CVs and Interview Skills





This ebook has been prepared to compliment on-line webinars covering CVs and Interview Skills. It has been compiled from proprietary and public sources with the aim of providing source and reference materials to remind the key points covered in the webinars.

It covers the subject mater step-by-step and is written to remind the methods and techniques that will help you craft engaging CVs and present yourself well at interview. Hopefully it will help you to think carefully about your approach to early career opportunities and ultimately improve you chances of landing your dream job.

This ebook will cover:

- Steps to a great CV
- The skills employers look for
- Interviews
- Demonstrating your skills and competencies
- Telephone & On-line Meeting Skills
- Public Sector and Panel Interviews

### Steps to a great CV

The Latin phrase Curriculum Vitae, loosely translated, means 'course of life'. Or, put in a more relevant way, it should be a statement of the 'progression of your career' so far. The CV is a sales brochure that should describe your best features including skills, experience, achievements and qualifications. A CV should not be a list of everything you have ever done, but a marketing document that should promote your skills and experience. In a 20 second scan the reader should be able to see evidence of your interest in and your ability to do the role you are applying for.

1. Start with the job specification

The starting point for CV writing should always be the skills and experience the recruiter is seeking. You will find this on the list of job requirements in the job advert, job description or person specification.

Your task is to clearly evidence each of these requirements on your CV using examples to convince the reader of your ability to do the job. If you are applying speculatively and there is no job description, search for similar roles to find out the relevant transferable skills.

2. Profiles and Personal Statements

A personal statement often refers to a information needed on an application form. For example, this is required on the application form for teacher training positions and on the UCAS undergraduate and postgraduate application forms. Some CV

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advisers also recommend including a very small 'personal profile' in the heading of a CV. This is rarely found on academic CVs though.

If using a Personal Statement or a Profile on your CV it is very important that you tailor each to the role you are applying for. Do not simply copy and paste an old personal statement into your new CV application.

For CVs, the Profile is a valuable 'tell me about yourself' statement. This is your spoken sales pitch. The main components of your profile should be:

- A statement of your current position and a summary of your career aims the job role or profession that your are looking to develop your career into e.g.' a Business Studies Graduate looking to develop a career in the Financial Services sector.'
- Your key skills, either contained in a sentence or as a supplement immediately below the profile. Also include any special skills, expertise or marketable abilities that are relevant to the role you're applying for: fluent in French or Microsoft Certified for example.
- Just a little about your approach to your work and the kind of person you are (e.g. 'customer focussed', 'highly detail-conscious' for example).Try to avoid clichéd phrases that might be seen as too subjective or woolly.

Above all, ensure that you can support your profile with evidence. You will be asked for examples at interviews and you need to have them ready.

For Personal Statement (Academic/Research Applications) the statement should cover:

- Why you want to pursue the role how it fits your overall career aims
- Why this particular area of research/academia is of most interest to you
- Why you have chosen to apply to this particular university/research group?
- Your motivation: provide examples to illustrate key points, have you read the papers? Do you have an opinion / ideas?
- What previous academic and practical experience have you got that shows your capability to do the job?
- Technical & methodological skills you have to offer
- Academic & personal skills & qualities
- Your Key Selling Points: skills, evidence and achievements that cover the skills needed in the role

#### 2. Active language

Use action words in your CV and covering letter to convey achievement and impact. Consider starting sentences with an action verb in the past tense rather than using pronouns (such as "I"). Avoid passive terms such as "I had to" "I was involved in" "I was required to".



Examples of active verbs:

achieved analysed coordinated created demonstrated designed developed evaluated improved increased initiated liaised managed negotiated planned persuaded prioritised researched supervised

(See Appendix for an extended list)

3. Brainstorm your skills

Think of examples of the skills you have gained and how you acquired them. Draw examples from your work, internships, volunteering, study, and interests. Match your skills to the job you are applying for to create a CV that clearly demonstrates you possess the skills they require.

4. Attention to detail

One spelling or grammar error can be all it takes for a CV to be rejected, as many employers regard it as an indication of carelessness and poor motivation for the job. Triple check all spelling and grammar and ask someone else to proofread the final draft. Reading it out loud to yourself is a useful technique that can help you identify any errors.

Guidelines on CV length There is no one rule about CV length, but in general two pages is the norm for a UK graduate CV. Exceptions are in investment banking where a one page CV is generally preferred (see the second example in this guide) and academic CVs tend to be longer (see the title CVs for PhDs for guidelines).

Always follow the recruiter's instructions on length.

Consider whether certain modules in your masters are particularly relevant to the job you want to apply for. Is your final dissertation/project on a topic related to the area of work you are trying to get into? If so, include the title and the type and scope of the research involved.

Avoid simply listing skills. Use examples to provide evidence that you have used a skill successfully in the past. Recruiters will look for this to confirm your ability to do the job.

Draw out the skills listed in the job advert, providing examples of exactly what the recruiter is looking for.

Use part time work as another way to demonstrate ability to use the skills the recruiter is looking for in a professional context

Clear section headings make the document easy to read.

## Example job advert: Investment Bank

We are looking for someone who is a confident communicator with strong analytical and project management skills, together with the drive to succeed under pressure. We are looking for innovative individuals who think creatively and are able to build relationships, both across internal teams and with external clients. To apply send a one page CV and cover letter outlining your suitability for the programme. Application deadline 10th November.

### Matt Chester

Great Queen Street, London, E1 8QP Mobile: 07797 345621 Email: mattchester@yahoo.co.uk

#### **EDUCATION**

MSc Banking and Finance, Queen Mary, University of London (2.1 expected) 2018-2019 Modules include: Commercial and Investment Banking, Investment Management, Quantitative Methods in Finance, Financial Derivatives

Dissertation topic: Impact of low interest rates on global asset prices (72%)

#### BSC Economics, Queen Mary, University of London, (2.1)

Modules include: Corporate Finance (80%), Econometrics and Macroeconomics (75%), Mathematical methods in Economics and Business (70%) 2008-2015

#### Hart Secondary School, Poole

A Levels: Mathematics (A), Business Studies (B), Biology (B) AS Level: Psychology (B) 10 GCSEs including Mathematics (A\*) and English (A)

#### Associate Member, QUMMIF

#### Developed theoretical and practical understanding of financial markets, trading strategies and risk management

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Demonstrated analytical and technical skills, carrying out the research and valuation of chosen equity stock
- Analysed vast amounts of data on Bloomberg Terminal and other resources
- Worked in a team of four to compile detailed investment report
- Developed strong communication skills, presenting to Senior Fund Management
- As a result of research and presentation investment proposal was included in fund's portfolio

#### P/T Sales Assistant, CameraShop, London

- Ensured efficient running of shop area in highly demanding and busy environment
- Provided excellent customer service awarded Customer Service Star award after three months
- Collaborated with colleagues in order to ensure constant stock replenishment during peak times
- Demonstrated strong ability to multitask, dealing with customer queries while keeping shop area organised

#### POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- Economics Society Committee member: Role involves working closely with a team of five to increase society membership, organise and run social and careers events and liaise with the department. We currently have 100 members and I have worked with two others to run three events off-campus with a turnout of 40-50 at each.
- Football coach for local youth team: This position involves organising training and matches, teaching, motivation and encouraging young people aged 12-14

#### **OTHER SKILLS**

- IT: MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint), Bloomberg Terminal
  - Languages: Conversational German

### REFERENCES

Available on request

September 2015-Present

September 2018-Present

2015-2018



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# CVs for PhD students and researchers

For academic roles and research roles outside universities

Your research will be highly relevant and of interest to potential employers. You may want to start your CV with a section entitled 'Research Interests' and focus on your research to date, as well as what directions you see it going in the future.

In the 'Education and Qualifications' section, include a paragraph outlining your research and any particularly applicable areas. Don't forget to mention any technical skills you have developed, such as using particular software packages, as well as your research skills. If your Masters and Bachelors degrees were also in a relevant area, you may want to include an overview of their content and a summary of your major project or dissertation.

In terms of your work experience and career history, academic employers are usually interested in research, teaching and administrative experience. You can split your experience into these areas and perhaps include an additional section at the end for other work experience. Detail any funding you have attracted. When presenting your teaching experience, make sure you include class sizes, degree of responsibility, pastoral support and course design where possible. If you have been involved in college committees include this in the administrative section.

'Publications and Conferences' are commonly left to the end of the CV but are one of your most important selling points for academic jobs. Present them in reverse chronological order and list publications first followed by conference papers and poster presentations.

For roles unrelated to your research Shift the emphasis away from your specialism and write about the transferable skills you have gained from your PhD study. You should be able to find details of the required skills and experience in the person specification that comes with the advertised position, or by researching the role and organisation. Outline your PhD topic using jargon-free language.

> Try to address any concerns the employer might have about recruiting someone with a PhD. It is helpful to include anything that shows business and commercial awareness. Academic researchers can be seen by employers as having the luxury of flexible deadlines, so emphasise your ability to manage your time well, and meet strict deadlines. If you have collaborated with industry during your research then make this stand out.

> Summarise and highlight the transferable skills you have gained from producing publications and presenting at conferences. These could include writing skills, making presentations, networking and collaborating with others in the field.

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The order of these elements could change depending on what is most relevant to the
job. If you had a paid PhD studentship and you are applying for non-academic jobs,
you could consider putting your PhD under 'Work Experience' to highlight the
transferable work skills you gained.

Your CV contents Career Profile: Should be short and specific to you and your experience. Avoid generalisations such as 'dynamic team player'.

**Education and Qualifications:** The amount of detail you provide on your PhD and other HE qualifications will depend on how relevant these are to the job. Present the information in reverse chronological order.

**Work Experience:** Emphasise the skills acquired, backed up by evidence. Highlight key responsibilities and outline achievements. Generally present the information in reverse chronological order but you can divide your work experience into sub-sections to ensure the most relevant comes first.

**Other Information:** You may want to include an additional skills section for languages, IT and any other skills related courses you have attended, for example, presentations, report writing and project management. Also include information on membership of professional bodies and awards or prizes.

Leisure Interests: Some employers have an interest in this section; academic employers traditionally have been less concerned about what you do in your spare time. It is a useful place to address any skills gaps such as teamwork and show an employer that you have interests outside your PhD. It works best if your interests show active participation and commitment, for example 'I regularly play for a Sunday League football team' or 'I have volunteered at a monthly social club for older people for the past year'.

**Referees:** For most jobs two referees are the norm. Ideally one will be your supervisor as they have worked closely with you for at least three years. For academic jobs it is useful if your referee is well-known in the field and the more senior the better. If you already have your PhD your external examiner might be a good option or someone who examined you for your upgrade. If you are moving outside of academia you should have one reference available from an employer. However, on your CV you can simply state 'References available on request'.

General points Length: for non-academic jobs, no more than two pages. Academic CVs can be longer but aim to have your

most important information on the first two pages.

**Style:** make sure section headings stand out. Use bullet points to keep the text punchy and help the reader focus on the important parts.

**Tailor your CV:** For each job you apply for you should review and tailor your CV to give greatest prominence to your most relevant skills and experience.



## Example Academic CV

Begin your academic CV with a concise introductory statement, giving a summary of your skills, experience and career ambitions.

List your achievements in reverse chronological order, starting with your qualifications. Give details of your degrees and your research, but don't take up too much space. Unlike other CVs, academic CVs are often several pages long, but still need to be concise and to the point. To save space list key subjects rather than all of your GCSEs.

Don't leave out any teaching experience and be sure to list your published work. Conferences, awards and professional memberships should all be shown, where relevant. Focusing on academic achievements, research interests and specialist skills this type of CV is used when applying for lecturing or research roles

#### **Mariana Greenway**

#### Hillview Court, Hillview Road, Hilltown, HZ4 8CV greenwaym@jm.ac.uk 07877009008

A registered nutrition professional with a solid research background, industry experience and a teaching portfolio. I am interested in developing a career which combines teaching and research, while maintaining my interest in public engagement with nutrition and the wider STEM field.

#### Education

#### Liverpool John Moores University (2017-2020)

#### PhD

NHS/LJMU funded research titled 'The role of parents and schools in the nutritional choices made by children aged 10-14' (Abstract in Appendix 1). Joint supervisors: Professor Alison LaMotte, Department of Nutrition and Food, LJMU and Dr Henling Strauss, Professor of Paediatrics, Chester University Hospital.

#### University of Nottingham (2011-2013)

BSc Nutrition and Food Science

Modules included nutrition and the health of populations, trends in food research and nutrition, metabolism and disease. Final-year project on 'Food flavourings - physical and psychological effects on children' based on research carried out through a Nutrition Society Summer Studentship.

#### Notts County High School (2006-2013)

A-levels: chemistry, biology, geography. AS level maths.

8 GCSEs including English language and English literature.

#### Teaching/supervising experience

#### Teaching assistant, Liverpool John Moores University (2018-present)

- Supervising undergraduate dissertations
- Assisting with programme development and student assessment
- Delivering teaching sessions on BSc Nutrition and Nutrition and Public Health
- Student assessment

#### Guest lecturer, BSc Nutrition and Food Science, University of Nottingham (2019)

- Delivered five lectures by invitation
- Supervised and assessed student presentations

#### Summer school lecturer, Liverpool John Moores University (2018-2019)

- Coordinating summer school programme
- Devising and delivering interactive teaching sessions

#### Publications

- Greenway M, Neill L, Smith J 'Apple or Biscuit: Children's food choices' (2019) Journal of Child Nutrition 20:934-939
- Greenway M, Neill L, Smith J 'Mum, can I have something to eat: parents' role in children's eating patterns' Journal of Child Nutrition (2018) 16:723-728
- Partrillo, V, Greenway M, 'How can schools help children with their food choices?' Primary Education (2018) 25:1029-1032



#### **Research skills**

- Taking and interpreting food diaries
- Qualitative interviewing
- Analysis using XJP and PSS 2.0 industry standard systems
- Mathematical modelling
- Application of scientific theory to qualitative data

#### Conferences and presentations

- British Nutrition Foundation Child Health Conference 2019 Workshop on 'The influence of parents in children's food choices'
- Big Bang 2015 Professional Strand presentation on STEM Ambassadors
- Association for Nutrition NW Branch Conference 2019 Paper on 'Working with parents'
- Chester University Hospital Child Nutrition Symposium 2018 'How and why do children choose what they eat?'
- Association for Nutrition Annual Student Conference 2012 Workshop on 'Creating a farmers market'
- Association for Nutrition Annual Student Conference 2013 Poster session on child nutrition group work
- Association for Nutrition Annual Student Conference 2018presentation on 'Parents' role in children's food choices: initial research findings'
- Association for Nutrition NW Branch Conference 2015 Workshop on 'Do farmers markets and food banks share common ground?'

#### Awards

- Nutrition Society Summer Studentship 2012
- Nutrition Society Student Award 2013 for BSc final-year dissertation

#### Professional associations

- Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr), working towards Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)
- Nutrition Society Student Member and member of Student Council

#### Other qualifications

- Levels 3 Award in PTLLS Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training

#### Employment

#### Project assistant, The Food Project, Liverpool (2015-present)

- Devising workshops for parents and young people
- Delivering workshops in schools, Children's Centres, NHS clinics, etc.
- Research to support projects and funding bids
- Supervising placement students

#### Nutrition adviser, Food Company Ltd, Merseyside (2013-2015)

- Advising product developers on nutritional content of new products
- Quality control of food labelling
- Research to support product development
- Supervising lab staff

#### Founder member, Dock Street Farmers Market (2014-2018)

- Collaborating with others to create monthly market events. Coordinating market days
- Negotiating with venues and traders
- Bidding for funding

While academic successes take precedence you'll still need to include your employment history - even temporary or part-time work is worth listing. This experience shows another side of you and of your experience outside the world of academia.



#### Trustee, Dock Street Farmers Market (2018-present)

- Strategic direction for the organisation
- Nutritional adviser to the Board
- Coordinating funding bids

#### STEM ambassador (2013-2015)

• Speaking at STEM events in schools and colleges to engage young people

#### Volunteer nutrition assistant, NHS Nottingham (2011-2013)

- Working under the direction of a community dietitian to help parents of young children create nutritious meals
- Leading cookery sessions for parents and children

#### References

Professor Alison LaMotte - Liverpool John Moores University, 0151 9009000, alamotte@Imj.ac.uk

Dr Henling Strauss - Chester University Hospital, 01244 012400, straussh@cuht.nhs

Damian Pandar - The Food Project Liverpool, L6 5PQ, 0151 2962960, damain@foodproject.co.uk

Finish your CV by giving details of your referees. Try to include a non-academic one if possible.



# The Skills Employers Look For

78% of employers rank skills as the most important factor when recruiting. Research from the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) shows they continually ask for evidence of a small list of similar skills. All employers will have a priority list, but typically it will be from the selection below.

So, when writing your CV or cover letter you must ensure you consider the skills they will want to see. The same principle applies to your interview.

The following notes identify and explain the key skills employers always look for. It is worth putting time aside to identify examples of how you have used and applied these skills in your own educational/work experience.

The skills you need to be aware of, be able to talk about and promote in your CV, cover letter and interview are listed below.

#### **Analysis and Decision-making**

Employers are looking for evidence of you solving problems logically, performing research and applying your findings, taking informed decisions and demonstrating accountability. This is also where numeracy skills are important

#### **Commercial Awareness**

You need to demonstrate where you have gained business and industry insight and show that you understand company structures, products, services, ethos and challenges. Any successful entrepreneurial activity you have been involved with would show commercial awareness.

#### Creativity

This is where you can talk about ideas you have developed; where you've come up with new options and innovative solutions. Think of a time where you've challenged the accepted way of doing things with a positive outcome; this is sometimes called blue-sky thinking.

#### **Customer Focus**

This skill is about how well you get to know a team, department, client or prospect; how well you empathise with customer needs: anticipating, influencing and fulfilling them and putting the customer first.

#### **Influence and Communication**

Employers want individuals who can communicate effectively and logically both verbally and when writing. Your communication skills need to show evidence not only of your persuading and influencing others, but also actively listening to them as well. This also encompasses your presentation skills. Remember that this is a skill that the employer can see direct evidence of in your interview - so always be prepared with what you're going to say.

"Spend time thinking about your skills; make sure your strongest skills are clear in your CV"



#### Leadership and Team-working

If you're a good networker this can be an example of how well you develop and maintain relationships, but working as part of a team, team building and motivating and leading people are also evidence of this skill.

#### **Planning and Organisation**

Think about where you've needed to structure and prioritise activities or tasks. This is a skill that you use a great deal outside of the office, particularly if you have children. Describe how you've broken an activity down into manageable and measurable parts and where the project was successfully delivered.

#### Self-management

Employers are looking for people that demonstrate initiative, resourcefulness, focus, self-reliance and motivation. So show evidence of where you've set yourself a goal and achieved it or where you've taken control of your own learning. It's also important with regards to this skill that you display integrity and professionalism

The good news is nobody expects you to be great at all eight, but employers do expect you to be able to articulate your experiences in relation to the two or three skills they really need. So try to research the company thoroughly beforehand to get an idea of the type of person they're looking for and focus your efforts on finding evidence in your work history of those skills. But be ready to talk about any of them.



## Interviews

Getting an interview is one of the key targets in any job search campaign and being invited is an important measure of success in itself. But a great deal still depends on how skilfully you handle yourself at the interview and whether you succeed in getting your key messages across.

This module will help you to plan your responses and be prepared for a range of interview situations. It also looks at presenting yourself positively and effectively over the telephone.

## Contents

Preparing for interviews

Much of your success will be down to how you prepare.

At the interview Questions and interview techniques to prepare for.

After the interview Learning the lessons.

Telephone skills Handling phone interviews and creating the right impression.

Public sector and panel interviews Selection methods frequently used in the public sector.



# Preparing for interviews

Interviews are a two-way exchange of information. Obviously, the interviewer is trying to find out about you, but you are also sizing them up, forming an impression of what it would be like to work for them and deciding whether you would like to join them. Given this two-way exchange, you must be clear about what you want to get out of the interview and how you can influence what the interviewer learns about you.

The interviewer's agenda is to:

- get a clear picture of your experience and capabilities
- hear examples of how you have worked in the past
- get an accurate idea of how you match their needs
- compare you with other good candidates.

So your agenda should be to:

- present compelling evidence of your experience, skills, knowledge and your ability to deliver
- reveal your personality and style and your ability to work well with others
- assess how the organisation meets your needs on job content, working environment, culture, style and career prospects
- get the organisation excited about employing you.

At interviews, people will be looking at your **competence** (have you got the knowledge, experience and skills to do the job?) and your **compatibility** (does your work style fit the organisation and the people you would be working with?). At a first interview, evaluating your competence is their main agenda although they may start to form an opinion on compatibility. In follow-up interviews, your compatibility is likely to be a more important concern.

You may well be more familiar with the interview process as an interviewer. Now you can make this experience work for you, using your knowledge of what interviewers are looking for and why.

Reflect on any situations where you have interviewed candidates:

• What were you looking for in trying to find the right person for the job?

• What impressed you about the successful candidates?



• What about the candidates who failed to do themselves justice? How did they let themselves down?

This exercise should have reminded you of the basic fairness of most interviews.

An interviewer's prime concern would have been to find the right person to join the team and evidence will be sought to show that the individuals match the criteria agreed in advance. The interviewer will make allowances for any nervousness or for the 'unnaturalness' of the situation.

The best candidates will have done their homework on the vacancy and made a good impression that was consistent with the one they had created on paper.

Research	You need to be well-prepared and fully briefed on the organisation you are visiting.		
	Check the job details		
	<ul><li>the advertisement</li><li>the job description</li></ul>		
	<ul> <li>the person specification</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>if a recruitment consultant is involved, get all the background information you can before your interview with the client company.</li> </ul>		
	Confirm your attendance		
	<ul> <li>When you are invited to an interview, confirm your attendance, in writing or by phone. A phone call gives you the opportunity to find out more about the interview, which will help your preparations. When you ring to confirm, you can check: <ul> <li>the names and job titles of the interviewers</li> <li>the length and type of interview (e.g. panel, one-to-one, tests)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>the location (larger organisations often have several premises)</li> <li>transport and car parking arrangements.</li> </ul>		
Planning what you will	Preparation is essential: you can't expect to just wing it on the day. You need to identify the key points that you want the interviewer to learn about you, how you are		
say	going to get them across, what key 'stories' will illustrate them and how you would respond to likely questions:		



What experiences and achievements do you want to cover?

• Which aspects of your experience and achievements must you get across? Not all of them will be relevant, so which ones best match what you think the organisation is looking for?



What will you use as evidence?

It's not enough just to say you have a particular skill or piece of knowledge. You need to provide evidence to back up your claim. Look at your list of transferable skills: Choose at least two examples to illustrate each skill.

Think about your skills and abilities in the areas that are relevant to the job you are applying for. Make a note of the activities and situations that best illustrate these abilities. You don't need to write the detail here - it's just a reminder. For example:

Ability	Situations or activities that illustrate it
Motivating my staff	The major Inland Revenue project Relocating the office Thank you dinner 2019
Analytical ability	Internet research project Budget preparation IT cost allocation model
My abilities	Situations or activities that illustrate it

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# Demonstrating your skills and competencies

Employers will decide if you have the necessary abilities to perform well in a job by assessing your skills and competencies.

Competencies are a set of skills that are needed to carry out a particular role. These are outlined in the job description and person specification. They are often called 'soft' or 'transferable' skills, such as communication, leadership and problem-solving skills. By measuring against their chosen list of competencies, recruiters will decide if you have the necessary abilities to perform well in the job.

Competencies in context Competencies can sound quite generic. However, analysing them in terms of the actual job can help to make them more tangible. Let's look at communication skills. This competency could be interpreted in many different ways. For example, these different contexts will require distinct elements of verbal communication skills:

- Giving a concise presentation to an academic audience
- Engaging disruptive schoolchildren in educational arts workshops
- Pitching creative ideas persuasively to an advertising client
- Reporting on performance to a critical board of trustees
- Providing impartial and non-judgmental advice to a distressed customer

By better understanding the context of the job, you can decide which examples from your own experience would best demonstrate these competencies.

Common competency questions

There are various ways in which an employer can ask competency questions during the recruitment process. They may explicitly reference the skill, or they may ask the question in a different way.

#### **Understanding questions**

e.g. "What are the essential elements of good communication?"

#### Self-description questions

e.g. "How would you describe your style of communication?"

#### Scenario questions

e.g. "What would you do if someone didn't understand what you were trying to communicate to them?"

#### **Behavioural questions**

e.g. "Describe a situation in which you demonstrated good communication skills."



#### **Experience questions**

e.g. "Tell me about your experience of communicating in different settings."

It is often useful to provide a specific example of when you demonstrated that particular competency. Turn over to see how you can do this using the STAR approach.

Using examples as evidence Using examples as evidence Simply listing the required skills in your CV or application won't suffice – the employer needs evidence of each of these skills to feel confident that you have what they need. Think through your experiences carefully and find the best example to highlight each skill required. Work experience, volunteering, parttime work, extra-curricular activities and your studies can all be useful sources of examples.

> For example, if you wanted to demonstrate leadership, you could describe a time when you helped your team to reach a decision when completing group coursework, or have taken the initiative to fundraise. These would require leadership skills such as careful communication, motivating others and delegating tasks.

If there is an area you feel you have little experience in, think about how you could get some experience to gain exposure to that skill.

#### The STAR approach

STAR is a handy acronym to use to structure examples of how you have demonstrated a particular competency.

	Set the scene by briefly
Cituation	outlining the context of your
Situation	example.
	Define what the task, problem
Task	or goal was.
	Explain in specific detail what
	you did, how you did it and why
Actions	you did it, as a way to
Actions	demonstrate the skills they've
	highlighted.
	Outline the outcome to show
	your success in using that skill.
	You may also want to reflect on
Results	what you could have done
	differently or what you learnt
	from the experience.



Example

Can you describe a time when you had to adapt your communication style?

*While working as a Spanish tutor for a GCSE-level student, I noticed that the student was becoming disengaged. (ST)* 

I wanted to find out why this was, so I arranged to have a discussion with him on a more informal basis so he might feel more comfortable explaining his feelings. He explained that he was having trouble understanding the content and was doubting his language skills. I knew he had the ability, and provided evidence of this to boost his confidence. I encouraged him to talk about his favourite subjects, to gauge whether he preferred alternative teaching styles. It seemed he was a visual learner, and therefore we agreed that I would incorporate more visual techniques into my tutoring. I tried this and his engagement increased. I also regularly checked his understanding by asking him to use visual tools to represent his learning. (A)

As a result, he exceeded his predicted grade and achieved a B. (R)

What if I don't have a list of competencies?

- Be proactive and contact the organisation to ask which skills are essential to the role. You can then follow up with an application perfectly tailored to their requirements.
- Look at similar job adverts. Find a comparable opportunity in another organisation. Think about how the requirements they list would map over onto the position you are applying for.
- Look at a different job advert for that organisation. This might give you an insight into the culture of the organisation and the kind of people that they hire.
- Create your own person specification. What duties might you be carrying out in this job? Think about what skills you would need to perform those tasks effectively.

Example Competencies: Consider some of the following examples to see which might reflect your own personal traits:-

**Courage:** You take on challenges and face risks by standing up for what you believe

**Emotional control:** You are aware of your emotional 'triggers' and how to control these to ensure you remain calm and productive

**Enthusiasm:** You demonstrate passion and energy when communicating goals, beliefs, interests or ideas you feel strongly about

**Optimism:** You remain positive and upbeat about the future and your ability to influence it to your advantage



**Resilience:** You deal effectively with setbacks and enjoy overcoming difficult challenges

**Self-confidence:** You have a strong belief in yourself and your abilities to accomplish tasks and goals

**Collaboration:** You work cooperatively with others to overcome conflict and build towards a common goal

**Compassion:** You demonstrate a deep and genuine concern for the well-being and welfare of others

**Developing others:** You promote other people's learning and development to help them achieve their goals and fulfil their potential

**Empathy:** You readily identify with other people's situations and can see things clearly from their perspective

**Leading:** You take responsibility for influencing and motivating others to contribute to the goals and success of their team and organization

**Persuasiveness:** You are able to win agreement and support for a position or desired outcome

**Relationship building:** You take steps to build networks of contacts and act as a 'hub' between people that you know

**Decisiveness:** You make quick, confident, and clear decisions, even when faced with limited information

**Efficiency:** You take a well-ordered and methodical approach to tasks to achieve planned outcomes

**Flexibility:** You remain adaptable and flexible in the face of unfamiliar or changing situations

Initiative: You take independent action to make things happen and achieve goals

**Results focus:** You maintain a strong sense of focus on results, driving tasks and projects to completion

**Self-improvement:** You draw on a wide range of people and resources in the pursuit of self-development and learning

**Common sense:** You make pragmatic judgments based on practical thinking and previous experience

Creativity: You generate new ideas and original solutions to move things forward

**Critical thinking:** You approach problems and arguments by breaking them down systematically and evaluating them objectively

**Detail orientation:** You pay attention to detail in order to produce high quality output, no matter what the pressures

**Strategic mindedness:** You focus on the future and take a strategic perspective on issues and challenges



Talking about your skills	Now you have identified and listed examples to illustrate each of your skills, you need to think about what you will say when you talk about them. You need to get across the key information but in a concise way because a long detailed story will do more harm than good.
	Here is an example of the main points in one 'skills' story - in this case, to do with 'motivation'.
	Describe a situation when you had to maintain your motivation under difficult circumstances
	In 2019 when I was a selection consultant for AnyCo, impending job cuts were announced due to worsening recession.
	I decided the best thing to do was to continue best efforts to secure business in spite of the tough trading conditions.
	It was hard to keep making marketing telephone calls to companies when the chances were so slim.
	I decided to intensify the sales effort. It would pay off long term, even if not short term.
	I implemented an internal marketing campaign.
	Results were pleasing in that I was invited to compete for a different role in the firm and I got the job.
	I think that coming across as positive and upbeat influenced this.
	Another result, much later when the recession had eased, was clients coming to us because we had not ignored them.
	A number of your 'stories' will illustrate more than one skill. The example above could for instance be used to show tenacity, or sales orientation. Therefore you will not need a different story for each skill, just enough to avoid using the same story twice.
Questions you may be asked	Here are some topics you are quite likely to be asked about. Prepare the points you want to make in your answers, but don't learn them word for word or you could sound stilted.
	<ul> <li>Your job attitudes</li> <li>What do you look for in a job?</li> <li>Why do you want to work for this organisation?</li> <li>What do you want to avoid in your next job?</li> <li>What are your long-term career objectives?</li> </ul>



Your last position

- What did you like most/least about your last job?
- Name a couple of problems you resolved that had previously been overlooked.
- Tell me about two things you learnt in your last position.
- What do you think of your former boss?

#### About you

- Tell me about yourself
- If you could start your career over again, what would you do differently?
- Why are you looking to move jobs?
- How would your colleagues describe you?
- In what ways would you disagree?
- What kind of salary are you expecting?
- What makes you a good candidate for this particular role?
- What is your style of management?

#### About your accomplishments

- What are your three biggest accomplishments in your career to date?
- What size of budget are you used to handling?
- What experience could you bring to this position?
- Give me an example of where you have managed change in difficult circumstances.

Some suggestions Listen to questions carefully and respond as naturally as you can. You will make a better impression if you can present relevant information without being prompted and without too much thinking time.

But don't just rely on the interviewer's questions to guide you; professional recruiters may lead you skilfully but often you will be interviewed by managers who don't do this for a living and who may not be very skilled at drawing information out of you. So, be prepared to volunteer key points about yourself if they are not covered by the interviewer's questions.

You should avoid:

- Textbook answers such as 'I believe in adding value.' Try instead to give examples of how you did it.
- Clichés and business jargon, even if they are in current use. To some people they
  are as irritating as the habit of using your fingers to make imaginary quotation
  marks.
- Inconsistency between what you say and the impression you give people. For example, there's no point in saying you value people if you don't mention the impact on people in anything you discuss.

'Have you any questions?'

Remember that this is really just another part of your assessment, so use it as an opportunity to show that you are interested in the job, that you have done your research, that you have a real grasp of what the job entails, and that you have thought about your career.



Don't ask about pay and benefits; you should try to avoid mentioning them until you reach final interview stage. If they bring the subject up, try not to pin yourself down to a definite figure.

Don't ask questions that you could have answered yourself with some simple research.

Work out at least five topic areas that you could ask about at interview.

1			
2			
3			
4	 	 	
5	 	 	

#### Some questions you could ask

1. About the role and people

- What would you like the person you appoint to achieve in the first year?
- Have the principal objectives of the role/department changed recently and if so, why?
- What do you see as the obstacles in achieving those objectives?
- How could the successful candidate best contribute to the objectives of this department?
- Is this a new position? If so, why was it created? If not, why was it vacated?
- What was the previous incumbent's approach to the job? What were their major successes? Shortcomings?
- What changes would you like to see in the way this job is performed?
- How valuable would it be for a candidate to have 'X' skill or experience (something you are good at)?

Don't volunteer information about what you can do without first establishing how useful or important this skill would be.

- What personal style best fits your culture?
- What can you tell me about the people I would be working with?

#### 2. About the organisation

- Have there been any major organisational changes recently? Are any planned?
- Are there any major acquisitions or changes being planned?
- Obviously you cannot expect to be told information that is commercially confidential or sensitive and you may need to say you are aware of this.
- What are the profit and turnover projections over the next few years?
- How would you describe the management style of the organisation?



## Practical preparation

#### What to take with you

There are some things that it is useful to have with you, but keep them put away unless they are needed. A conference folder is a neat way of storing any papers you want to take to the interview and is better than rummaging in a packed briefcase.

These can be useful:

- the job advertisement
- your application letter (and application form if there is one)
- names and job titles of interviewers
- company phone number, address, map
- any important company or product literature
- notes of key points you want to make
- spare copies of your CV
- the job and person specifications
- your diary
- pen and paper
- details of your referees.

Check the time of the interview and plan to arrive a bit early, in case of transport delays.



# At the interview

Rightly or wrongly, people do hire the people they like, so establish rapport at the start and greet the interviewer with a smile and a firm handshake. You want to be seen as friendly and make the interviewer feel they would be comfortable if you were their colleague.

You should come across as quietly confident, but do not take total charge of the interview or interrupt. Establish how the interview will proceed and check how much time is available.

Your answers should be relevant, concise and to the point. Avoid jargon and don't get bogged down in detail. Break up longer explanations into stages and speak for no longer than two to three minutes at a time.

Focus on how you can contribute to the organisation's success. It's not just a question of did you do something well, but also why was that activity important. It can help if you frame your answers by starting them with:

the situation was ... the action I took was ... the result was ... the benefit to the organisation was ...

If there are periods of silence, don't feel you have to fill them. If you feel you are being provoked, keep cool. Some interviewers may try to upset you to see how you react.

Listen actively and look interested in what the interviewer is saying or asking you. Observe their reactions to what you say.

Be positive and enthusiastic without becoming gushing. Never criticise your past employer or sound embittered. If you are asked about your last organisation, give a balanced picture of both the good and the not-so-good.

Don't push the interviewer to meet your timetable or needs. Until you have an offer, they are in the driving seat.

At the end of theUsually the interviewer will signal when the interview is at an end.interviewEstablish what will happen next and who should do what.

Be sincere in your thanks, even if you have been given a rough ride.

Reinforce your enthusiasm for the job. Even if you have some reservations, keep them to yourself. You can always turn a job down, but only if it's offered.



Being aware of body language

There are many opinions and interpretations of the signals we give unconsciously. It is important that you consider this aspect of communicating as all of us do it all the time. What follows is the generally accepted view on the subject, but a word of caution is needed. Firstly, be careful not to over-interpret non-verbal signals. Scratching your chin can sometimes just mean you have an itch. Secondly, body language is culturally dependent. For example we may interpret avoiding eye contact as someone being less than honest. In Jamaica it is expected behaviour when talking to someone you respect or of higher social status.

Body language is an echo of our animal origins. We use and interpret it unconsciously, but its signals reveal how we really feel. Try to be aware of the signals that you are sending out to your interviewer and of the messages that you are getting back from them.

Our bodies send out a continuous stream of signals. Even silence can be loaded with unspoken meanings and we listen with our eyes as much as with our ears.

This is why the words we speak are not always as effective or influential as we think:

Words In a study by Professor Albert Mehrabian, Professor of Psychology at UCLA, the words that people spoke contributed just 7% of the impact or effectiveness in trying to influence people's attitudes.

Voice Loudness, softness, tone, tempo, inflection. Vocal features accounted for 38% of the impact.

Body Movement, posture, eye contact, facial expression. Body language, combined with overall appearance, contributed 55% of the impact of the communication.

For effective listening, we need to learn how to spot any underlying conflict, boredom or discomfort. We should also be aware of what we are saying with our postures and reduce any negative effects to a whisper rather than a shout.

#### Eyes

Our eyes are probably the best signal of how we are getting on with someone. We look at people's eyes and faces to show we are listening or to get feedback on what we are saying. If someone maintains eye contact while we are speaking, it at least signals interest, even if they don't agree with us.

In conversation, listeners look more at the speaker than vice versa. Listeners are searching for cues that support or contradict the speaker's words. Are they lying? Are they serious? Should I laugh? People also look at each other more in co-operative relationships, less if the relationship is tense or cold.

People who are lying eventually avert their eyes or look down. Some people can maintain their gaze when telling a lie, but they usually overdo it and reveal their dishonesty that way.

# andersonyorke

Eye contact can signal the power structure of a relationship. With Anglo-Saxons, the higher your status, the more eye contact you receive. A person who likes to control people can gauge submissiveness from how much other people look at them. Dominant people are impressed by the personal force of a listener who seldom gazes back at them; they are also reluctant to gaze at someone they see as more forceful than them.

#### Facial expression and body movements

Most facial expressions last from about a half-second to a second. Some can only be caught by the most alert observer, but most of us react to facial expressions intuitively, even if we can't explain what caused us to react that way.

When people like each other or are in agreement, their bodies tend to move at the same time or speed or in the same way. They tend to lean forward or backward at the same time; they use similar motions with the arms, legs and hands. People seated next to each other who are in agreement tend to cross and uncross their legs at about the same time or assume a similar sitting position. When people don't agree, their body motion is reversed and the listener may slightly turn away from the speaker.

When listeners are in a passive mood, they do things like scratching their chin, running their fingers through their hair or looking at the ceiling.

Feet and legs often reveal anxiety or even rage with tense postures or nervous leg jiggling, which is like barely perceptible running motions.

Assuming a posture similar to people standing or sitting nearby you reveals a desire to identify with them. In negotiations, people will sit closer to the table if they are pleased with progress and further from the table if the talks are either displeasing or frightening.

The most important point about all this, is that your spoken and non-spoken (unintended) messages must say the same thing. If you claim to be energetic it is no good slumping motionless in the chair; if you claim to be enthusiastic, your voice tone must also be enthusiastic.

There are many books on this subject. One such is **Body Language at Work** by Adrian Furnham (published by The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, ISBN 0-85292-77-1).



# After the interview

Review and report	
	Examine how the interview went. Look critically at your performance and how well you handled questions.
	Were you too vague/arrogant/unassertive/aggressive?
	Were there any areas you could improve?
	If you could do the interview again, what would you do differently?
	Make a note of what you were asked and your answers in case you are called for a second interview. Complete an Interview Report immediately after every meeting (see next page).
Write a follow-up letter	A follow-up or thank you letter can be well received. If you forgot to mention some key information or experience, a letter gives you the opportunity to put things straight - but keep it brief. In the example below, you will see that there is something which didn't get discussed fully and this is therefore addressed briefly in paragraph three.
	Dear Mr Ashworth
	Project engineer vacancy
	Thank you for your time on Tuesday and for the chance to talk about this opportunity and my career background.
	I have been reflecting on what we discussed and feel convinced that I can make a solid contribution to your organisation in this role.
	You mentioned that the new Project engineer must have considerable experience in Robotics. Since we had little time to discuss this, I thought it worth mentioning that I have been very heavily involved with (elaborate) whilst with XYZ plc and in the mechanisation of two major operations for clients in a similar situation to your own.
	I enjoyed our meeting and am most interested in the position. As suggested, I will telephone you in ten days, if I have not heard from you.
	Yours sincerely



Interview report	Date of meeting	Source	
	1 Company details		
	Address		
	Telephone		
	Interviewer's name/title		
	Other people you saw		
2 Position discussed			
Responsibilities and requirement	S		
Main points they mentioned			
Key points you made			
Questions asked			
Points I need to make more stror	ngly at the next interview		
3 Result of interview			
4 Follow-up action			
Thank you letter sent		Chased progress on	

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# Telephone & On-line meeting skills

Apart from face-to-face interviews, the other ways of making personal impressions is over the phone or via on-line video calls, so it is worth brushing up on both your telephone and on-line video skills. In both however, your voice will creates 80% of your impact.

Three areas need attention:

- planning and preparing for calls/meetings
- telephone techniques
- receiving calls and connecting on-line.

Plan and prepare	<ul> <li>Before you make any call, be sure that you know:</li> <li>your objective - the outcome you want to achieve by the end of the conversation (a meeting with a contact, a specific piece of information)</li> <li>what you want to get across</li> <li>what you need from the other person.</li> </ul> Write yourself an agenda in the same way that you would for a meeting and use it as a prompt.
Making calls and or on- line meetings	<ul> <li>Here are some pointers that other job seekers have found helpful:</li> <li>Smile - your voice conveys it.</li> <li>Sit upright or stand - this helps you to sound enthusiastic and positive because you are using energy (relaxing comfortably tends to make you sound relaxed and comfortable!).</li> <li>Speak more slowly than normal.</li> <li>Introduce yourself clearly, using both your first name and surname.</li> <li>Make the call in a private area away from noise and distractions.</li> <li>Keep a record of who you spoke to and when, what you discussed and any follow-up action that you promised to take.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Ask someone to listen to you making a call and give you feedback on your technique, looking particularly at:</li> <li>your tone of voice and its pitch</li> <li>how clearly and loudly you spoke</li> <li>how well you paused or listened</li> <li>your eye-to-camera contact</li> <li>the mood and overall impression you conveyed.</li> <li>You may also find it helpful to consider people you think are 'good' on the phone.</li> <li>What is it that impresses you about their technique? Is there anything that you can</li> </ul>

adapt to suit your style?



Tips for making better calls

- After giving your name, put yourself in context so that the receiver knows who you are:
  - 'I have applied for the vacancy of ... '
  - 'I recently wrote to you about ... '
  - 'Your name was given to me by ... '
- Clarify the purpose of your call: 'I'm ringing to find out more about the interview procedure.'
- Some people are difficult to locate or are shielded by secretaries. Do not be put
  off by the secretary. Say firmly and politely that you want to talk to the principal
  and ask the best time to call back.
- The best time to catch people may be early or late in the day. Think about making your calls before 9.15am and after 4.30pm.

Receiving phone calls	<ul> <li>Your response to incoming calls also needs to create a business-like impression.</li> <li>Keep a pen, notepad, diary and a copy of your CV by the phone at all times.</li> <li>Answer as you would if you were working: 'Hi, David Smith.'</li> <li>If the caller does not say who they are, ask. You need to know who you are talking to and why.</li> <li>Brief the family to take good messages. You will be judged in your absence.</li> <li>If the call is inconvenient or you are not prepared, say that you are unable to talk at the moment and that you will call back at a mutually convenient time.</li> <li>Use an answering machine. This allows you to screen calls if you wish. It also allows you to speak later when the house is quieter or you are more composed.</li> </ul>

Interviewing by telephone and or online meetings As a cost-effective method of screening, phone interviews and on-line meetings have significantly increased. You may be given warning and an appointment for your phone interview - or you may simply get a callout of the blue asking for 'a chat'. If that happens and you are unprepared - if you haven't got your CV, the advertisement and other materials to hand - ask to call back in a couple of minutes when you are ready.

Remember that no matter informal they say the conversation is, they will be assessing you, so don't be seduced into saying things you shouldn't. Seize every chance you can to drive home your interest in the job and your relevant skills and experience.

The other hints and rules of telephone techniques still apply in on-line meetings. While your voice is very important it is also important to convey enthusiasm, relevance and all the other things you would strive for if you were meeting in person.



# Public sector and panel interviews

Interviews for jobs in the public sector, particularly in local government, are often competency-based. Candidates are asked identical questions based on the criteria in the job description and person specification. So study them and find several examples as evidence when you prepare for interview.

The public sector also places a lot of emphasis on equal opportunities, so you should read the organisation's equal opportunities policy and consider its implications for this job.

Here is a sample of panel interview questions. They are for a local authority Manager role, but illustrate the questioning used in interviews for many posts.

Sample questions	What is your current understanding of the challenges we face?
	What is your motivation for wanting to take on the role?
	What do you think will be the most significant differences between working in XXX compared to your present role?
	What would you hope to achieve by the end of your first six months?
	What are the most difficult things you might expect to tackle?
	What do you see as the role of the xxx function in a modern local authority?
	What message would you deliver to your team about the next three years? How would you deliver it?
	Valuing, growing and empowering staff are all a key part of the culture of a quality organisation. How in practical terms would you contribute to this?
	How would you deal with any officers who do not observe the policies we hold?
	How long will it take for you to make a significant impact in XXX and what will be the key markers along the way?
	How would you advise us on decisions where, whatever we decided, one 'community' would feel disadvantaged compared to another?
	Two topical issues in local government are the quality agenda and developments in how we manage our people. How would you apply these principles in this role.



Panel interviews	Panel interviews are common in the public sector but fairly rare in the private sector. They simply mean that several people interview a single candidate at one time. Most candidates find them a bit of an ordeal. To do well, you need to identify the important figures on the panel and what role they play, but don't ignore anyone.		
	It is more difficult to establish rapport with a group than it is with an individual. When you are talking, you should talk to the whole panel and make eye contact with everyone. If your chair is in an awkward position, ask to move it slightly.		
	The chairperson will be the one making the introductions, but make plenty of eye contact with the person you would be working for.		
	Be prepared for rapid-fire questions. Candidates are often asked identical questions, so the panel members will have all their questions ready.		
	Observe how people interact with each other. If there is one panel member who everyone else seems to agree with, make sure you impress him or her.		
	Can you picture yourself working with them?		
Informal talks	Many public sector posts are advertised months in advance and offer the opportunity to have an informal talk with the present incumbent. You should seize any opportunity to do this as it gives positive signals about your interest in the post and can help you in the initial selection process. It will also give you information that you can use at the interview, particularly if someone asks what steps you have taken to find out about the role.		



#### Appendix

Action Words/Active verbs in the past tense

Achieved Adjusted Advised Analysed Anticipated Applied Arranged Assisted Assembled Audited Authorised Avoided Bought Broadened Brought Built Calculated Captured Changed Checked Collected Combined Communicated Compiled Completed Constructed Controlled Converted Co-ordinated Created Dealt with Decided Decreased Delegated Demonstrated Designed Despatched Developed Devised Diagnosed Discovered Diverted Documented Doubled Drafted Edited Eliminated

Employed Encouraged Engineered Enhanced Enlarged Ensured Established Estimated Evaluated Examined Exceeded Executed Expanded Explained Extended Extracted Finished Followed up Formed Generated Guarded Guided Helped Highlighted Identified Implemented Improved Increased Influenced Informed Initiated Inspected Installed Instructed Interpreted Interviewed Introduced Invented Investigated Judged Launched Learned Led Lengthened Lessened Liaised Listened

Lowered Maintained Managed Marked Maximised Mechanised Merged Minimised Modelled Modernised Modified Monitored Motivated Negotiated Observed Obtained Operated Ordered Organised Oversaw Participated Performed Persuaded Piloted Planned Prepared Presented Prevented Processed Produced Programmed Promoted Provided Purchased Queried Questioned Quoted Rearranged Recognised Recommended Redesigned Reduced Refined Reinforced Rejected Related Released

Removed Reorganised Repaired Reported Represented Researched Resolved Responded Restored Reviewed Revised Saved Scheduled Secured Serviced Selected Set up Shaped Shortened Simplified Solved Sorted Specified Started Stopped Streamlined Strengthened Studied Succeeded Supervised Supported Taught Tested Tightened Trained Transferred Transformed Translated Travelled Uncovered Undertook Utilised Verified Visited Widened Won

Wrote



### Appendix - Academic into Industry template

## NAME

Location (not full address)

Phone

Email

LinkedIn URL

### AREA OF EXPERTISE / SUMMARY / PROFILE /

Insert a brief summary (4 lines max) of the "professional you", framed in a way that relates to your areas of expertise. Who am I (with a target job title) and what is my background? What are the key strengths I have that make me the candidate of choice and how do I apply those successfully? What is the main contribution based on my track record that I am going to deliver to the next organization?

### **KEY SKILLS**

Key Skill	Key Skill
Key Skill	Key Skill
Key Skill	Key Skill

### **CURRENT EXPERIENCE**

### Job role/PhD title, University

### Year-Year

Briefly outline main areas of study, collaborations, results, feedback. Use bullet points. Write in Achievement style (using verbs in past tense), in third person, not full sentence structure. Don't give lots of learned detail, concentrate on professional areas which bring out transferable skills and tangible contributions.

- Developed XYZ synthesiser which reduces carbon emissions in XYZ by 8% ....
- Collaborated with XYD R&D department on ... which led to a 72% take-up of .... for
- Produced first UK prototype for black-hole visualiser with projected cost savings of 50% compared to previous technology
- Worked with UK Space Institute and Physics department on .. which resulted in ...
- Utilised alumni networks with P&G and developed case-studies for energy saving chemicals
- Taught 50 students and supervised 6 masters students over a three-year period and achieved 88% A\* ratings
- Invited to speak at XYZ conference and delivered the first paper on ... to an audience of over 600
- Won research grant of £..... competing against 300 others and was mentioned in "GalaxyNews"

Name

# PROFESSIONAL / CAREER / EXPERIENCE

# Job Title, Organisation

Provide a 1-2 sentence "job overview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position. Include scale and scope of role (budget, team size, reporting to where relevant)

email or phone number

- Achievement: a 1-2 sentence result that you achieved (example: Increased efficiency by 25%, implementing a new software system which ...)
- Achievement
- Achievement

# Previous Position Title, Organisation

Provide a 1-2 sentence "job overview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position held.

- Achievement
- Achievement

# Position Title, Organisation

• Achievement

# **PRIOR EDUCATION**

Masters or First degree, Subject, University/College Year–Year Provide only brief details of school qualifications e.g. 4 A levels in Maths (A), Further Maths (A)Physics (B), Chemistry (C)

# **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

PRINCE2 Project Management Training Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

# TRAINING

Business Development Techniques Effective Networking

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hobbies and interests include ... Keep succinct, balanced and interesting. Give no more than about 3.

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Page Two

Year-Year

Year-Year

Year-Year



# Appendix - Academic CV template

# NAME

Location (not full address)

Phone Email

# SUMMARY / PROFILE / AREA OF EXPERTISE / RESEARCH INTERESTS

Insert a brief summary (4 lines max) of the "professional academic you", framed in a way that relates to areas of expertise. What is my main area of academic interest and what is my background? What are the key strengths I have that make me the candidate of choice and how do I apply those successfully? What is the main contribution based on my track record that I am going to deliver to the next academic post?

# CURRENT EXPERIENCE

# PhD title, University

Main areas of study, collaborations, results, feedback.

Use bullet points where possible and possibly section headers. Concentrate on writing in Achievement style (using verbs in past tense), in third person, not full sentence structure. May have sub-section headings:

# **Research Grants**

• Won research grant of £..... competing against 300 others and was mentioned in "GalaxyNews"

# Teaching and Supervision

 Taught 50 students and supervised 6 masters students over a three-year period and achieved 88% A\* ratings

# **Conferences and Presentations**

 Invited to speak at XYZ conference and delivered the first paper on ... to an audience of over 600

# **Publications and Journals**

# Awards and Recognition

Year-Year



# **Additional Achievements**

- Achievements with implications for any industrial/real-life applications ...
- Developed XYZ synthesiser which reduces carbon emissions in XYZ by 8% ...
- Achievement related to collaborations
- Collaborated with XYD R&D department on ... which led to a 72% take-up of .... for ...
- Achievement related to commercial applications/commercial awareness
- Produced first UK prototype for black-hole visualiser with projected cost savings of 50% compared to previous technology
- Achievement related to cross-functional/cross faculty working
- Worked with UK Space Institute and Physics department on .. which resulted in ...
- Achievement related to case-studies involving business/production/operations outside University
- Utilised alumni networks with P&G and developed case-studies for energy saving chemicals ...
- Achievement related to communication skills
- Achievement relating to overcoming obstacles
- Achievement related to teamwork
- Achievement related to leadership
- Achievement related to report writing
- Achievement related to problem solving

# OTHER EDUCATION

Masters or First degree, Subject, University/College Year–Year

Provide only brief details of school qualifications

e.g. 4 A levels in Maths (A), Further Maths (A)Physics (B), Chemistry (C)

# PROFESSIONAL / CAREER / WORK EXPERIENCE

# Job Title, Organisation

Year-Year

Provide a 1-2 sentence "job overview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position. Include scale and scope of role (budget, team size, reporting to where relevant)

- Achievement: a 1-2 sentence result that you achieved (example: Increased efficiency by 25%,
- implementing a new software system for ...)
- Achievement:
- Achievement:
- Achievement:



# Previous Position Title, Organisation

Year-Year

Provide a 1-2 sentence "job overview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position held.

- Achievement:
- Achievement:

Previous Position Title, Organisation

Year-Year

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Professional training/development: PRINCE2 Project Management Training

Hobbies and interests include ... Keep succinct balanced and interesting. Give no more than about 3

# REFEREES

Provide basic details only, and only if you have contacted them beforehand.



# Appendix – cover letter - application

# Name

jobloggs@whatever.com

Address Date: Name Title Company Address City, Postcode

Dear Mr./Ms. .... (or First Name, if appropriate):

# Python Role Ref 65748

I would like to apply for the above position as advertised in Big Data Journal (date).

I am an experienced and qualified IT/Big Data specialist, currently completing a PhD in ... with proven ability to ..... as well as.... You will note from the enclosed CV that my background and experience demonstrate my ability to utilize Python in the complex and innovative ways which are required by your organisation.

I am enclosing my CV but I would like to emphasis the following in support of my application:

- Researched .... as part of PhD studies which concluded ...
- Created a ..... which led to ....
- Led a multi-discipline team which produced a ... which resulted in .... £ savings for ..
- Drove an interactive technology planning process for a Start-up XYZ which ...

As I am nearing the end of my PhD I am looking to utilize my technical knowledge within industry, preferably within a small enterprise where I feel my team-working, problem-solving skills and flexibility will offer an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. I am very excited to hear about this potential role and impressed by what I have read about your company's research and production methods.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I can be reached at (07\*\*\*) 834\*\*\*

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely

Enclosure: CV

Telephone







# Workshop Overview

# andersonyorke

### Monday -

- Constructing and developing high quality CVs
   10:15-12:15 CV writing Part 1
  - 13:00-14:00 CV writing Part 2

### Tuesday -

- Performing well at interview
  - 9.15-12.15 Interview skills

# High quality CVs

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### Developing a compelling CV:

- Defining transferable skills
- Pinpointing and capturing achievements S T A R
- CV formats Reverse Chronological, Functional, Hybrid
- The skills employers look for
- Writing style
- □ Academic CV's personal statement and cover letters
- Private Sector CV's
- Covering letters tailoring each CV
- Knowing yourself



# **Preparing for** interviews

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Personal preparation and company research:

- Researching organisations and employers Dunn & Bradstreet, LinkedIn, Glass Door etc.
- Managing first impressions projecting an upbeat and 'can do' attitude
- · Self-knowledge, Organisational & Occupational Knowledge Different types of interviews - Competency or Criteria based
- Difficult interview questions and how to answer them
- Additional selection techniques Assessment Centres,
- Psychometrics, aptitude tests etc.

# How you will benefit

# 0 andersonyorke

### Guidance to help you:

- Identify key transferable skills
- Capture and communicate achievements
- Develop effective and compelling CVs that will connect you to jobs and opportunities
- · Perform well at interview



# Take Stock of vour skills

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- What have you enjoyed most from your studies?
- □ What really gives you a buzz?
- □ How would you describe the responsibilities you have undertaken during/alongside your course?
- □ What experience have you had? During your
- academic life, in industry, applying technologies etc. What skills or competencies do you have?
- What are your strengths?



# How do you see Your Future

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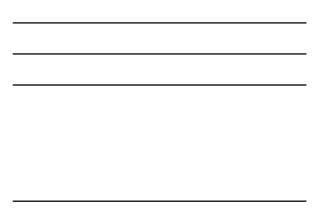
career manac

- □ What role are you seeking Academic or in Industry?
- Generation Where do you want to do it?
- What are your longer term goals?
- Where would you like to be in 3-5 years time?
- Opportunity to reflect on lifestyle
- Possibly take time off to think/travel/study/train
- Turn interests into income perhaps start –up?Have more than one job?



# The Skills Employers look for

- 78% of employers rank skills as the most important factor when recruiting
- When writing your CV or cover letter you must consider the skills they will want to see
- Put time aside to identify examples of how you have applied these skills in your own educational/work experience



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# Core Skills -Industry

- Written and verbal communication
- Teamwork
- Commercial awareness
- Attention to detailTime management
- (organisation)

  Adaptability and
- flexibility

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### Responsibility and

- reliability

  Leadership
- Decision-makingInitiative/ self-starter
- Innovation and creativity

# Core Skills -Academia

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- In addition to the 'soft skills' for industry academic roles focus on research, teaching and administrative experience
- For teaching, include class sizes, responsibility, pastoral support and course design
- Involvement in college committees should be in the administrative section
- 'Publications and Conferences' are among your most important selling points

# Your Achievements

- What achievements have you had, whether at work or while studying?
- What are you proud of?
- □ Can you describe and quantify your achievements? These might involve:
  - Doing a job quicker or more effectively than colleagues
  - Suggesting improvements to save money or improve quality
  - Helping others to work better/more effectively
  - Overcoming major obstacles to do your job



# Describing Achievements

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**STAR** Achievements

□ What was the Situation?

What was the Task?

- □ What **A**ctions did you take?
- □ What was the **R**esult?

# Describing Achievements

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EXAMPLE: While working as a Spanish tutor for a GCSE-level student, I noticed that the student was becoming disengaged. (ST) To find out why this was, I arranged a more informal chat so he might feel more comfortable explaining his feelings. He explained that he was having trouble understanding the content and was doubting his language skills. I knew he had the ability so suggested lincorporate more visual techniques into my tutoring. (A) As a result, his engagement increased, he exceeded his predicted

As a result, his engagement increased, he exceeded his predicted grade and achieved a B. (R)

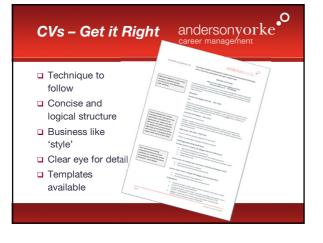
STAR Achievements

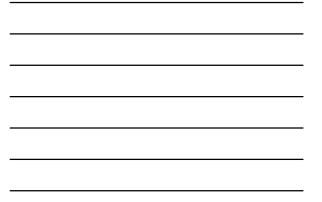
# Prepare an effective CV

# 

- □ What's an effective CV? Why have one?
- □ What part does it play in job search?
- Different types of CV
  - Chronological CV employment history in reverse date order
  - Functional CV focussing on key transferable skills rather than details of each job
- Application Forms
- LinkedIn Profile







# CVs – Get it Right andersonyorke

- □ The CV is a sales brochure It should describe your best features including skills, experience, achievements and qualifications
- A CV should not be a list of everything you have ever done. It is a marketing document to promote your skills and experience
- In a 20 second scan the reader should be able to see evidence of your interest in and your ability to do the role you are applying for

# CVs - Get it Right andersonyorke

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- CV should be word-processed/printed
- □ Two pages are good; three OK. Any more and ...
- Use bold headings & white space and keep formatting simple
- □ Use action verbs built, controlled, planned, led etc.
- Use headers or footers to make sure each page shows your name and page number
- □ Most CVs are first read on screen so make sure any formatting will be maintained e.g. pdf file



# CV – This is me!

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- Personal details phone, mobile, location, email
- LinkedIn link
- Profile
- Education/Employment history dates, roles
- Skills & Achievements
- Additional Training
- Qualifications
- Interests



# CVs – Active language

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- Use action words in your CV and covering letter to convey achievement and impact
- Start bullet points with an active verb in the past tense rather than using pronouns (such as "I")
  - Achieved; analysed; coordinated; created; demonstrated; designed; developed; evaluated; improved etc.
- Quantify and show results where possible
- Avoid passive terms such as "I had to" "I was required to"

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# CVs - Academic into Industry

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Year-

career management

# CURRENT EXPERIENCE

Job role/PhD title, University Year-Year Brielly outline main areas of study, collaborations, results, feedback. Use builted points. Write in Achievement style (using verbs in past tense), in third person, not full sentence structure. Don't give too is deamed detail, concentrate on professional areas which bring out transferable skills and tangible contributions.

- · Developed XYZ synthesiser which reduces carbon emissions in XYZ by 8% . · Collaborated with XYD R&D department on ... which led to a 72% take-up of .... for
- Produced first UK prototype for black-hole visualiser with projected cost savings of 50% compared to previous technology
- · Worked with UK Space Institute and Physics department on .. which resulted in ...
- Utilised alumni networks with P&G and developed case-studies for energy saving chemicals
- Taught 50 students and supervised 6 masters students over a three-year period and achieved 88% A\* ratings

# CVs - Academic into Industry

### PROFESSIONAL / CAREER / EXPERIENCE

Job Title, Organisation Year– Provide a 1-2 sentence "powerview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position. Include scale and scope of role (budget, team size, reporting to where relevant) Year-Year

- Achievement: a 1-2 sentence result that you achieved (example: Increased efficiency by 25%, implementing a new software system which ...)
   Achievement
   Achievement

### Previous Position Title, Organisation

Year Provide a 1-2 sentence "job overview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position held.

Achievement
Achievement

### CVs – Academic into Industry

# andersonyorke career management

Year-Year

### PRIOR EDUCATION

Masters or First degree, Subject, University/College Provide only brief details of school qualifications e.g. 4 A levels in Maths (A), Further Maths (A)Physics (B), Chemistry (C)

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PRINCE2 Project Management Training Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

# TRAINING

# Business Development Techniques Effective Networking

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Hobbies and interests include ... Keep succinct, balanced and interesting. Give no more than about 3.

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## Academic CVs

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Your research will be highly relevant and of interest

- Your profile should include research interests as well as future direction
- Within 'Education and Qualifications' include a paragraph outlining your research skills and any applicable areas
- Include relevant technical skills e.g. software packages as well as previous degrees, major project/dissertation(s)

## Academic CVs

# andersonyorke

- Highlight career history including research, teaching and administrative experience
- For teaching, include class sizes, degree of responsibility, pastoral support and course design where possible
- Involvement in college committees should be in the administrative section
- 'Publications and Conferences' are left to the end but are among your most important selling points. Present in reverse chronological order and list publications first followed by conference papers and poster presentations

# CVs - Academic

# andersonyorke

### NAME Location (not full address) Phone Email

Linai

### SUMMARY / PROFILE / AREA OF EXPERTISE / RESEARCH INTERESTS

Insert a brief summary (4 lines max) of the 'professional academic you', framed in a way that relates to areas of expertise. What is my main area of academic interest and what is my background? What are the key strengths I have that make me the candidate of choice and how do I apply those successfully? What is the main contribution based on my track record that I am going to deliver to the next academic post?



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# **CVs - Academic**

# andersonyorke career management

Year-Year

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CURRENT EXPERIENCE

### PhD title, University

Main areas of study, collaborations, results, feedback. Use bullet points where possible and possibly section headers. Concentrate on writing in Achievement style (using vebs in past tense), in third person, not full sentence structure. May have sub-section headings:

Research Grants
Won research grant of £........ competing against 300 others and was mentioned in
"GalaxyNews"

 Teaching and Supervision
 Taught 50 students and super achieved 88% A\* ratings vised 6 masters students over a three-year period and

Conferences and Presentations

Invited to speak at XYZ conference and delivered the first paper on ... to an audience
of over 600

- Publications and Journals
- Awards and Recognition

### andersonyorke **CVs - Academic** career management

### Additional Achievements

- Achievements with implications for any industrial/real-life applications ...
   Developed XYZ synthesiser which reduces carbon emissions in XYZ by 8% ...
   Achievement related to collaborations
- Collaborated with XYD R&D department on ... which led to a 72% take-up of .... for
- Achievement related to commercial applications/commercial awareness Produced first UK prototype for black-hole visualiser with projected cost savings of 50% compared to previous technology
   Achievement related to cross-functional/cross faculty working
   Worked with UK Space Institute and Physics department on .. which resulted in ...

- Achievement related to case-studies involving business/production/operations outside University
- Utilised alumni networks with P&G and developed case-studies for energy saving chemicals..

# andersonyorke career management

Year-

Year-Year

### OTHER EDUCATION

### Masters or First degree, Subject, University/College

**CVs - Academic** 

Vear Provide only brief details of school qualifications e.g. 4 A levels in Maths (A), Further Maths (A)Physics (B), Chemistry (C)

PROFESSIONAL / CAREER / WORK EXPERIENCE

Job Title, Organisation Year-Yt Provide a 1.2 sentence "job overview", letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position. Include scale and scope of role (budget, team size, reporting to where relevant)

- Achievement: a 1-2 sentence result that you achieved (example: Increased efficiency by 25%,
   implementing a new software system for ...)
   Achievement:
   Achievement:

- Achievemen



### **CVs - Academic**

andersonyorke career management

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Professional training/development: PRINCE2 Project Management Training Hobbies and interests include ... Keep succinct balanced and interesting. Give no more than about 3

REFEREES

Provide basic details only, and only if you have contacted them beforehand.

# **Covering Letters**

- A covering letter is your opportunity to make a positive first impression
- Just as important as your CV, it is where you can explain your skills, ability and motivation for the role

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Dear Mr./Ms. .... (or First Name, if appropriate):

**Covering Letters -**

**Application** 

Python Role Ref 65748

I would like to apply for the above position as advertised in Big Data Journal (date).

I am an experienced and qualified IT/Big Data specialist, currently completing a PhD in ... with proven ability to .... as well as... You will note from the enclosed CV that my background and experience demonstrate my ability to utilize Python in the complex and innovative ways which are required by your organisation.

I am enclosing my CV but I would like to emphasis the following in support of my application:

- Researched .... as part of PhD studies which concluded ...
   Created a ..... which led to ....
   Led a multi-discipline team which produced a ... which resulted in .... £ savings for ...
   Drove an interactive technology planning process for a Start-up XYZ which ....



# **Covering Letters -**Application

# andersonyorke career manager

As I am nearing the end of my PhD I am looking to utilize my technical knowledge within industry, preferably within a small enterprise where I feel my team-working, problem-solving skills and flexibility will offer an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. I am very excited to hear about this potential role and impressed by what I have read about your company's research and production methods.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I can be reached at (07\*\*\*) 834\*\*\*

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely Enclosure: CV

### **Covering Letters -**Speculative

# andersonyorke career management

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### Dear Mr./Ms. .... (or First Name, if appropriate):

### Python Role

Further to a recent conversation with George Bloggs, I would be very interested in talking to you about your need for a Python Expert. I met George as part of an event delivered at the LIV.Dat (Liverpool University) event and she suggested that I get in touch with you.

I am an experienced and qualified IT/Big Data specialist, currently completing a PhD in ... with proven ability to .... as well as.... You will note from the enclosed CV that my background and experience demonstrate my ability to utilize Python in some complex and innovative ways.

In particular I would draw your attention to:

- Researched .... as part of PhD studies which concluded ...
   Created a .... which led to ....
   Led a multi-discipline team which produced a ... which resulted in .... £ savings for ..
   Drove an interactive technology planning process for a Start-up XYZ which ...

# **Covering Letters -**Speculative

# andersonyorke career management

As I am nearing the end of my PhD I am looking to utilize my technical knowledge within industry, preferably within a small enterprise where I feel my team-working, problem-solving skills and flexibility will offer an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. I am very excited to hear about this potential role and George has spoken highly of your achievements within both academia and enterprise.

I am very happy to talk on the phone or Zoom etc. if you let me know what would be most convenient for you. I can be reached at (07\*\*\*) 834\*\*\*

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely

Enclosure: CV

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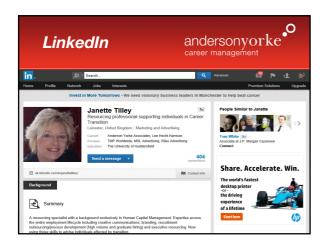
# Application Forms andersonyorke

- $\hfill\square$  What are they for? Persevere with them if needed
- Read through form completely before completion
- Follow instructions
- Draft on a photocopy or pencil answers before inking
- Don't rush
- Don't leave blanks
- Keep a copy of completed form
- List matching skills/experience if possible on "anything to add page"

# Getting out there andersonyorke

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- Talking to Your Friends "I'd like to pick your brains..."
- Writing letters/emails:
  - To personal contacts
  - Speculative letters
    - Who would you like to work for? Who do you write to? What do you have to offer?
  - Responding to press/internet advertisements
- Registering your details on-line





# LinkedIn It's a Database!

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- Optimise Your Profile become 'findable'
  - Photo, Education, Employers, Responsibilities, Achievements, Qualifications, keywords,
- Maximise the Number of your Connections
- Join Groups
- Interact Publish, Comment, Like
- Follow Companies/Employers
- □ Research People, Organisations and Jobs

# Summary

# andersonyorke

- Importance of defining your transferable skills
- □ Pinpointing and capturing achievements STAR
- CV formats Structure, content and writing style
- The skills employers look for
- Academic CV's personal statement and cover letters
- Covering letters importance of tailoring each CV

Thank you – see you tomorrow!









# Preparing for interviews

# andersonyorke career management

### Personal preparation and company research:

- Researching organisations and employers
   Dunn & Bradstreet, LinkedIn, Glass Door etc.
- Managing first impressions projecting an upbeat and 'can do' attitude
- Self-knowledge, Organisational & Occupational Knowledge
- Different types of interviews Competency or Criteria based
- Difficult interview questions and how to answer them
- Additional selection techniques Assessment Centres, Psychometrics, aptitude tests etc.



# What is an Interview?

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- A business meeting with an Agenda
- They want a clear picture of your skills and experience
- You want to show how you will meet their requirements
- Both want to explore how you will fit into the role and the organisation

# 10 Steps to Success

- 1. Research the organisation
- 2. Know the job details tie responses to employers needs
- 3. Understand the selection
- process 4. Refine verbal positioning
- statement 5. Identify your relevant
- USPs

# 6. Select appropriate achievements (STAR) 7. Resolve possible

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- obstacles i.e. skills gap
- 8. Prepare the questions you intend to ask
- 9. Select key referees keep them in the loop10.Prepare to maximise

your first and last impression?

# The 11th Step to Success

- Unless you are meeting a recruiter, most people conducting interviews are <u>not</u> highly practised interviewers.
  - So, the more you do to prepare for the interview the better you will be equipped to make their job easier i.e. 'to help them interview you well' and to gather the important information and background that will make 'you stand out' above and beyond the other applicants!



# Types of Interview andersonyorke

- Telephone interviews
- Screening/preliminary interviews, sometimes in groups
- □ One to one interviews with HR/personnel
- One to one interviews with prospective boss
- □ Increasingly interviews via Teams, Zoom etc.
- Panel interviews

# Tips for online interviews

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- Check lighting, background, position on screen (head and shoulders), acoustics
- Dress smartly and prepare venue for minimal interruptions
- Recognise that eye contact is distorted
- Try to avoid excessive movement (e.g. hand
- gestures) as the effect will be magnified on-screen
- Use the mute button if multiple participants
- □ Practice, practice, practice YouTube has examples

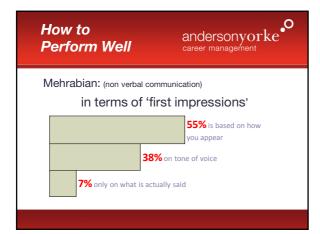
# Advanced Selection andersonyorke

### Psychological Profiling

- Tests of ability, aptitude or emotional intelligenceQuestionnaires to establish 'personality', interests and
- preferences
- Situational judgement tests
- Critical Thinking (Watson Glaser) and Case Studies
- Group selection tests
  - Leaderless group discussions
  - Group problem solving
- Assessment Centres







# How to Perform Well

- Good eye contact
- Include all panel members in your eye contact
- Don't use first names unless invited
- Listen to the questions; ask them to clarify if needed
- Don't ramble don't exaggerate
- □ Use **STAR** format to structure response
- Stress points matching your skills with their needs
- Ask prepared questions when invited
- □ Thank interviewer for his/her time and SMILE



# 'Generic' Interview Questions

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- Tell me about yourself?
- Why do you want this job?
- What do you know about us?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What achievement/s are you most proud of?Where do you see yourself in 2/5/10 years' time?

# 'Generic' Interview Questions

- Describe your experience in leadership
- Describe how you have worked well as a team
- □ How did you relate to colleagues/bosses?
- What would you bring to our organisation?
- What training do you think you would need for this job?
- Why should we offer you this job?

# 'Generic' Interview Questions

- □ How would your colleagues describe you?
- Describe a time when you felt under pressure?
- Describe a time when you made a mistake?
- □ If you were appointed, how would you go about...
- What questions do you have for us?



# Sample Questions - Competency

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# "Tell me about a situation where you demonstrated good..."

- Partnership or collaborative working
- Problem solving
- Leadership skills
- Team working skills
- Presentation skills
- Commercial accountability
- Project management skills

# Sample Questions - Competency

- Negotiation skills
- Initiative
- Cross-discipline/functional collaboration
- Conflict management skills
- Delegation
- Organisation and planning skills
- Managing conflicting priorities

# Sample Questions - Competency

- Learning from mistakes
- Ability to deal with negative feedback constructively
- Communicating a complex idea to a less informed audience
- Awareness of diversity and equality issues in the workplace
- Managing change and uncertainty at work



# Sample Questions moving to Industry andersonyorke

- Why have you decided at this point in your career to move into industry?
- What industry experience do you have?
- What skills have you learnt during your PhD which are relevant to this role?
- □ How might your research experience impact on the role you are applying for?
- What is its relevance to us and our customers/clients/partners?

# Sample Questions - andersonyorke

- □ What have you learnt over the last few years that we can use in our company/team/project?
- Why should we employ you? (What can you do for us?)
- How can you justify this salary?
- Give us an example of how you have demonstrated commercial awareness/acumen?
- Give us an example of how you have demonstrated a pragmatic approach?
- Give us an example of how you have demonstrated good customer/client relationship skills?

# Sample Questions – PhD applying for academic role

□ Who do you know from this department/faculty?

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- □ Why do you want to apply for this particular post?
- Describe your approach to teaching?
- □ Tell us about your research experience?
- What aspect of your research are you most proud of?
- Describe your approach to obtaining funding for your research?



# Sample Questions – PhD applying for academic role

- What steps do you typically take before commencing your research study?
- How will you balance the research/teaching/supervision/administrative aspects of this role?
- Can you tell us about a research paper you have read recently?

# Sample Questions - applying for academic role

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- Can you read this paper/abstract (exercise) and feedback to us with your analysis and comments?
- Describe any experience you have in audit or quality improvement projects
- □ What are your long-term research goals?
- □ If you were given a blank cheque, what would you do with it?

# Tell me about yourself

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### Tell me/us about yourself.....?

- · Me at present
- My background is ...
- Before that I ...
- My special interest is ...
- My key skills are ...
- I'm excited about ...

Refer to your CV Profile statement ....





# Sample Questions – Tell me about yourself

Refer to your CV Profile statement ...

**Current PhD student** with an interest in ... particularly in relation to ... Previous experience in a research environment at ... and ...lab and ... spin-off. Won  $\mathfrak{E}$ ... research grants. Authored XYZ journal. Confident and proactive teaching and supervision experience.

This becomes "I am currently completing a PhD in ...etc.

# Sample Questions – Tell me about vourself

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Refer to your CV Profile statement ...

**Data Scientist (PhD)** with key interest in ... Worked on £ ...industry collaboration on .... Cultivated key partnerships with major pharmaceutical companies (name?) in UK and US. Also participated in XYZ spin-off.

This becomes "I am a Data Scientist specializing in ... etc.

# Sample Questions –Tell me about yourself

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### Example:

"I am a Data Scientist with a particular interest in .....and I am currently completing a PhD at Liverpool University's LIVEDAT. I have previous experience in a research environment at *xyz* and *xyz* lab and *xyz* spin-off. Along the way I managed to nurture some great partnerships with major pharmaceutical companies such as *xyz*. I'm very keen now to develop my analytical and project management skills with Big Data within a large organisation such as your own."



# Competency Questions – using STAR

### Using STAR is an ideal model for describing Achievements

### Example of a competency answer

Could be in response to: "Tell me about a situation where you demonstrated good ...

### Initiative

- or Proactivity
- or Networking
- or Planning and Organization
- or Problem Solving
- or Communication Skills
- or Problem Solving
  or Partnership Working Skills etc.

Example:

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"During the first year of my PhD studies, I heard that my supervisor was leaving. I decided to act quickly to secure another appropriate mentor. I approached both my supervisor and other members of the department and within 48 hours had telephone conversations with 6 of them. I researched, asked questions and established 2 good alternatives. I found that whilst 2 of these were experts in my chosen field, only one had the time to devote to my supervision. Within the week we had had our first meeting and because of the other interactions I had had, I managed to pick up a very useful and relevant case-study from his colleague. As a result, the relationship has been a very fruitful one and I heard last week that I had been awarded a good PASS.

I did also keep-in-touch with my original supervisor and in fact we are partnering on a conference collaboration in the summer."

# Example:

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The above example will illustrate a lot of transferable skills, for example:

- proactive approach; initiative; problem-solving;
- □ developing relationships; networking; being assertive,
- recovering from a set-back; self-confidence; persuasion;



# STAR: reminder

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### The STAR breakdown

- What was the Situation?
- What was the **T**ask?
- What **A**ctions did you take?
- What was the **R**esult?
- (S and T = Context)

### STAR = Achievement

- Importance of saying "I... I... (Unlike in your CV)
- Creates a professional, considered response 1 or 2 minutes only

# Key Interview Tips andersonyorke

- Be Prepared. Do your research on the company, the job they are recruiting for, their requirements/key competencies
- Anticipate questions and practice answers
- Be Positive. Answer questions referring to relevant achievements
- Be concise. Keep things short and sweet
- Be Yourself!

# After the Interview about career management of the interview about your impressions and things that could be improved Ask the interviewer for feedback if you are unsuccessful Asian action plans and targets Be like a 'salesperson' - move on to the next prospect be interviewer for fee time' Asian action plans and targets are unsuccessful as a target of the next prospect be interviewer for fee time' Asian action plans and targets are unsuccessful as a target of the next prospect be interviewer for fee time' are unsuccessful as a field of the next prospect be interviewer for fee time' and the time' are unsuccessful as a field of the next prospect be interviewer for fee time' and the time' are unsuccessful as a field of the next prospect be interviewer for the next prospect as a field of the next prospect be interviewer for the next prospect as a field of the next prospect as a field of



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# **Get Organised**

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- Set aside regular time each weekday for job search
- Review progress and achievements on a daily basis
- Draw up a daily activity schedule
- Look at ways to use your time more effectively
- Set up a system to keep paperwork in order
- Use a diary to note appointments
- Note dates for following up interviews
- Make notes to follow up responses to applications

# Get Organised

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- Develop simple systems and routines to organise your efforts
- Keep a track of your activities
- Set aside time to plan and pursue your search
- Include 'me time' to ensure you don't overlook yourself





# The Offer

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- When you get a job offer, follow-up other interviews you have attended; tell them you've had an offer
- Evaluate offers on basis of job challenge, prospects, salary package and location
- Have an idea of what you want before negotiating
- State what you'd like simply and wait for a response
- Be polite, firm but realistic in negotiation
- □ Ask for a salary review after a probationary period

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# Thank you and good luck!

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