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Your Future

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Before you Begin Looking for a Job

Do some research

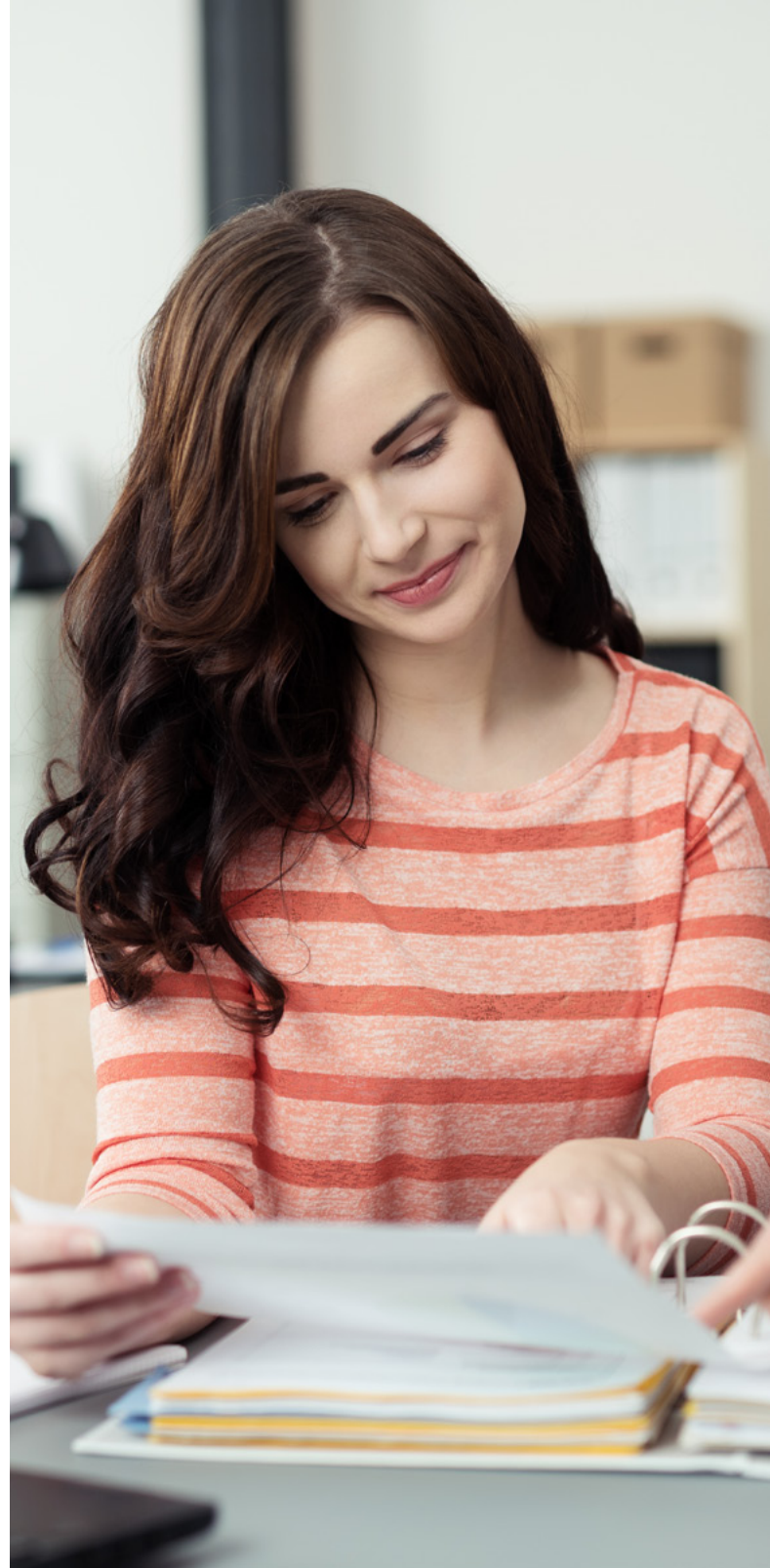
Talk to people in the industry who hold positions that you think you might like to do in the future. Identify what type of hours you may need to work, or the type of tasks you might like to do. Gather information on courses offered by external training providers, see how you can invest in your education or improve on areas where you have less experience.

Create opportunities

Your human resources department may be able to keep you informed about internal training opportunities. If you can, let people know you are interested in developing your experience and knowledge. Apply for jobs that are advertised internally. Volunteer for opportunities that occur - this shows that you are enthusiastic and keen to succeed and find out if you can obtain financial assistance from your employer or take time off for studies.

Be proactive and assertive

Perform your tasks in the workplace with enthusiasm and show that you have a willingness to learn. Think about how you can improve your behaviour, skills or attitude. Can you improve or reinforce relationships with your colleagues and superiors? You may find it helpful to set yourself achievement goals for the short, medium and long term.



Where to Look for Vacancies

The internet

Job boards such as Monster and Total jobs post jobs nationwide, daily. Also, most recruitment agencies will advertise vacancies online. If you are familiar with social networking, companies also advertise jobs via Facebook, Twitter and the professional networking site LinkedIn.

Newspapers (local and national)

Most local newspapers have a jobs search section that appears daily and usually dedicate one day a week to a bumper jobs vacant issue. Newspapers can normally be viewed at your local library if you do not wish to purchase a copy.

Trade journals and magazines

These will have sector specific vacancies and are useful when you know the area that you want to work in.

Recruitment agencies

Take your prepared CV into the agencies in your area; you may need to contact them daily to check for details of the latest vacancies.

Recruitment fairs

Job fairs are held all around the country and are usually advertised in the local newspaper. If you do go along to one of these events be sure to dress smartly and take copies of your CV with you.

The job centre

Job listings can be viewed at your local Job Centre.

Professional bodies

Vacancies may be advertised on their websites and will be specific to your profession.

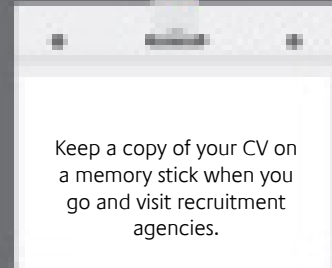
Networking

Sometimes the old adage of “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know” works very well. Be sure to talk to friends, relatives and colleagues as they may be helpful in your job search.

Speculative applications

Cold calling local firms, shops and businesses can sometimes produce results as can posting your CV with a covering letter to companies that you would like to work for.

Applying for Jobs

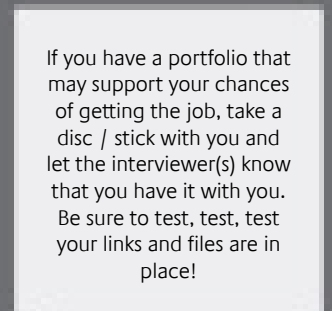
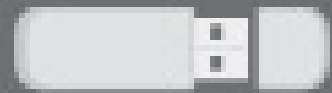


If you have to provide a paper copy of your CV to an employer in the post, have it printed at a print shop on good quality, plain paper.

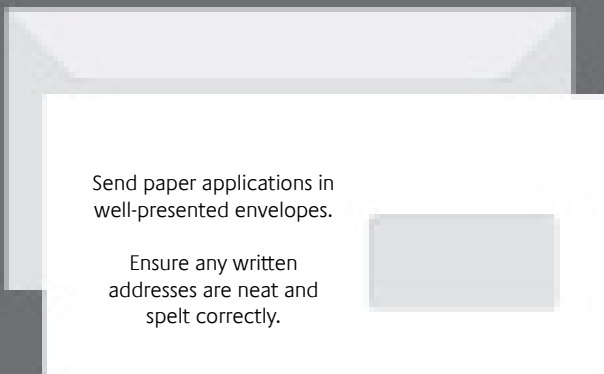
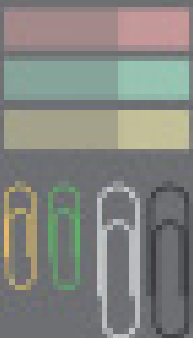
If you print at home, ensure you don't print on 'ink-saving' mode, and buy some better paper than standard copy paper.

If your CV is to give to a recruitment agency, they will generally require a digital copy on a memory stick or email, so it isn't necessary to give them printed copies.

Keep a copy of your CV on a memory stick when you go and visit recruitment agencies.

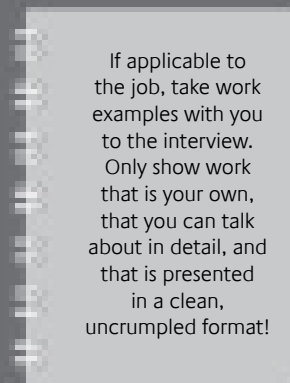
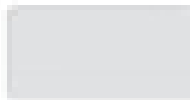


If you have a portfolio that may support your chances of getting the job, take a disc / stick with you and let the interviewer(s) know that you have it with you. Be sure to test, test, test your links and files are in place!

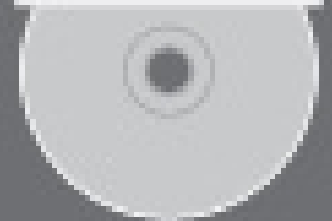


Send paper applications in well-presented envelopes.

Ensure any written addresses are neat and spelt correctly.



If applicable to the job, take work examples with you to the interview. Only show work that is your own, that you can talk about in detail, and that is presented in a clean, uncrumpled format!



Preparing a CV

Your CV is a very important document and should represent the best you have to offer, it is an opportunity to tell prospective employers exactly what you want them to know about you. Employers often receive a lot of CVs for advertised positions - jobs advertised in national papers often attract hundreds of applicants, so it is important to get your CV right. The visual layout of your CV is very important.

- You should use plenty of 'white' space in your CV and appropriate headings and section breaks.
- Use bullet points to make information stand out.
- Always use good quality A4 paper for your CV and covering letter.
- It is best to try to keep your CV to two pages of A4 unless someone specifically asks for a longer CV.

Writing your CV

You will find that the layout described here will work for you, however other sections may be added if required or the order changed to suit you.

Heading

The heading of your CV should always be your personal details: name, address, telephone number and email. Date of birth, marital status and nationality can usually be left off your CV.

Profile/summary

This should be a short summary of your experience, skills and abilities, and be contained in four to six lines of text. Only list the attributes that will be of interest to your next employer; do not include irrelevant information.

Achievements

List 3 to 6 achievements which you feel will be in line with your next position. Do not list achievements which are not in line with what you want to do next. Bullet point your achievements to make them stand out. Start with the strongest point in your favour and then work backwards from there.

Experience

This should be in reverse chronological order starting with your most recent job and working backwards. When you are describing your experience for each position you should start with the strongest point in your favour and then work backwards. Make sure you stress your responsibilities and achievements under each job which will be useful in your next job, but do not repeat information in your CV as this will just bore the reader.

Training

Only include the most important training courses on your CV. You may not want to bother with a section on training or you may combine it with education/qualifications depending on how much space you have on your CV. Education/Qualifications - Only list the most important qualifications. If you are a graduate you do not really need to list your GCSEs (England/Wales & Northern Ireland) or Standard Grades (Scotland), just indicate the number gained. You may want to put this section before the Training Section. Unless you have just completed a degree or MBA, this section should go after work experience. In the case of recently completed education, if your work experience is more likely to be of interest to an employer, you should still put work experience first. You could perhaps mention your recent qualifications in your profile or in your cover letter.

Additional Information

Include any additional information, such as whether you have a driving licence - if you have a clean driving licence, say so.



To download a sample CV in Microsoft Word [click here](#).

To download a sample CV for Scotland [click here](#).

Showing Personality

Your interests

It's important to remember that the section on your interests has a dual role; our interests indicate what kind of people we are. Employers are interested in responsibilities that you have had. If you've no commercial experience of managing people in a job, you can still identify occasions where you have taken responsibility as a result of holiday jobs, whilst at university, school, or in the community.

Keep this part fairly short. If you do not currently have any management responsibility, you could include positions of responsibility held in recent years (e.g. football Captain, 2001 - 2004).

Other examples:

Team hockey

Skills shown: Teamwork, leadership, communication, motivation

Child-minder

Skills shown: Responsibility, organisation, flexibility.

Volunteer sales assistant

Skills shown: Handling money, initiative, working under pressure.

Delivery person

Skills shown: Reliability, organisation, customer service, teamwork.

References

You do not normally need to list referees on a CV, but it is a good idea to have them ready if asked for them. For some professions however it is normal to list referees; these include the teaching and health service professions - your referees in these professions are often asked to provide you with a reference before you are even asked for interview.

What to leave out of your CV

Be prepared to answer questions or give further details at the interview on any information contained in your CV.

- Photos - the only people that need to include these are models, actors and possibly air cabin crew.
- Failures - exams, marriages, businesses etc.
- Reasons for leaving each job.
- Salary information.
- Fancy patterns/borders - these distract from your information.
- Title pages, binders and folders are usually unnecessary and can be off putting.
- Leave out age, date of birth, weight, height, health or any other personal information that is irrelevant.



Completing Application Forms

Some organisations prefer to use their own application forms and will state this on the job advertisement, in some cases you may be able to enclose your CV but this will be in addition to, not instead of, completing the application form.

How to complete applications successfully

Step 1

You need something to write things down with - computer and/ or pen and paper. Many jobseekers just simply begin writing on the application only to mess-up somewhere down the line. It is best not to write on the application itself until you've done it elsewhere first.

Your goal is to make the actual application look neat, clean, and professional! Remember, sometimes you don't even fill-out an application until the interview. So having your information handy in advance makes you look prepared, professional, and helps speed the process along!

Step 2

Have your CV at hand

Since a job application requires lots of information about your work history and skills, having your CV close at hand will make your job easier. Trying to do things from memory can lead to you getting something wrong or forgetting something important.

Step 3

Don't leave anything blank.

It's very important that you fill-in all pieces of the application, including those sections that don't apply to you. So never leave anything blank or the reader may think you forgot or missed it. You need to show that you've read and completed the entire application. So how do you indicate that you've read and completed a section that doesn't apply to you? You put either "NA" or "N/A" there. In other words, you didn't just leave it blank, you entered information in there to show you responded to it.

Use a black pen	Answer all the questions	Check grammar, spelling and punctuation
Ask somebody else to check your application	Keep a copy of the completed form and covering letter	Send off your form before the closing date
Research the company, and show that you have done so.	Think about all of your life experiences and analyse the skills and knowledge you have gained.	Analyse each question. What do you think it's designed to reveal about you?

- Answer positively. Highlight your qualities, but be realistic and do not lie!
- Use different experiences to illustrate your answers. Make sure you include examples from your course, work experience, volunteering and hobbies.
- Be concise, but make sure you provide enough information to be selected and meet each element of the person specification.
- Use short, punchy sentences, with plenty of action verbs and power words, e.g. achieved, experienced, implemented, improved, initiated, knowledge of, managed, negotiated.
- Don't write 'see attached CV' for any question unless the instructions say you may do so.
- Don't leave any gaps.
- Don't rush the form - take time to write it as neatly as possible.
- Don't waffle - make sure that your answer is relevant to the question.
- Don't use 'text speak' - always use correct grammar in your answers.

Covering Letters

Covering letters should always be sent with a CV or application form.

What to include

Underline the skills in the advert. Write a rough copy of your letter and include the skills underlined. Be positive and emphasise why you are perfect for the job. Suggested layout.

- First give a summary of your skills and experience. Keep it brief and to the point. Then, say when you will be free for an interview. Remember to include your name, address and phone number and the date.

What to say

Be concise. Do not use long words if a short one will do. If you have been unemployed for a while, or this is your first job, say how you spend your spare time (Be honest - you will get caught out at an interview). Keep to the facts

How to say it

Include the job reference number, if there is one, in the job details. Try to find out the name of the person you need to write to. If you start with 'Dear Sir/Madam', end with 'yours faithfully', or If you start with the person's name for example, 'Dear Mrs Smith', end with 'yours sincerely'. Finally, double-check your spelling and grammar.

How the letter looks

Be neat - Type your covering letter, leaving plenty of space around the edges and a clear space between each paragraph. Your covering letter should not be longer than three or four short paragraphs. Check against your rough copy to make sure that you have not missed anything, Sign and print your name and ask a friend to check over your letter before you send it.



Mr Knight
Westwards Ltd
500 Sample Street
Sample Town
LZX 1XX

Your address
Phone
number
Date

Dear Mr Knight,

I would like to apply for the job of IT Support Officer which was advertised in today's Journal.

For the past four years I have worked in IT with Brown's. As they are moving to another part of the country, I will be made redundant in two weeks' time. My present job involves various IT duties in person and by phone. I also:

- Deal with IT queries
- Handle incoming calls
- Handle incoming and outgoing post
- Order printer consumables

Before this job I was a trainee with Brightson's (Solicitors) in North Street, Inverton and completed RSA I and II in Business Administration and have experience with various Microsoft packages. I have always enjoyed working with people and think that my previous experience will allow me to work as part of the team and to be an effective representative of your company.

I am available for interview at any time and could start work immediately. You can ask for references from my present and previous employers.

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV for more information and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Your Name

Speculative Applications

You may find that there is a company you'd like to work for that are not advertising a role. You can still write to them with your CV - this is called a 'speculative application' - this method has a relatively low success rate, but you may get lucky and it's worth taking the chance as there will be less competition if you are asked to attend an interview.

- Target your companies and write each letter individually.
- You should always write to a named person if possible.
- Do not address letters to the personnel manager, ring up the company and ask for the name of the individual that you wish to contact.
- Show the organisation that you have taken some time to find out about them.

Miss Janet Smith
Personnel Manager
The ABC Company
The Strand
Herts
H27 9BL

Dear Miss Smith,

I was interested to read in the Hertfordshire News recently that your company is expanding and planning to open a new store in the area.

As The ABC Company is one of the county's leading retail organisations, I view this as a great opportunity and would very much like to be considered for a Sales Assistant position within this new store. I enclose a copy of my CV for your consideration.

I am currently working for Browns Stores as a Junior Sales Assistant. My duties include - keeping the sales floor neat; tidy and well stocked; delivering good customer service; ensuring that all sales targets are met and covering cash point duties. I work as part of a team of four and was recently asked by my manager to mentor a new member of staff, which I was very happy to do.

I enjoy working in the retail sector and am currently studying for my Level 2 in Customer Service. I am looking to gain more experience in the industry and to further my career.

I would welcome hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Your Name

Your address
Phone
number
Date

Preparing for Interview

The better prepared you are before your interview, the more confident and relaxed you will be.

Research the company by visiting their website and familiarising yourself with what they do. If you are unsure about anything, it would be OK for you to use that as a question in your interview. Check if you need to bring anything with you such as references, certificates, or a passport.

Prepare your questions; these could be based around the company, its future plans and the job itself. Think about the questions that they may ask you - If there are gaps in your experience or long periods between jobs, think about how you will answer these in a positive way.

Finally, find out how to get there and how long it will take you, so that you can arrive at least 10 minutes early on the day. Decide what you are going to wear in advance and make sure it is smart and presentable.



At the Interview

Remember that the company is assessing your suitability for the role, but also it is a chance for you to decide if this is a company you would like to work for.

- Switch off your mobile phone.
- Don't smoke before you go into your interview.
- Nerves are normal but try to relax and get the best out of the interview.
- Smile, give a firm handshake and maintain good eye contact.
- Sit comfortably but don't slouch.
- If you have a panel interview, address your answers to all the interviewers and not just to the person who asked the question.
- Make sure that you mention any particular relevant skills or knowledge that you want to emphasise.
- During an interview, never make up answers or invent anything about yourself or your past work experiences. Be honest, but never negative.
- Don't worry about not having the answer to a question immediately. If you don't have an answer ready you could say, 'That's a really good question, I may need a minute to think about that' and then give your answer when you are ready.

Tips for coming across well

- Be positive
- Relax and appear confident
- Listen carefully to the question without interrupting
- Ask for the question to be repeated if you are not sure
- Thank the interviewer(s) at the end and ask when you can expect a decision
- Don't ask about the salary or holidays at the first interview
- Don't chew gum
- Don't take or make any phone calls or text while waiting for, or during the interview
- Don't be critical or negative about former employers or colleagues
- Don't give one word answers to questions



Typical Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself...

This is usually the opening question and, as first impressions are key, one of the most important. Keep your answer to under five minutes, beginning with an overview of your highest qualification then running through the jobs you've held so far in your career. You can follow the same structure of your CV, giving examples of achievements and the skills you've picked up along the way. Don't go into too much detail – your interviewer will probably take notes and ask for you to expand on any areas where they'd like more information. If you're interviewing for your first job since leaving education, focus on the areas of your studies you most enjoyed and how that has led to you wanting this particular role.

What are your strengths?

Pick the three biggest attributes that you think will get you the job and give examples of how you have used these strengths in a work situation. They could be tangible skills, such as proficiency in a particular computer language, or intangible skills such as good man-management. If you're not sure where to start, take a look at the job description. There is usually a section listing candidate requirements, which should give you an idea of what they are looking for.

What are your weaknesses?

The dreaded question, which is best handled by picking something that you have made positive steps to redress. For example, if your IT ability is not at the level it could be, state it as a weakness but tell the interviewer about training courses or time spent outside work hours you have used to improve your skills. Your initiative could actually be perceived as a strength. On no accounts say "I don't have any weaknesses", your interviewer won't believe you, or "I have a tendency to work too hard", which is seen as avoiding the question.

Why do you want this job?

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

What can you bring to the job role?

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

What are your goals? or Where do you see yourself in five years?

It's best to talk about both short-term and long-term goals. Talk about the kind of job you'd eventually like to do and the various steps you will need to get there, relating this in some way back to the position you're interviewing for. Show the employer you have ambition, and that you have the determination to make the most of every job you have to get where you want to be.

Why do you want to work here?

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought. If you've prepared for the interview properly, you should have a good inside knowledge of the company's values, mission statement, development plans and products. Use this information to describe how your goals and ambition matches the company ethos and how you would relish the opportunity to work for it. Never utter the phrase "I just need a job."

What do you know about this company?

This is your chance to impress the interviewer with your knowledge of their company (this is where your interview preparation pays off). Give them a run down of their products/ services, sales figures, news, customers, etc.

What interests you about our product (or services)?

Again your research into the company should help you in answering this question.

What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?

This is a great time to brag about yourself through someone else's words. Try to include one thing that shows your ability to do the job, one thing that shows your commitment to the work, and one thing that shows you are a good person to have in a team. For example, "My boss has told me that I am the best designer he has ever had. He knows he can always rely on me, and he likes my sense of humour."

Questions You can Ask in an Interview

Prepare a minimum of five questions, some which will give you more information about the job, and some which delve deeper into the culture and goals of the company. The questions you ask, do as much to differentiate you from the competition as the questions asked by the interviewer.

Key questions for you to ask may include:

What are the most important skills for the job?

What are the company's long and short term goals?

What do you think gives this company an edge over its competitors?

What is the work environment like?

Why do you enjoy working for this company?

What are the opportunities for professional development?

When can I expect to hear from you?

Interview questions NOT to ask:

What does the company do?

If I get the job when can I book holidays?

Can I change my hours if I get the job?

Have I got the job?

Further Support and Links



Education, Training and Careers with Babcock

Tel: 0800 731 8199

The UK's Largest Provider of Work-Based Training. Delivering high quality government-funded and commercial training programmes within the workplace. Our Policy reflects the core values and guiding principles of 'being Babcock' and 'All together different – diversity at Babcock', the company ethos for equality, diversity and inclusion. Babcock believes that fairness and equality of opportunity are a fundamental human right for all. We wholeheartedly support the principles of equal opportunity and diversity for all, including but not limited to: its employees, subcontractors, other stakeholders, partners and customers. In recognition of our commitment, we are proud to be awarded Investors in Diversity, which validates the above, and Matrix status for the quality of our information, advice and guidance provision.

In addition to our own internal vacancies we work with many of our employer partners across the UK to assist in the recruitment of apprentices and trainees on their behalf.

To search and apply for apprenticeship and traineeship vacancies advertised by Babcock, [click here](#).

Careers Wales

Apprenticeship Matching Service (AMS) found on Careers Wales for vacancies advertised by Babcock.

Content available in English and Welsh language. Careerswales.com provides tools and resources along with information on jobs and training, pathways, careers advice, educational courses and events calendar.

Delni

This is part of the delni.gov Employment and Learning site and is for students completing a course of study within higher education. It brings benefits on many levels in terms of your future job, a degree can lead to increased earning potential, greater opportunities and a more rewarding career. For those already pursuing their careers, a higher education course can increase your employment prospects, and many employers have woken up to the value of ongoing lifelong learning programmes for their staff.

Careers Service Northern Ireland

Tel: 0300 200 7820

Careers Service NI's mission is to develop effective career decision makers leading to increased and appropriate participation in education, training and employment. Throughout Northern Ireland, Careers Advisers based in JobCentres, Jobs and Benefits Offices and Careers Offices provide an all age advice and guidance service, to help young people and adults make informed choices about their future career paths.

My World of Work

My World of Work has been developed by Skills Development Scotland as part of the Scottish Government's commitment to an all-ages careers service. My World of Work is online to help you through every stage of your working life, from school right up until you retire. Includes feature articles on a wide range of topics like choosing a career, learning and training, applying for jobs and making a career change.

Myjobscotland

myjobscotland is the national shared recruitment portal for Scotland's 32 local authorities. The recruitment portal has been designed to provide easy access to local authority jobs across the country and in doing so they have worked with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Scottish Human Rights Commission, the Equality Network and the Scottish Councils Equality Network, to ensure the site meets the needs of everyone.

The National Careers Service

Tel: 0800 100 900

The National Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential and impartial advice. This is supported by qualified careers advisers.

Rathbone

Rathbone is dedicated to working with young people who very often have not been successful in their secondary education. Many such young people require access to education and training opportunities that are tailored specifically to their learning and social support needs.

The Campaign for Learning

We are all born eager to learn. But for too many of us, our enthusiasm for learning wanes as we get older. To create a learning society, we must remain keen learners throughout our lives. The Campaign for Learning believes this can only happen when learning is understood, valued and accessible to everyone, as a right.

Graduate Prospects

Graduate Prospects is the UK's leading provider of information, advice and opportunities to students and graduates. They publish a wide collection of journals and directories, as well as provide an extensive graduate careers website.

The Department for Education

Tel: 0870 000 2288

The Department for Education is responsible for education and children's services in England. They work to achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for children and young people, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

Gov.UK

This site will help if you are at school, planning to go on to further or higher education, looking for training or interested in a student or career development loan.

Glossary of Terms

Some action words that you may want to use with application forms, CV's and covering letters.

WORD	DEFINITION
Accurately	Without errors or mistakes, precise.
Actively	Being fully involved.
Adapted	To adjust to different conditions, change to suit a new or different purpose.
Advised	To offer advice, to inform or notify.
Assisted	To give help or support. To work or act as an assistant to (another).
Carried out	To accomplish, to perform, to put into action.
Competently	Having sufficient knowledge, ability, to be capable.
Communicated	To exchange knowledge, information, thoughts, by speech, writing, gestures etc.
Consistently	To carry out a task efficiently time after time.
Co-ordinated	To organise events or tasks, to ensure that things work together in an agreeable way.
Delegated	To assign or allocate roles. To give duties or power to others.
Demonstrated	To show others, to prove by evidence.
Eliminated	To reduce, to take out, to get rid of, to remove.
Enabled	To make possible, allow, permit.
Exceeded	To go above and beyond, surpass, beat.
Facilitated	To make possible, to smooth the progress of something.
Improved	To make better, develop, expand, build up, increase.
Initiated	To start something, to begin or organise.
Introduced	To bring in, to establish, to put forward for approval.
Led	To show the way, direct, head up, pilot.
Motivated	To encourage, inspire to do something, to induce.
Organised	To be prepared, to plan, control or structure a situation.
Plan	A scheme, a strategy, an idea for doing something.
Produced	To be brought into existence, formed etc.
Responsibly	In a dependable, reliable manner.
Skilled	To be competent, trained, experienced in a task.
Trained	To be skilled, qualified, educated.



trusted to deliver™

For further information about Babcock, please visit our website, or contact us directly on the number below.

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