



Introduction

Welcome to your Resource Pack... a wide ranging source of detailed information and guidance that takes you beyond the content of our Cardif Pinnacle Jobseeker Brochure. Use this Resource Pack to address concepts and considerations that will enhance your employability and influence decisions regarding your career.

This Resource Pack has been developed in response to the feedback we have invited from Cardif Pinnacle policy holders. Whilst efficient processing of your claim is a crucial part of our relationship, we also have an opportunity to support you back into employment. This knowledge has been gained with the help of a selection of Outplacement Professionals who have had a long and successful track record of assisting all kinds of people back to work, whether it's back into a similar role, or through a successful career transition.

So let us help you address your employment situation, and the questions you may need answering.....

- ➔ **What are my goals?**
- ➔ **Can I change my Career?**
- ➔ **Who/What do Employers want?**
- ➔ **What CVs get positive results?**
- ➔ **How can I make the most of Interviews?**
- ➔ **Where do I look for jobs?**

You can also find further
Employment Support Resources on our web site:
www.support.cardifpinnacle.com



How you can change career

“There are four main ways to change a career”

1 Transferring your Skills

From reading this Resource Pack, you will be able to build a good picture of your current skill set and achievements.

You may already be sure of your skill set. If this is the case looking for jobs with similar skill sets will start to build choices.

2 Developing a New Skill Set

In order to reach your goal you may need to develop your skill set.

- By Learning/Training

There are a wealth of learning and training opportunities available through various media and to suit every lifestyle! There are also different ways that training can be funded.

- By Volunteering

Adding experience to a skill set may be best achieved through participating in some sort of voluntary activity. It not only shows commitment to a career change but also allows you to test whether you have made the right choice.

Most towns offer information about voluntary services ... similar to a Job Centre where you can browse opportunities and select one which is best for your development.

3 Seizing an Opportunity

Having an eye for an opportunity; tapping into the key skills that it will take to make it work.

4 Develop an Existing Pastime into Employment

Examine closely what leisure interests you have and look at ways of turning them into employment.

Real examples of real people!

What follows are true stories of:

people who have re-examined their lives, their values and have made a decision to change their career.

Transferring Skills

Maggie (53), was for many years a senior manager in the retail industry. Recognising a need for change as she went through redundancy, she looked around for somewhere to utilise her skill set whilst also easing the pace of her life. She discovered that her administrative and customer service skills, coupled with her caring nature, were ideal for a position in Healthcare Administration.

Michael's (28), career as a production planning engineer in the aerospace industry was interrupted by redundancy. By recognising his transferable skills he found a job in a growth sector - rail infrastructure engineering.

Tony (41), had worked in the IT industry as a Business Development Manager, designing complex IT solutions for corporate clients. After a career break he found a role as a Business Development Manager for a merchant bank. The products were completely different but the selling process much the same.

Developing a New Skill Set

Colin (45), started his career as a telephone engineer. Although technically able, he aspired to the 'Human' side of business. He studied for a Degree in Organisational Change and switched from telephone engineer to change agent delivering organisational change to blue chip clients.

Ray (53), was an electrician by trade but decided to change his career. He wanted to work in a more caring role. He volunteered for work in day care centres for people with mental health problems and undertook distance learning to study Social Work. He later won a job as a Social Worker with a remit to support young people with disabilities into employment.

Craig (29), having gone through redundancy twice in the manufacturing sector, decided to change career. By attending night school to get qualifications, and by volunteering to help at his local gym, Craig paved the way to his current position as a full time Personal Trainer!

Real examples of real people! continued....

Seizing an Opportunity

Nigel (33), was an employee of an American Investment Bank... but not happy with his role. He was also part of the Residents Committee of his serviced block of flats in south London. When the contract for the grass cutting and hedge trimming came up for the flats he saw his opportunity.

His contract horticultural company was born and now employs 38 people engaged in environmental management all over Surrey and London.

Jeremy (38), was a Marketing Executive for a commodities company. Jeremy was having a meal with some friends when the topic of quality stationary arose. There was a common complaint that it could not be found! In a world of e-mail Jeremy was not convinced that there was any mileage in stationary but he took the plunge ... and was rewarded by the flow of orders that poured into his new company.

Develop an Existing Pastime into Employment

Keith (52), had been a Mechanical Engineer throughout his career, but had a passion for working with wood. Following redundancy he moved to remote countryside in the West Country to make ornamental Beehives, dovecotes and bird tables for garden centres.

Mike (55), a designer of commercial kitchens by trade, had always had a passion for second hand, rare and antiquarian books. Realising the value of his own collection he started to sell them at book fairs and soon found himself successfully buying and selling for profit. He now has a small, but thriving business.

Nigel (45), suffered redundancy from an IT company for the second time in two years and decided that the market was sending him a clear message. He looked to his interests for an alternative occupation and decided to capitalise on his passion for fine French wine. He now has a small but growing business importing Rhone wines which he sells to vintners and restaurants.

Motivation for Change

Think about the positive aspects of change

Whenever we feel forced to do something we naturally push back. Don't go through the motions of career change with negative emotions that hinder your job-hunting campaign or performance at interviews. Conquer this inhibition - visualise the change that you hope for and feel the benefit of anticipating it NOW.

“Visualise the change that you hope for and feel the benefit of anticipating it now”

Who and what employers want

What's the UK Job Market like?

Our Job Market has been in a transitional phase for over twenty years. Fresh in most of our memories is the era of long-term employment. It was the experience of our parent's generation and many of us started our careers in a similar environment.

The pace of the technological revolution is dictating personal and organisational change to us all ... as new markets open and old ones close; as organisations rapidly change to compete in the global economy ... so the ebb and flow of their requirement for human resource changes.

Long-term employment is being superseded across all sectors of the workplace by long-term employability. Some sectors have changed completely. Some sectors are in transition. Some have yet to change ... but change they will!

'Long-term employable' is how to describe today's Jobseeker. Organisations need people to join their workforce, deliver a top quality job in return for money and development, and then un-join and move on to the next opportunity.

The evidence for this change has been around for many years. More and more of us are working from home as freelance consultants.

More and more of us are completing short-term contracts. Mortgages, pensions, personal loans, credit cards are all available with "payment holiday" options in anticipation of career change.

There are plenty of jobs around. What today's Jobseeker needs to do is to access the market, package him or herself appropriately and promote him or herself comfortably and effectively.

Personal and Organisational Change

“If there's one
constant in life, it's change”

If change in our circumstances is perceived as positive it readily becomes acceptable. If change in our lives is perceived as negative, we are on life's emotional roller coaster. We will be subject to a range of negative emotions, each of which can affect our overall performance.

We need to ensure that we are experiencing an emotion that is enhancing our job prospects and not inhibiting them.

When an important part of our lives change, it is very common to experience a series of highs and lows.

The typical emotions we go through are:

- Denial and shock
- Emotional reaction, which can be frustration and then anger
- Fantasy - allows you to have unrealistic ideas of what will happen next
- Coming to terms with the situation - Reality will set in; your self confidence has been knocked. Once this happens, we can think about rebuilding and taking control
- Motivation - We take control of the situation and proactively start a job search campaign

Who and what employers want continued....

Discover yourself and what you have to offer your next Employer

Take some time to have a think about you in the work place, and what has made you successful in the past. What qualities do you have that are desirable to the next employer? If you are not aware of what these are and how to portray yourself, then a recruiter will not know and will not notice you.

Think about the skills and strengths you have developed in your previous employment. What were your achievements and what did you enjoy? What you done well in one role, you can do well in for another employer.

Evaluating your skills is an important part to every job search. And being able to effectively communicate these skills to your audience is as equally important.

For many of us, just thinking about finding a new job is very daunting. Obtaining a similar position in the same industry can be tough. Changing career can be even tougher. Realising what you have to offer will increase your chances of successfully obtaining new employment.

Today's Job Market looks increasingly at the individual's personal qualities and attributes. These now translate into Key Skills and Achievements.

The rationale being that the qualifications we have, whilst demonstrating an intellectual capacity, are likely to be technically obsolete. Likewise industry knowledge can be obsolete.

A job being advertised may be a completely new role, or it may be an exsisting role that an employee has moved from. The employer can find it difficult to get a qualification and experience match, so there can be more emphasis on getting the right person for the right role.

The right person may not have the direct industry or product experience, but the employer can train them.

The right person may not have the right qualifications, but the employer and individual can work together to gain them.

Employers want applicants who have the right level of work place competencies and who achieve.

Key Skills

Your Key Skills need to propel you into the Job Market at an appropriate entry level.

Discover your level:

- **Newcomer** - just starting out from school, college, university;
- **Newcomer Plus** - Looking for a job after 3-5 years experience;
- **Senior / Supervisory** - Senior operative, possibly in a team leadership role;
- **Manager** - Leadership role as a team builder;
- **Senior Manager / Executive** - Organisational leader.

What level is your career at?

Having identified the level you are at, you now need to discover the Key Skills appropriate to that level; which will contribute to a potential employer seeing you in the role.

“A common error in jobseeking
“is to promote yourself
at the wrong level”

Who and what employers want continued....

Levels of Key Skills

Newcomer

A newcomer, fresh out of school, college or university, and without significant work place experience, may only be offering Key Skills at a fairly basic level. This will be reflected in the remuneration.

- Open to Learning - Employers need people they can train and develop;
- Team Player - Possibly the only team experience may be organised sport or activity in an academic environment;
- Communicator - Possesses sufficient communication skills to function effectively within a team;
- Organised, Reliable and Punctual - A good record from an academic environment;
- Quality Job - Always strives to deliver the best result possible.

Newcomer Plus

A comparative newcomer with three to five years experience from one or two jobs. The Key Skills have developed, as has the remuneration.

- Open to Learning and Change - Starting to gain experience of change and development within the workplace;
- Team Member - Now has experience of the team concept and makes a contribution;
- Communicator at all Levels - Learned to communicate outside the team as well as inside;
- Customer Focussed - Learned to represent the employer and have the best interests of the employer as a priority;
- Can-Do Approach / Problem Solver - Not daunted by projects or tasks and has developed strategies to get jobs done.

Senior/Supervisory

More developed Key Skills result in greater responsibility. The more workplace experience, the more a Job Seeker has to offer. In return, the Job Seeker may expect greater rewards and level of development.

- Senior Team Member / Team Leader - Starting to assume more responsibility for people and projects or tasks;
- Embraces and Implements Change - Experienced and accustomed to the concept of organisational change;
- Self-Developer - Increasingly conscious of Personal and Professional Development needs and proactive in bringing them about;
- Project and Results Oriented - Recognising the need to manage tasks and to get results, on time and within budget;
- Customer Focussed Internally and Externally - Recognising that everyone is your customer both in and outside the organisation. Also a customer relationship builder.

Manager

The Key Skills are sufficiently developed to have outright responsibility for people and projects. All of the Key Skills so far described are considered a "given". Remuneration and level of development should reflect the added responsibility.

- Team Builder - Now recruiting and building functioning and effective teams;
- Coach, Developer - Recognising the need to develop the team and its individual members;
- Motivator, Inspirer - Leading the team with today's management techniques;
- Change Implementor - Delivering change through consensus;
- Project and Results Achiever - Developing a track record of habitual achievement;
- Customer Relationship Developer - Representing an organisation, breaking new ground.

Who and what employers want continued....

Senior Manager/Executive

The peak of responsibility with skills developed to the level of managing multiple projects through multiple managers.

- Strategist / Big Picture Thinker - Looks at an organisation from all directions; developing overall strategies;
- Proven Track Record - Multiple projects completed successfully, on time, within budget. A habitual achiever;
- Diplomat / Influencer - An effective communicator at the highest levels;
- Leader / Delegator - Effective leadership and delegation to ensure continuance of the track record;
- Change Designer - Designing and delegating organisational change for implementation by the management team;
- Mentor - Self-developing as well as a change agent for others.

Where to Look for More Key Skills?

The best source of Key Skills - and the up-to-date way of describing them - is to study job advertisements for positions similar to those which you are looking for. The way you present yourself needs to accord with the employer's perspective of the role on offer. The best place to look is on the Internet.

Refer back to past appraisals or references. Review recent training course material. Ask your former employer for a Specification of the job you have just vacated.

Identifying your Key Skills may require some assistance from a third party. Find a good friend or ex-colleague/manager who can help you to identify all your Key Skills.

"Overcome your natural modesty and be prepared to sell yourself!"

How Many Key Skills?

Accumulate as many as you can. The list can be edited later when you create your CV.

Key Achievements

Communicating what you have achieved in the workplace is absolutely core to a successful campaign. If you've achieved for one organisation, you'll achieve for another.

Have you done any of the following?

- Made a company money, saved a company money, saved a company time;
- Received rewards or recognition, improved teamwork and relationships;
- Cut costs, made something look better, got something done more quickly;
- Improved Sales/Profit/Turnover, provided more information, opened more territories;
- Diversified the risks, obtained Government support, turned around a bad situation;
- Preserved competitive advantage, improved the packaging, avoided potential problems;
- Organised something, used old things in a new way, provided a tax advantage;
- Met deadlines consistently, reduced inventories, developed staff performance;
- Introduced new systems

"Employers cannot guess
'what you have to offer'
"they need to be informed"

Who and what employers want continued...

The following STAR Stories exercise is designed to help you identify your workplace achievements. If you struggle to think of achievements, recruit the help of an ex-colleague or manager.

The STAR Framework is a very useful analytical tool to help identify how you have transferred your ability and capabilities (I can do) through using your competencies/skills (has done/will do) to contribute significantly within the organisation. STAR is an acronym for:

S - situation: This is the evaluation of the circumstance to find out/diagnose the problem.

T - task: Then you assess what needs or ought to be done.

A - action: What you did to rectify the situation.

R - result: The effect of your actions.

Used effectively, the STAR Framework could help separate responsibilities and duties, from competencies and achievements. Since every role or job title has duties and responsibilities, demonstrating how you performed your role to achieve significant or positive results in previous employment, will stand you in better stead with prospective employers.

If you achieved for one organisation, you will achieve for another, all things being equal.

COMPETENCY	SITUATION	TASK	ACTION	RESULT
TEAMWORK PROJECTS SECONDMENTS				
FLEXIBILITY PROBLEM SOLVING				
CUSTOMER SERVICE CUSTOMER DEMANDS				
IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES				
INNOVATION NEW IDEAS				
CRISISES DISASTERS				

Who and what employers want continued...

Some useful Skills, Strengths and Achievement words you may want to incorporate into your STAR stories, and your CV

Attained	Avoided	Completed	Devised	Established	Identified
Accelerated	Began	Composed	Directed	Estimated	Implemented
Accomplished	Bolstered	Computed	Discharged	Evaluated	Imposed
Acquired	Bought	Conceived	Discovered	Examined	Improved
Activated	Bring about	Concluded	Distributed	Exceeded	Improvised
Adapted	Broadened	Conducted	Diversified	Executed	Inaugerated
Addressed	Built	Conserved	Diverted	Expanded	Incorporated
Administered	Calculated	Consolidated	Documented	Expedited	Increased
Advanced	Campaigned	Constructed	Doubled	Facilitated	Initiated
Advised	Capitalised	Continued	Drafted	Finished	Inspected
Altered	Captured	Controlled	Drove through	Forecast	Inspired
Amplified	Carried out	Converted	Edited	Forged	Installed
Analysed	Carried through	Corrected	Effectuated	Formed	Instigated
Anticipated	Caught	Costed	Eliminated	Formulated	Instituted
Applied	Caused	Counselled	Employed	Founded	Instructed
Appointed	Centralised	Created	Enabled	Fulfilled	Integrated
Appropriated	Changed	Cultivated	Enacted	Generated	Interpreted
Approved	Checked	Cut	Encouraged	Grew	Interviewed
Arranged	Clarified	Decided	Enforced	Guided	Introduced
Assembled	Clinched	Decreased	Engaged	Halted	Invented
Assessed	Co-ordinated	Defined	Engineered	Halved	Invested
Assimilated	Collaborated	Delivered	Enhanced	Headed	Investigated
Audited	Collated	Demonstrated	Enlarged	Heightened	Invigorated
Augmented	Collected	Designed	Ensured	Held	Judged
Authorised	Combined	Determined	Enthused	Highlighted	Justified
Averted	Complied	Developed	Eradicated	Hired	Kept Up

Who and what employers want continued...

Skills, Strengths and Achievement words continued...

Launched	Organised	Proved	Repaired	Specified	Traced
Lead	Originated	Provided	Replaced	Spurred	Traded
Led	Outlined	Publicised	Rescued	Standardised	Trained
Lessened	Overcame	Published	Resolved	Steered	Transferred
Liaised	Overhauled	Purchased	Restored	Stemmed	Transformed
Lightened	Oversaw	Pushed	Retained	Stopped	Translated
Linked	Perfected	thorough	Revamped	Streamlined	Trimmed
Liquidated	Performed	Quantified	Reversed	Strengthened	Tripled
Lowered	Persuaded	Ran	Reviewed	Stretched	Turned around
Maintained	Piloted	Rationalised	Revised	Structured	Uncovered
Managed	Pioneered	Re-designed	Revitalised	Studied	Underpinned
Marketed	Planned	Re-directed	Revolutionised	Succeeded	Undertook
Met	Positioned	Re-structured	Satisfied	Summarised	Unified
Minimised	Predicted	Re-vamped	Saved	Supervised	United
Modelled	Prepared	Recognised	Scheduled	Supported	Updated
Modernised	Prescribed	Recommended	Secured	Surpassed	Upgraded
Modified	Presented	Recruited	Selected	Surveyed	Used
Monitored	Preserved	Rectified	Serviced	Sustained	Utilised
Motivated	Prevented	Redesigned	Set up	Tackled	Vacated
Moved	Probed	Reduced	Shaped	Tailored	Verified
Negotiated	Processed	Refined	Shaped	Targeted	Welded
Nursed	Procured	Regulated	Shortened	Taught	Widened
Obtained	Produced	Rejected	Simplified	Terminated	Won
Operated	Programmed	Remedied	Sold	Tested	Worked out
Optimised	Promoted	Renewed	Solved	Took on	
Ordered	Proposed	Reorganised	Specialised	Took over	

Who and what employers want continued...

What Other Information Do I Need?

...apart from a full Career History and the obvious information such as name, contact details etc.

Training and Development

Employers need to know that you are up-to-date with training. That you are today's employee accustomed to Continual Professional Development.

Gather together details of all courses attended during the last ten years, both in-house and out-sourced.

Technical Skills

An optional section of the CV. Technical Skills are appropriate for some IT positions and (e.g.) in the field of skilled fabrication. Some technical job roles may need details of Software packages etc.

Professional Qualifications

Also membership of Professional Organisations etc.

Academic Qualifications

Degree, College Diploma, A'levels, GCSE's, etc if appropriate.

Other

Every CV needs to accommodate any data that will enhance your application. For example, Voluntary Work.

Hobbies and Interests

More and more media attention is being given to "Life / Work balance".

Employers need a non-intrusive glimpse of your life outside the workplace. Employers need to be assured that you have a balanced life; that you have outside interests that make you resilient to the pressure of today's commercial world

Summary of Key Outputs from this section:

- Understanding of Personal and Organisational Change;
- Key Skills at an appropriate level (At least six);
- Key Achievements (One per year worked, maximum of ten);
- All other relevant information.

"You now have the "components
for a successful
"Job Search Campaign"

CVs that get results

A CV is a summary of your employment history, qualifications and some personal information. It should be updated to change the emphasis of the information according to the particular position you apply for, using your relevant key skills to match those required in the job advert.

You have complete control of the style and content of your CV.

A CV has only one purpose; to get the reader interested enough to make contact with you.

To do this, it must attract and hold the interest of the reader who may be busy, bored, or have a pile of similar papers on their desk. A successful CV will be like a good advertisement; it will evoke a positive emotion in the reader.

It should:

- Be attention grabbing
- Make the reader want to read on
- Be clear about what you can do
- Show off strengths and good points
- Be well laid out and easy to read
- Be honest and give the facts
- Be business-like and accessible
- Be produced on quality white paper when being posted for a role
- Be user friendly when sent electronically
- Be ready to go when opened on a PC screen

It should not:

- Leave the reader in doubt about which jobs you have had
- Leave out simple facts such as name; address; contact details; qualifications
- Leave out years between dates of working
- Puzzle the reader with names or jargon/abbreviations
- Make the reader look hard for information
- Give reasons for leaving any previous roles
- Gives names of any references
- Incorporate a photo
- Be bound in a fancy cover or folder
- Be formal and distant

CVs are commonly written on two pages; however, some people, such as IT experts or scientists, may need to give more information about their experience or usage of particular technology or equipment. This is best done by adding a piece of paper called an "Appendix". All the technical terms and different equipment used should be listed on it, making it easier for the reader to comprehend at a glance.

CVs that get results continued....

Getting started

What's the best approach?

The best approach when writing a CV is to study the market for what it wants and deliver it. Employers need people with Skills and Achievements, Experience and Qualifications.

As a footnote, they also need people with a good Life / Work balance.

CV Pro-forma

Your Name
Your Address
Your Telephone Numbers
Your Email Address

Your Profile

Who you are (one sentence)
The achievements or key skills you have
(5 bullet points)
What you want - Are now looking for.....

Technical Skills (Optional)

- Technical Skill
- Technical Skill
- Technical Skill
- Technical Skill

Career History (10 year window)

Your Job Title Dates
Your Employer

A short statement about the employer and your job role

- Key achievement
- Key achievement
- Key achievement
- Key achievement

Your Job Title Dates
Your Employer

A short statement about the employer and your job role

- Key achievement
- Key achievement
- Key achievement

Your Job Title Dates
Your Employer

A short statement about the employer and your job role

- Key achievement
- Key achievement
- Key achievement

Earlier Employment History

Jobtitle, Employer Dates
Jobtitle, Employer Dates
Jobtitle, Employer Dates

Training and Development

- Courses attended showing continual professional development
- Courses attended showing continual professional development
- Courses attended showing continual professional development
- Courses attended showing continual professional development

Academic Qualifications

- Highest first

Other?

Is there any other information that you could give about yourself that would strengthen your application?

Interests

- Your hobbies and interests showing your Life/Work balance
- Your hobbies and interests showing your Life/Work balance
- Your hobbies and interests showing your Life/Work balance

CVs that get results continued....

CV Guidance Notes

Name

What name to use? Remember the more formal, the more distant the CV will be. Use the name that you would have on a business card; your business name.

Address

Keep it to one line ... it is only one of many ways to contact you.

Contact details

Telephone numbers including landline and mobile

E-mail address

A must for today's job seeker.

If you don't have an address already, you can find a list of free web-based email services at <http://www.emailaddresses.com>

Profile

This is the most important part of your CV as it is the piece of information that will probably determine whether the reader will read on.

This needs to be the "hook" into your CV.

The profile is divided into 3 key parts:

1. Who you are

A statement, one sentence long, that describes you truthfully but powerfully. (See sample CVs.) This statement can change and adapt depending on who is to receive your CV.

2. The skills you have

List five of your key achievements that are relevant to the roles you apply for in bullet points.

3. What you want

A clear statement that matches the needs of the potential employer or recruiter.

Career History

• Job Title

A job title that matches the needs of the potential employer as closely as possible.

• Employer

Name of employer only.

• Short statement

A brief statement of what the company does/did and your role within it.

• Achievements

Now list your key achievements as bullet points.

• Ten year window

For the purposes of a CV, detail needs to be provided for the last ten years only. Anything prior to that can be reduced to a one-liner containing Employer and Job role.

Training and Development

What comes next on a CV is always what is most appropriate. Usually it is confirmation of your continuous professional development i.e. Training and Development.

List your most recent training courses that demonstrate that you are 'today's employee'.

Technical/Practical skills

Appropriate for some jobs only. Such as IT specialists, Engineers etc.

Professional Qualifications

Where appropriate.

Academic Qualifications

The highest first. Only put down the name of a University, College or School if it genuinely strengthens your application.

The longer you have been in the workplace, the less relevant your subjects and grades for 'A' levels and GCSE's. Only list how many you have at what level.

Other

Always be open to providing another section of your CV that can strengthen your application. For example, Voluntary work or indirectly related qualifications such as Health and Safety at work and First Aid.

Personal details - Life/Work balance

• A non-intrusive glimpse of your personal life to demonstrate that you have a good Life/ Work balance.

Bring yourself to life with some adjectives that genuinely describe your interests.

Steve Wood

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An **IT Project Manager** who is imaginative, results driven and used to working to tight deadlines and budget constraints.

- Achieved revenue target of £1.7m
- Reduced implementation and support costs by 50%
- Implemented 20 top customers onto one internal financial database
- Successfully delivered £1m project 2 months ahead of schedule
- Identified an Indian software house, saving £2m by outsourcing

Now looking to further enhance current skill set and to broaden experience in the field of IT implementation.

IT Project Manager - Fast Forward Logistics plc

2005 - 2014

Responsible for design, build, implementations, and commercial aspects of a business application within Fast Forward's central e-Commerce group.

- Implemented 20 of the company's top customers onto the application, on time and to budget
- Achieved revenue target of £1.7m and further out performed by 17%
- Reduced implementation and support costs by 50%
- Successfully built and led the e-Commerce team
- Planned project stages and assessed implications at each stage

IT Programme Manager - BBOT Ltd

2000 - 2005

Programme managed all IT projects within Group Centre, with full resource and budget responsibilities. Programme managed in excess of 20 concurrent IT projects.

- Identified an Indian software house to partner with, to develop and support an operationally critical system, balancing skills need with resource availability and budget limitations
- Delivered smooth changeover from old systems to new
- Implemented appropriate work practices to drive the 'on shore/offshore' development and support model
- Successful delivery of all projects to time and budget
- In depth checking of test results and fixing technical problems

Sales Manager - IPC Archtec Ltd

1996 - 2000

A leading manufacturer of high specification computer hardware

- Developed sales strategies and set high sales targets
- Motivated the team to reach their high targets, resulting in £2.5m in sales
- Won contracts resulting in £3m new business

Sales Representative - IPC Archtec Ltd

1990 - 1996

A leading manufacturer of high specification computer hardware

- Identified corporate IT needs and met them
- Out performed sales targets by an average of 23% year on year
- Awarded Salesperson of the year 1991, 1992 & 1995
- Key member of working group looking to improve sales efficiency resulting in customer interface being increased by 35%

Production Manager

1985 - 1990

Sales Representative

1982 - 1985

Training and Career Development

- Management Principles - Henley School of Management
- Staff Appraisal and Interview Techniques
- Effective Time Management
- Prince 2 Project Management Methodology

Education

BA Hon English 2:1
2 'A' Levels, 9 'O' Levels

Interests

- Football - Play weekly with the local team
- Fishing - Regularly take part in local tournaments
- Socialising - Enjoy spending time with family and friends to relax

Bill Beaumont

Corby, Northants NN6 7NA

07711 422678 • bill.beaumont@hotmail.co.uk

A **Financial Planning, Sales Manager** with a career of teambuilding and record breaking revenue generation for Provincial Insurance plc.

- Won internal awards for sales growth in structured financial products
- Sales team, number one revenue generator 9 years running
- All members of the sales team in the top quartile (Out of 1400)
- Achieved industry awards for "Excellence in Compliance"
- Contributed articles to "Financial Adviser" on best sales practice
- Fully qualified to Assessor status
- Empowering leader resulting in high performance and retention

Now looking for the opportunity to build and lead a new sales team beyond performance targets.

IT Project Manager - Fast Forward Logistics plc

2000 - Nov 2013

Promoted with the remit to further develop and grow "International High Net Worth" service, delivering financial planning solutions, globally.

- Member of the Provincial innovation think tank
- Grew sales from £5million to £10million plus in 18 months
- Sales team, number 1 revenue generator from 2000 to 2008
- All team members awarded holidays to Bahrain and New York in recognition of their success.
- Achieved "Excellence in Compliance" award from the FSA 2005

Sales Manager - Provincial Insurance plc

1995 - 2000

Headhunted from Mainwaring's Bank to set up High Net Worth sales team as a premium service to Provincial customers.

- Brought in to pioneer sales innovations for all customers
- Recruited a sales team that entered the top quartile in year one
- Grew sales from zero to £5million plus in 18 months
- Won internal award for sales growth 1995
- Published articles in "Financial Adviser" that set a benchmark for best practise
- Sat on the FSA compliance think tank panel

Manager - Mainwaring's Bank, Main Branch, Bedford

1990 - 1995

Assistant to the General Manager with specific remit to develop Financial Services sales and best practise.

- Achieved best provincial sales record in the UK.
- Pioneered sales team recruitment, development and training
- Built team that out-performed Sales targets by average of 37% 1991-1995
- Streamlined administration to save up to 50% man hours producing compliant paper trail.

Assistant Manager Mainwaring's Bank, Main Branch, Bedford

1985 - 1990

Administrator, Mainwaring's Bank,

1977 - 1985

Administration Assistant Franklyn's Coal

1973 - 1977

Training and Development

- Full FSA, Train the Trainer qualified
- Team Leadership - Myers Briggs, Maslow, Belbin
- Fully qualified NLP practitioner
- Total Quality Management Champion
- PRINCE II project management qualification

Professional Qualifications

Financial Planning Certificate 1, 2 +3

Education

City and Guilds Business Administration
6 O'levels

Interests

- Walking: Enjoy fell walking in Cumbria and the Peak District
- Cycling: Part of a touring club. We ride up to 100 miles in a weekend
- Reading: Keen student of personal development and business as well as enjoying a good thriller to relax

A time served and fully qualified Electrical/Mechanical Maintenance Engineer with 31 years experience.

- Very hardworking and can be relied upon to get a job done
- Sociable and friendly, enjoys a positive atmosphere
- Enjoys the challenge of solving practical problems
- Good track record of process improvement
- Approaches work with enthusiasm and a can do attitude
- Flexible and adaptable, will turn a hand to any task for the business
- Gains great satisfaction from a job completed

Key Skills

- Machining - Lathes, Milling, Drilling, Grinding
- Welding skills
- Power tools, Hand tools
- Inspection
- Lifting and Handling
- FLT licence, Mobile Elevator Platforms
- Health and Safety awareness, risk assessments
- First Aider

Now looking to continue a career in Engineering.

Employment History

Mechanical Engineer/Maintenance Fitter

1997 - Jan 2014

DPP Packaging, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

Suppliers of packaging to the Ford/FMCG industry. Part of a four man team (two on days, two on afternoons) working together to keep production to optimum output.

- Happy to multi-task and carry out any works to keep production running
- Implemented machine modifications that improved output on several occasions
- Implemented TPM schedules resulting in reduction of machine breakdowns to near zero
- Delegated greasing procedures to production staff resulting in time savings & improved efficiency
- Worked over a Christmas period to ensure production was ready for the new year

Machine Fitter

1975 - 1997

Sedmore's Plc

Pipe maker for heavy industry, worldwide. Served apprenticeship in Mechanical Engineering and went on to be a Maintenance Fitter.

- Working on the maintenance team keeping production running
- Implemented machinery improvements that improved production by 30%

Training and Development

- Health and Safety
- Lifting and Handling techniques
- First Aid
- Fork Life Truck, Mobile Elevator Platforms

Further Education and Professional Qualifications

- 16th Edition Wiring Regulations
- City and Guilds Mechanical Engineering 1,2,3
- City and Guilds Electrical Installation Theory 1,2

Interests

- Golf: enjoy a round with friends. Play off 12
- DIY: turn my hand to anything
- Gardening: keep and clean and tidy garden
- Walking: enjoy the Peak District

Rachel Banks

147 Kings Road North, Southampton SO14 2NG

02380 989814 • 07447 758477

rachael1banks@live.co.uk

An experienced **Administrator** who is competent working with high level of workloads to strict deadlines in a busy Customer Service environment

- Methodical and organised approach to work
- Good communication skills at all levels
- A team player
- Accurate and pays attention to detail
- Can work on own initiative and take responsibility
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office and Lotus notes

Now looking for a new challenge in a busy Administration role

Administration Assistant

2003 - 2014

Barklay Ltd

A large company specialising in the manufacturing of household appliances. Member of a team of 5 Administrators, providing support to Senior Managers in the Marketing Intelligence Department.

- Handle the provision of all clinical papers for new product information projects
- Researched competitors and markets, using internal and external data, monitoring regular news sources
- Received and filtered incoming calls
- Dealt with queries by telephone, email and letter
- Organised Senior Management meetings, taking and distributing minutes
- Communicated on a regular basis with suppliers to ensure smooth delivery of good required
- Provided cover and worked overtime during busy periods/holidays/absences

Customer Service Administrator

1995 - 2002

Railway Ltd

A popular operator of rail transport in the UK. Administrator in a large Customer Service Department.

- Efficiently dealing with incoming telephone calls in a prompt and friendly manner, recording the relevant details, and directing the calls appropriately
- Telephone booking of fares and processing payments
- Following up prospective customers who have enquired about certain travel packages
- Dealing with customer complaints in a professional manner
- Working to agreed service level agreements to ensure excellent levels of customer service
- Responding to incoming post and emails in timescales set
- Maintaining stationary supplies

Administrator

1989 - 1995

Ashbick Ltd

- Dealing with customer queries and complaints in a professional manner
- Greeting customers and looking after visitors when on Reception
- Updating in house database with customer details
- Validated invoices against orders, and filing paperwork
- Follow up the non payment of fees and invoices
- Provided support to the Manager, including diary management, word processing, photocopying, filing and maintaining personal records.

Administration Clerk, Specker Ltd

1984 - 1989

Junior Office Administrator, LLD Plc

1980 - 1984

Training and Development

Letter Writing Skills
Excellence in Customer Service
MS Excel & Word Intermediate

Education

NVQ in Business and Administration levels 1-4

Interests

Bowling: Member of an All Girls team, taking part in competitions
Cycling: Regularly cycling coastal routes
Reading: Enjoy a good romance to relax

Caroline Smith

Corby, Northants NN6 7NA • 07711 422678 • c.smith@hotmail.co.uk

A highly experienced **Primary Teacher** with over 6 years experience of providing support and advice to students.

- High level of communication skills, both spoken and written
- Enthusiastic and committed to raising standards in Education
- Team player with excellent task management skills
- Ability to manage classes and deal with challenging behavior
- Experience of providing help, support and advice to students applying for Higher Education
- Ability to motivate young children
- Enthusiastic and good sense of humour
- Proactive approach to problem solving

Now looking to continue to build skills and knowledge in Teaching

Primary Teacher - Manor Park Primary School

2008 - 2014

Responsible for teaching all areas of the curriculum for year 1, 2 and 3.

- Managed classroom and provide effective support to students
- Planned and prepared lesson and teaching materials
- Delivered effective teaching and learning
- Assessed students work and prepared reports
- Prepared and organised students for SATS
- Monitored and recorded students progress
- Discussed children's progress and other relevant issues with parents
- Organised social activities and sporting events
- Attended meetings and in house training

Teacher Assistant - Barham Primary School

2007 - 2008

Provided effective support to ensure children reached their full potential.

- Supported and assisted class teacher in the care and welfare of children
- Prepared and organise resources for teaching

Training and Development

- School-Centred Initial Teacher Training
- Speaking and Listening
- ICT
- Safeguarding Children
- Behaviour management

Interests

- Enjoy going to Gym and swimming
- Keen on listening to music like classic and jazz
- Gardening, keep clean and tidy

CVs that get results continued....

CV Writing Summary

- Your CV needs to be interesting enough to 'hook' your reader
- Update your CV and make it specific to the different roles you apply for
- Be honest on your CV, do not make up any details
- Keep your CV as achievement based/key skill based as possible (whichever is relevant)
- Ensure your CV is user friendly and ready to go when the reader receives it, either electronically or by post
- The document is best viewed with a view of around 100% on a PC screen to get as much important information you can within the first screen of your CV
- Keep the information brief and to the point
- Use bullet points rather than bulk text as they are much more appealing on the eye
- Keep the content positive and emphasise your achievements, successes and strengths, letting the reader see what you have to offer as a candidate
- Leave off any information with regards to reasons for leaving previous employers or any mention of redundancy
- Do not include your photo or salary history
- Have your CV typed and spell checked - if possible, ask someone to check it for you (you will be surprised with what you miss!)

Letter writing and Emails

Letter Writing Checklist:

- Use good quality plain white paper when posting letters
- Post in an A4 sized envelope
- Always have it word processed/typed (unless an advert specifies handwritten applications)
- If possible, address it to a named contact - it will be more successful
- If responding to an advertised vacancy, refer to the job advertised (including the reference number)
- Keep the content brief - don't rehash your CV but make sure that you pick out the points in your career which are key features and show how these are likely to translate into benefits for the employer
- 'Dear Sir/Madam' = Yours faithfully
- 'Dear Mrs Brown' = Yours sincerely
- Keep a copy

Letter writing and Emails continued....

Correspondence Requesting an Application Form

Keep this simple and straight forward. At this stage there is no point in telling the reader anything about you, as the only purpose is to obtain the application form.

21 Main Street
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS1 2NJ

Tel: 01532 256845

1st March 2014

The HR Manager
Leeds Tool Company
Victoria Industrial Estate
Leeds
West Yorkshire

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Maintenance Engineer Vacancy

Please forward to me an application form and any related information for the above position advertised in the Yorkshire Post on 21st March 2014.

Yours faithfully

John Peters

Letter writing and Emails continued....

A Covering Letter to Send with a CV

Here is an example of a job advert which details what the employer is looking for in a candidate. The covering letter below incorporates the Key Skills required in the job advert.

RMH UK Ltd - Office Administrator

RMH is a UK leader in software and system's supplies to large corporate clients. The post will involve liaison with customers all over the UK, with responsibility for taking and processing orders and answering customer queries. We are looking for a mature approach and excellent communication, administration and keyboard skills. The successful candidate will have supervisory experience.

Please send your CV to:

Janet Dell, Recruitment Manager, RMH UK Ltd, Tennison Street, Liverpool L69 4US

28 Grange Road
Liverpool L28 2SB

Tel: 0151 656713

1st March 2014

Ms J Dell
Recruitment Manager
RMH UK Ltd
Tennison Street
Liverpool L69 4US

Dear Ms Dell

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

I am writing to apply for the above position, which was advertised in the Liverpool Echo on 1st March 2011.

In my last job I gained knowledge of, and experience in, all aspects of administration work in a large office. My responsibilities included taking orders from customers throughout the country, and dealing with queries by telephone and in writing. For the last 6 months I have been deputising regularly for the team leader.

I enclose a copy of my CV and look forward to discussing the vacancy in more detail.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Smith

Letter writing and Emails continued....

Networking Correspondence

There are a number of points to remember when putting together networking correspondence:

- Tell the reader how you got their name - who gave it to you
- Say why you are writing
- Advise when you will be contacting them to follow up the letter

In the following example, the writer is contacting a past colleague who she has not seen for some time. She is simply making her position known and asking for any ideas which could help her situation.

25 James Street
Mansfield
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG18 2QQ

Tel: 01623329826

1st March 2014

Mrs A Sharp
16a Hadfield Gardens
SHEFFIELD S19 4PG

Dear Ann

The news may not have filtered through to Sheffield yet, but there have been major cutbacks in the Mansfield region and my department is due to close next month.

This means I am now busy looking for my next career move.

I have decided to find something nearer to my family so I am looking mainly in the Sheffield area. As Sheffield is your home town, and your job role involves contact with so many different companies, I am hoping that you can give me some advice about job opportunities in your area.

I have attached my CV to bring you up to date. As you can see, I was promoted in to a new role a few months ago, which has given me a few more strings to my bow!

I will be in Sheffield on the 8th and 9th of April..... So could we met for a chat?

Hope to see you soon

Sally Noble

Letter writing and Emails continued....

Speculative Letters

This type of letter is perhaps the most difficult to write, but if done well it is potentially the most successful. Companies spend a great deal of money on recruitment advertising and if they can recruit without advertising they can save thousands of pounds.

Some general points for speculative letters:

- Try to shape the letter for that particular company. Explain why you have written to them:
 - e.g. "I was very interested to hear from Alison Carter, the Manageress of ABC Ltd, that you may be looking for extra staff in the area of..."
 - "Having read the article in yesterday's Post about your new line of work..."
- Saying something particular to the reader at the start of the letter will encourage them to read on;
- Wherever possible write to a named person rather than just a job title (ring the company and ask for their name);
- Make your letter sound positive and enthusiastic;
- Enclose your CV and use the letter to draw attention to your main selling points - that is, your most relevant skills, achievements and experience;
- Remember, you are not applying for a specific job - you want a chance to meet and discuss what you have to offer and any 'possible openings' for employment;
- End your letter by requesting a meeting (rather than an 'interview') or say that you will telephone to see if a meeting can be arranged.

Letter writing and Emails continued...

Sample Speculative Letter One

7 Ash Road
Stockport
Cheshire SK4 9JL

Tel: 0161 580 3222

1st March 2014

Mr James Jones
Managing Director
Manchester Engineering Ltd
West Road Trading Estate
Bolton B4 8ZT

Dear Mr Jones

Colin Smith of JK Welding suggested I contact you concerning opportunities in HGV driving.

Colin mentioned that you have spoken to him recently about the difficulty of finding reliable drivers for your overseas deliveries.

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV. I have three years experience of driving articulated vehicles both in the UK and on the Continent and my performance record has always been excellent.

I would be grateful of the opportunity to discuss possible openings for employment within your company.

I will telephone early next week to see if we can meet and discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Brian Williams

Enc.

Letter writing and Emails continued....

Sample Speculative Letter One

56 Sebastian Terrace
Lower Sutton
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire NG16 8PG

Tel: 01624 65478

1st March 2014

Mr F Harris
General Manager
Computer Software plc
Hartington
Derbyshire SC34 9LO

Dear Mr Harris

Your company is well known for efficiency and quality of service. I have considerable experience in the varied and ad hoc development work that Computer Software plc undertakes and would like to be considered for any programming opportunities that arise with your company. I have 10 years experience in specification and programming of COBOL applications and my work has always met strict cost and quality targets.

I am currently seeking a career move. I enclose my CV and would welcome the chance of discussing my experience in greater detail. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Jim Hopkins

Enc

Letter writing and Emails continued...

Sample Speculative Letter Three

25 Albert Street
Glasgow G3 5UB
Tel: 0141 329826

1st March 2014

Mr D Rylett
Librarian
Market Surveys International
Milton Road
Gateshead N31 7GP

Dear Mr Rylett

During a meeting last week with Mrs Jane Brown of National Corporations Ltd in Newcastle, she mentioned that you were going to re-advertise the position of Assistant Librarian/Records Administrator.

As you can see from the enclosed CV I have experience in the Records Department of _____ in Glasgow. My work experience has involved the accurate recording, and efficient storage, of vast amounts of information using both manual and computer systems.

As my experience fits well with your requirement, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet you when I am in Gateshead next week. I will telephone you shortly to see if this is convenient.

Yours sincerely

Hasit Modha

Enc.

Letter writing and Emails continued....

Sample Speculative Letter Four

Catherine Sykes
18a Mile End Road
Derby DE6 2EG
Tel: 01332 222222

Brian Kirkpatrick
HR Manager
East and West Building Society
Chester Road
London NW17

1st March 2014

Dear Mr Kirkpatrick

I understand that you are responsible for recruiting HR staff in the Midlands region. I am currently looking for an HR role which will allow me to contribute to a professional and effective HR function whilst enabling my personal development. Everything I have heard about HR at East and West suggests that you could provide just such an opportunity.

Please find enclosed my CV. I am an enthusiastic and committed CIPD graduate, with 3 years experience in a generalist HR and training role in the finance industry. My responsibilities have included;

- providing advice and guidance to line management regarding employment law and company terms and conditions;
- induction of new staff and delivery of customer service training workshops;
- recruitment of clerical and customer service staff.

I will call you in the next week to find out what opportunities you may have in the near future for someone with my skills and experience.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Sykes

Enc.

Applications Forms

Application forms have evolved into a type of first interview. Aside from standard information there is likely to be a requirement for additional information. Application forms have become the first level of filtration for the employer.

General Guidance

Always read the instructions. Some organisations will simply discard an application that does not precisely comply with their instructions.

When you fill in your application form, if it is hand written, make sure it is neat, and always get someone to proof read it for you before you send it off, checking for spelling and grammatical errors.

When a question has different parts, make sure you answer each part.

Do not make anything up on your application form to enhance it. If you get called for an interview, you will be asked questions relating to the content of your application form, and any information that isn't true will be obvious.

Use the STAR story exercise to answer the competency based questions. Clearly explain the Situation, Task, Action and Result which relates to the competencies required in the job specification.

Statements and Competency Questions

These are the interview style questions commonly found on application forms. For guidance of what competencies to promote, study the Person Specification. This section of the application is an opportunity to promote the skills and achievements that comprise your Self-Assessment.

Ensure your answers show you have the right skills, character and experience for the job.

Consult with Someone

Application forms can be difficult to complete by yourself so get some help and get it right!

Summary of Key Outputs from this Section:

- A skills and achievement based CV;
- Letter writing competency;
- Application form competency.

Having achieved these outputs, interviews come next!

Making the most of interviews

General

Having put together a CV that gets results, the next step will be to prepare for interviews. Employers are increasingly using different strategies to review candidates. The key to success is preparation. Become familiar with all you might encounter and you will take it all in your stride. Interviews are often turning into assessment days where you will go through a variety of processes.

Providing that you are applying for jobs you genuinely can do, there is nothing to fear.

Making the most of interviews continued....

What will I encounter?

Psychometrics

Psychometric tests are getting more and more effective. There are no right or wrong answers, only a character profile produced as a reflection of your answers. The purpose of psychometrics is to see whether your character profile matches the profile required by the employer. The psychometric test may take place during an assessment day or on-line.

Practical Skill Tests

The most common skill tests are Literacy and Numeracy. The potential employer needs to be assured that the applicant meets the standard required for the job. Other tests might include IT skills or something directly related to the job. Lateral thinking tests are also becoming popular.

In-tray Exercises

As a test of Literacy and Numeracy, as well as a test of knowledge about the job, you may encounter In-tray exercises. These are written tests asking for answers to hypothetical problems or tasks you may encounter.

Competency Assessments

An efficient way of reviewing several candidates at once is to organise Competency Assessments. Groups are typically given activities to perform that may be team-based, and relate to some specific competency the employer wishes to focus on. The activity may be unusual or seem totally removed from the job. This is to be expected. The test may also explore real commitment to the job opportunity.

Telephone Interviews - Informal

Rather than bring you in for a meeting with all the time and expense that it incurs, an employer may interview you informally by telephone first. Usually you will be warned in advance, but occasionally employers telephone unexpectedly. Keep a copy of your CV to hand at all times along with pen and paper to take notes.

Telephone Interviews - Formal

Employers are now using outside agencies to review candidates. You may be telephoned on behalf of the employer and put through a structured question and answer session. This process may be a type of psychometric test, a test for "Key words" in your answers, or a test of specific knowledge.

Presentations

Part of an assessment day might be the delivery of a presentation. If you are warned in advance, it may be beneficial to prepare a PowerPoint presentation.

Make sure your presentation does not exceed the allotted time.

Structure your presentation so that it will be easily understood.

For example:

- Introduction
- Creativity
- Reasoning
- Closure

Think how your audience will feel when receiving your delivery. They may not remember exactly what you said, but they will remember how you made them feel. Tell a story with a happy ending!

Provide handouts so they can refer back to your presentation once you have gone.

If you have advance warning, make sure you are well rehearsed.

Competency based interviews

Competency based interviews can be very daunting when you're first looking for a new role. Being prepared with your STAR stories can help take away the nerves. Companies will be interested in your core competencies so they can get idea if you are a good candidate for the role.

Setting Goals

Employers want candidates who are motivated and can ensure commitment. Make sure you come across as the person who is ambitious and driven, and does not give up easily.

Communication and people skills

Interacting with people and getting your ideas across is important to the working day. Think of examples which show you have the people skills to get colleagues working effectively with you and keeping your customers happy.

Sticking to policy and procedure

Policies and procedures play an important part in the smooth running of any business, especially in large organisations. Can you show you are able to stick to process, both established and new? Do you challenge it where appropriate?

Leadership and Influence

If you are of a senior level it is important that you promote your staff's development, and motivate them to achieve targets and deadlines set. Do you lead teams? What is your management style?

Flexibility

Companies are responsive to many factors in order keep up with the competition. Demonstrate how you handle change and how you ensure others adapt effectively.

Diplomacy

Employers are keen on diplomacy. There will be many work-based situations where you disagree with a colleague. But how do you get your point across and respond to people with conflicting opinions without causing negative working relationships?

Decisiveness and judgment

We all have to make difficult decisions in order for progress to be made. Show that you have the confidence and skills to do so.

Independence

Employers want individuals who are resourceful and can work without the need for detailed instructions or supervision.

Organisational and planning skills

Companies want people who provide high productivity. Are you able to organise your workload so that tasks are done well, on time and within budgets?

Problem solving

Every day we come across different obstacles of varying levels. What is your approach and how do you implement solutions?

Creativity

Companies need people with ideas who can contribute to a progressive vision. What do you have to offer a company?

Risk taking

Risk taking is important in business and the rewards can be high. Are you a confident individual who can calculate risk and reward and proceed accordingly?

Stress

Performing well under pressure in stressful situations is important for many roles. Do you keep a clear head and think on your feet?

Initiative

Employees who go above and beyond their day to day tasks stand out as candidates. An employer wants individuals who can use their initiative and come up with ideas they might not think of.

Teamwork

It's important you can demonstrate you are a team player and work towards a common goal with a team of colleagues. You also need to contribute on an individual level.

Preparation

There are many things you should do to prepare for an interview and most of them are common sense.

Preparation Check List

How to look?

Job Interviews do not always mean suit and tie. How to look needs to be thought out carefully. What do they look like? Wear an outfit that helps you look the part! Do not wear clothes like body armour. Wear an outfit that you are comfortable in ... and that is appropriate for the job.

How to get there?

Don't make assumptions about travel. Travel time is unpredictable. Plan a route, and time it carefully. Give yourself plenty of time. Aim to turn up ten minutes before the arranged time so that you are organised and relaxed.

Who am I meeting?

Don't turn up at reception needing to pull out a letter from a pocket or briefcase to find the name of the interviewer. Receptionists are often quizzed on what they thought of a candidate.

What do I need to know about the company?

Typically, what you need to know can be found on their web site. A web site should give you all sorts of information about the company, not only the company's activities but their ethos.

What have I told them?

Always review the CV or the application form you submitted so you know what you have already told them. It was good enough to get you an interview so use it to good effect again.

What have they told me?

Review the Job Description and Person Specification to ensure that you are talking their language. Focus on promoting the key competencies that are most important to them.

What will they ask me?

Review all the frequently asked questions and formulate answers. There are only so many questions that can be asked in only so many ways. Formulate a strategy to cope with any question you have not prepared for.

What will I ask them?

Prepare a mental or physical list of all you need to know from this meeting. Treat interviews as you would a business meeting.

Rehearse! Rehearse! Rehearse!

- Think of something you are good at;
- How did you get to be that good?;
- A sport or an art or craft;
- You got that good through practice and trial and error;
- You met with barriers to your success and you explored ways of overcoming them.

A theatre company does not turn up on the opening night and just perform. They have been rehearsing for months beforehand.

Find someone you trust who will help you to practice. Someone who will give you objective feedback and criticism. Someone who will tell you not just how your answers sound but how you make them feel.

Interviewers will not remember a great deal of what you said, but will remember how you made them feel.

First Impressions

First Impressions and do they count?

First impressions come from how we look, how we act and how we deliver, all within the first few moments in someone's presence.

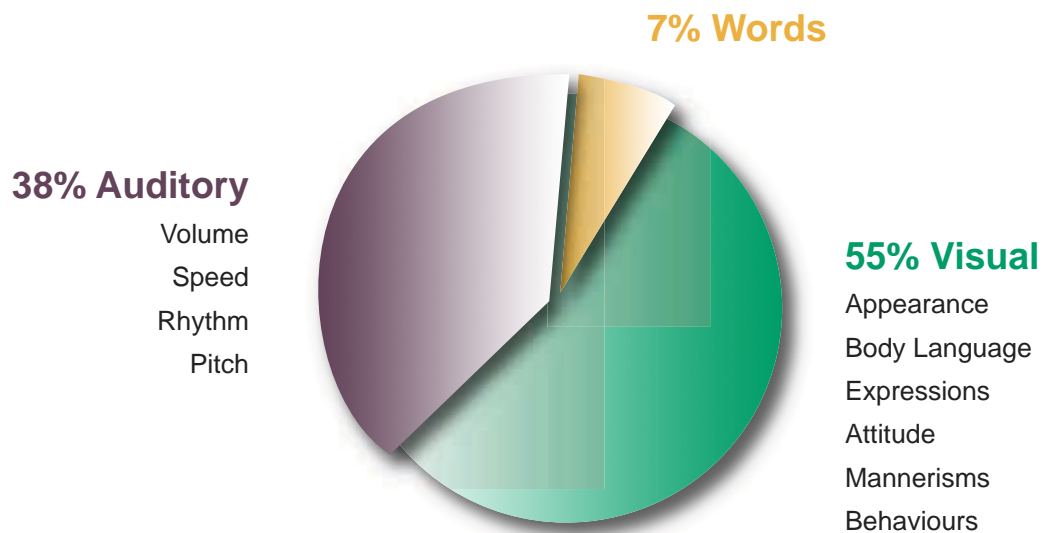
The interviewer will discover a great deal about you in a relatively small amount of time by use of their experience in body language. Generally speaking we know within a few moments of meeting a person for the very first time whether we will like them or not (despite knowing very little about their background).

Therefore, your first few seconds are very important when you greet your interviewer and walk into the interview room.

When you first meet your interviewer, look them in the eyes and smile a pleasant and friendly smile. Everyone likes a smiley face. Good body language starts with a confident and firm handshake, and being smartly dressed. Don't bathe in perfume or aftershave as strong smells often give off an overpowering smell and can be very off putting.

Do not just sit down when you enter the room. Wait to be offered a seat as this is good manners.

The interview may start along the lines of chit chat. You will probably be asked how your journey was etc, etc and then offered a drink. Depending on the type of person you are and how well you cope with nerves, which we all have, from the person applying for a job flipping burgers to the Executive applying for a new £ 250K per year position; it's up to you whether you decide to accept one. You won't be thought of any less should you not accept.



Interview questions you may be asked

Before attending an interview you need to think about your response to the following questions. Your answers will vary depending on the job or company in question.

Use the following list as the basis of your rehearsal.

Why do you want this job?

Think carefully about this question. Stress the positive aspects which have motivated you to apply for this position. Do not mention any negative aspects of your current job or the job in question.

What qualities do you think will be required for this job?

Hopefully you will have got this answer from their Personal Specification.

What can you contribute?

This is your chance to shine. Tell them about your achievements in previous position(s) which are relevant to the new position you are applying for.

Why do you want to work for this company?

Emphasise the positive reasons why you want to join their company. Be truthful, business-like and positive ... avoid flattery.

What do you know about this company?

This is your chance to impress the interviewer that you have done your preparation.

What can we (the new company) offer that your previous employers could not offer?

Stress opportunities for personal growth, new challenges, etc.

You have not done this sort of job before. How will you cope/succeed?

Say that you are the sort of person who aims to succeed at everything you do and that you are very determined and will do whatever it takes to get the job done.

Why should we employ you?

The answer to this question will be based on your previous experience and achievements which relate to the company. In conclusion, you could add that there is a good fit between you and the job ... and ask the interviewer for their opinion, if appropriate.

How long do you think it would be before you could make a significant contribution to the team/company?

If you think that you could contribute from day one then say so. Then turn the question round on them and ask how soon they would expect it.

How ambitious are you?

Depending on the position you are applying for you, may want to sound fairly ambitious ... but don't make it look as if you're after the interviewer's position!

Why did you choose a career in ...?

Be positive about your reasons. If you have previously changed careers present a logical argument as to why you did so.

What do you think of the last company you worked for?

You should stress the positive aspects of your last company saying that they were a good company to work for. Tell them about the training you received or the work related experience you gained.

Interview questions you may be asked

Why did you join your previous company? Did they live up to your expectations? Why are you leaving now?

Always be positive about your reasons for joining and leaving a company. Be very careful that you do not say anything negative about your present employer. If you do, the new company will wonder what you will say about them when you leave. You might want to stress that you are looking for a new challenge and that you feel that the company which is interviewing you fits the bill!

Explain the organisational structure in your last company and how you fitted into it.

This sort of question may be used to find out whether your old job is comparable with the vacancy in question. If the job under discussion would be a step up the ladder you need to show that you are ready for a more demanding position. You may be able to show that you've already exercised many of the responsibilities and necessary skills which the new job would require.

How long have you been looking for a new job?

If you have been unemployed for a long time this may be a rather tricky question to answer. But be honest. If you have been away on holiday, or done some voluntary work, you should mention this.

What are you looking for in a new job?

Make sure your answer is appropriate to the company interviewing you. A suitable reply would be that you are looking for a new job where you can apply existing skills and learn new ones.

What would your ideal job be?

Again, remember where you are! Describe the job in terms of the criteria they have used to describe their job. An ideal job might include things like challenging work, a fair rate of pay for the job, good colleagues, good career prospects, good team atmosphere, opportunity to learn new skills, apply old skills, etc.

Are you considering any other positions at the moment?

If you are, say so ... but don't give too many details away or it will weaken your negotiating position later. If you don't have any other job offers at the moment just say that you have 'a few irons in the fire'.

What did you do on a day to day basis?

Stress the positive things you did including your achievements. Even if some, or much of it, was paperwork, you can still show that you had an interest in the way it was tackled.

Did you increase sales or profits in your last job?

This question is only relevant for senior managers or sales people. If you have increased sales and/or profit then do not be afraid to shout about it. If you have not increased sales say why not, e.g. general downturn in the market. It might then be a good idea to mention an achievement in a previous job if your performance was better there.

Have you reduced costs at your last company?

If you have reduced costs say so - companies are always looking for ways to reduce costs.

How would you describe yourself? / How would others describe you?

Pick your best attributes and achievements from your career.

What was your greatest success? How did you achieve it?

You should pick an achievement which is related to their needs.

Interview questions you may be asked

What has been your biggest failure?

Try to pick a failure which you were later able to correct or something that is not really important.

How could you improve yourself?

The interviewer is looking for continual self-improvement.

Did you feel you progressed satisfactorily in your last job?

If you progressed faster than normal you should say so. If growth was not as good as expected then be careful how you phrase this.

Are you a leader?

State how you have successfully acted as a leader, giving examples of your successes.

How do you handle criticism?

Your answer should be along the following lines: "I always think that it is important to get feedback on how I am performing so that I can improve any areas which my manager/supervisor highlights". Then ask "Do you have regular staff appraisals and a staff development plan?"

What sort of manager are you? / What makes a good manager?

You should say that it is someone who listens to other people and can delegate whilst maintaining overall control of the task at hand, bringing in the project on time and to budget. Good planning skills are essential. Demonstrate that you are today's and tomorrow's manager.

Do you work well with others? Or are you a loner?

Some jobs mean that you have to work very closely with other people whilst other jobs mean that you are largely working on your own, so you need to say that you are happy in both situations.

Do you need other people around to stimulate you or are you self-motivated?

You need to say that you are self-motivated.

Can you act on your own initiative?

You should say that you can. You could ask how much responsibility you would have.

How do you run a meeting?

You could say that you must start with an agenda and stick to it. You could add that you would try to get the views and ideas of everyone present, working with an air of co-operation. If people went off at a tangent you would bring them back to the agenda item under discussion.

What motivates you?

Our suggestions are career growth, opportunity to learn new skills, good co-workers, etc.

What management style gets the best results out of you?

Try and think about how you have reacted to different managers and which factors have motivated you. Do not say too much in reply to this question, because if your answer is contrary to the management style of the company they will not be keen to employ you!

Do you know how to motivate other people?

Hopefully you can say "Yes", and say that you have to find out what motivates a person and give them recognition for a job well done. You should always give them encouragement and help them when required.

Interview questions you may be asked

Are you competitive?

Your answer will depend on the sort of job you're doing. If you will be working as part of a team you need to show that you can work in the best interests of the team and not just for your own benefit.

Are you aggressive?

If you mean by this someone who gets things done, then the answer is "Yes". However, you need to defuse any negative implications of this question.

What do you dislike doing?

Say that you are prepared to do whatever it takes to get the job done well and on time ... and you try to do disagreeable things first to get them out of the way rather than putting them off.

What problems did you encounter in your last job? What annoyed you about your last job?

Stick to the problems that you were able to solve, i.e. "I had problem X, which I later managed to resolve by doing Y". Show that you are a person who can solve problems rather than someone who lets things get on top of them.

Do you feel you are ready to take on greater responsibility?

Show how you have progressed throughout your life and how you have accepted and taken on responsibility for your actions and the actions of others when appropriate. If you have not had many work related responsibilities mention other responsibilities you have had outside work.

Can you work under pressure?

You need to say that you can. You could ask how much pressure the job involves.

How many hours are you prepared to work?

You would be prepared to work the necessary hours to get the job done on time; but not to the detriment of your work/life balance.

What are your career goals?

Link in your goals with the company which is interviewing you.

How did you get on with your previous manager/supervisor, co-workers and subordinates?

Hopefully you can say that you got on well with everyone.

Are you over qualified for this position?

Tell them that your qualifications would enable you to make a bigger contribution sooner than someone less qualified.

Are you prepared to relocate?

If you are, say so. If you don't want to move then you don't have to accept the job - but try and come across as someone who is positive.

Are you willing to travel?

Again, if you are, say so. You want to sound positive, so find out how much travelling is involved before you turn down the job.

How often are you off sick?

This can be a difficult question to answer if you are frequently off sick or you have just recovered from a prolonged period of illness. If you generally enjoyed good health and this period of illness is not typical then you should say so.

What did you earn in your last job?

You have to be very careful when answering this question because once an interviewer knows your current salary they will offer you a package based on this figure. This may be satisfactory if you were only seeking a modest rise in salary and your current salary is in line with their salary range.

But, what if your current salary is substantially lower than the rate for the new job, or if you want a substantial rise in salary? If this is the case you would be best advised to say that you do not want to prejudice yourself by being too high or too low. Ask if you can address the issue of salary later after the responsibilities of the job have been discussed; you may also want to ask them what the salary range for the job is (if you do not already know).

What level of salary are you looking for now?

Be very careful when you answer this question - you do not want to appear greedy. If you are applying for a specific vacancy you could ask what the salary range is. Once they have answered you could say "I think my experience would place me at the top end of your range, don't you?"

If they ask you this question early in the interview you could delay answering by saying "It is hard to discuss salary without first knowing more about the job and its responsibilities."

Closure

The end of an interview is often signalled with:

"Do you have any questions?"

This is your opportunity to ensure that you leave the interviewer with the right impression. If you don't want the job, tell them that you have no questions, thank them for their time, shake hands and leave.

If you do want the job, mentally check that you definitely said so at some point during the interview. If you did not have the opportunity, employ a closing strategy.

**"Interviewers will not remember
a great deal of what you said;
they will remember how you
made them feel"**

You want the interviewer to remember:

- That you could do the job;
- That you would fit in;
- That you wanted the job.

"One last question, what is the process going forward? I'd like to pursue this opportunity."

"Do you think you'll be making me an offer? I'd really like to receive one."

"No questions. I'd just like to say that if you offered me this job, I'd take it!"

NB. The closure needs to sound like you!

Interview Techniques

The best stance to adopt is openness and honesty. Employers want skilled, achieving, self-developing people. Interviews are all about self-promotion and the more you rehearse and practice, the better you will get.

Visualisation

The power of language is immense. Using our imaginations, we can evoke emotions and images as though they were real. Imagine you are standing on a table. Three feet off the ground, right on the edge, leaning over, staring at the floor.

Now imagine the table is three hundred feet up in the air, with the breeze blowing and the air cold, and the space around you immense.

Just sitting and reading this you can feel your very natural fear of heights.

Apply visualisation to interviews. Use your questions and answers to help them see and feel you doing the job and being part of their organisation.

Q. "Please tell me what the job involves?"

A reasonable enough question and something you will definitely need to know, but it can be phrased much better:

Q. "Please tell me what you would like me to be doing on a daily basis?"

The interviewer will need to answer something like:

"On a daily basis, we would like you to....."

You are helping the interviewer imagine you in the job. Here are some more questions:

- What will be my responsibilities?
- Where will I fit into the overall organisational structure?
- Who will I report to?
- Who will report to me?
- What do you expect me to do in the first 6 months?
- What level of performance will you expect from me?
- May I see where I will be working?

SUMMARY OF KEY OUTPUTS FROM THIS SECTION

To be rehearsed:

- Tell me about yourself
- Coping with difficult questions
- Coping with negative statements
- Closure
- Visualisation

What happens after the interview?

The interview process is a good learning tool. Each one will give you that extra bit of experience and confidence.

Take some time to go over the interview and have a think about the following:

- If there were some parts that you found to be awkward because of the types of questions asked, make a note of these and practise your responses for the next time.
- Did you maintain eye contact and decent body language?
- In which areas do you think you could have done better? Were you well informed about the employer as a company?
- If the employer does not contact you within the time frame advise, wait a couple of days beyond the advised date, then contact them to get an update about the position.
- Keep your options open. Don't stop your job search or wait to be offered the role even if the interview went even better than expected. It's best to have more options available to you until you have definitely secured a role.
- If you are unsuccessful, it would be a good idea if possible, to get feedback from the interviewer. This will show that you were keen on the role, so if the person they offer it to does not accept, then you may still be in line for the role. It also shows your professional attitude to the process. The feedback you get may help with future interviews. But if the feedback you receive is negative, be prepared to take it well. It's never good to hear negative feedback but the purpose of it is to help you in the future.

Where to find jobs

General

Having dealt with the key issues relating to your Job Search, it's now time to apply some of these principles! Some common questions are:

Where do I look?

How much effort should I put in?

This section will answer these questions:

Where to look?

- Newspapers and Magazines
- Job Banks
- Recruiters
- Direct Approaches
- Networking

The places to look for a job revolve around the Internet. Internet access is a crucial part of any job search campaign. If you do not have access at home, you can log in at local libraries or Internet 'cafes'.

Newspapers and Magazines

Traditionally, the first place to look would be local and national newspapers. Job advertisements are still placed in these publications but they are diminishing as the popularity of the Internet grows. Job advertisements in newspapers and magazines are expensive and can be slow to publish.

Most newspapers and magazines will have a related web site that will have a section for job vacancies. This section may include jobs from several publications along with the new vacancies that can be posted to the website online.

Recruitment Consultancies

The first thing to remember about Recruiters is that they do not charge you anything. They charge the employer.

Recruiters operate by obtaining a job brief from a client and then advertising for applicants. They tend to pigeonhole people and may not think laterally about a candidate. You may need to offer them guidance regarding the type of job you are looking for and state this very clearly on your CV and covering e-mail.

In the UK today there are in excess of 25000 recruiters, ranging from well known national organisations to one-man operations. All of these recruiters will have embraced Internet technology.

You can now register your CV with a recruiter in seconds. Send it with a covering e-mail stating clearly the type of position you are looking for and your desired salary.

To find listings of recruiters on the Internet, go to a specialist web site such as: <http://www.rec.uk.com>

Direct Approaches

Approaching a potential employer direct is getting easier; companies want to save money on recruiting costs! Most companies post their job vacancies on their corporate website.

Identify organisations that you could possibly work for and find their web site by using a search engine or visiting a specialist site such as yell.com

Companies expect direct approaches and should treat your enquiry with respect. Remember that the covering e-mail needs to be as professional as your CV and include a confident and effective closure to conclude your communication.

Where to find jobs continued....

Networking

This involves you realising the potential of your business and personal contacts. Through this network you may hear of companies ...

- With a problem that needs to be solved ... and if you can solve it there may be a job for you!
- Companies that are expanding/winning new orders ... who may need to take on additional staff;
- Job openings created by people leaving a company or a new position being created.

If you manage to uncover a vacant or new position before a company advertises it, there may be very few candidates or just you! If you are a specialist in your field, a company may be willing to create a position just for you and your talents!

Your success in networking will depend on your ability to communicate and interact with other people. If you find it difficult to communicate, or to get on with other people, you will find networking a real struggle. If, on the other hand, you are very outgoing, enjoy meeting new people, and possess communication and interpersonal skills, you will take to networking very quickly.

Contacting your network

To realise the potential of your network you need to list everyone you know including business colleagues, personal friends, casual acquaintances and people you meet in your every day life. When listing business colleagues you should include everyone you have known at your present and previous employers. You should also include people you have had dealings with in other companies. This may include customers, suppliers, competitors, accountants, solicitors and anyone else you have had relevant contact with. Literally list everyone you know!

Handling network meetings

When you are meeting someone in a work related environment you should dress smartly. This may not be an interview, but you should treat it as if it is. If you're going to a public place, such as a pub or restaurant make sure your contact has their back to the door - you don't want your contact watching to see who is entering and leaving; you want their undivided attention!

When you are talking to someone you have not met before it is important to put him or her at ease. Don't directly ask them for a job as this will put them under pressure and they may try and get rid of you as quickly as possible! It's far better to say that you are looking for some help and advice with your job searching campaign - if they happen to mention that they have a current vacancy whilst you are talking to them, all well and good.

Most people are willing to help people they know. The worst that can happen is if they are not prepared to help you - big deal! Just cross them off your list and move on to the next name.

Maintaining your network after your job search

Once you have found yourself a job it's important not to lose contact with the network you have spent so much time building. This network can still be very useful to you in your new position, giving you vital market intelligence. Just little things like a Christmas or birthday card, or a 'hello' call on the telephone every six months, are enough to keep in contact.

You should also remember how much the people in your network have helped you. If these people come to you for help, try and use your network to help them solve their problem. If you help someone they will be more willing to help you in the future!

Q How much should I look?

A successful campaign will always be a function of the effort you put in.

Q How many newspapers and magazines should I study?

All of them! Organise your campaign so that each day you scour publications for opportunities and regularly visit their web sites.

Where to find jobs continued....

Q How many job banks and search agents?

Every one you can find! Organise your campaign so that on any given day you visit a number of websites and scour them for opportunities.

Q How many recruiters should I register with?

Start with ten a day until you reach fifty. Then manage them as a rolling portfolio; inclusion dependent on how much interest they show in your candidacy.

Q How many direct approaches should I make?

Identify two organisations per day that have the potential to employ you. Two per day becomes ten a week, becomes forty plus per month.

Q How much networking should I do?

As much as you can fit in around all the other activity you are involved in.

Q Job-hunting afterthoughts

If your CV doesn't seem to have the impact you want and you're not getting many interviews, then you should consider the following: Are you aiming for jobs that you aren't qualified for? Does your CV meet the requirements of an advertisement?

If you can see no reason why you have been rejected then you should look again at your CV, as this must be the culprit.

If you're getting interviews, but not getting suitable job offers, you need to look carefully at your interview performance. Try and get as much feedback as possible from the people who have interviewed you. If you have been unsuccessful in getting a particular job ring up the interviewer and ask them where you fell down and how you could do better. Once you've got feedback you can modify your interview technique and do better at the next interview.

Job Search Campaign

Looking for a new job can take as much time each day as actually being in a full time job! You want to ensure that you manage the time you spend job seeking effectively. It is useful to maintain a record of your job search activities –

Keep a note of the following details:

- Date
- Where you looked for roles
- Was there a position to apply for, if so what is the position and ref number?
- Are you already registered with the Agency?
- Contact details for the position
- Closing date for application
- Outcome
- Interview booked?
- Next action - follow up with a call or email?
- Chase agencies for any new positions?

Make sure you allow yourself some quality time to take a break from everything, whether it is an hour each day going for a long walk, or making sure you take time at the weekends to do something you wouldn't normally do. It is important that you refresh yourself so you are in the best frame of mind when an interview does come up.

Do not put too much emotion into applying for one particular role. Keep your options open by applying for any roles you feel you are able to do. Once you have applied, don't sit around and wait for the interview to happen, keep going and see what else there is you can apply for.

Take time to review your progress. Are you meeting your targets and following up your chases as planned?

What kind of responses are you getting from your CV or application forms? If you feel you have applied for many roles (50+) but have not once had a telephone call regarding your application, then your CV/Application form need improving. Are you applying for the right jobs? Ensure that you are applying for job that you have the skills, experience and where necessary, the qualifications to do.

If you keep getting interviews but you are not being offered the job; what can you do better next time. Try and get as much feedback as possible to help you to move forward in your job search.

Starting a new Job and the transition

Once you have secured your next role, there are key transition challenges which are the key to a successful new job role.

- Know how to market yourself internally. Work hard and effectively to start building your new internal network
- Set yourself some steep learning curves. Aim to understand as much about the business and your role as quickly as possible. Don't wait to be informed
- Ensure you understand the situations facing you and make sure your responses are appropriate
- Achieve some quick wins which will demonstrate your new success
- Work out your success route with your manager, ensuring you are aware of what is required of you and that you both agree
- Build your new working relationships, whether you are a team leader or a team player
- Identify the people you can relate to easily, especially those who will be essential to your success
- Do not lose prospective or make poor judgements
- Be positive and helpful to everybody you can



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