
2023-24



WORKSHOP FOUR

RESOURCES

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The documents included with the job advert, like the role description and person specification are your best friend when preparing for an application or interview.

Spend time reading these documents, concentrating on what skills and competencies they are looking for. Personally, I like to print them, highlight words, make notes and link them to stories that I can relate to the skill. Find your way of studying the documents.

Role Description

- Gives you an idea of what the job will entail - do you think you can do it? Does it excite you?
- You can match it to your previous experience
- Usually in order of what will take up the most time or what is the most important to the role.
- It will also explain the accountability of the role, who to, do you manage staff/volunteers etc

Person Specification

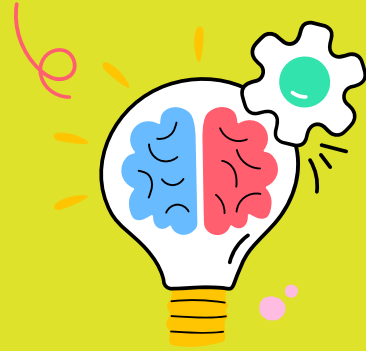
- This is usually the list of all the skills, competencies and experience that they want you to have
- Use this to see how to answer questions on the application form, or to construct your covering letter
- You can also see what competencies they may ask about in the interview - some will even tell you where/when they will be assessing these skills
- Again, they are usually in order of importance, so the top ones are the ones that are most important.

Information about the company

- Although I recommend independent study of the company online, this can be a good source of information about what their values are.
- Being knowledgeable about the organisation and what it does will vastly help you understand the role and interview better.
- It can show you that the organisation does not match you values, and so save you the time of applying for a job that would not make you happy!

Why it is important to recognise your transferable skills

- They prove your flexibility.
- Employers love them - they know you can do the job
- They let you know you can change roles easily
- They increase your employability.
- You already have them.
- You hone your transferable skills all the time.
- You won't lose them.



Match your transferable skills to those in the role description

Then, make sure that they are clear in your CV or application form, and think of examples you can talk about in the interview.

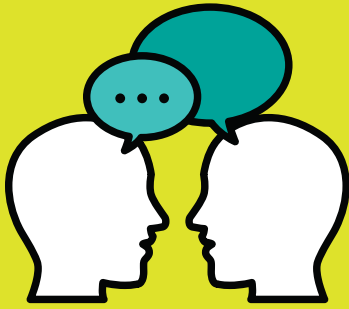
Below are some of the key transferable skills, look at which ones you have:

Communication skills

The most important transferable skill of them all.

Communication skills are crucial regardless of the situation. And it doesn't matter if you want to communicate an idea of yours to the world or have a conversation with a colleague.

Communication is a two-way process—it's about self-expression and listening to others. If you're unable to get your point across or focus on what you're being told, you clearly need to improve your communication and active listening skills.



- Use listening skills to understand oral instructions
- Learn new procedures
- Understand and carry out written instructions
- Orally convey information to others
- Observe and assess your own and others' performances
- Communicate in writing
- Use mathematical processes to solve problems
- Speak in public
- Demonstrate professionalism

People Skills

Put simply, these are the skills that you can get on with other people. It can be put as simply likeability or getting on with others, but there are skills in there that can be grown and nurtured.

- Provide constructive criticism
- Receive feedback
- Coordinate actions with other people's actions
- Negotiate, persuade, and influence people
- Motivate others
- Handle complaints
- Train or teach new skills
- Delegate work
- Oversee others' work
- Perform outreach
- Counsel people
- Build strong customer relationships
- Collaborate with others
- Mentor less experienced colleagues
- Resolve conflicts
- Develop relationships with suppliers
- Demonstrate comfort when dealing with all people
- Gain clients' or customers' confidence



Management Skills

You don't need to be a manager to have management skills.

Management skills cover a broad spectrum: from project management to people management to time management or action planning.

Take a look at the list of management skills to identify what you're good at.



- Oversee budgets
- Recruit personnel
- Review resumes
- Interview job candidates
- Select new hires
- Supervise employees
- Allocate resources such as equipment, materials, and facilities
- Schedule personnel
- Chair meetings
- Negotiate contracts
- Evaluate employees
- Organise committees
- Project Management
- Conflict resolution

Clerical Skills

We all need to do some admin, so keeping on top of the latest software and platforms your organisation uses helps you in every role.



- Perform general clerical and administrative support tasks
- Design forms, correspondence, and reports
- Manage records
- Take minutes at meetings
- Use word processing software
- Use database management software
- Use spreadsheet software
- Use desktop publishing software
- Use presentation software
- Perform data entry
- Keep track of accounts receivable, accounts payable, billing, and other bookkeeping tasks
- Screen telephone calls
- Greet visitors



Analytical, Research and Planning Skills

Of all transferable skills, employers value analytical skills the most.

Organisations need people who can look at things, research and analyse them and sort problems out.



- Identify and present problems to upper management
- Anticipate and prevent problems from occurring or reoccurring
- Use critical thinking skills to make decisions or evaluate possible solutions to problems
- Solve problems
- Brain storming
- Deal with unexpected situations
- Define the organisation's or department's needs
- Set goals
- Prioritise tasks
- Locate and reach out to suppliers or sub-contractors
- Analyse information and forecast results
- Manage your time and meet deadlines
- Plan and implement events and activities
- Create and implement new policies and procedures
- Develop a budget
- Coordinate and develop programs
- Document procedures and results
- Produce reports
- Conduct research using the Internet and library resources
- Generate ideas
- Implement new strategies

Computer and Technical Skills:

We're living in a world where technological competence is a must-have. Even when your role isn't in technology, you are expected to have basic technical skills.

These technical and computer skills are easily transferable from one job to another, and the more you're able to offer, the higher your employability.



- Use computer software that is related to job
- Use job-related equipment and machinery
- Install software on computers
- Use the Internet, including email and search engines
- Social Media
- Use office equipment such as printers, copiers, and fax machines
- Troubleshoot problems with hardware and software
- Install equipment
- Troubleshoot problems with and repair equipment
- Maintain equipment
- Inspect equipment to identify problems

Leadership

Leadership and management skills are often conflated, but they aren't the same.

Management is about efficiency. Leadership is about inspiration. It requires possessing a strong set of interpersonal skills.

Leaders motivate and set a model to follow



- Motivation
- Coaching
- Delegation
- Decision making
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Giving feedback
- Commitment
- Strategic thinking
- Critical thinking
- Communication
- Influencing





- Keep your CV Simple, Structured, Succinct and Significant
- Market yourself. Sell yourself – highlight your strengths.
- Tailor your CV to the advertised position. Read the job description and role description carefully and look for the key words. Repeat these – or similar ones - in your CV and covering letter.

- Give examples of how you have demonstrated key skills.
- Put in a competence/strengths summary - matched to the role
- List things in time order – most recent first.
- List your employment history as achievements not as responsibilities or duties.
- Make your name stand out clearly in the top centre of the first page. Also include here your address, contact numbers and email. (you can also add your LinkedIn profile)
- Use a good template, Microsoft Office have a few and so do Canva.
- Use bullet points rather than long paragraphs; but make sure they aren't over brief.
- Spell check your CV and ask someone to proof read it for you. Check the grammar.
- Make use of your transferable skills, highlight them throughout the document with good examples, and in your competency statement
- If you have career gaps, you can explain why, briefly - i.e. illness, maternity etc.
- If there is no application form and chance for you to sell yourself further, ensure you write a covering letter to go with your CV, make sure that it is tailored to the role.

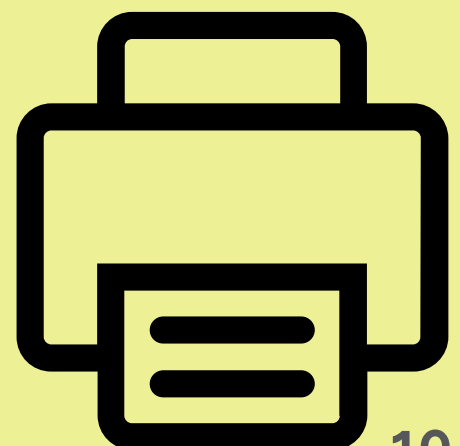


Dont's

- Under or oversell. Its like perfume – too much or too little doesn't work.
- Be tempted to be wacky or to use humour.
- List every qualification/ training course/hobby/ interest – just list the relevant ones.
- Put in things, which might bias someone against you – e.g. political affiliations.
- Use jargon, which the interviewer might not understand
- Use clichés.
- Lay out your whole life – warts and all.
- **Lie.**

If you have to print it!

- Keep it to two sides
- Use plain, light coloured paper as it is easier to copy
- Fold your CV – instead buy an A4 envelope
- Use too much colour.
- Don't underline headings (it can confuse a scanner).



Asking Questions in the Interview

We all know that it is a good idea to ask questions in an interview, but we often draw a blank.

Asking questions at the end of the interview can have a few positive outcomes:

- Showing your interest in the role
- Showing your interest in the organisation
- Demonstrating that you have ambition beyond the current role
- Find out more about the organisation so you can make YOUR decision



Top Tips

- Avoid closed questions, those that just require a yes or no answer
- Don't ask too many questions, two or three should be enough - have more prepared in case they have already come up
- If all your questions are answered in the course of the interview, let them know - at least then they will see what you have thought of
- Don't use over confident questions - like "When do I start?"
- You don't have to wait until the end - if you have a question that makes sense to ask in a different part of the interview - like a conversation - do that then



Asking Questions in the Interview

Role orientated questions

What do you think is the most challenging aspect of the job?

Can you elaborate on the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?

Is this a new position? If not, why did the person before me leave this role?

How does this position contribute to the company overall?

What are the team's biggest strengths and challenges?

What is the performance review process like here? How often would I be formally reviewed?

What metrics or goals will my performance be evaluated against?

What are the current goals that the company is focused on, and how does this team work to support hitting those goals?

Can you tell me about the team I'll be working with?

Company orientated questions

Are there any upcoming initiatives or projects you're especially interested in?

What's different about working here than anywhere else you've worked?

What is your favorite thing about working for this company?

What are the biggest challenges the company is facing right now?

What do you think encourages employees to stay at this company?

How does the company ensure it's upholding its values?



Asking Questions in the Interview

How has the company changed since you joined?

How long have you been with the company?

What's been your best moment at this company?

Wrap-up questions

What does your onboarding process look like?

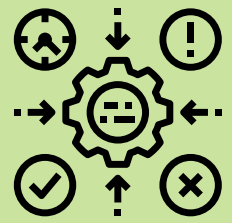
What learning and professional development opportunities are available to your employees?

Have I answered all your questions?

Do you need me to clarify or elaborate on anything regarding my suitability for the position?

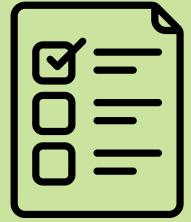
Situation

Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.



Task

Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.



Action

Explain exactly what steps you took to address it.



Result & Reflection

Share what outcomes your actions achieved.



STAR

S

At the start of the Covid pandemic, the organisation I worked for had to stop all volunteering while the situation was assessed.

T

I was tasked with identifying training needs, arranging training, sorting access needs, and ways of working for all volunteers.

A


Liaised with all operational departments
Spoke with the board and senior leadership to find their concerns

Liaised with internal departments such as IT
Met with volunteers to understand their needs

R

Produced training materials and a guide
Produced new processes for the volunteers to follow
Got all volunteers back to work
Gave regular feedback to staff and board

STAR

STAR Checklist	
Have you given some detail about the background and context to the situation you are describing? i.e. when, where	
Did you describe the challenge and expectation? i.e. what needed to be done and why?	
Did you use an appropriate situation for the job you are applying for?	
Was it an interesting example?	
Did you clearly explain the action that you took i.e. what you did, how you did it and the tools that you used?	
Did you focus on your own contribution to the task?	
Did you explain the results of your efforts? i.e. What did you accomplish?	
Did you give concrete and measurable outcomes?	
Did you explain how your managers and team responded and how they recognised you?	
Did you say what they had learnt from the experience and how you might do things differently?	

Ted talks for before an interview:

[Full Playlist](#)

If you have any suggestions you want to share with us all of Ted Talks you have enjoyed, email them in to us or start a conversation on Pushfar!

RECOMENDED PODCASTS



The Career Tool Podcast

<https://open.spotify.com/show/4gqcJ6VbKCZBYobm2jcS30>

The Career Career Change Makeover

<https://open.spotify.com/show/3VO2CDpikhgFc8HqYULQEE>

Squiggly Careers

<https://open.spotify.com/show/6t6vYEeYl3KmdoAE6v3xj>

Career Talk - Learn, Grow, Thrive

<https://open.spotify.com/show/6sY90mdRx78qRAQKV8xEJe>

Additional and free online training that is available

One of my mottos is "Every day is a school day"

Continual learning through our lives happens naturally, if we are open to it, but there are a lot of free options out there to get additional learning and development.

Here are a few examples:


OpenLearn is the free courses from Open University and has thousands of free courses for you to choose from. Here are a selection that might be useful to you at the moment, but there are plenty to have a look at:

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>

KEEP LEARNING



REFLECTIONS



Don't hesitate to get in touch if you want more information or support during your journey:

General queries to HDN and the Mentoring team;



Mentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk



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Socials

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