are unwell
- ask for help if you are not sure what you are being asked to do
- listen carefully and follow any health and safety instructions
- show interest in your work.

Everyone feels nervous at first, try not to worry and:

- find out who you need to see if you have a problem
- if you make a mistake, always ask how you can put it right.

Working hours may be longer than you are used to – be sure to go to bed early enough to get enough sleep.

If you feel that you are being treated unfairly at work, try:

- **Pay and Work Rights** Helpline: freephone 0800 917 2368
- **Acas (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)**
Telephone 08457 474747 or see the website www.acas.gov.uk
- **Citizens Advice Bureau:** www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Worksmart from the TUC (Trades Union Congress):**
www.worksmart.org.uk

General tips for work include:

- dress appropriately for the workplace
- make sure your personal hygiene is good
- be sensitive to other people's feelings and respect their opinions
- try to get on with people – you have to work with them even if you don't like them!

You might get sacked if you:

- misuse the internet
- lose your temper, fight, use threatening behaviour or foul language
- use alcohol or drugs at work
- are often late or take days off for no good reason.

Keeping a job search record

When job hunting, you gather a lot of paperwork. Keep documents safely and keep a record.

[illegible]

Top Tip... If you
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If you are receiving benefits, your job search record will be useful way of helping you and your adviser to complete your **Claimant Commitment** statement.

Keeping a job search record

[illegible]

Website directory



Careers Advice...

www.connexionsdudley.org

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>



Part time, temporary and voluntary work...

Recruitment and Employment Confederation:

www.rec.uk.com

www.gapwork.com

www.yearoutgroup.org

www.vinspired.com

CSV (training and volunteering): www.csv.org.uk



Job Hunting...

Universal Jobmatch: www.gov.uk/jobsearch

Practice online application forms:

www.selectsimulator.com

American sites – plenty of top tips but beware of the differences in spelling and terminology:

www.jobsearch.about.com

www.howtointerview.com

Top Tip...

DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE LOCAL APPRENTICESHIP VACANCIES ON:
www.connexionsdudley.org



Job Search Sites...

www.alljobsuk.com

www.monster.co.uk

www.fish4.co.uk

www.jobsgopublic.com

www.twitjobsearch.com



Apprenticeships and Training...

www.apprenticeships.org.uk



Self Employment...

www.princes-trust.org.uk



Your Rights at Work or Training...

www.acas.gov.uk

www.citizensadvicebureau.org.uk

www.worksmart.org.uk



Newspapers...

Newspaper Society:

www.newspapersoc.org.uk



Accessing the Internet...

www.ukonlinecentres.com

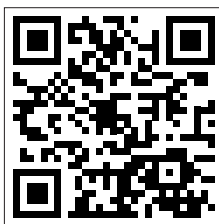


Public Libraries...

www.dudley.org.uk/resident/libraries

CONNEXIONS DUDLEY

Saltwells EDC
Bowling Green Road
Netherton
Dudley, DY2 9LY (by appointment)



Connexions can also be accessed at community locations across the borough, please contact us for more information.

Telephone: 01384 811400

Email: connexions@dudley.gov.uk

Talk to an Adviser via Livechat or see the website: www.connexionsdudley.org

You can also get help and advice about careers and learning from the National Careers Service:

Telephone 0800 100 900 or visit: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Do you know about the Youth Contract?

Are you 16 or 17 years old? Got one, or no, GCSEs A*-C?⁵

Are you looking for EDUCATION, TRAINING, APPRENTICESHIP OR A JOB?

Sign up with a Youth Contract Mentor who will:

- help you get and keep an opportunity that's just right for you
- support you to settle in and to overcome any problems along the way
- keep in touch with you to see how you are doing.

All you need is a willingness to work with your mentor to achieve your goals.

Contact Connexions Dudley: 01384 81140

⁵There are certain other young people aged 16 or 17 who may be able to get help.





Good luck... we're here to help...

If you need this information in a different format, such as large print, Braille or Audio, please let an adviser from Connexions Dudley know.

The information in this booklet is also available in 71 different languages on www.connexionsdudley.org.

We are committed to the active promotion and support of Equalities and Diversity in the way we organise, manage and deliver our services and in the employment of our staff.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share that commitment.



Produced by prospects Information Team

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