

Equality Matters

National Apprenticeship Week 2021 Careers



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What do you want to be when you grow up?

From an early age we are often asked 'what do you want to be when you grow up?' For some the pathway is clear and set out very early on in their lives but for many it can be foggy and less easy to see! That is okay, there is no law that tells us precisely what we should achieve at what age. Maybe, instead they should stop asking children this question and say 'what career shall we explore today?' Most adults will tell you they just fell into their current career path and it wasn't really what they thought they would be doing when they were 8 years old.

We have put together some helpful tips to guide you through the first stages of choosing a career.

Who are you?

Before you can decide on a career path you must first understand a few things about yourself.

- What interests you?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- What are your strengths, weaknesses and capabilities?

Confucius, a famous Chinese philosopher once said: **'Choose a job you love, and you will never work a day in your life'**

It is important that you find a career that sparks an interest in you and you enjoy. This will mean you give your best to learning the new role and will ultimately lead to job satisfaction and helping you to be happy. As we said before we are asked as children what we want to be when we grow up and they should be discouraged from saying a particular career, instead they should be inspired to answer 'to be happy'.

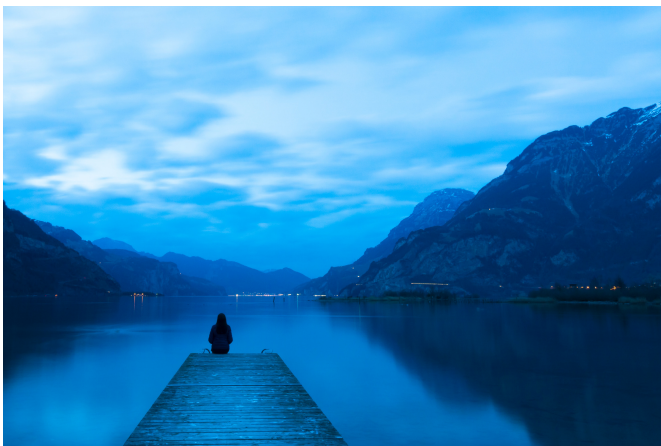


Make a list of all the things you enjoy doing. Working outside; with children, with animals, in an office, working with data, in a laboratory or on motor vehicles. Whatever you enjoy doing, you should look to find a career that involves some or even one of the items on your list. If you enjoy the fundamental element of the job you are doing, you will find you finish your day at work fulfilled and have a sense of pride in the tasks you achieved.

Understanding your own skill set will enable you to find the right role for you. Spend time reviewing your strengths, weaknesses and your current capabilities **#hint** employers will likely ask you what they are in an interview. If you know what you are capable of and where your strengths lie you will be able to read a job description and match up to see if you would be a suitable candidate before you apply. The first step to improvement is to know what you need to work on. For example, if you know you struggle with time keeping, practise setting yourself timed tasks and completing them in a set time frame. You will soon become so good at keeping to schedule you will have changed that weakness into a strength.

Self analysis is a key to finding a career path that will make you happy.

So, what do you want to be when you grow up?



Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.

Aristotle

Where to look?

It can be really disheartening to sit down and scroll and scroll and not find something that makes you stop and read. Let us take a look at the many options there are in the search for the perfect job.

Search Engines

Of course everyone knows you can type a few words into the search bar, but most people will only look at the first page of results. What appears on that first page will depend on how many words a company uses in their search engine optimisation, some use more than others. So, it is worth a click through those other pages to check if that dream job is waiting for you to apply.

Recruitment Agencies

It is worth contacting recruitment agencies directly and sending them your CV. They tend to work with businesses where they are contracted to find the right candidates for specific roles. This means they will contact you if they have a vacancy that may suit you.

Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions and are there to support people in returning to work or starting out in their career. They provide advice and guidance and help to match employees to employers.

Careers Fairs

Careers fairs, job fairs and job expos, which are a large event where employers, recruiters, schools and training providers offer information and advice to potential employees. It can be a great way to network and see a wide variety of businesses or industries you may be interested in working in.



Contact Businesses

It can be beneficial to contact businesses directly that you would be interested in working for. Send them a copy of your CV and a covering letter explaining why you have contacted them, why you would like to work for their company and what sort of positions you would be interested in.

Training Providers

Contacting training providers may be helpful as they may know of a suitable apprenticeship role that is about to become available.

Network

It is worth joining appropriate networking groups. They bring together people from certain areas or industries to make connections. It can offer a chance to get to understand areas you may be interested in working in and you may find that someone is recruiting.

Talk to people

Lastly, talk to people you know. Family, friends and acquaintances. Get the word around that you are searching for a job. You will be surprised how many people find a job just by speaking to people. All it could take is having a conversation with that one person who could unlock the door to your future career. So get chatting!

Applying for a job.



It may seem simple, but we are going to share with you a few common mistakes that can put your application at the bottom of the pile straight away.

Fill out the application in full

This may sound basic, but make sure you have filled out all the sections of the application. If you miss a section, the employer may think you are not worth a second look because it appears you haven't bothered or taken the time to read all the instructions. Employers will not be interested in employing people who do not follow instructions correctly.

Explain employment gaps

It is important if there is a gap in your employment history, that you explain why. They may think you are trying to hide something and no-one wants to employ someone who is deceitful. If you have had an illness, or a period of unemployment due to personal reasons, be honest. Employers prefer to know, they may find your ability to overcome a challenge inspiring.

Attach correct documents

It is important that you check what documents you are attaching carefully. Ensure that you are attaching the required documents and that they open.

Adapt application to match the job description

Make sure you read the job description carefully and adapt your application to highlight to the potential employer how you match what they are looking for.

Keep it real

Make sure you do not tell any 'porkies' on your application. You will very quickly be found out. It is better to stay truthful and avoid any embarrassment.

Sell yourself

There is a fine line between selling yourself to the potential employer and sounding like a 'big head'. On the other hand, ensure you back yourself and don't undersell yourself as a candidate. Provide examples of good work you have done in the past and when you have overcome challenges. If you are unsure, ask someone who knows you well to read and check you are coming across in the right way.

Give correct information

Ensure all your details are correct. Imagine you miss out on your dream job because you missed a digit off your phone number or your email address was wrong!

Proof Read

Check, check and check again. Read your application carefully. Firstly check to make sure you haven't missed any sections or any requirements. Then check for any spelling or grammatical errors. Then just to be sure check it again. Remember Father Christmas checks his list twice!

Check the dates

Check when the application has to be in by. You do not want to put your heart and soul into completing the best application you have ever done and then find out you missed the application closing date and your chance at your dream role.

Respond

After you have sent in your application, stay alert! Check your emails and answerphone messages daily. Make sure your answerphone is turned on. You do not want to miss the opportunity of being invited for interview. Also, respond to any requests promptly. It will make a good impression.

*It is never too late to be
what you might have been.*

George Eliot

Interview Technique.

Congratulations! You have been invited for an interview and have made it to the final stage of the job application process.

Interviews give employers the opportunity to explore the suitability of your experience, personality and skills for the job role.

It is also a chance for you to make sure the job is suitable for you and to see if you will feel happy working for the organisation.

Preparation is key

The key to a successful interview is to make sure you are prepared. Plan for your interview carefully and this will help you to sell yourself and give you confidence. Do your research on the organisation you are applying to join. Prepare some key questions to ask at interview.

Before the interview check the date and time and carefully plan how you will get there.

What to wear?

It is important to make a good first impression. Be smart and professional and dress appropriately. You may be asked to complete a practical task as part of the interview process. You will be notified of this on the invitation to interview.

Plan your answers

Interviewers will often ask the same type of questions so prepare your answers ahead of time to help give you a confidence boost.

Here are some example questions:

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

What do you have to offer that is unique?

How does the job role fit into your future aspirations and goals?

What do you want to do with your career and how

Will this job move you forward?

What motivates you?

What are your past achievements?

How do you react to difficult situations or pressure?

Practice your answers out loud, this will help build your confidence and avoid any unnecessary panic.



On the day

Set off with plenty of time to spare. Allow extra travel time to deal with the unexpected, such as traffic jams. You do not want to arrive all flustered and stressed out.

Here are some do's and don'ts

Do

- Greet each interviewer in turn.
- Smile confidently and sit upright.
- Listen carefully to the questions and ask for clarification if you are unsure.
- Take your time and think about your answers.
- Make eye contact.
- Speak clearly and be positive.
- Ask questions at the end of the interview.

Don't

- Chew gum.
 - Look at your phone (turn it off)
 - Appear too casual.
 - Use slang or swear words.
 - Criticise former employer, school or college.
 - Lie, be as honest as you can.
 - Ask about pay, you will have the opportunity to discuss if you are offered the job.
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The End

After the interview has come to an end, make sure you thank the interviewers and leave quietly and professionally.

Now the wait

This can be one of the hardest parts of the process. Have you got the job or not?

Make sure you are ready to answer that call anytime, it could be the same day it could be a few days later, but be ready!

The last thing you want to happen is to miss out on your dream job because you didn't answer the phone, or reply to a message left on your answerphone in time.

Congratulations!

So, you got the call you have been waiting for, the job offer of your dreams!

It can be so exciting to hear those words, but make sure you listen carefully to the person on the other end of the phone because they may need a few things from you to get the process started.

Make sure you follow the instructions carefully and complete any paperwork promptly and return it to the employer on time. It doesn't make a good impression if they have to chase you from the start!

