



GET READY TO TAKE ON  
**THE WORLD  
OF WORK**

**BRIGHT  
FUTURES  
ARE  
MADE AT**



# THE START OF YOUR FUTURE

This guide will help you to set up your CV, and prepare you for future job interviews. Your journey starts here.

## LET'S START WITH YOUR CV

Every employer is looking for the same thing: potential. Show us yours. Tell us about your strengths and achievements in the table below – and make sure you give evidence for each one! You can then use your ideas to start drafting a personal statement.

PERSONAL QUALITY	EVIDENCE
I am (determined, enthusiastic, helpful etc.)	Prove it!

## USING YOUR SKILLS PROPERLY...

Here are some hints and tips that will help you make the most of the things you do best:

1

Before you speak: think!  
What qualities do employers want you to demonstrate?

2

Next, use examples that really show these qualities in action.

3

Be specific: stay on track and make sure you explain how your skills made the difference.

# EXAMPLE CV

## PERSONAL STATEMENT

A highly motivated, friendly and hard-working individual, who has recently completed their BTEC in Business and received good grades in both Business and Science at GCSE. With a particular interest in retail work and customer service, I am seeking a position that provides the opportunity to build on my key skills and gain valuable experience.

## KEY SKILLS

- Key problem solving and numeracy skills
- Effective communication skills, both written and verbal, developed through numerous essays and presentations given during my time at school
- Organisation – ability to take the initiative and work well under pressure, ensuring strict deadlines are met
- Flexibility – whilst maintaining enthusiasm and commitment to each project
- Proficiency in all areas of Microsoft Office, including Access, Excel, Word and PowerPoint

## EDUCATION **School Name (2004 – 2010)**

BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) Level 2 Diploma in Business at Merit Level

Functional Skills Level 1 English – 2010

5 GCSEs, grade B-D, including Double Science (BB) and Business (C)

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### **Part-time Sales Assistant, Shop Name, Location (April 2011 – present)**

Key results:

- Achieved four out of five revenue targets
- Demonstrated resilience and ability to upsell products, consistently meeting KPIs set for adding more value to sales
- Significantly improved negotiation skills, regularly converting customers from point of enquiry to sale

### **Volunteer, Help the Needy Charity Shop, (Jan 2010 – present)**

Key results:

- Served customers at the till
- Accepted and sorted customer donations
- Assisted with stock replenishment

## HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Over the last two summers I have helped a family friend restore a classic sports car. This has triggered a passionate interest in mechanics and automotive restoration and, now that the project is finished, I have continued to build my knowledge by attending various classic car events.

I received a silver medal for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. This helped develop my leadership, perseverance, teamwork and communication skills.

# PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

Once you have sent your CV to an employer, you may be asked to attend an interview. Use these hints and tips to get ready for work experience or interviews and make the most of your opportunity!

## PLAN YOUR JOURNEY

Work out how you're going to get there and aim to show up a little bit early.



## USE GOOD BODY LANGUAGE

You don't need to speak to show confidence: sit up straight and make eye contact.



## APPLY YOURSELF

Find out as much as you can about the job beforehand. Make a list of the skills and qualities they want, then show them in your application and interview.



## TRY AND ENJOY IT

Come in with a positive, friendly attitude and you'll have a much better chance of making a connection.



## KEEP IT CLEAN

A neat and tidy appearance will help you to make a great first impression.



## LOOK THE PART

Dressing smart is always a smart choice.



## SHOW YOU'RE INTERESTED

Really listen to the other person and respond to what they say.



## ASK QUESTIONS

This is also an opportunity for you to interview them, so prepare some questions in advance. What do you want to know?



## SELL YOURSELF

You're the right person for the job, all you need to do is prove it. Believe in your strengths and make them clear.

# PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Find a partner and use these questions to rehearse for an interview. If you like, you can switch roles halfway through (this might help you to pick up some new tricks or techniques).

1

**Can you give me an example of when you've worked as part of a team?**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

2

**Tell me about a time when you've used your initiative.**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

3

**What are you like at solving problems? Describe a time when you solved a problem.**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

4

**Would you say that you are someone who is determined?**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

5

**Tell me about when you've had to manage your time.**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

6

**Would you say that you're good at making decisions? Describe a time when you made an important decision.**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

7

**Can you give me an example of when you've used your communication skills?**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

8

**Tell me about a time when you've 'done the right thing'.**

Example? Detail? Made a difference?

# PHONE INTERVIEWS

## SOMETIMES YOUR FIRST INTERVIEW MIGHT BE DONE OVER THE PHONE

It's important to be prepared for a telephone interview. You never know when a recruiter may call and ask if you have a few moments to talk.

However, if they call at a time that isn't convenient, it's okay to ask them to rearrange. It can be easy to feel like you should always say yes – but you could end up doing yourself a disservice – particularly if you aren't somewhere quiet, don't have a CV or any notes in front of you.

When you are on the call, expect the same sort of questions that you'd have at any face-to-face interview.



## TOP TIPS

- Make sure that the telephone number that you put on your CV or application form is the right one. If you don't have credit on your mobile to listen to a voicemail, then consider putting a landline number down as well
- Practise speaking on the phone to a friend or someone you know
- Stay calm and try not to talk too quickly, even if time is limited
- Don't make lots of notes and have them scattered around. There won't be time to search for answers during the interview
- Some candidates like to look smart even though they can't be seen. Looking reasonably smart rather than wearing shorts and a t-shirt might put you in a better frame of mind
- You may want to sit behind a desk or stand, rather than slumping on the settee
- Choose a quiet location where you are unlikely to be interrupted
- Some companies may even want to carry out a video interview, so whether you can be seen or not, make sure you dress smartly and are somewhere quiet where you won't be disturbed

# ASSESSMENT CENTRES & GROUP INTERVIEWS

## What is an assessment centre?

An assessment centre is really just a series of activities designed to find out whether or not you're suitable for a particular role. That could include: **interviews, presentations, tests, group exercises and social events.**



## TOP TIPS

- Make sure you have all the documents, notes and stationary you might need with you (and keep them organised!)
- Read about the job and think about what people might be looking for
- Demonstrate those qualities on the day
- Don't think about what the other candidates are doing and stay true to your strengths
- Be friendly and positive at all times

### DO

- Plan to get there early
- Think about how you'll introduce yourself
- Stay positive and show it in your body language
- Prepare some questions in advance
- Include other people in your conversations
- Dress smartly

### DON'T

- Be afraid to speak up
- Forget your manners
- Talk over other people
- Drift away from the conversation
- Ignore others around you
- Get carried away or overshare

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