

FREE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Careers & Employability

A practical guide for learners: understanding your strengths, exploring opportunities and preparing for the world of work.

Workplace **Hero**

workplacehero.co.uk

Learning objectives

By the end of this resource you should be able to:

Identify	Explore	Prepare	Develop
Recognise the skills, strengths and experiences you can offer.	Find ways to investigate different careers and opportunities.	Understand what can strengthen an application and interview.	Identify practical next steps for your own career development.

Your career isn't just your first job

Careers can include:

- different jobs
- promotions
- career changes
- further study
- apprenticeships
- self-employment
- freelance work
- periods of retraining

Priorities and opportunities change. Career development is ongoing - and every route is a legitimate one.



Know yourself

There is no test that can tell you your perfect career. Start by asking:

- What am I good at?
- What do I enjoy?
- What matters to me?
- What have I learned?
- What type of environment suits me?
- What skills do I already have?

Activity: Write down three strengths - and one example of when you used each.

You have more skills than you think

Transferable skills include communication, teamwork, problem solving, organisation, digital skills, customer service, creativity, adaptability, leadership, reliability, research, presenting and numeracy. You build them through work, education, volunteering, caring, projects, hobbies, sport and community activity.

Instead of	"I am a good communicator."
Try	"I regularly explained technical information to customers and adapted my language to their experience."

Show evidence, not just adjectives.

Explore your options

Don't rely on job titles alone. Find out:

- what the role actually involves
- skills required
- entry routes
- qualifications
- typical working environment
- progression
- location and flexibility
- current opportunities
- salary information, where reliable
- whether it fits your priorities

Useful starting point: National Careers Service job profiles - nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

What do employers look for?

Requirements vary by role. Commonly valued behaviours may include:

- reliability
- communication
- willingness to learn
- teamwork
- problem solving
- professionalism
- adaptability
- role-specific technical skills

Read the actual vacancy. The employer is telling you what matters for that role.

Reading a job advert

Example vacancy: Junior Operations Assistant (fictional)

Requirement	"Ability to work effectively as part of a team."
Weaker	"I am a good team player."
Stronger	"During my final project I worked in a team of five to build a new product. I took responsibility for coordinating testing and helped resolve issues before our deadline."



CVs and applications

- tailor each application
- prioritise relevant evidence
- use clear language
- check spelling and accuracy
- quantify achievements where useful
- explain your impact
- follow the instructions
- keep everything truthful

There is no single correct CV format. Your CV should make it easy to understand:



Interviews

Before

Research the organisation and role.
Reread your application. Prepare evidence. Plan travel or tech.

During

Listen to the question. Take a moment to think. Answer clearly with evidence. Ask for clarification if needed.

SITUATION



TASK



ACTION



RESULT

Focus on ACTION: what YOU actually did.

Your digital professional identity

- a professional email address
- appropriate voicemail and contact details
- LinkedIn, where useful
- a portfolio or GitHub, where relevant
- a sensible online presence
- checked privacy settings
- professional communication

Present yourself deliberately online - show the professional side you want people to find.

AI and your job search

AI can help with

Brainstorming, improving structure, practising interview questions, checking clarity and spotting transferable skills.

Never let AI invent

Qualifications, experience, skills, achievements, employers or references.

Always review and personalise anything AI produces - it should sound like you and be true.

AI can help you communicate your experience. It should not manufacture experience you do not have.

Rejection and resilience

Not getting a role does not necessarily mean you were a poor candidate. Decisions depend on competition, role fit, evidence, experience and employer priorities.



It is normal to feel disappointed. Talk it through with someone you trust, then plan your next step.

Your next 30 days

My goal

One role or career I will research

One skill I will develop

One person or service I will speak to

One application or career action I will complete

Date I will review my progress

Small actions build careers.

Where can you get support?

- your tutor or trainer
- a careers adviser
- your provider's careers or apprenticeship team
- your employer, manager or mentor
- National Careers Service
- Jobcentre Plus, where appropriate
- professional bodies
- industry networks

My organisation's careers contact Name / Email / Other support

About this resource

This resource is designed for tutors and trainers to use as an introduction to careers and employability.

It supports career learning but does not replace personalised, impartial careers guidance. It makes no guarantee of employment outcomes.

Content reviewed: 25 September 2026 Suggested next review: 25 September 2027.
Reviewed earlier where relevant legislation or official guidance changes.

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