



IN2WORK

**HELPING YOU GET IN2WORK AND
ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS**

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Where you see the * symbol you can find a definition in the Glossary.

INTRODUCTION

The In2Work guide is here to help make sense of the world of work and get you the job you want! We have included plenty of hints and tips to help you beat the competition, but please note this is a brief guide and intended as a starting point only. Further help is at hand and there is lots available to you, which we have signposted throughout the guide.

Good luck!

No matter what level or course you are on, you will have to make decisions about your future. You will need to have some idea about what career/ job you are interested in; especially as the world of work is quite complex and competition can be strong.

It's important to understand that there are no shortcuts, and taking time to research your options will be beneficial in the long term.

Research, research, research is your starting point!

STARTING POINT		
What stage are you at?	What can help?	How can I access this?
No idea at all what you want to do	Careers matching software: this can generate some ideas about jobs that will suit your likes, dislikes and hobbies etc. See a careers advisor: A careers advisor will be able to talk you through your options and offer some guidance.	Our Licensed software at SGS is called Kudos: you can access this through Moodle under 'Careers', or pick up a flyer on how to use it from Learner services (Filton site/ Stroud) or Student Union (WISE). There is a careers advisor available every day of the week at SGS College. See Page 5 for details of how to make an appointment.
Have some idea what you want to do, but want more information	Looking at job profiles can help: these will give you information on what's involved in different jobs, what qualifications you will need, the pay you will get and useful websites etc. See a careers advisor: A careers advisor will be able to give you more information about jobs and areas of interest.	The National Careers Service website has many job profiles for each industry: The web address is https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/pages/home Go to 'careers advice' and 'job profiles' There is a careers advisor available every day of the week at SGS College. See Page 5 for details of how to make an appointment.
I know what I want to do	Knowing how to produce a winning CV/ application will help you get your dream job: See a careers advisor: A careers advisor will have labour market information* and knowledge that can help you be a competitive candidate.	The In2Work Guide: We have lots of information for you on how to job search, write a CV and fill in a good application form There is a careers advisor available every day of the week at SGS College. See Page 5 for details of how to make an appointment.

Options

The main options are:

- **Work, fulltime/part time or in temporary employment**
- **Continue with another course at college**
- **Higher Education (university)**
- **Work with training or without training.**
- **Apprenticeships - this combines work with training, working towards work based qualifications such as National vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Apprenticeships usually last 1/2/3 years, are paid an allowance and will attend college on a weekly or block basis.**
- **Travelling/ Gap Year**
- **Unemployment**



Want to talk through your options?

We are here to help you make the best of your time at SGS College and to help you realise your career ambitions. **We can help with...**

- **Accessing** up- to- date, relevant, impartial information on careers, courses, work experience and voluntary work.
- **Higher Education** courses, universities, open day visits, finance, the UCAS application process, help with writing personal statements.
- **Employability** skills, careers planning, CV writing, filling in application forms and help with interview techniques.
- **Mock interviews/ general interview help**
- **Access** paid work via our moodle Jobs Shop/ careers vacancy board.
- **Current information** on school/leaver college opportunities, latest news and labour market.

Careers guidance interviews are available throughout the year, including the summer break. Appointments are impartial, confidential and tailored to your needs.

The Careers Service is located at **Bristol**: Filton Main site, Learner Services Office CG11 and at the WISE campus WG32.
Stroud: Learner Services Office.

It's important to understand that there are no shortcuts to finding out what option might suit you best- you will need to spend time and effort working this out.

To make sure you get the most from all of our Support and resources visit:

<http://moodle.sgscol.ac.uk> Student area ➤ E campus ➤ Support Zone ➤ Careers and Guidance ➤
Careers updates

Alternatively contact us on **Email:** careers@sgscol.ac.uk **Tel:** 0117 9092 225 (**Bristol Sites**)

Email: karen.young@sgscol.ac.uk **Tel:** 01453761173 (**Stroud**)

YOUR PLAN- Getting Started

Being successful at job-hunting involves good planning, time and effort. You need to ascertain your priorities, research your career options, decide on a career path, and then apply for that job/ course.

Have you set yourself a timescale? If you're thinking about an Apprenticeship, start planning soon after Christmas. If you're leaving college at the end of the academic year, start planning around April/May time.

You need to treat job hunting as a job in itself!

Tips:

Be **realistic**; don't expect to step into your prefect job straight away. You may need to consider a job that is not as well paid, or in a different position than you hoped if it could eventually lead to other opportunities.

Be **organised** - create a job hunting file to keep copies of CV's, job applications, letters and so on.

Do your **research**- employers identified that candidates are unaware of the range of jobs available, and do not know what they want to do in future; these are key issues (especially with younger job seekers)

Be **persistent**- making unsuccessful applications and not hearing back from employers can be very demoralising, it may take time, but keep going, you will get there!

If you have been unsuccessful for a long time, **STOP** and ask for help in revising your applications and CV.

The jobs are out there, but competition is tight.



Being a Competitive Job Seeker:

- **Apply for lots of jobs** - not just jobs that are advertised, but speculative applications*!
- There are many places to look for work: **be creative!**
- **Apply early**; don't leave it until the deadline.
- **Continue developing your skills**, this could be voluntary work, work experience or part time work.
- Don't forget your **ICT skills**- can you use Microsoft Office, Word packages, and Excel? Employers will want to know about this!
- Build **networks*** if possible with family and friends and other contacts.

Don't forget to seek help from the Careers Team @ SGS College for more help.

JOB SEARCHING

Common ways of looking for work are newspapers, Jobcentres, trade journals and shop windows. However, increasingly, many employers are now recruiting via the internet or recruitment agencies.

Internet:

Looking for work on the internet has made our searches quicker, but, also means we can be swamped with jobs! It's important to target your search to only jobs that are relevant to you and make sure that the deadlines and closing dates are still applicable!

To broaden the number of jobs of interest, you may have to look at related categories and alternative job titles, or even widen your geographical area of research.

Job Boards:

Jobs boards are areas where jobs are advertised, they can be physical, or virtual (on the internet). There are three main types:

- **'Niche'*** job boards dedicated to particular professions or industries
- **General** job boards advertising all vacancies
- **Local** job boards advertising all jobs in the area they cover locally.

Use a search engine (Google or Yahoo) and type in job boards, jobs in retail etc.



Recruitment Agencies:

Companies use recruitment agencies to find them new employees. The company will state the positions available and the type of candidate they want, and the recruitment agency will go through their clients' CV's and match them to the available job role.

When using agencies, first check that they offer employment in the area you are interested in and don't go with one that charges a joining fee!

Agencies will ask you to complete a recruitment form, and may ask you to do a skills test (usually around literacy and your knowledge of Microsoft Office) **Always read the terms and conditions**, as recruitment agencies will keep your CV on their database. It's important to remember that good agencies will contact you prior to sending your CV to a company.

Most recruitment agencies have a website and you can join as many as you like. However, building good relationships with each agency is important and will increase your chances of them selecting you.

Speculative Opportunities:

Speculative job searching is when you **'apply' for a role that hasn't been advertised**. For example, handing in your CV to a shop you would like to work for to show your interest for when they recruit in future. If you are interested in working for a particular employer, write to them or go to their website so see if they have vacancies posted.

Around 80% of all jobs are not advertised, often because it's expensive for employers and takes time to go through application forms. Employers get around this by recruiting from within the organisation or actively encouraging staff to refer friends or family with suitable skills. This is known as **Networking**. By developing relationships with people, Networking effectively gives you inside information on any vacancies.



Good ways to Network:

- **Friends and family**- ask them about a job of interest. Most people enjoy talking about what they do, so don't feel awkward, but always show genuine interest and make notes.
- **Job Fairs**- Great way of meeting employers directly. Think about the impression you want to make; consider your outfit choice and try not to have a ciggie before you speak to prospective employers! **Always take CV's with you!**
- **Social network sites**- Especially sites such as LinkedIn, twitter and facebook. Try and network with as many people as you can. This is especially useful in the creative/cultural fields such as art/ media/ journalism and marketing. But make sure you remember to keep your profile professional and appropriate - even if you use it for personal use as well!

When networking think of the following:

- Who do you know?
- What position do they hold?
- Who do they know who can help?

Your speculative letter may be the one that fills that vacancy!

If you're a Young Person also consider School Leaver Programmes and Graduate Schemes; these offer excellent opportunities to prove and develop your skills with leading companies



UNDERSTANDING JOB ADVERTS

Job adverts and job applications can seem very confusing, and at times it seems as if the potential employer is talking a different language to you. It's not unusual for recruiters to use language such as 'dynamic' and 'go-getter'. All they're doing is competing with other employers to make their job sound more interesting!

What do Employers Actually Mean?

Proven track record: evidence of your experience. You will need to give examples that back up your experience.

Team Player: it's important to any organisation that you fit into their culture and work effectively with different types of people. Can you give an example of where you worked outside your normal task to support a team member?

Flexible: are you prepared to work late if necessary? Cover a weekend? or stay an extra hour or so, especially during busy times, outside of your normal hours?

Customer focused: be able to put the customers' needs first. As an example, think of a time when you had to deal with a difficult customer, how did you deal with the situation?

Ability to communicate at all levels: all employers want employees who can communicate with people within and outside the company at all levels. It would be good to give examples of where you have had to work with a wide range of people.

Proactive: are you able to take positive actions without too many instructions? Are you able to work on your own initiative?

Commitment to equal opportunities: do you treat colleagues and customers equally and are you aware of the Equal Opportunities Act?

Fast learner: are you someone who can pick things up quickly? Employers don't always have the time for lots of on the job training. Find out what training is offered, so you know what skills you will need to develop.

Dynamic: someone who is confident and able to take on new tasks, can solve problems and can do so with enthusiasm, motivation and commitment.





Common Abbreviations	
PA = Per Annum	Usually applies to wages and means 'one whole year'
PW= Per Week	Applies to wages, means paid weekly.
OTE= On Target Earning	This means the salary will be part basic salary and performance-related. Make sure at interview you ask about targets. Do you feel they are realistically achievable?
Pro Rata	This refers to the annual salary when the job is part-time. It means 'proportionately' If the salary is £15,000 (pro rata) based on a 37 hour week, and you work only 18.5 hours, then you will earn £7,500.00 pa.
Fixed Term/ Temporary Contract	This means the job is not permanent and will only last for a certain amount of time (this will be specified) e.g. fixed term position for 6 months.
Zero Hours Contract	This is a contract where the employer doesn't promise a fixed number of hours per week and the employee is paid only for hours they have worked.
Casual Work	This means you will work various hours when you are needed by them employer e.g. work more in busy periods etc.
CCDL	Current clean driving licence

EMPLOYABILITY

Employability - What do Employers Mean by This?

Simply put, this means- skills and achievements that you possess that are also useful in the workplace

The world of work is ever changing, traditional jobs are disappearing and new ones are taking their place.

How is Work Changing?

- Fewer low- skilled jobs*
- More jobs in 'customer services' industries, e.g. call centres
- More people working from home because of modern technology
- More flexible, but less secure, ways of working— fixed term contracts, temporary and part-time jobs and self employment
- More job changing - fewer people will stay in the same jobs
- More STEM* jobs

The Hospitality and retail sector are most likely to recruit 16 – 18 year olds.
The Financial and health sectors are most likely to recruit 19 – 24 yr olds.
In general, large companies are most likely to employ young people.



To be successful in the job market, you need to know what employers are looking for.

How Can I be More Employable?

- Make informed choices about what, how and where to study and train.
- Get qualified- low skill jobs are disappearing!
- Find out what skills employers want and then develop these skills.
- Be flexible about job choice and willing to adapt to new ways of working.
- Plan and manage your own time.

Skills:

As part of your research to give you an idea of which path to follow, you will need to find out what your values, skills and interests are and what motivates you... ***then look for jobs that match!***

Alternatively, you can just look at jobs that seem interesting to you.

What do we mean by values, motivations and strengths?

Values/ motivations are things that you believe are important in the way you live or work.

Values/ motivations can be personal to you (money, travel opportunities, interesting work). Alternatively, motivation can be linked to wider issues, such as the environment, helping others, offering a public service etc.

Your strengths are a mixture of your talents, knowledge and skills.

Some skills and qualities can be easy to identify, such as driving a car, playing an instrument or sport. But other skills can be harder to identify, such as personal attributes* or 'soft skills'. Below is a table to help you understand what employers mean by different types of skills.

Type of skill	What this means?	Example
Technical skills	Can include skills gained from your education and any knowledge based skills	ICT skills, Technical qualifications, other languages etc.
Qualities/ Personal skills/ Attributes	Inbuilt talents (you can think of these as being part of your personality)	Communication skills, team work skills, interpersonal skills*, trustworthy, hard working etc.
Soft skills	Include skills that you have acquired from school/college/volunteering	Planning, organizing, problem solving, people management, negotiating etc



Some Skills You Might Have that Employers Want...



Young People and Employers

The number of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or training) has been well publicised, but recent reports have looked into **why** employers might not choose a young person to fill a vacancy and, the good news is, there are lots of ways to overcome these hurdles!

Outlined below are reasons why employers might wish to hire an older candidate- **many are easy to overcome** and we have many suggestions on how to do this in the In2Work guide. However, young people also have a lot to offer and should sell these facts to employers!

Barriers to work for young people	What young people can offer!
Lack of experience	Enthusiastic and excited about entering the workplace
Poor written communication- especially electronic communication.	Good digital skills and understanding
Not appearing keen and interested at interview	Willingness and ability to learn
Lack of confidence/ poor at selling themselves	More familiar with IT and technological advancements
Too intimidated by the corporate environment	More energy and a 'fresh' perspective
Unsure of <i>why</i> they want the job	More flexible working practices (no bad habits/ preconceived ideas)

WORK EXPERIENCE

A good way to build on your experiences, or gain new experiences is volunteering.

A recent survey found that work experience was one of the key factors in successful job-hunting.

Why Volunteer?

- Build self - esteem and gain confidence
- Learn new skills and further build on the skills you already have.
- Work experience can sometimes turn into paid employment with the same company
- Make contacts/ network*
- It should also be fun and a great way to meet new people
- Get inspiration (from the work you do and people you meet)
- It will enhance your CV and be viewed positively by employers
- It's useful for gaining a reference for future job roles
- Contribute to a cause you feel passionately about
- Can give you the opportunity to work abroad



When thinking about work experience, **be realistic about the amount of time you can offer.** It's best to start with a few hours and offer more later as you become more confident.

If you find you are not enjoying the experience, **you can always leave at any time.** It is, however, wise to talk to someone in the organisation who could suggest something else. If you decide it isn't for you though, give a couple of weeks notice, so the organisation can make alternative arrangements.

If you have a disability many organisations will aim to give you whatever support you need. <http://www.do-it.org.uk/> is a good place to start.

If you are **in receipt of benefit, you can still do WEX***, but must continue to look for paid work and attend interviews.

Often with WEX **you will get out-of-pocket expenses paid**, such as travel, food and equipment.

When you think about WEX you need to **be clear about what you want and what you have to offer.**

You can volunteer in almost any area of work from Art to Sport and much more.

For some volunteering experiences, you will need specific skills such as knowledge of graphic packages, but for most you just need enthusiasm and the willingness to work and learn.

DISABILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

If you have a disability you might feel unsure about your rights, or even a little bit nervous about entering the workplace. We hope this section of the employability book will help you to know your rights and feel confident looking for employment.

What is a Disability?

A disability is described as a long- term physical or mental impairment that has a large impact on how you carry out everyday tasks (such as eating, walking, speaking etc).



Know Your Rights

There are laws and regulations that mean anyone who is well enough to work **CAN**, even if they identify with being disabled.

The Equality Act 2010 covers disability discrimination laws and helps disabled people get jobs and be treated fairly in the workplace. This means that when you are looking for work, changes should be made to help you at all stages; from writing an application form, going to interviews, training and being comfortable in the workplace.

Employers legally have to make ‘**reasonable adjustments**’ this means that they have to make changes that will allow you get, or do, a job well, so you are not at a disadvantage to non- disabled workers. An example of a ‘reasonable adjustment’ would be making changes to a building, like putting a ramp in for a wheelchair user, changing equipment, or even altering the hours of the job.

Sell Yourself!

As a disabled candidate you have a lot to offer an employer! Many Employers are learning the advantages of employing disabled people, some of which are...

- ✓ Disabled people have been proven to take less time off sick than non- disabled candidates
- ✓ Disabled people have been proven to be more loyal to their employers
- ✓ Disabled people in the workforce can bring a fresh perspective
- ✓ Companies can have a competitive advantage by having a diverse workforce that can attract a diverse range of customers.
- ✓ Employers who are positive about disabled people have access to a wider talent pool
- ✓ Disabled employees are, on average, as productive or more productive, than their non-disabled colleagues
- ✓ Disabled people have fewer workplace accidents



Additional Help for Disabled Job Seekers:

As we have discussed, looking for work is a lengthy process. We understand that if you have a disability, it can further complicate the process and there are specific programmes, organisations and initiatives that could offer you that extra bit of help to land you the job you want!

Be Aware of...

Schemes:

There are several schemes designed to help disabled people find work. A great way of accessing additional help is by gaining the help of a **'Disability Employment Advisor' (DEA)**. DEA's can be accessed through Jobcentre Plus and every branch will have one. Your advisor will provide specialist support and will also have excellent contacts with employers, including those that are 'disability friendly'. Your DEA will support you into work and also help you when you start in the workplace to make sure you are receiving all of the adjustments you are entitled to. Ask to speak to a DEA at your local jobcentre.



Your DEA will also have information on programmes and grants available to you such as...

- **Access to work**- a grant that offers money towards practical support that will help you do your job e.g. equipment, transport, human assistance.
- **Work Choice**- an optional support service that helps you find, keep and succeed in work. The support is tailored to your own individual needs.
- **Help you access Systematic Instruction Training** - this is a form of supported employment where employees get trained in a way specific to their learning; this is mainly aimed at those with social and learning impairments that may not feel general training programmes suit their learning style.

Look Out for...

When job searching look out for the **'Positive about disabled people'** symbol; this means that the company are particularly committed to employing disabled people and, because of this, they automatically shortlist you and give you an interview if you meet the basic requirements for the role e.g. have the right qualifications. The symbol looks like this...



Don't Underestimate...

Personal Support:

Ok, it sounds obvious, but asking for help from friends and family can open up a lot of opportunities, as well as providing the support and motivation that is often needed for job seeking. Share your goals with them and may provide the additional ideas, contacts and support that gets you into your dream job!

CV's - CURRICULUM VITAE

Your CV is an opportunity to sell yourself. You are the product and you are selling your skills and abilities to an employer. You need to impress, so it's very important that your CV is well presented and does not contain spelling or grammatical errors.

Try To...

- **Be Positive** - using positive words to describe what you have achieved in school, work or the wider community.
- You need to **emphasise your achievements**, strengths and successes.
- **Research organisations** you are interested in, find out what the organisation does and what they're looking for!
- **Adapt and tailor your CV** for different roles and companies- they will all be looking for something slightly different
- Find out who it is you need to talk to or send your CV to- **Get a name!**
- Make the document **clear and easy to read**
- Keep it to **2 pages or less** (not double sided)
- Check and double **check for spelling and grammatical errors**- these are unacceptable!
- Use bold type, underlining and different fonts to **highlight important points**
- Keep a template - **so that you can adapt your CV to each job applied for**
- Always get someone to **check your**

CV.

Important - your CV should always match the job you are applying for. Make sure your skills and abilities match the requirements of the job you are looking for.

If the potential employer is asking for particular skills, make sure these skills are mentioned in your CV, showing evidence of where you acquired these skills.

Don't be tempted to add in qualifications or jobs that you don't have- it's very likely you will be asked about these at interview!



What to Put in Each Section

YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Name,

Address

Contact details (including email address and mobile number).

Personal Profile:

Not all CVs have personal profiles. A profile summarises your key strengths. Use positive words e.g. 'competent', 'adaptable' 'conscientious.' It is a good idea to include this if you don't have much work experience and want an employer to know more about you.

Education/ Qualifications:

Lay your information out in columns/SHORT paragraphs/bullet points.

Give Dates and Grades starting with the most recent and working backwards. Set it out so it is clear e.g.

Dates from- to:	Where you studied:	What you studied	Grade/s
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Work and Vocational Experience:

List any paid or unpaid jobs you have had, giving details of dates and responsibilities. Always start with your most recent experience first. Use any projects or events you've organised if don't have much experience. **All work experience is useful!!**

Dates from- to:	Company name:	Role:
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Responsibilities:

- Bullet point your main responsibilities for each

Interest and achievements

Just a small section showing the employer that you have interests outside of work or education. This could include passing your driving test, or having a first aid certificate.

References

At least one reference should be related to your current employer if possible. You can also choose a tutor, or work experience supervisor if you haven't had previous employment. Set it out like this...

Name

Name

Job Title

Job Title

Company

Company

Contact Details

Contact Details

COVERING LETTERS

Covering/ application letters have more detail than a CV, allowing you to highlight the most relevant parts of your CV. A good letter will make the employer take notice. It should show that you understand what the job involves and what they are looking for in a candidate.

You need to convince the employer that you are the person they are looking for.

At the start of your letter, you need to grab the employers' attention!

Cover Letter Guidelines if there is a Job Description:

BEGINNING

You should include a brief paragraph about why you want to apply for the job or work for the company (research on the internet).

- What are the organisations future objectives?
- What skills do you have to help move the company forward?
- What can the company do for you?
- Experience?
- NB- If you are still at college, talk about why you choose to study the course, and how it would fit in with an employer.

Remember: If you know the person's name, end the letter with 'Yours sincerely' and if you are addressing it to Sir/ Madam and the name is unknown close with 'Yours faithfully'

MIDDLE

Here you need to talk about **why you think you are the best person for the job** and how your skills and abilities match theirs. Where possible, match your skills to the job description using examples of your work experience/project work.

Show the employer that you have identified what sort of employee they are looking for, and that you have the personality/skills/qualities to meet their requirements.

END/ CONCLUSION

Include anything extra which you think will help you application, and mention that you are attaching your CV, and are looking forward to hearing from them.



NB- Do not use the above headings when writing the

Letter, see page 19 for tips on layout.

Covering Letter Guidelines if there is No Job Description:

If there is no job description, a covering letter follows a similar format.

The **BEGINING** and **CONCLUSION** will be pretty much the same. The main differences are in the middle section; where you need to talk about what area you would like to work in within the company. Include what skills you have at the moment that you can bring to this area? This includes qualifications and courses taken, you also need to talk about your employment history, including voluntary roles.

Format for a cover letter...use bold and underlining as shown...

	Your Address
	Date
Who the letter is to	
Company Address	
Dear.....	
<u>Heading e.g. job title/ reference</u>	
1st paragraph	
2nd paragraph	
3rd Paragraph	
Yours sincerely/ Yours faithfully	
(Your signature)	
Type your name	



THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Application forms provide employers with information about individuals in a format that can be easily compared with other applications. **To get information about you and to see if your skills and abilities match their job requirements.** Whether the application form is paper or online, they all tend to follow a similar format.

With competition for jobs being high, companies are creating additional methods to screen applicants before interview. New screening measures include online tests and Assessment days so being aware and prepared for these is essential.

Online Tests:

Some companies will ask you to complete an 'online test' before making a formal application. These usually consist of multiple choice questions and are designed to give a sense of what the job will involve and if you are suited to it. At the end of the test it will either suggest that you are suitable and invite you to make an application, or state that they don't feel the job is for you at this time, but suggest you try again in future. If you come across these simply be honest in your answers; if you aren't suited to a job, finding out before making an application will save you and the company time.

Online Application Forms:

Online applications are quick and easy. It's very easy to find five vacancies and send them off on the same day. If you are completing several at once, make sure they are all tailored to each role and not too general, as employers will spot this and assume you aren't very interested.

Always **save the job and online application in a word processing package** like Word. Then you can do a spell check, before you copy the application into the online system, it also means you have a back up if there is a problem, and a copy for reference.

If you have to create usernames/passwords to review or edit your application, make sure you **keep this information in a safe place.**

Online forms may be more complicated than paper versions, so follow the instructions carefully and check how many screens you need to fill before you submit your application.

Many application forms follow a similar format, and many employers will include tips on completing your application form, so please do read these.



Understanding the application form:

Many job applications will have an **Employee/ Job Specification*** where the employer will tell you what criteria, skills and abilities they are looking for. You will see lots of these when job searching so we have decoded a real example below...

EMPLOYEE SPECIFICATION

Job Title Administrative Assistant: Child Care

GRADE 6

DEPARTMENT of Corporate Services

DIVISION Legal and Democratic Services

ESSENTIAL (must have)	DESIRABLE (should Have)
<p>Knowledge and Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge or experience in business & administration equivalent to NVQ level2. • Experience of maintaining and manipulating computerised and/or paper based data/information. • Working knowledge of word processing and spreadsheet packages. <p>Abilities & Aptitudes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to demonstrate knowledge and/or experience of equalities and diversity issues in accordance with Bristol City Council's 'Equalities Policy - Equal Opportunities & Anti-Harassment'. • In communication, ability to assess any given situation and to respond in the appropriate manner. • Ability to organise and prioritise work, and to meet and keep to deadlines and targets • Ability to complete accurately basic financial and arithmetic calculations. • Ability to file and retrieve information stored alphabetically and by subject. • Ability to check information is current and accurate by searching and crosschecking from a given source. • Ability to organise and trace information securely and confidentially. • Ability to work co-operatively as part of a team • Ability to anticipate and identify problems to the Office Supervisor at the correct time 	<p>Knowledge & Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a service orientated environment. • Experience of completing the administrative procedures applying to any of the following: invoices, orders, absence/leave records, payroll, employee records and of inputting information in to pre-set databases. • An understanding of the requirements in shaping the image of a customer orientated organisation, when working as a 'first point of contact' member of staff.
Special Conditions:	None

Everything in this column refers to things that the employer says you **must** have to apply for/ do this job.

Everything in this column refers to things the employer would **ideally** like, but you don't have to have.

This section will commonly include criteria such as 'willing to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service* (CRB) check, or willing to work additional hours etc

Reasons for Leaving:

Many application forms will ask for 'reasons for leaving'. Your reasons for leaving need to be positive, no matter what you feel about past, or present, employers. You need to keep your answers short, as there is just a small space in each section of job history.

Reasons for leaving could be:

- End of fixed term contract
- Career progression
- Redundancy
- Change of area



You will also need to explain gaps in your employment history; this could include unemployment, volunteering, ill health or a career break etc.

Disclosure and Barring Service:

All jobs which involve working with young children and vulnerable adults, will have an additional requirement of a DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service), previously known as CRB (Criminal Records Bureau).

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, individuals are given the right not to disclose details of old offences that are deemed to be "spent". However, for those jobs working with young children and vulnerable adults, an employer is required to check on previous convictions (including those deemed to be spent), plus details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings.

Right to Work:

Employers will also ask for applicants to provide proof of the right to work in the UK.

Important: Ensure your application is with the employer before the deadline- send it recorded delivery. (This gives you proof that the employer has received the application).

If you email an application, request in the body of the email to be notified when they receive the email and any attachments

Short Listing:

The information on the application is used to 'short list*'. When an employer is short listing for interview, they will look at your application form and tick off all the points you have mentioned that meet their criteria. They will then do a scoring system, and the applicants with the highest scores will be invited in for interview/ assessment days.



Fill out Form

Tips for Completing Your Application:

- **Planning is important.** Make sure you read the instructions carefully on the form e.g. they might ask for it to be word processed, or written in black ink.
- Always **read the whole form first** before starting your application form
- **Think about examples from your own experiences** that match the job description, and use these to demonstrate your skills and abilities.
- Answer **all the questions** and fill in all boxes
- Complete **every section**
- **Don't leave gaps in your life/employment history** - you don't want to look as if you have something to hide! Explain all gaps, including unemployment and ill health, bringing up children or voluntary work.
- **Be honest** about your grades, employers will ask for copies of your certificates!
- **Check very carefully for spelling and grammar mistakes.** Make sure you use a spell checker—English version.
- Always **ask referees for permission** to use them as a reference.
- **Keep a copy** of your final version, so you can refresh your memory if called for interview, and as a guide for other applications.
- Include skills you have developed outside school/work.
- **Write a draft first** to copy from if you are writing the form by hand.
- Read the job advert over again and **make sure the information you include on the form is relevant.** Tick off each specification once you have answered it
- Often at the end of the application form is **the blank box*** (sometimes called personal statement) this is your chance to market yourself (refer to below point)
- Always **make yourself sound positive and enthusiastic**, and make sure your **match your skills, abilities and experiences with the Employer / Job Specification**
- You can always **attach extra paper if need be-** but always number pages!
- Write concisely, **avoiding repetition.**
- **Don't assume the recruiter knows anything about you**—you have to tell them!
- You should also **include your motivation for applying** for this particular job.
- Do not forget to **sign and date your application** form and put it unfolded into an A4 envelope, correctly addressed.

Good wording for applications	
Words to try and <u>Use</u>	achieved, active, developed, evidence, experience, impact, individual, involved, planning, transferable skills, proven abilities/skills etc.
Words to try and <u>Avoid</u>	always, awful, bad, fault, mistake, never, nothing, panic, problems, not always, patience, not good etc.

Be aware of deadlines, and make sure you meet them: late applications are not considered!

Assessment Centres:

Businesses are frequently using Assessment Centres as a way of screening a large number of applicants at once, this is especially used by bigger, well known organisations to save time and money during the application process.

Assessment centres/ assessment days, usually involve around 6 – 20 applicants visiting the organisation for a day and performing various tasks, these tasks will replicate the type of work you will be doing if you get the job- for example, Clothes shops may ask you to find an outfit in store suitable for a certain occasion etc.

The employers will be viewing your interaction with others and ability to perform the role- so always ensure you are proactive in tasks, but also show that you can work well with others.



At the end of the day, employers will assess each candidates performance and decide who they want to short list for interview. Ensure that you interact with the employers when given the chance and ask relevant questions to show you are keen and to make yourself more memorable.

If you are unsuccessful at any stage of the application process, always try and get **feedback** about why. Remember these experiences are excellent practice and make you more likely to be successful in future applications.

INTERVIEWS

Most employers select people for jobs by giving them an interview, which allows the employers to decide whether or not you are suitable for the job. The interview isn't only about your skills, it's a two way process. It's also a chance for you and the employer to think, 'would I want to work with this person?', or 'will I/ they fit into the organisation?'

Currently, competition for jobs is great, so the successful candidate will be the one who sells themselves well to the prospective employer.

Being Successful at Interview:

A key tip is **to Research the organisation and the role** you have applied for to show that you are motivated and interested. Find out...

- What do they make or sell?
- Who are their customers?
- What sort of organisation are they? (Big/ small/ Franchise*/PLC* etc)
- What is the job likely to involve?
- How best can you fit your skills to match the job?



Planning for the Interview:

If you have a disability, all employers must make **reasonable adjustments*** for you to have an interview.

Some adjustments you may need:

- A parking space close to the building
- A guide
- An advocate/ support worker
- A signer
- An accessible room/ certain conditions (e.g. light on, quiet room, warm etc)
- Extra time e.g. if you have a stammer/ slurred speech etc.
- If there is a written element candidates with related disability e.g. dyslexia/ lack of fine motor control etc, can ask for an electronic format and/ or extra time.
- Additional time to process information (e.g. if you have a social impairment/ global delay/ dyspraxia)
- Rewording of the questions, especially where hypothetical wording is used, if your disability means you respond better to more concrete and literal language.

Try to find out how long the interview will take, and whether you will have to take a test or make a presentation. Employers usually advise you if they have any requirements, to give you time to prepare.

Types of Interview:

- **Panel Interviews:**

These are quite common, and will normally have two or three people facing you and asking questions in turn. **If you're worried about who to look at, look at the person who has asked you the question** and you won't go wrong, but this doesn't matter too much.

- **Group Interviews:**

Group interviews are less common, but the format is to be interviewed at the same time as other candidates. A panel of interviewers will ask you questions in turn. The most important thing to remember is not to interrupt the other candidates when they are answering and to listen at all times. The interviewer may ask another candidate a question, and then ask you what you think, so listening is very important.

- **Telephone Interviews:**

Increasingly, more employers are using telephone interviews for the first stage of the process. You may be given a date and time to expect the telephone interview, but you must also be prepared to receive a call 'out of the blue'

Reasons why employers use telephone interviews:

- To ensure that you are serious about the job
- They may have a large number of candidates
- Your role may involve talking to people on the phone.
- Candidates may have a long way to travel



Tips for telephone interviews:

- Think about how you would answer the phone- always be polite!
- If you are invited to use their first name, use it.
- Have your CV or application form on you when the employer rings, as well as pen and paper for notes- so you can remember what has been said.
- Stay focussed when answering questions and try not to focus too much on your notes
- Be succinct (don't waffle)
- Match your formality to the interviewer
 - Smile! Your voice will sound keen and enthusiastic, and this is how you want to come across to the employer.
 - Stand! Odd as this may seem, this will make you sound more confident.
 - If you do well, you may be called back for a further interview. So have your diary with you
 - Always thank the interviewer for the interview.

Try and find out who will be interviewing you, if it is your manager, the interview could be quite detailed. If it is a team from personnel, it may be less detailed, but still testing.

The Day of the Interview:

You may be nervous on the day of the interview, employers will understand this. What they are interested in is your enthusiasm for the job; employers have noted that many younger applicants especially, come across as uninterested and not very keen at interview, researching the company and job role shows willingness and interest and goes a long way to convincing the employer that you *really* want to work for them, it can also help you to feel prepared and more calm going in to the interview.

A lot of the interview is about how you present yourself. Looking and feeling the part will help you feel confident and show you are professional.

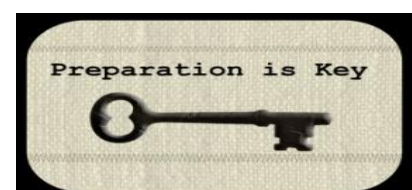
Body language is important and can be influential at interview. Research has shown that in terms of first impressions:

- **55% is based on appearance**
 - **38% tone of voice**
- **7% of what is actually said**

Looking at the above bullet points you can see how important first impressions are. So follow the preparations below to come across as organised, efficient and confident upon meeting the panel!

Important Preparations:

- Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to get ready and have all the relevant paper work.
- Read through your application; practice your responses to possible questions (see page 27).
- Take a mobile phone in case of emergencies and have a contact number in case you are going to be late.
- If you are unexpectedly delayed, contact the employer, apologise and arrange another appointment.
- Plan your journey, aiming to arrive 10 minutes before the interview.
- Check bus/train time tables.



We want our interview tips to be inclusive and useful for everyone. There are specifics for those with little/ no interview experience. But there are also tips in there that all users will find useful.

Interview Tips:

TRY TO...	TRY NOT TO...
Act professionally on entering the building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use appropriate language ○ Have your phone on silent and in your pocket/ bag ○ Look well presented: smart, clean clothes 	Sit down until invited —or at least until the interviewer sits down
Be friendly and positive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shake hands if the interviewer offers first ○ Smile when you greet the interviewer ○ Say ‘nice to meet you’ or other friendly greetings when you meet the interviewer 	Touch or lean on the interviewer’s desk or table.
Relax as much as possible; you will speak more clearly and sit more still if you remain calm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sit up straight (but stay relaxed) in the seat ○ If you don’t know what to do with your hands, or think you might fidget, loosely clasp them in your lap. 	Slouch in your chair, but do not sit nervously on the edge of it
Show that you can listen and show positive interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You can do this by making eye contact 	Swear or use any offensive language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interviews are usually formal so speak politely
Look at the interviewer/ the panel—not around the room or your feet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ But also make sure you don’t stare. 	Interrupt the interviewer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you do this accidentally, apologise.
Smile; you will look enthusiastic, polite and friendly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are unsure when to smile, don’t overdo it. Always smile when you greet the panel and then when you feel comfortable doing so. 	Answer vaguely or by listing; always give examples in your answer.
Speak clearly; this can be hard when you’re nervous, but can be helped by looking up and being confident	Guess the question; if you haven’t heard clearly, or don’t understand then ask politely for it to be repeated or rephrased.
Listen to what you are being asked; think before you answer!	Panic- If your mind goes blank, ask for time, have a sip of water and remain calm.
Think of some questions to ask at the end of the interview: this could be about the role, or the company.	Overdo the smellies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal hygiene is important, but using too much of a scent can distract people from listening to your answers.
Freshen up if you’ve had a cigarette	
Be well groomed, make sure you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have clean teeth ○ Smell fresh ○ Have a clean, neat and suitable outfit on. 	



Interview Practice:

Practice is key to doing well at interview. It will help you feel prepared and confident and allows you to give the best possible answers on the day.

No one can guess exactly what will be asked in an interview, but there are some questions that almost always come up in one form or another.

Below is a list of the most common questions to be asked in an interview. When answering focus on your positives, always use examples to illustrate your skills/ answers and be truthful and polite!

Always be yourself: Yes, the interviewer wants to know about your skills and experience, but they also want to get a feel for you as a person and how you will fit in with the company!

Common Questions Asked at Interview:

- Tell us about yourself?
- Why do you want to work for this company/ why have you applied for this role? NB- employers have identified that many young people slip- up on *why* they want that particular position so have a strong reason in mind.
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Describe a situation where you have been an effective member of a team?
- What do you expect to be doing in 5 years time?
- Give an example of when you have used your initiative?
- Give an example of when you have solved a problem?
- What can you bring to this organisation?
- What would you say is your main achievement?
- Do you have any questions for us?



For example, 'what training will I receive?' 'Will there be staff development opportunities?' 'How and when will I hear if I have been successful?'

If you are unsure what makes a good answer contact the careers team on the contact details on page 5 and we can arrange a mock interview where you can practice your answers and get some feedback.

USEFUL WEBSITES

NAME OF WEBSITE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Careers Help	
Kudos	www.cascaid.co.uk/kudos Click 'Use' Licence Code: stepstay58
Job profiles	https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/job-family/Pages/default.aspx
Not going to Uni	www.notgoingtouni.co.uk
World of Work Gloucestershire	www.wowgloucestershire.co.uk (even if you are based outside Gloucestershire this has lots of information about job sectors and employability skills)
What now Glos	http://www.whatnowglos.co.uk/information_and_support/
Job Search Sites	
Bristol Evening Post jobs	http://www.thisisbristol.co.uk/jobs#axzz2WYdJa2i7
Bristol jobsite	http://www.jobsite.co.uk/local/bristol.html
Council jobs	http://jobs.southglos.gov.uk/
Cabot Circus Jobs	http://www.cabotcircus.com/jobs-and-vacancies
The Mall Cribbs Causway	www.mallcribbs.com/careers.php
The Mall Broadmead Galleries	http://www.galleriesbristol.co.uk/index.php?section=about-us&page=jobs
Yes2jobs	www.yes2jobs.co.uk (Gloucestershire based)
LPW	http://www.connexionswest.org.uk/jobs
Job Seekers Direct	http://www.jobisjob.co.uk/jobseekers-direct/jobs
Monster	www.monster.co.uk
Fish4jobs	www.fish4jobs.co.uk
Total Jobs	www.totaljobs.com
Sites for Disabled Job Searchers	
Disability Rights in Employment	https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/employment
Work smart- disability and discrimination	http://www.worksmart.org.uk/
Disabled people- rights, benefits, carers and the Equality Act	https://www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities
NHS Jobs	
NHS Jobs	www.jobs.nhs.uk/
North Bristol NHS	www.nbt.nhs.uk/
University Hospital Bristol NHS	www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/
South Gloucestershire NHS	www.sglos-pct.nhs.uk/
Bath and North East Somerset NHS	www.banes-pct.nhs.uk/
Advice jobs	www.adviceuk.org.uk/
Community Care Jobs	www.communitycare.co.uk/Home/Default.aspx

Public Sector	
Citizens Advice Jobs/volunteering	www.citizensadvice.org.uk/
Housing Jobs	www.insidehousing.co.uk/
Local Government Jobs	www.lgjobs.com/
Public Sector Jobs	www.opportunities.co.uk/
Volunteering sites	
Bristol Volunteering Organisation	www.volunteerbristol.org.uk
Do-it	www.do-it.org.uk
Vinspired for under 25s	www.vinspired.com
Patchway, Filton & Stokes	www.volunteercentre-pfs.org.uk
NHS Volunteering	www.nhs.uk/Livewell/NHS60/Pages/Volunteering.aspx
Jobs in Education	
Education Jobs	www.education-jobs.co.uk/
Eteach	www.eteach.com
TES Connect	www.tes.co.uk
Capitaers	www.capitaers.co.uk
Monarch Recruitment	www.monarchrecruitment.co.uk
Reed	www.reed.co.uk
Great Education	www.greateducation.co.uk/
FE Jobs (Further Education)	www.fejobs.com
Jobs in education	www.jobsineducation.co.uk
Work Based learning	
Apprenticeships	www.apprenticeships.org.uk
South West Apprenticeship Company	www.theswac.org.uk
Princes Trust	www.princes-trust.org.uk
Police	www.policecouldyou.co.uk/ www.gloucestershire.police.uk/ www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/
Fire Service	www.fireservice.co.uk/recruitment/
Ambulance Service	www.nhscareers.nhs.uk
Recruitment Agencies	
Ranstad	www.ranstad.co.uk/
Adecco	www.adecco.co.uk/
Andrew Fraser	www.andrewfraser.co.uk/
Manpower	https://portalqa.manpower.com/wps/portal/GBCampus
Reed	www.reed.co.uk/
Blue Arrow	www.bluearrow.co.uk/Homepage.aspx

GLOSSARY

Blank Box: These are commonly used in application forms and act as a space for a prospective employee to say how they meet the job specification and why they are right for the job.

Commercial Awareness: Knowledge of how businesses work, make money and function.

CRB/ DBS: Criminal Records Bureau (this has recently changed to become the Disclosure Barring Service) - this is the body that currently checks peoples past for any previous criminal activity, this is especially important for anyone who is planning to work with young or vulnerable people.

Franchise: A type of business model where a successful brand is lent out for use in return for a percentage of the profits.

Job/ Person Specification: This outlines the characteristics and qualifications that someone should have to perform a certain job.

Labour Market Information: This refers to data, statistics and research about the world of work, which can give an insight into different career areas and includes trends, changes and statistics.

Low Skilled: People that do not hold a level 2 qualification (GCSE's at A* - C grade) are considered 'low- skilled'. However, this does not necessarily mean they cannot work in a higher skilled job.

Networks/ Networking: Making and developing contacts, often within a certain field, to exchange information and further your career.

Niche: Refers to a special area of demand for a product or service. E.g. a Niche job board could specifically advertise 'Driving Jobs' 'Medical Jobs' 'Education Jobs' etc.

Personal Attributes: A persons traits and characteristics.

PLC: A type of business- a Public Limited Company, where the public can buy shares.

Reasonable Adjustment: a key aspect of the Equality Act 2010 where employers have to make changes to the job in any way that removes barriers to a disabled employee, as long as it is 'reasonable'.

Short List: A reduced list of only the best candidates, usually for a job. e.g. of all the job applications for a role, only some will be shortlisted for interview.

Speculative Application: When you register interest/ apply for a job that hasn't been advertised. This usually involves handing in a CV (often with a cover letter) to an employer you wish to work for.

STEM Jobs: STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths and jobs relating to these industries are on the increase.

WEX: Work experience- this includes all paid and unpaid work you have performed in the past.



∞ The end ∞

If you need all or part of this publication in an accessible format (eg in larger print, or electronic format), please contact the careers team:

Email- careers@sgscol.ac.uk Or Tel- 0117 9092 225

The information in this booklet is correct as of June 2013.

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

In2Work guide

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