



Guide for the Older Workforce

A guide to assist information,
advice and guidance practitioners

**ADVICE
RESOURCES**

CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	3
Overview	4
Snapshot of older people in the UK	5
SECTION ONE: CAREER DEVELOPMENT	9
Raising clients' self-awareness	
Unit 1 Four steps to career development	10
Unit 2 Lifeline review	20
Unit 3 Personality preferences - what makes me tick?	24
Unit 4 A look at your values	30
Unit 5 Wheel of Life	32
Unit 6 Strengths and areas for development	35
Unit 7 Learning styles	38
Unit 8 Employability skills	42
Unit 9 Career drivers	50
Setting goals	
Unit 10 Ticket to the future	52
Unit 11 Setting Goals	56
Making an impact	
Overview Just the job - from the BBC	59
Unit 12 CVs and application forms	62
Unit 13 Job Search	69
Unit 14 Competency based interviews - a look behind the scenes	72
Professional older workers	
Unit 15 Working with professional clients	79
SECTION TWO - WORLD OF WORK	93
Infosheet 1 Working with employers/Age legislation	94
Infosheet 2 Jobcentre Plus	98
Infosheet 3 Self-employment	100
Infosheet 4 Flexible working	104
Infosheet 5 Dealing with redundancy	107

CONTENTS

SECTION THREE: MONEY MATTERS	111
Infosheet 6 Retirement/Pensions/Financial Planning	112
SECTION FOUR: HEALTH AND CARING	117
Infosheet 7 Ill Health	118
Infosheet 8 Disability	123
Infosheet 9 Caring for others	124
SECTION FIVE: FREE TIME	125
Infosheet 10 Volunteering	126
Infosheet 11 Travel/Career breaks	128
SECTION SIX: LIFELONG LEARNING	129
Infosheet 12 Learning and qualifications	130
Infosheet 13 Skills for Life	134
CASE STUDIES	142
USEFUL CONTACTS	146

INTRODUCTION

- **Who is this guide for?**

This guide is for practitioners advising older clients who wish to stay in employment, or return to work or learning, including nextstep advisers , Careers Advice Service career coaches, advice and guidance practitioners in higher and further education, Jobcentre Plus advisers working with older clients in the broad information, advice and guidance (IAG) field.

- **What does the guide cover?**

This guide provides information, advice and ideas on topics that impact on older workers and the barriers they face when staying in work or returning to work or learning. Topics include self-awareness, career development, the changing world of work, ill health and caring for others. Information is also provided on learning and qualifications and skills for life.

- **How should I use the guide?**

The guide is divided into seventeen sections. Exercises have been included for advisers to use directly with clients on a group or one-to-one basis. Advisers' Notes provide an overview of the exercises and are included at the start of each activity. In some sections infosheets providing details of other organisations and websites are also available.

- **The information in this guide**

We have noted some of the recommendations suggested in the *Challenging Age* research project on Information, Advice and Guidance for Older Age Groups commissioned from the The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) and published by the former Department for Education and Skills (DfES). We have produced useful exercises and infosheets to assist advisers deliver a client-centred service when assisting this particular client group.

- **Who produced this guide?**

This guide was produced on behalf of advice-resources by CfBT Advice and Guidance Ltd.

- **How can you give feedback?**

If you have comments about this guide for advisers please send them to ca-advice-resources@lsc.gov.uk

(Last updated August 2007)

OVERVIEW

Guide for the Older Workforce

Older workers often face barriers when staying in employment or returning to learning or work. This guide hopes to provide useful solutions to assist IAG advisers working with this client group to overcome these barriers and provide a tailored approach to meeting their individual needs. Remember that these individuals are all different.

Older people are as disparate as any other group and can include:

- those who may have lower skills and ability levels
- career changers
- those who wish to change their life style
- professional older workers
- those whose aim is to continue working after retirement age
- those who are longer term unemployed and now seeking to return to the workplace.

Whilst it is important to meet each client's needs, there are inevitably some concerns that commonly re-occur, eg concerns about loss of confidence in own abilities; lack of awareness of what one can offer and how to present this effectively. Older people also share similar barriers to employment and learning.

Clients in this group need skilled and empathetic IAG workers who will listen to their story and who are genuinely interested and concerned in helping them resolve their difficulties.

The exercises, activities and information contained in the guide can be used with clients on a one-to-one basis, or in a group session. However, clients may wish to complete some of the exercises at home and not during the IAG session. Those exercises designed to raise self awareness require clients to reflect on past actions and events during their long career, and understandably, they may require some time to accurately recall this information.

SNAPSHOT OF OLDER PEOPLE IN THE UK

POPULATION

- There were **20.0 million** people **aged 50** and over in the UK in 2003.
- The number is projected to **increase** by a further **36 per cent** by 2031, when there will be 27.2 million people aged 50 and over.
- **Older women** outnumber **older men**, as death rates are higher among men than among women.

Sources:

Population estimates, Office for National Statistics
Population projections, Government Actuary's Department
Census 2001, Office for National Statistics
Census 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

LABOUR MARKET

- The employment rates of men and women aged between 50 and state pension age (SPA) in Great Britain were 72 per cent and 68 per cent respectively in spring 2004.
- Most workers, irrespective of their age, are employees. However, self-employment is more common among older workers than among those under 50.
- Men in their 50s who were **self-employed** were much more likely than those who were employees to still be working **ten years** later.
- Both men and women who have been economically active seem to leave the labour market at an **earlier age** than 25 years ago (when the series first began in 1979).
- **Part-time** work may act as a bridge between full-time work and retirement.
- Over **nine tenths of older people** who were out of work were economically inactive rather than unemployed.
- About **1.2 million** Incapacity Benefit claimants in the UK, almost half the total, were aged between 50 and SPA in February 2005.
- Over a third of people aged 50-69 in Great Britain who have retired considered that they were **forced** into retirement.
- People in the 50-69 group were more likely to have **no formal qualifications** and much less likely to have an income from a private pension, compared with those who retired voluntarily.

Sources:

Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics
Family Resources Survey, Department for Work and Pensions

SNAPSHOT OF OLDER PEOPLE IN THE UK

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

- Older women are more likely than older men to live alone and the proportion increases with advancing age.
- The majority of older men live in a married or cohabiting couple family, though the proportion declines with age.
- Cohabitation is becoming more common among people in their 50s, and again the proportion declines with age.
- Widowhood is common among women at older ages: 6 per cent of women aged 50-59 are widowed compared with 79 per cent of those aged 85 and over.

Sources:
General Household Survey, Office of National Statistics
Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
Census, April 2001, General Register for Scotland

HOUSING

- Most **older households** in Great Britain (where the reference person was aged 50 or over) lived in **owner-occupied** homes in 2003/04.
- Over **half** owned their homes outright and just under a **quarter** were **buying** their home with a **mortgage**.
- **One in five** older households lived in **social housing**, rented from the social sector and one in twenty rented privately. The proportion of older households living in social rented accommodation **increased** with age.
- **Marital status** also has an impact on **older peoples' housing** circumstances. Widowed, married and single older households were most likely to live in homes owned outright (60 per cent, 55 per cent and 49 per cent respectively).
- **Divorced** or **separated** older households were most likely to live in **social rented** property.

Sources:
General Household Survey, Office for National Statistics
English House Condition Survey, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

SNAPSHOT OF OLDER PEOPLE IN THE UK

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- **Women** can expect to **live longer** than **men**, with life expectancy at birth in the UK being **75.9 years** for men and **80.5 years** for women in 2002.
- However, women are also more likely to have more years in poor health.
- The proportion of older people with a long-term illness or disability (LLTI) that restricts their daily activities increases with age.
- Many people in the older age groups still consider themselves to be in good health, even if they have a long-term illness which restricts their daily activities.

Source:

General Household Survey, Office for National Statistics

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics; Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

INCOME, WEALTH AND EXPENDITURE

- Over the last 8 years pensioners' incomes in Great Britain have risen faster than average earnings. Net income rose by 28 per cent between 1995/96 and 2003/04.
- The level of **income** older people receive **falls** with age.
- The proportion of pensioners living on low incomes in Great Britain has fallen over the past decade, from 26 per cent in 1995/96 to 20 per cent in 2003/04. However, the proportion of working-age people on low incomes in 2003/04 was substantially lower at 14 per cent.
- As people get older and retire from the labour market their sources of income change. People in their 50s get most of their income from employment and self-employment (80 per cent). This falls to just 10 per cent for those in their 70s. State benefits (which include the state retirement pension) are the main source of income for pensioners.
- Differences in pensioners' incomes can also be a reflection of their working lives.
- People with **broken work records**, such as women who have taken on caring responsibilities, are likely to have accrued **lower levels** of private or state pensions.

Sources:

Family Resources Survey, Department for Work and Pensions

English Longitudinal Study of Ageing 2002, University College London

SNAPSHOT OF OLDER PEOPLE IN THE UK

LIFESTYLE

- In 2002 around three in ten men aged 80 and over and nearly one in five women in England said they owned a mobile phone. Use of **mobile phones** and the **Internet** can help older people to remain **independent** by making it easier for them to communicate with their family and friends or to access public and commercial services.
- As people age and their working lives end, they may have **more free time** available to spend on leisure activities. However, a variety of barriers to more active leisure pursuits may exist. These include health and mobility problems, poor transport and lack of finance.
- People's ability to travel affects their quality of life. Older people's travelling patterns depend in a large measure on their health and general mobility which are likely to be lower as they get older.
- Car usage declines with age and varies by sex. **Fewer older women** than men have access to a **car**: 77 per cent of men and 64 per cent of women aged 65-74 in 2001 in Great Britain. Among those aged 75 and over these proportions were far lower at 57 per cent and 34 per cent respectively.
- People over 60 are more likely than those in their 50s to use public transport. In 2002, 23 per cent of women and 11 per cent of men aged 70-74 in England said they use public transport a lot, compared with 14 and 10 per cent of those aged 50-54.
- Participation in volunteering, cultural and sporting activities also changes as people get older. People aged **65-74** have the **highest** levels of **volunteering** of all older people.
- More **older** people are also choosing to participate in **education** and **learn new skills** including the use of **computers** and **Internet**. In 2002, **51 per cent** of those aged 60 to 69 in England and Wales engaged in some form of learning as opposed to 47 per cent in 1997.
- Older people's lifestyles can be affected by fear of crime. Although people aged 60 and over worry less about crime than those aged 16-59, the older people felt more afraid of walking alone after dark. Women aged 60 and over were more likely than men of the same age to feel unsafe: one in three women compared with one in ten men in England and Wales.

Source: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing 2002, University College London

For more information visit the National Statistics website: Focus on older people
www.statistics.gov.uk/focuson/olderpeople/

SECTION ONE: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

1

SECTION ONE: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

This section includes exercises that will help raise clients' self-awareness by focusing on their skills, preferences, values, strengths and areas for development. Once clients feel more confident in their abilities and skills, they can then focus on their own individual needs when considering employment and career options.

Raising clients' self-awareness

- Unit 1 Four steps to career development
Career Development Plan
- Unit 2 Lifeline review
- Unit 3 Personality preferences - what makes me tick?
- Unit 4 A look at your values
- Unit 5 Wheel of life
- Unit 6 Strengths and areas for development
- Unit 7 Learning styles
- Unit 8 Employability skills
- Unit 9 Career drivers

Setting goals

- Unit 10 Ticket to the future
- Unit 11 Setting Goals

Making an impact

- Overview Just the job
- Unit 12 CVs and application forms
- Unit 13 Job Search
- Unit 14 Competency based interviews - a look behind the scenes

Professional older workers

- Unit 15 Working with professional clients

ADVISERS' NOTES

Advisers' notes are included at the beginning of each unit. The notes provide an overview of the unit, the aims and objectives and how it can benefit clients.

FOUR STEPS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this section clients should be able to:

- identify the four steps to successful career management
- focus on the need to prepare a Career Development Plan for their future

The four-steps to career development are:

■ Step 1 – Self knowledge

Even though they have been in the workplace for many years, a large percentage of older workers continue to undervalue their skills, experience and knowledge. The first step in the career management process helps clients discover more about themselves and what they have to offer, which in turn helps build their confidence making it easier to manage career plans.

■ Step 2 – Check out the world of work

Many older workers may never have had the opportunity to undertake career matching exercises or skills assessments to help them discover the most suitable areas of work for them. This step focuses on establishing their needs in the workplace, what they like to do, and how they can use their skills to their best advantage.

■ Step 3 – Set goals and make decisions

Small steps are often the best way to achieve major goals. Step 3 concentrates on breaking down clients' short and long term goals into realistic steps to ensure success.

■ Step 4 – Now, down to action

The last step is a call to action and moves clients on to the final step in their career management, eg redesigning their CV, booking a training course, or learning a new skill.

Older people often lack confidence and distrust their own abilities, especially after negative experiences and trauma. A main function of the IAG worker is to help older clients to regain motivation and self-belief.

Challenging Age: TAEN

FOUR STEPS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

STEP 1 : SELF-KNOWLEDGE

ACTIVITY 1

Working out who they are

About the task

It is often difficult for this client group to come up with a good description of themselves. Most clients think they can, but an in-depth look into their preferences, skills, values and motivations may surprise them.

Getting organised

The tools provided in this section, eg activities, quizzes and exercises all help clients get to know themselves and go on a journey of self discovery.

Which resources to use?

- Unit 1 **Four steps to career development – Handout 1.1**
Helps to break down career management into four easy steps. Includes a copy of a Career Development Plan to collate information.
- Unit 2 **Lifeline review – Handout 2.1**
Exercise to help determine the positive and negative factors of past jobs.
- Unit 3 **Personality preferences - what makes me tick? – Handout 3.1**
Short quiz focusing on personality preferences and how they can impact on our behaviour.
- Unit 4 **A look at your values – Handout 4.1**
List of values to establish what is important to each individual.
- Unit 5 **Wheel of life – Handout 5.1**
Short exercise to determine which areas of life are satisfactory and which areas need more attention.
- Unit 6 **Strengths and areas for development – Handout 6.1**
Quiz to establish strengths and areas for development.
- Unit 7 **Learning styles quiz – Handout 7.1**
Short questionnaire covers the three learning styles, visual, auditory and dynamic.
- Unit 8 **Employability skills – Handout 8.1 – 8.2**
Websites offering online assessments/employability skills quiz.
- Unit 9 **Career drivers – Handout 9.1**
Looking at the different aspects of work and putting them into order of importance.

Case Studies for client motivation

FOUR STEPS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

STEP 2: CHECK OUT THE WORLD OF WORK

★ ACTIVITY 2

Checking out the options available

About the task

Now clients have a clear idea of what they have to offer and what they want out of life, they can look at options in different work areas and decide which ones are most suitable for them.

Getting organised

Once clients have identified the tasks and activities they like to do, it should be easier for them to determine whether a job or particular career will fit their needs. Clients who are still uncertain could benefit from careers matching programmes such as *Skills and Interests Assessment* on www.advice-resources.co.uk or similar at this point.

The websites listed below can be very useful in breaking down the skillset required for future job roles. Clients should demonstrate their key skills on their CV or during a job interview, so checking the skills needed in a particular job role beforehand can provide helpful information.

Resources

www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u

<http://careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/helpwithyourcareer/jobprofiles/>

www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Explore_types_of_jobs/plmjlX

For those clients with a basic skills need, the Basic Skills Agency has produced useful *Survival Skills in workplace* leaflets in a variety of work settings to help clients and IAG advisers work out the skills gaps with clients.



Administration
 Catering and Hospitality
 Childcare and Education
 Construction Industry
 Direct care
 Hairdressing
 Horticulture
 Motor Vehicle Servicing
 Policeforce **new**
 Retail
 Working in a Gym **new**
 Working a Travel Agency **new**

The survival guides are to help people of all ages to make choices about vocational courses and careers. The leaflets provide accessible information about the reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematical demands of a range of occupations. They are available to download free of charge from the Basic Skills Agency website: www.basic-skills.co.uk enter 'Skills and Work' on the web search facility or order copies from the helpline 0870 600 2400.

More information on **Skills for Life** can be found in section six of this guide.

FOUR STEPS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

STEP 3: SET GOALS AND MAKE DECISIONS

★ ACTIVITY 3

Putting everything into context

About the task

Once a client has raised their self-awareness and looked at the world of work for possible job opportunities, it's time to put everything into context, set goals for the future and make decisions.

Getting organised

You will be helping the client gather the facts for each career option and weighing up how well that career will suit each individual's wants and needs. The client now needs to consider the realities of the job market and perhaps be prepared to make compromises as they choose a path to follow.

Which resources to use?

Unit 10 Ticket to the future – Handout 10.1

Unit 11 Setting Goals – Handout 11.1

Case Studies for client motivation

STEP 4: NOW, DOWN TO ACTION

ACTIVITY 4

★ Now, down to action

About the task

Clients may require new skills or further training and education. If clients already have employability skills they should be moving on to the job search and job interviews.

Getting organised

Some older workers may have to overcome barriers, some of which come from the individuals themselves (fear of failure, perfectionism, low self-esteem) or from their environment (family pressures, economy, ill health). Preparing a CV or attending a job interview can be very worrying if they are unaware of today's recruitment practices.

Which resources to use?

Unit 12 CVs and application forms – Handout 12.1

Unit 13 Job Search – Handout 13.1

Unit 14 Competency based interviews - a look behind the scenes – Handout 14.1

CV Builder from advice-resources website www.advice-resources.co.uk

Clients should complete the Career Development Plan regularly to monitor their progress.

FOUR STEPS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

STEP 1. SELF-AWARENESS



Do you know your skills?

Are you aware of your strengths and limitations?

Do you know your values?

Fill in a **Career Development Plan** as you work through the exercises and see all you have to offer a future employer.

STEP 2. CHECK OUT THE WORLD OF WORK

What do you want from a job?

Do you want to earn a lot of money? Are you looking for status?

Do you want to work with others in a team? Or do you like working on your own?

How far do you want to travel to work? How many hours do you want to work?

Take time to think about what you want from work. What is important to you?

The career drivers exercise can help you find out what you want from a job

STEP 3. SETTING GOALS AND MAKING DECISIONS

Now you know what you have to offer.

You know what you want from work.

The next step is setting your goals and making it all happen.

Each small step can make a difference - why not make a start today?

Your adviser can provide exercises that can help you set goals for the future

STEP 4. NOW, DOWN TO ACTION

You may need new skills or more training, your CV may need updating.

Action is now required if you want to move forward.

If you come across any barriers think about how you can overcome them.

Your adviser has exercises that can help you redesign your CV and prepare for your job interview.

Discuss this with your adviser who will help you complete a **Career Development Plan**

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A career development plan is the tool which you can use to plot and record your career development. Your adviser can provide you with exercises that are designed to help you work out your skills, values, strengths, personality preferences and much more, the results of which can be transferred to your Career Development Plan.

What should you include in your Career Development Plan?

Your career development plan will be a mixture of career-related documents and material that you have collected, plus your own notes, details of the goals you have set yourself for the future, and generally how you think and feel about your career.

Consider including:

- job appraisals
- performance reviews
- up to date copy of your CV
- copies of job descriptions
- evidence of your achievements
- when you have received positive feedback
- letters or emails from your boss or colleagues praising your work.

Start collecting copies of job adverts that interest you. Even if your longer term goal is to stay within your current company, this will help you to identify the kinds of roles that attract you, and you can start to build up a picture of the skills and qualities you'll need for those roles.

Think about your likes and dislikes. Include the answers to the self-awareness exercises and start to build up a picture of what it is you are really looking for in your career.

Set yourself short, medium and long term objectives in relation to what you want to achieve, and make sure these are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely. It's important that you include short and medium term goals in your wider career plan to keep you motivated.

IMPORTANT

Keeping a career development plan should be an ongoing process. Be proactive about updating and reviewing it. You should be honest with yourself about your goals, likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses.

Buy a folder and keep everything you think is important to your career development inside, this will help you organise your paperwork.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

My personality preferences are:

Energy/Communication:

Taking in information:

Making decisions:

How I live my life:

My top five values are:

Value No.1

Value No.2

Value No.3

Value No.4

Value No.5

Areas in my Wheel of Life that need more attention:

Area No.1

Area No.2

Area No.3

Area No.4

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

My strengths are:

Strength No.1

Strength No.2

Strength No.3

Strength No.4

Strength No.5

My learning style is:

.....

My key skills are:

Skill No.1

Skill No.2

Skill No.3

Skill No.4

Skill No.5

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

My career drivers are:

No.1

No.2

No.3

No.4

No.5

Setting goals:

My Goal No.1 is:

The goal is important because:

Steps I'll take to reach this goal:

My Goal No.2 is:

The goal is important because:

Steps I'll take to reach this goal:

LIFELINE REVIEW

OVERVIEW

This unit is designed to encourage clients to reflect on the reasons why they didn't enjoy some jobs, but loved others. They need to be reassured that many people have, at one time or another, not always enjoyed some aspect of the job they were doing. The most important point is that they have a clear idea of what they enjoyed in their past jobs.

Aims:

To determine what clients found to be the negative and positive factors in their past jobs/careers.

Objectives:

- To examine the issues that caused them to feel dissatisfied in past job roles.
- To examine the issues that caused them to feel satisfied in past job roles.
- To establish what they need to do to avoid the negative factors reoccurring.
- To consider how they will address these issues today, to avoid possible dissatisfaction.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit clients will be able to:

1. State clearly any negative areas they wish to avoid in their next job role.
2. Recall the times when they have enjoyed job roles, and the reasons why this is so.
3. Describe the occasions when they have had to change their career plans, either of their own accord or due to forced circumstances.

INSTRUCTIONS

Clients are asked to plot their past career on a chart (lifeline). They should add the highs (positives) and lows (negatives) of their career to date.

Clients may wish to take this exercise home and spend some time thinking about their career history to date. It may take time to remember issues from some years ago.



Attention!

Personal issues may have affected their career choices. When delivering this exercise in a group situation, advisers may wish to remind clients that no information need be shared with others, unless they are happy to do so.

LIFELINE REVIEW

INSTRUCTIONS

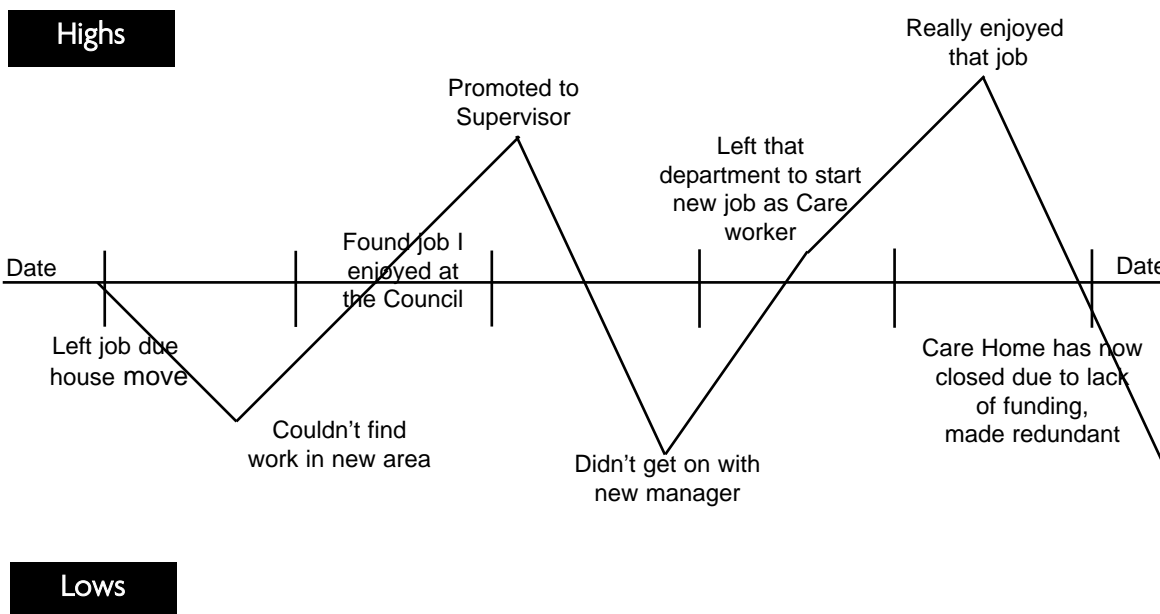
This unit asks you to remember some of the highs and lows that you have had in your career up until now.

1. You are going to draw a lifeline to help you think about the pattern of your career so far. You'll be asked to refer back to the line later.
2. Note down any high or low factors that have happened during your career. Draw these in the form of a diagram like the example below.

It should show the highs and lows of your career to date.

EXAMPLE

Put the dates on the timeline, it could be a ten-year period. Then write brief details of your career to date, reflecting on the highs and lows.



Please note:

You can always use one or more charts to look at each ten years of your career if you have had lots of jobs.

For a larger A4 version of the lifetime review chart - see overleaf.

Source: Crown copyright June 2006

LIFELINE REVIEW

? Questions

Explore your lifeline

Use your career lifeline to answer the following:

What does the lifeline say about you and how you have approached your career?

.....

Is your line going up and down? Or is it steadily moving along?

.....

Did you decide to change direction or were others involved, if so, who are they?

.....

What were the factors that caused your line to go down to the low zone?

.....

What were the factors that caused your line to go up to the high zone?

.....

What lessons can you learn from the lifeline?

.....

Is there anything you can do to improve your line now?

.....

PERSONALITY PREFERENCES

OVERVIEW

There has been a great deal of research undertaken on personality preferences which goes back to the ancient Greeks. In the 1920s, Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung believed that although we are all unique, we also have similar preferences to other people.

Personality preferences occur in our everyday lives and help us to understand ourselves and others. In this unit clients will investigate their own preferences when undertaking everyday tasks.

ACTIVITY

Clients are given a short questionnaire (Handout 3.1) asking them to choose between two choices when answering the following four questions:

- a) Where is your flow of energy? Are you OUTGOING or RESERVED?
- b) How do you take in information? Do you like FACTS or IDEAS?
- c) How do you make decisions? With your HEAD or your HEART?
- d) How do you live your life? Are you ORGANISED or FLEXIBLE?



ACTIVITY

Once clients have established their preferred way of operating, they will become aware of how their behaviour (or preference) can work for them, or against them, in a career or job search environment.



Questions to show how certain behaviour can impact on job related situations

1. How they communicate during a job interview
2. How they take in information when conducting a job search
3. How they make decisions on changing a job
4. How they prepare for the journey to the job interview

Handout 3.2 on p28–29 aims to provide clients with examples of how certain behaviour can impact on job related situations

Please note: This exercise is solely for information purposes and should not be confused with the Myers Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) which has copyright restrictions.

More information:

Clients can access the 'What am I like?' personality questionnaire devised by the BBC and OPP which is featured on the BBC website. It is a simplified personality test, devised by psychologists.

It is not a replacement for the full Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® questionnaire and the results are not intended to be the psychometric or practical equivalent to MBTI® questionnaire. However, it is very helpful if clients wish to learn more about personality preferences. Visit the BBC link here:

www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/surveys/whatamilike/index.shtml

PERSONALITY PREFERENCES

WHAT MAKES ME TICK?

In this unit we will look at your personality preferences.

What are personality preferences?

Personality preferences are the way you operate when doing everyday tasks.

How long have they been around?

They have been around since the ancient Greeks. The questions listed in this unit are based on the work of Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist who researched the benefits of personality types in the 1920s. These are still valid today.

How will they help me?

Knowing more about your personality preferences will help you understand about why you do the things you do and how others see you.

INSTRUCTIONS for the personality preference assessment

1. Look at the list of personality preferences overleaf on p.2–3.
2. From the four sets of opposite preferences, you will be asked to choose the ones which are most like you.
3. It may be difficult to decide on which one to choose from the two choices as you probably do both things at different times, but you would normally *prefer* one answer over the other – so choose that one.
4. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers, this is not a test!

If you are having difficulty choosing between the two preferences ask yourself:

*“If I could choose only **one** of the two preferences for the rest of my life, which one would I choose?”*

Please note:

This exercise is solely for information purposes and should not be confused with the Myers Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) which has copyright restrictions.

More information:

You can access the ‘**What am I like?**’ personality questionnaire devised by the BBC and OPP which is featured on the BBC website. It is a simplified personality test, devised by psychologists.

It is not a replacement for the full Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® questionnaire and the results are not intended to be the psychometric or practical equivalent to MBTI® questionnaire. However, it is very helpful if you wish to learn more about personality preferences. Visit the BBC website link here:

www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/surveys/whatamilike/index.shtml

PERSONALITY PREFERENCES

What makes me tick?

Select the list that is most like you.

? 1. Where do you get your energy? Are you OUTGOING or RESERVED?

Which one of these preferences is most like you? Are you comfortable in a group with lots of people or do you like time to yourself?

I like being around people
 I speak quite loudly
 I like to talk things over
 I usually act quickly
 I talk more than I listen

I like my own company
 I speak quite quietly
 I like to think things through
 I like to think before I act
 I listen more than I talk

OUTGOING

Where do you get your energy?

RESERVED

Outgoing or Reserved

? 2. How do you take in information? Do you like FACTS or IDEAS?

What do you pay attention to? Do you trust your five senses to take in information, or do you rely on your instincts and hunches?

I focus on facts
 I like to live in the present
 I like to start things at the beginning
 I like to look at the details
 I like a step-by-step approach

I focus on ideas
 I like to think about the future
 I like to jump in anywhere
 I look at the 'big picture'
 I trust inspiration

FACTS

How do you take in information?

IDEAS

Facts or Ideas

PERSONALITY PREFERENCES

? 3. How do you make your decisions? With your HEAD or your HEART?

How do you make your decisions? Do you like to take a logical point of view? Or do you like to consider your own feelings and those of the people around you?

I want to be fair
I prefer to be truthful
Facts are more important
I can be tough-minded
I can be direct and to the point

I like harmony
I consider other peoples' feelings
Feelings are more important
I tend to be sympathetic
I am supportive of others

HEAD

How do you make your decisions?

HEART

Head or Heart

? 4. How do you live your life? Are you ORGANISED or FLEXIBLE?

How do you run your life? Do you like to make lists and plans, or are you pretty flexible?

I like to have a list or a plan
I enjoy finishing projects
I plan work in advance
I like to have things decided
I need to have things agreed

I like to 'go with the flow'
I enjoy starting projects
I work with a 'last minute' effort
I don't like to be too organised
I prefer being flexible

ORGANISED

How do you live your life?

FLEXIBLE

Organised or Flexible

Remember to transfer these results to your Career Development Plan

Communicating in a job interview

Gathering information when job hunting

OUTGOING preference

Good points

- can talk easily and isn't shy
- feels comfortable with the interviewers
- shows confidence when talking about self
- happy to be in the centre stage

Watch out for these points!

- could talk too much or disclose too much information
- could interrupt the interviewer
- may not listen carefully to the question
- may not think before answering

FACTS preference

Good points

- notice many small adverts in the newspaper
- can rely on their past experience
- notices all the details in a job description
- works steadily through the process

Watch out for these points!

- may miss some connections between different job adverts
- could benefit from using more imagination when selecting the right job
- may get bogged down with facts
- may concentrate too much on small details, need to look

RESERVED preference

Good points

- will listen carefully to the interviewer
- will think before they answer
- is careful not to disclose too much information
- allows the interview to speak without interruptions

Watch out for these points!

- could dry up and not provide the necessary information
- could lack confidence
- could appear shy and speak in a quiet voice
- not able to think quickly if asked an unexpected question

IDEAS preference

Good points

- has a good idea of what they are looking for
- can imagine how things will be in the future
- can fit different pieces of information together
- looks at the connections between, agencies, websites and newspapers

Watch out for these points!

- may not fully appreciate that small details are important
- could make errors in application forms, CVs, etc.
- could miss the closure date on a job advert
- could fail to notice important facts



Making the decision to change your job

Preparing for your job interview

HEAD preference

Good points

- can be very logical and analyse the whole situation
- lists the pros and cons of leaving the old job and starting the new
- looks at the tasks and duties involved with the new job role
- can be firm minded and make tough decisions

Watch out for these points!

- may not consider the feelings of the people who matter to them
- may not be in touch with their feelings and why they want change
- may over analyse and see too many negatives
- may not have worked out the important reasons (values) why they want to change jobs

ORGANISED preference

Good points

- have a well organised plan of how the day will go
- work out the distances and timings well beforehand
- prepare the answers to interviewer's questions in advance
- take a trial run before the big day

Watch out for these points!

- could be upset with last minute changes to venue, date etc
- sometimes appear too rigid, need to relax a little
- could get caught up in preparing the list and pre-planning
- don't enjoy the moment as too busy organising

HEART preference

Good points

- aware of their personal needs in a new job
- know how changing jobs will affect the people around them
- go with what they feel is right for them
- need to feel appreciated in their job role

Watch out for these points

- could find it difficult to make tough decisions regarding their future
- sometimes find it hard to put their own needs before others
- could find it difficult to accept the tough world of business
- may find the interview process quite challenging

FLEXIBLE preference

Good points

- not too upset if plans are changed at the last minute
- takes a relaxed approach 'what will be, will be'
- can leave things right to the last minute and still be organised
- doesn't get too 'stressed out' beforehand

Watch out for these points!

- may not leave enough time for the journey, can arrive late
- may not prepare the answers to difficult questions in advance
- could come over as too easy-going to the interviewer
- hasn't done enough research on the company



A LOOK AT YOUR VALUES

Why should your clients indentify their values?

Values are made up of everything that has happened in life and includes influences from: our parents and family, our religious affiliation, our friends and peers, our education, our reading and more.

- once defined, values impact on every aspect of life
- Values are used to make decisions about priorities in our daily work and home life
- Goals and life purpose are grounded in our values.

OVERVIEW

Ask clients to look at a list of values.

1. They should choose only the **ten values** they consider to be important to them.
2. From that list they should then choose their **top five values**.

Establishing their priorities in life and what is important is one of the most powerful tools available to help them be the person they want to be, and to help them accomplish their goals and dreams.

A LOOK AT YOUR VALUES

What is a 'value'?
 A value is what is most important to us as human beings. Values can include honesty, loyalty, integrity, friendship and generosity. They make up the core of our beliefs about ourselves and how we want other people to see us.

Benefits of knowing your values
 When you know your values you can then make better career choices. Take a moment to look at the values listed below. Think carefully about what is **important** to you at this stage in your life - now tick only **TEN** that you feel are your most important values.

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> honesty | <input type="checkbox"/> honour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> being liked | <input type="checkbox"/> human rights | <input type="checkbox"/> success |
| <input type="checkbox"/> loyalty | <input type="checkbox"/> humility | <input type="checkbox"/> reward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassion | <input type="checkbox"/> integrity | <input type="checkbox"/> respect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> control | <input type="checkbox"/> independence | <input type="checkbox"/> reliability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> courage | <input type="checkbox"/> wisdom | <input type="checkbox"/> friendship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fun | <input type="checkbox"/> power | <input type="checkbox"/> personal fulfilment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> health | <input type="checkbox"/> persistency | <input type="checkbox"/> freedom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> intelligence | <input type="checkbox"/> success |
| <input type="checkbox"/> financial stability | <input type="checkbox"/> happiness | <input type="checkbox"/> making a difference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> job security | <input type="checkbox"/> trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ethics | <input type="checkbox"/> knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> generosity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fairness | <input type="checkbox"/> family | <input type="checkbox"/> environment |

Questions

? Now choose your top **FIVE** values from the previous list of ten

1. 2. 3.
 4. 5.

This list is not exhaustive and if you can think of others, then add them to your list.

Now, look at the values you said were very important to you.

Do you think there are some jobs you just couldn't do because of what you believe in?

How important do you think it is to do a job which satisfies your values?

Remember to transfer this information to your **Career Development Plan**

Discuss this with your adviser

THE WHEEL OF LIFE

OVERVIEW

This simple, but effective unit is often used in coaching. It provides clients with a chart of how their life is now balanced and highlights areas that they need to address if they are to maintain a well-balanced life.

It helps them determine whether they are focusing too much on an area of their life and neglecting other areas. The wheel is divided into different areas. Clients are asked to rank the level of satisfaction in each area of their life.

Questions

After completing the unit clients should take some time to reflect on the following questions:

1. What do I have to do to become more satisfied, what do I need to change?
2. What can I do myself to make these changes?
3. What can I ask others to do to help me?
4. How will I know when things have improved - what will I feel, see, hear that is different?
5. Ask yourself how much you want things to change.
6. On a scale of 1 to 10 how much do I want to improve this area?

Important points

The level of clients' commitment is crucial at this point.

If there is little commitment and clients choose a low scale from 1 to 10, then very little will change in their circumstances.

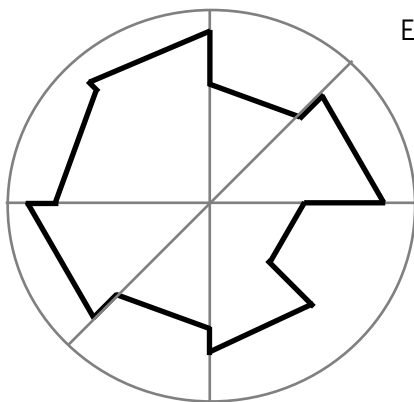
THE WHEEL OF LIFE

The **Wheel of Life** is a simple, but powerful exercise. It gives you a chart of the way your life is currently and compares it with the way you would ideally like it to be. It is called the 'Wheel of Life' because each area of your life is mapped on a circle, like the spoke of a wheel.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Look at the chart overleaf, now consider each area of your life in turn.
2. The centre of the wheel is **0** and means you are not satisfied with that area of your life. The outer edge of **10** and means you are fully satisfied.
3. Now think in a scale of 1 to 10 how satisfied you are with each area.
4. Now draw a line to join your degree marks together.
5. Mark each score on the appropriate spoke of the wheel.

This is an example of how your Wheel of Life could look

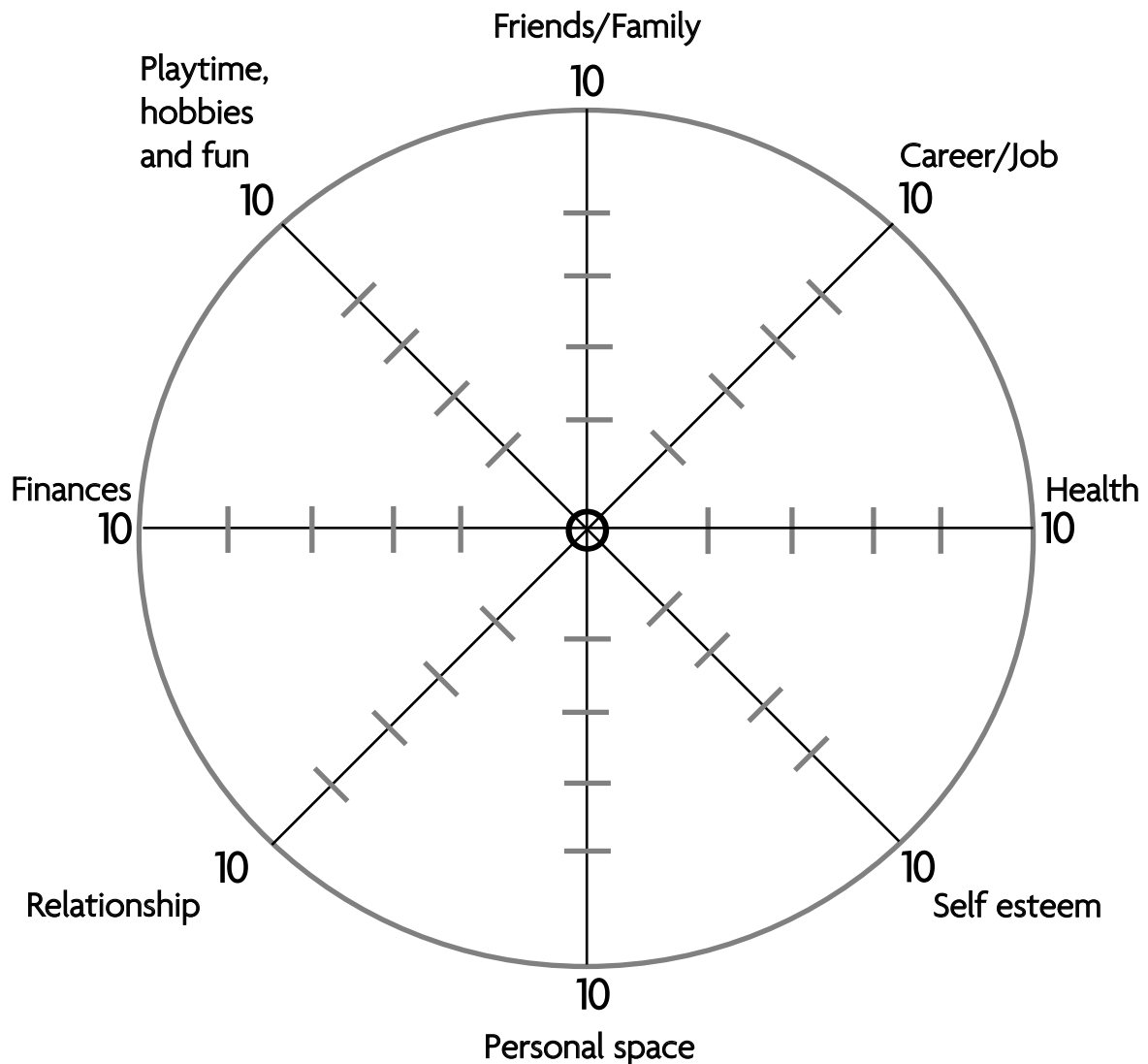


Each area of the wheel represents one area of your life.

Consider each area - how satisfied are you with all these areas of your life?

Are you putting as much time, energy and attention into these areas as you would like?

Remember to transfer your results to your Career Development Plan



? When you have finished the exercise look at the results and ask yourself:

1. What changes do I have to make to become more satisfied in certain areas?
2. Can I do it on my own?
3. Do I need other people to help me?
4. How will I know when things have improved - what will I see, hear, feel?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10 how much do I want this area to improve?

It may take you some time to make these changes - but each small step counts.

Speak to your careers adviser

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Acknowledging strengths and areas for development

Most recruiters and employers nowadays look for candidates who can clearly understand what their strengths are and the areas they can still develop.

This is not an easy exercise for many older clients as they may be convinced they have very few strengths and often suffer from low self-esteem.

Clients will benefit greatly from the questions which ask them to recall when and how they used these strengths in the workplace.

To have examples of their strengths will be particularly useful for them when they attend a job interview, performance appraisal or are considering a career change.

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Knowing your strengths and areas for development

Look at the list of personal characteristics overleaf on p.2

1. Place a tick ✓ next the qualities that you think describe your personal strengths.
2. Then put a cross ✗ next to areas you feel you need to develop.

Think about how you can improve your weaker areas. The **Careers Advice Service** and **nextstep** are available to offer advice, contact them on:

- **The Careers Advice Service** for information on courses near you:
Tel: 0800 100 900 or visit the website www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice

- **nextstep**
www.nextstep.org.uk

Questions

To prepare for future job interviews you should be thinking about when you used your strengths in the workplace and in which job roles you used them.

For example:

- If you have a good attendance record over the years, then you are *reliable*.
- You may feel you are a steady worker and are *conscientious*.
- You have assisted co-workers when they were in difficulty and been *helpful*.
- You may have supervised others and been *fair-minded* and *competent*.
- Have you worked handling cash or expensive goods and been considered *trustworthy*?

How can you use this information?

You can use the results of your strengths assessment not only for future job applications, but also for your appraisal at work, for future promotion or a career change.

Knowing your weaknesses means you can develop these areas too.

Remember to transfer this information to your **Career Development Plan** and discuss this with your adviser if necessary.

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

List of personal characteristics

? Question

Which ones are your strengths and which ones are your areas for development?

1. Place a tick ✓ next to your strengths

2. Place a cross ✗ next to the areas you need to develop

3. You will need to choose 5 of each to put on your Career Development Plan



academic	dignified	mature	robust
active	discreet	self-confident	determined
accurate	dominant	meticulous	self-controlled
adaptable	eager	mild	sensible
adventurous	moderate	sensitive	trusting
affectionate	efficient	modest	serious
unaggressive	emotional	natural	sincere
alert	energetic	obliging	sociable
fair-minded	open-minded	spontaneous	methodical
attractive	firm	opportunist	stable
bold	ambitious	original	steady
broad-minded	forceful	outgoing	strong
businesslike	formal	reliable	strong-minded
calm	frank	patient	sympathetic
capable	friendly	practical	tough
careful	generous	precise	witty
cautious	gentle	charming	good-natured
realistic	caring	cheerful	healthy
purposeful	unassuming	versatile	curious
clear-thinking	helpful	quick	understanding
clever	honest	quiet	wise
humorous	trusting	competent	inventive
competitive	idealistic	trustworthy	kind
confident	imaginative	prudent	reflective
conscientious	independent	warm	relaxed
conservative	co-operative	verbal	likeable
considerate	flexible	resourceful	easygoing
cool	intelligent	rational	logical

LEARNING STYLES

OVERVIEW

To put it simply, a learning style (or learning preference) is the way we tend to learn best. It involves our preferred method of taking in, organising, and making sense of information. Learning styles do not tell us about a person's abilities or intelligence, but they can help us understand why some tasks seem easier for us than others.

Benefits of knowing a clients learning style:

- people learn most effectively when using their preferred learning style
- different situations and learning environments require different learning strategies, so it can help to know how to adapt to each one.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The following pages include a paper version of the Learning Styles quiz. However, the quiz can also be taken online at the following website:

University of South Dakota

www.usd.edu/trio/tut/ts/stylest.html

Other websites offering Learning Styles quizzes:

www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html

www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/

www.chaminade.org/inspire/learnstl.htm

www.ldpride.net/learning-style-test.html

Useful handouts:

www.nwlincs.org/mtlincs/pilotproject/studyskills/learningstylehandout.pdf

Feldman's Index of Learning Styles

www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html

Richard Feldman's INDEX OF LEARNING STYLES classifies learners along these dimensions:

Active or Reflective Learners

Sensing or Intuitive Learners

Visual or Verbal Learners

Sequential or Global Learners

LEARNING STYLES QUIZ

Knowing your preferred learning style can help you understand how you take in information during a course or a training event. Look at the statements below.

Don't spend too much time thinking about the answers, choose the first answer that comes into your head, then highlight either **a**, **b**, or **c**.

Q.1 When you study for a test, would you rather:

- a) read notes, read headings in a book, and look at diagrams and illustrations
- b) have someone ask questions, or repeat facts silently to yourself
- c) write things out on index cards and make models or diagrams?

Q.2 Which of these do you do when you listen to music?

- a) daydream
- b) hum along
- c) move with the music, tap your foot, etc.

Q.3 When you work at solving a problem do you:

- a) make a list, organise the steps, and check them off as they are done
- b) make a few phone calls or talk to friends or experts
- c) make a model of the problem or walk through all the steps in your mind?

Q.4 When you read for fun, do you prefer:

- a) a travel book with a lot of pictures in it
- b) a mystery book with a lot of conversation in it
- c) a book where you answer questions and solve problems?

Q.5 To learn how a computer works, would you rather:

- a) watch a film about it
- b) listen to someone explain it
- c) take the computer apart and try to figure it out for yourself?

Q.6 You have just entered a science museum. What will you do first?

- a) look around and find a map showing the locations of the various exhibits
- b) talk to a museum guide and ask about exhibits
- c) go into the first exhibit that looks interesting, and read the directions later

Q.7 When you aren't sure how to spell a word, which of these are you most likely to do?

- a) write it down to see how it looks
- b) say it out loud
- c) write it down to see if it feels right

LEARNING STYLES QUIZ

Learning styles quiz (cont.)

Q.8 Would you rather go to:

- a) an art class
- b) a music class
- c) an exercise class?

Q.9 Which are you most likely to do when you are happy?

- a) grin
- b) shout with joy
- c) jump for joy

Q.10 If you were at a party, what would you be most likely to remember the next day?

- a) the faces of the people there, but not the names
- b) the names of the people, but not the faces
- c) the things you did and said while you were there

Q.11 When you see the word 'd-o-g', what do you do first?

- a) think of a picture of a particular dog
- b) say the word 'dog' to yourself silently
- c) sense the feeling of being with a dog (patting it, running with it, etc.)

Q.12 When you tell a story, would you rather:

- a) write it
- b) tell it out loud
- c) act it out?

Q.13 What is most distracting for you when you are trying to concentrate?

- a) visual distractions
- b) noises
- c) other sensations, like hunger, tight shoes, or something worrying you

Q.14 What type of restaurant would you rather *not* go to?

- a) one with the lights too bright
- b) one with the music too loud
- c) one with uncomfortable chairs

Now add up how many you answered a, b and c.

Remember to transfer these results to your Career Development Plan

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first featured on the 'Future is in your hands' CD LSC Free to learn/nextstep Berkshire project

LEARNING STYLES QUIZ/ANSWERS

If you answered mostly **a** then your preferred style of learning is **Visual**

If you answered mostly **b** then your preferred style of learning is **Auditory**

If you answered mostly **c** then your preferred style of learning is **Dynamic**

Tips for **visual** learners (learning by seeing)



- The use of images, pictures, and colour can help visual learners
- Colour-code your notes with a highlighter so that everything relating to one topic is the same color
- Try to find visual displays of learning materials such as diagrams, illustrated text books, sketches, DVDs, or videos wherever possible
- Sit away from doors, windows, or other distractions when learning

Tips for **auditory** learners (learning by hearing)



- Reading text aloud or using a tape recorder can help
- Taking part in discussions, or talking things through and listening to what others have to say can be beneficial
- Repeat information silently to yourself
- Get a friend to read aloud to you

Tips for **dynamic** learners (learning by doing)



- Ask questions and participate in discussions whenever possible
- Take notes, jot down key words and draw pictures or make charts
- Take regular breaks from learning to stand up and stretch
- When learning walk back and forth with learning materials in hand and read information out loud

You can also take the Learning Styles test free online:

University of South Dakota

www.usd.edu/trio/tut/ts/stylest.html

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS - OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

This section will answer questions such as:

- What skills do employers want?
- How do clients know if they have them?
- How can they improve them?

According to the latest National Employers Skills Survey (see chart opposite) the skills lacking among their staff are the soft skills areas, in particular **team working** and **customer handling skills**, each of which are lacking in almost 50% of all workers.

Employers reported 44% of workers were lacking in **technical and practical skills**.

Skills reported lacking by UK employers

1. Team working (48%)
2. Customer handling skills (46%)
3. Technical and practical skills (44%)
4. Oral communication (42%)
5. Problem-solving skills (40%)
6. Written communication (29%)
7. Management skills (26%)
8. General IT user skills (23%)
9. Literacy skills (22%)
10. Numeracy skills (21%)
11. Office admin skills (20%)
12. IT professional skills (12%)
13. Foreign language (9%)

Source: National Employers Skills Survey 2005

Other soft, generic skills such as **oral communication**, **problem-solving** and **written communication skills** were the next common skills gaps.

A lack of **literacy** and **numeracy** skills were each present in around a fifth of skills gaps (22 per cent and 21 per cent respectively).

Older workers may not have taken stock of their skills for many years (if at all). Clients would benefit from taking a skills assessment to make them aware of the skills they have. An overview of the skills employers report are currently lacking in the workplace is featured overleaf on Advisers' Notes 8 on p.2.

Handouts 8.1 – 8.2 include an employability skills assessment and details of websites featuring online skills assessments.

There is a specific and urgent priority to tackle skills and employment needs for people who are out of work or who have low skills. Overall, around half of those who have very low skill levels – around 2.5 million people – are unemployed or economically inactive. Too many people still find it difficult to find a job or progress in work. They are trapped in a cycle of low-skilled, poorly-paid, often short-term employment with few training opportunities and dependence on public support. Many of those who are registered as unemployed frequently move between work and claiming benefits, and lone parents need more help to acquire the skills they need to get into and get on in work.

World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS - OVERVIEW

Skills lacking overall and by occupation

	Managers	Professionals	Associate profs.	Administrative	Skilled trades	Personal services	Sales	Operatives	Elementary occupations
<i>Skills lacking</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Team working	47	35	41	43	39	55	48	50	55
Customer handling	34	30	39	52	33	47	63	29	51
Technical/Practical	31	52	53	36	64	47	36	56	43
Oral communications	42	28	30	39	36	43	44	47	48
Problem-solving	45	36	41	44	43	41	38	43	38
Written communication	29	28	34	39	30	36	20	34	27
Management skills	76	30	23	23	18	16	23	11	15
General IT skills	28	33	33	51	17	18	19	18	10
Literacy skills	10	18	22	24	23	32	16	27	27
Numeracy skills	14	16	17	18	19	21	20	28	26
Office admin skills	31	22	23	55	15	11	15	8	8
IT professional skills	19	26	21	29	9	8	7	5	5
Foreign language skills	13	5	4	7	6	13	8	12	11

Table 4.4 Skills lacking overall by occupation

Source: National Employers Skills Survey 2005

National Employers Skills Survey 2005 is available from the LSC Reading Room website: <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/Lsc/2006/research/commissioned/nat-nationalemployersskillsurvey2005mainreport-re-june2006.pdf>

The above table represents the skills which are lacking in each of the occupations listed.

How can it be useful?

Shows clients who are considering various job roles, eg an *administration assistant* the percentage of skills found to be lacking by workers in that particular occupation.

Consequently, they should then have an understanding of those skills that they need to excel in and demonstrate to employers on their CV or application forms when applying for that particular job role.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS - OVERVIEW

SECTOR SKILLS COUNCILS

Check out the sector based skills

The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) funds and supports Skills for Business - a network of 25 Sector Skills Councils (SSC). Each SSC has its own website providing comprehensive information and guidance specific to a sector (eg Creative and Cultural Skills).

How do I access it?

Find a comprehensive list of the Sector Skills websites on the advice-resources website:
www.advice-resources.co.uk/adviceresources/nextstep/infolinks/sectorbasedskills/

What do SSCs do?

Each SSC has four key goals:

- reduce skills gaps and shortages
- improve productivity, business and public service performance
- boost the skills of the sector's workforce
- improve learning through apprenticeships, higher education and National Occupational Standards.

Who is it for?

Careers advisers can direct their clients to the appropriate SSC website for up-to-date sector specific information. Many SSCs now have dedicated career sections, eg Skillset the SSC for the Audio Visual Industries and SkillsActive the SSC for Active Leisure and Learning.

The SSCs are:

- expansive - covering approximately 85% of the UK to meet your clients' needs
- a reliable source - licensed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, in consultation with Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- employer-led - providing a range of benefits such as better dialogue with government departments and more influence with education and training partners.

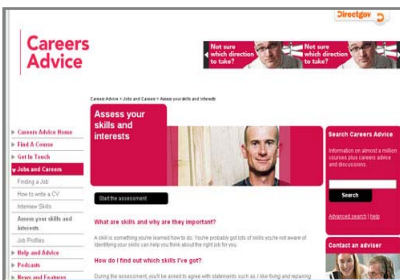
EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

How to assess your skills

Today's job market is competitive. Gone are the days when workers had jobs for life - you need to keep your skills up to date to gain employment.

Use these websites to help you assess your skills, free of charge, on the internet.

The Careers Advice Service Skills and Interests Assessment



Take the Skills and Interests Assessment and learn just which skills you need to improve on.

<http://careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/helpwithyourcareer/skills/>

Career Development eManual from the University of Waterloo, Canada



Features the six 'Steps to Career and Life Planning Success'. The six steps include: self assessment, research, decision making, networks and contacts, work, and life-work planning. Follow the six steps at:

www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/index2.asp

University Minnesota

The University of Minnesota offers a free transferable skills assessment.



As you begin your job search, you should be aware of your transferable skills. They are the skills you have learnt in other jobs and can use in your new job.

The five topics for skills on the assessment are:
Communication skills
Research and planning skills
Human relations skills
Organisation, management and leadership skills
Work survival skills

www.d.umn.edu/kmc/career_transfer_survey.html

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS QUIZ

Take this quiz to identify your employability skills

Employability skills you need in the workplace		Don't agree (0pts)	Agree a little (5pts)	Agree a lot (10pts)
1	I follow a step-by-step approach to solve a problem			
2	I can work confidently as part of a group			
3	I can produce a MS Word document			
4	I find it easy to talk to people			
5	I know my learning style			
6	I look at the risks involved before I solve a problem			
7	I am able to create an MS Excel spreadsheet			
8	I can fill in my time sheets without difficulty			
9	I like to support my co-workers			
10	I'm confident talking to co-workers on the telephone			
11	I am really keen to learn new things			
12	I am able to divide numbers easily			
13	I like to use a variety of methods to solve a problem			
14	I can send and receive emails			
15	I ask questions to make sure I have fully understood			
16	I often ask other co-workers for their opinion			
17	I like to plan what I am going to do if I hit a problem			
18	I can use the Internet			
19	I can work out estimates easily			
20	I share information I think is important with my co-workers			
21	I often ask my co-workers for help if I'm in difficulty			
22	I set targets for myself when I'm learning			
23	I am able to work out percentages without any help			
24	I often look at my progress to see where I am heading			
25	My spelling, grammar and punctuation is good			
26	I am confident when adding up and subtracting numbers			
27	I like to have a goal to work towards			
28	I enjoy problem solving			
29	I am able to do a 'Google' search on the internet			
30	I think it is important to get along with everyone at work			

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS QUIZ/ANSWERS

HOW TO SCORE

- Each question in the Employability Skills Quiz represents a particular skill
- To find your score look at the question numbers in each of the sections below, for example, the teamworking skills are featured in questions 2, 9, 16, 21 and 30.
- For each answer give yourself the following points:
 - If you answered 'Agree a lot' score = 10 points
 - If you answered 'Agree a little' score = 5 points
 - If you answered 'Don't agree' score = 0 points

Add together the total points for each skill and put the number in 'Total score' box

1. Teamworking skills

Total score

Total for question numbers 2, 9, 16, 21, 30

2. Communications (Written and spoken) skills

Total score

Total for question numbers 4, 10, 15, 20, 25

3. Working with numbers (numeracy) skills

Total score

Total for question numbers 8, 12, 19, 23, 26

4. Information and Computer Technology (computer) skills

Total score

Total for question numbers 3, 7, 14, 18, 29

5. Improving your learning and performance skills

Total score

Total for question numbers 5, 11, 22, 24, 27

6. Problem solving skills

Total score

Total for question numbers 1, 6, 13, 17, 28

How did you do?

You should now have a score for each of the six skills featured above

50 - 40 points - Well done, you have a good overall knowledge of this skill

39 - 20 points - You have some knowledge of this skill, see the improvements list overleaf

19 - 10 points - There could be gaps in your knowledge of certain skills, your adviser can help you consider how you can improve this skill

9 - 0 points - Speak to your adviser who will help you with a learning plan

IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

1. Improve your TEAMWORKING SKILLS

- Be flexible, respect and support other members of your team
- Recognise and respect people's diversity and individual preferences
- Share information and your expertise with the team
- Understand that you are all individuals, but are working together as one team
- Question others to find out their views and feelings

2. Improve your COMMUNICATION (Written and spoken) SKILLS

- Use simple words and language to express your point
- Listen carefully to what people say to you
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand
- When speaking to others, wait for them to finish before you begin
- Make eye contact when others are speaking to you

3. Improve your WORKING WITH NUMBERS (numeracy) SKILLS

- Consider booking a course at a local college (some courses are free of charge)
- Call the **Careers Advice Service** 0800 100 900 for a list of courses near you or visit the website: www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice
- Practice solving number puzzles and games (borrow books from your local library)
- Ask your adviser for assistance on ways to improve your numeracy skills

4. Improve your ICT (computer) SKILLS

- Attend an evening or weekend course at your local college or community centre
- Ask family or friends who use computers to teach you the basic requirements
- Learn how to use email and the internet at a beginners' class
- Learn how to do a 'Google' search on the internet
- Learn how to play something for fun on the computer such as solitaire, or research your family tree

IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

5. Improve your LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE SKILLS

- Take responsibility for your own learning, manage the way you learn
- Set targets for yourself and plan how to achieve those targets
- Find out what resources will be best to support you
- Review your progress and judge how well you're doing and when you will need to do it
- Undertake the learning style questionnaire to find out your learning style
- Take time to read a newspaper or a magazine as often as you can
- Join a course and learn a new skill

5. Improve your PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

- Keep your mind sharp by doing puzzles, playing word games or board games
- Think about a problem you have solved in the past, how did you go about it?
- If you are faced with a problem, face it full on
- Ask others for advice
- Keep an open mind and if you don't succeed, try again

CAREER DRIVERS

OVERVIEW:

Unlike young people leaving school or college, older people have a lifestyle already established, and when it comes to changing their career they have a lot to consider. The 'career drivers' exercise helps clients focus on their priorities when embarking on a career change.

Aims:

To determine what clients are looking for in a job or career.

Objectives:

- To examine each priority when seeking satisfying work.
- To establish an order of preference in their career priorities.
- To consider what will happen if the priorities are not met.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this exercise clients will be able to:

1. State clearly what they require in a job role to achieve job satisfaction.
2. Understand what drives them to choose a particular job.
3. Recognise how to examine job roles more closely to ensure their needs are met.

CAREER DRIVERS


What is important to you - is it money, job satisfaction or the number of hours you work?

Look at the list below, think about the order of importance of these different aspects of work. Which ones are important to you?

Be completely **honest** with yourself and mark them in order of their importance from 1 to 15 (1 is the highest - 15 is the lowest).

Put these career drivers into the order of importance to you Score from 1 to 15

Job location	
Job satisfaction	
Prospects	
Responsibility	
Value of work	
Company reputation	
Scope for promotion	
Physical conditions	
Pay	
Security	
Benefits package	
Pension	
Status	
Hours	
Training	

 **Action:** Now you are aware of your career drivers think carefully how they will match any job descriptions, job roles or career changes you are considering.

Remember to transfer these results to your Career Development Plan

YOUR TICKET TO THE FUTURE

OVERVIEW:

This unit helps clients concentrate on what they can achieve if they focus on the end result, ie a long-term goal. It is based on Dr Stephen Covey's self help book '*7 Habits of Highly Effective People*' and on one habit in particular, that is 'begin with the end in mind'. This habit helps clients set long-term goals and introduces visualisation as an important tool to help them develop this.

Aims:

To introduce clients to the power of visualisation and goal setting.

Objectives:

- To examine how one's life can progress to a positive outcome.
- To establish the input required to achieve a long-term goal.
- To consider what possibilities lie ahead.
- To determine what will happen (change) to achieve their goal.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit clients will be able to:

1. Visualise themselves in five years' time in a successful environment.
2. Identify the barriers they encountered along the way.
3. Identify the people who helped them realise their goal.

Boarding cards to the future

To set the scene and help clients imagine they are going on a *journey*, a template of a boarding card is included on p.2.

Usage: The template can be used freely and photocopied on a non-commercial basis for use with both individuals or in a group workshop.

The future is in your hands

“To truly future-proof yourself, you need two things.

The first is self-belief: Trust yourself and have the confidence that you will see the right things.

The second is a willingness continually to justify your employability. You have to make sure that you keep learning.”

Nick Isles, a director of the Work Foundation

BOARDING CARDS - YOUR TICKET TO THE FUTURE

BOARDING CARD 1 006 706841125553 7		BOARDING CARD *****	
DESTINATION: The future		DESTINATION: The future	
Today's date: Day.....Month.....Year..... Future date: add five years from today Day.....Month.....Year.....		SEAT 35A	SEAT 35A
Your name:		*****	
[Barcode]		[Barcode]	



BOARDING CARD 1 006 706841125553 7		BOARDING CARD *****	
DESTINATION: The future		DESTINATION: The future	
Today's date: Day.....Month.....Year..... Future date: add five years from today Day.....Month.....Year.....		SEAT 35A	SEAT 35A
Your name:		*****	
[Barcode]		[Barcode]	

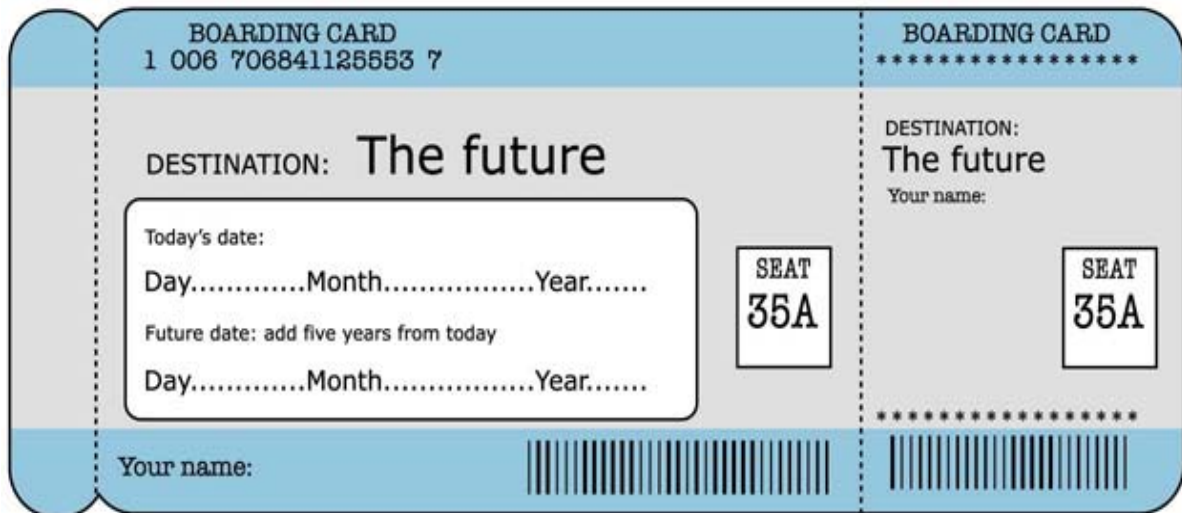


BOARDING CARD 1 006 706841125553 7		BOARDING CARD *****	
DESTINATION: The future		DESTINATION: The future	
Today's date: Day.....Month.....Year..... Future date: add five years from today Day.....Month.....Year.....		SEAT 35A	SEAT 35A
Your name:		*****	
[Barcode]		[Barcode]	

YOUR TICKET TO THE FUTURE

★ Where will you be in FIVE years' time?

- Take a piece of paper and write today's date exactly **five** years from today.
- Now, close your eyes and imagine you have gone forward **five** years from now.
- Visualise yourself having achieved all you wanted during the past **five** years.
- Now write down what you have achieved.
- Be positive, imagine success.
- Take a few moments to enjoy it.



★ HINTS

Think about:

1. The job you are doing
2. Where you are living
3. Who is with you?
4. Career skills you have acquired
5. Important things you have achieved outside work
6. Include family, friends, people you work with

Originally featured on 'The Future is in Your Hands' CD produced by LSC Free to learn/nextstep Berkshire

YOUR TICKET TO THE FUTURE

Where will you be in FIVE years time?

Now think about how you achieved your goals and answer the following three questions:

? What was the biggest barrier(s) you had to overcome?

? How did you overcome these barriers?

? Who were the people who helped you?

You now have **three** options of what to do with your golden ticket:

1. Rip it up, as you either have too much to do or you haven't got the confidence to do it.
2. Put it away for the future, although probably you may never get around to it.
3. Start working towards your goals. This will involve some effort and commitment on your part. You may need to share it with a friend or a family member.

Now think of something you could do this minute, this day, this week.

Start turning your dreams into reality...

SETTING GOALS

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING GOALS

For those people who have been in the workplace for many years, it may be difficult to appreciate the power of 'goal setting' in relation to their future career plans, either within their own organisation or if they are considering a career change.

OVERVIEW

In this unit clients are asked to set their short and long term goals for the future.

Using the SMART model they will map out the small steps required to work towards their achievable goals.

Attitude plays a very big role in setting and achieving goals. Individuals should ask themselves:

- if they themselves are putting barriers in their way, that could hold them back from completing the simplest goals?
- if any part of their behaviour acts as an obstacle to them fulfilling their plans?

SETTING GOALS

What is a goal?

A goal is a result. Ask yourself “What results do I want from my life?”

Why should we set a goal?

- Goals can give you a target to aim for and keep you focused.
- Goals can help you concentrate your time and effort.
- Goals can help you establish priorities, and focus on what is important to you.

Set yourself up for success!

To ensure you succeed with your goal you should use the SMART formula:

Specific - Measurable - Achievable - Realistic - Timely

Specific - set clear, concrete goals. Some examples might be starting a career plan , or working towards a qualification.

Measurable - this keeps you on track to indicate when you have reached your goals. You can break them down into small steps. One measurable step could be to start buying the local paper and look in the situations vacant section.

Achievable - ensure that your goals are achievable. You need to be honest - can you achieve your goals? For example, setting yourself the goal of finding a new job in two days may not be achievable, but to find one in a month could be.

Realistic - make sure that your goals are something you truly want, you will be focusing a great deal of time and energy on them.

Timely - set a timeline that will guide your progress. If you state a goal for two years from now, it does not have the same result as one that you set for the next six months.

The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them.

Denis Watley

SETTING GOALS

SMART Goals	This goal needs work	This goal is much better
Goals should be specific	I want to change my job.	I want to begin a new career as a Healthcare worker.
Goals should be measurable	I want to do well in my career.	I want to have a permanent position in the NHS.
Goals should be achievable	I want to pass my computer course.	I want to pass my computer course within 6 months.
Goals should be realistic	I wish to review a couple of jobs in the Healthcare sector.	I will call the Careers Advice Service tomorrow and visit the local nextstep office to get some CV advice.
Goals should be relevant	I want to improve my public speaking.	I will book a 'How to give winning presentations' course at my local college.

The SMART concept is featured in 'One Minute Wonder' Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson

What are your SMART goals?	Write your goals here
Goals should be specific	
Goals should be measurable	
Goals should be achievable	
Goals should be realistic	
Goals should be timely	

Look at the descriptions above if you need help describing your SMART goal format.

Remember to transfer these results to your Career Development Plan

MAKING AN IMPACT

OVERVIEW

WORK - BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

The text on the following pages has been adapted from the BBC *Just the Job* section. It provides an overview of what is happening in the world of work today.

How can it be used?

- to help describe changes in today's workplace
- before clients start to prepare their CVs and get ready for job search and interview practice, it would be useful for them to understand the changes taking place in today's workplace.

How can IAG advisers use this information?

- on a one-to-one basis during an IAG session to provide an overview of how the workplace has changed since clients' last experience of job search, CV preparation or job interviews.
- during a job search, interview or CV workshop.

Who will benefit from this information?

- older workers who find themselves job hunting for the first time after years of secure employment
- people who have not been in employment for a period of time due to ill health, or caring for others and are now considering re-entering the job market
- individuals who have been long-term unemployed
- career changers.



Use the information in Unit 8 - Employability skills to demonstrate the skills required in the UK today.

See adapted text from *BBC JUST THE JOB - Work, but not as we know it* overleaf

MAKING AN IMPACT

BBC JUST THE JOB - Work, but not as we know it
www.bbc.co.uk/wales/justthejob/skills/work.shtml

In the last 50 years we have seen a revolution in technology, in the way we live and in the way we work.

Traditional ways of working are disappearing. Old jobs are going and new ones are taking their place.

To be successful in today's competitive job market you need to know what employers will be looking for. Qualifications are important, but qualifications alone will never guarantee you a job. You also need the right skills and personal qualities to succeed at work and get on in life.

How is work changing?

- Fewer low skill jobs, especially in manufacturing
- More jobs in 'customer service' industries like call centres
- More women in the work force
- More people able to work from home because of new office technology like computers and e-mail
- More flexible, but less secure, ways of working – fixed-term contracts, temporary, part-time jobs and self-employment
- More job changing - fewer people will stay in exactly the same job throughout their working life.

What are people doing?

- **Getting transferable skills**
These are the 'generic' and 'key' skills, like communication and team working, which are needed in nearly all jobs.
- **Becoming 'knowledge' workers**
Highly skilled, self-motivated people, able to produce work of high quality with minimum supervision.
- **Learning throughout life**
Constantly up-dating their knowledge and skills throughout their working life.

What are employers doing?

Downsizing - Employing fewer people or not replacing vacant posts.

De-layering - Reducing the number of supervisors or managers, especially 'middle' managers.

Job loading - Increasing the level of responsibility within jobs and expecting more of people.

Outsourcing - Decreasing the number of 'core' permanent staff and increasing the number of people on temporary or short-term contracts.

MAKING AN IMPACT

What can clients do?

- Make informed choices about what, how and where to study and train for.
- Get qualified - low skill jobs are disappearing.
- Know and develop the transferable skills that employers want.
- Gain relevant work experience.
- Plan and manage your career - don't leave it to chance.
- Improve your qualifications and skills throughout your working life.

Jobs going up

- IT consultants
- Telecommunications engineers
- Managers (especially specialist managers and IT)
- Call Centre staff
- Care assistants
- Chefs and waiters
- Security guards
- Accountants
- Lawyers
- Maths and science teachers
- Anyone with strong skills in communication, numeracy and IT.

Jobs going down

- Jobs in retail banking
- Coal miners
- Shorthand typists
- Accounts clerks
- Traditional craft printers and compositors
- Milkmen
- Chimney sweeps
- Unskilled manual jobs
- Skilled engineering and other skilled trades
- Machine operatives in the older manufacturing industries
- Anyone without literacy or numeracy skills

What do employers want?

Many employers think that skills and personal qualities are as important, if not more important, than paper qualifications.

CVs AND APPLICATION FORMS


OVERVIEW

CV writing is a huge subject and thousands of books have been written about it. Most IAG advisers will already have many resources they can use with clients.

For the purpose of this unit we will assume that clients have access to the basics of CV preparation from their IAG adviser. Our main focus here is to look at the specific needs of the older jobseeker when preparing a CV or an application form.

Included in this unit:

- Issues affecting the older jobseeker
- Which CV format to use
- Useful websites featuring:
 - transferable skills
 - examples of chronological and functional CVs
 - examples of action words
 - examples of before and after CVs in different job sectors
- Application forms
- Client Handout No.1 - Top Ten Tips for your CV

 **Important:** Before helping clients prepare their CV or application forms, clients should have undertaken the self-awareness exercises featured in this guide. Units 1–9.

CVs AND APPLICATION FORMS

ISSUES AFFECTING THE OLDER JOBSEEKER

■ Attitude

Many older people looking to change their job or wishing to re-enter the workplace have already resigned themselves to not being successful because of their age.

■ Lack of self-awareness

Lack of self-awareness can act as a barrier for many older workers. They may not have taken the time to look at themselves and what they have to offer in any great depth. Some have dedicated time to bringing up a family, looking after older parents, or are working full-time. Their own personal needs may have fallen down the priority list.

■ Lack of self-belief

It is said that if you think you can't do something, then you probably won't do it. Self-belief is often lacking in older workers. The beliefs people hold directly affect their actions, and can limit their results. If they firmly believe they can't do something, they won't go the extra mile to overcome the obstacles.

■ Unaware of current job market trends

Many older workers may have spent years in steady work and are now unaware of the reality of today's competitive job market. Having to compete with graduates and migrant workers means they have to raise their game and market their skills carefully.

■ Lack of self-marketing skills

When attempting to re-enter the job market or change careers, this client group may struggle to market themselves to a potential employer. They often feel uncomfortable when asked to 'blow their own trumpet'.

■ Lack of employability skills

Job seekers need employability skills to impress employers. Older workers have many skills but are often unaware of them. Unit 8 Employability skills - will help clients assess their skills.

SOLUTIONS

Often, it is *only* when clients actually see their skills, personality preferences, achievements, strengths, values, career drivers and other positive factors written down in their **Career Development Plan** that they fully appreciate all they have to offer a potential employer.

Clients should feel confident in their own abilities before they start preparing a CV or completing an application form.

The **CV Builder** on the advice resources website can help clients prepare a CV.
www.advice-resources.co.uk

CVs AND APPLICATION FORMS

WHICH CV FORMAT TO RECOMMEND?

? Chronological or functional?

Many recruiters prefer to receive CVs in chronological order. The reason for this is that CVs designed in this way are easy to read; busy recruiters can find the information they require in a short space of time. But not all candidates benefit from the chronological CV format.

If clients have had lots of short term jobs or work gaps, then a functional or skills based CV can often show candidates in a more positive light. This format will highlight their skills and can have more impact.

? Who will benefit from a chronological CV?

The chronological CV lists achievements and responsibilities against each job role. Career history is presented in reverse order, starting with the most recent. This format is good for clients who have a formal history of experience or:

- clients with few gaps in their employment record
- clients who have been in similar types of jobs for a number of years
- clients wishing to highlight their job responsibilities and experience.

? Who will benefit from a functional CV?

The functional/skills CV is more descriptive and focuses on skills and direct experience. It is suited to agency workers, contractors and others who have moved around a lot or held a number of unrelated jobs or:

- clients with a varied past with many different jobs
- clients considering a different type of job in a different sector
- clients with a broken work history for a variety of reasons, eg bereavement, maternity/paternity leave, prison time, family commitments
- clients who have been in the same company for many years and need to highlight skills
- clients who have taken time out of the workplace to care for others or have gaps in their employment.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Examples of both CV formats can be found here:

CV Tips www.cvtips.com/CV_example.html

Examples of before and after CVs in different job sectors

Professional Resumes

www.professional-resumes.com/resume-samples-professional-resumes.shtml

Example of transferable skills

Quintessential careers www.quintcareers.com/transferable_skills_examples.html

Action words by profession

Quintessential careers www.quintcareers.com/action_skills.html

CVs AND APPLICATION FORMS

APPLICATION FORMS

Application forms can actually work to the advantage of older workers. Application forms allow employers to compare candidates easily, as they are all answering the same questions.

CHALLENGE

Usually the page most candidates find difficult in an application form is the one asking them to describe why they think they are suitable for the job.

It usually says something along these lines:

“Please use the space below to give details of your skills and experience from your education, employment and personal life which you think are relevant to this job. Continue on another sheet if necessary.”

SOLUTION

Fortunately, your clients will now be able to refer to their **Career Development Plan** to easily match any skills, abilities, experience and knowledge to the job role.

For more detailed information on application forms:

The Careers Advice Service

The **Careers Advice Service** provide a detailed section on completing application forms <http://careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/features/news/appforms/>

TIPS FOR YOUR CV



“Now, what was I doing in 1967?”

Tip No.1 – Keep in the present

When listing jobs do not go back too far. Employers are only interested in what you can do for them now, not 30 years ago. Go back only 10 – 15 years.

Tip No.2 – More than just experience

Experience is good, but accomplishments and achievements are even better. What did you do in your last jobs that made a difference? How can you show this on your CV or application form? Make a list of your accomplishments and compare them to the job description.

Tip No.3 – What do you have that is special?

Compare yourself to younger workers. What do you have to offer that they may be missing? It could be your reliability, or offering to mentor inexperienced co-workers. Respecting others and understanding that everyone is different with their own views can often be a plus point for older candidates.

Tip No.4 – Sing your own IT praises (if you have them)

One concern employers have about hiring older workers is that they haven't kept up with technology. If you have strong IT skills then make sure they are listed high up on your key skills list. Mention any IT qualification you have gained.

Tip No.5 – A tailored approach, prepare, prepare, prepare

Target and tailor each CV carefully to each job application. A *one-size-fits-all* design for every employer won't be enough to make you stand out. Look at the information in the job advert or information pack and take a piece of paper, draw a line down the middle and list all the points featured in the job advert on one side. What skills they are looking for? Do they mention any qualifications? What level of experience are they looking for? Now list all the skills, accomplishments, experience and anything relevant you have that will help you secure the job.

Tip No.6 – Key words

Many organisations now use technology to store CVs; the only hope a job seeker has of being found is to sprinkle relevant keywords throughout their CV. You can find the keywords by reading job descriptions that interest you, then add those keywords repeatedly in your CV.

Examples of keywords can be found in Handout 12.2

Tip No.7 – Performance matters

Employers don't only want a list of your job duties and responsibilities. They need to know how you performed better than other candidates they are also considering for the job.

TIPS FOR YOUR CV

TIPS FOR YOUR CV

Tip No.7 – Performance matters (cont.)

Think about your last jobs:

- What were the problems or challenges you faced?
- How did you overcome them?
- What were the results?
- How did the organisation benefit from your performance?
- Have you received any awards?

This is the type of information employers are seeking from candidates.

Tip No.8 – Market yourself and your skills

List any skills, abilities and knowledge you feel will help you secure an interview. Lots of people may be after this job and you are competing directly with them.

Tip No.9 – Don't undersell yourself!

Remember, you have a lot to offer. If you are in any doubt check all the skills, knowledge and experience you have had, look again at your **Career Development Plan**.

KEYWORDS AND ELECTRONIC CVs

KEYWORDS

CV keywords are words or phrases placed in your CV to help attract potential recruiters' attention. These keywords will be dependant upon the industry you're interested in, the job and person specification. Many companies use software to filter out CVs if specific keywords do not appear.

Computer scanning software is often used to search CVs for the main key words which are required for prospective candidates. This often happens when CVs are submitted online via the internet.

An example of key words used for administration jobs

Positions: administrative assistant, secretary, office manager, executive assistant, executive secretary, customer service representative, data entry clerk, general office clerk.

Other: MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), Windows NT/98/95, event planning, meeting planning, word processing, spreadsheets, database management, multiline phones, switchboards, scheduling, presentations, office support.

Finding the keywords to include

To enable the electronic spiders to find your CV before their human equivalent, you should look carefully through the job advert or job description to find the keywords used. If your CV does not contain the correct keywords it is unlikely you will be invited for an interview.

More information on **keywords** can be found on the following websites:

<http://content.monster.com/articles/3475/17202/1/home.aspx>

www.careerperfect.com/content/resume-writing-help-keyword-resume-tips

ELECTRONIC CV SCANNING

See an example of software used for scanning CVs here:

www.recruitment-software.co.uk/features/rapidcv.aspx

USEFUL INFORMATION

Examples of CV formats can be found here:

CV Tips www.cvtips.com/CV_example.html

Examples of before and after CVs in different job sectors

Professional Resumes

www.professional-resumes.com/resume-samples-professional-resumes.shtml

Example of transferable skills

Quintessential careers www.quintcareers.com/transferable_skills_set.html

Action words by profession

Quintessential careers www.quintcareers.com/action_skills.html



Please note: If you are not able to access the internet ask your adviser to print this information for you.

JOB SEARCH

JOB SEARCH

Newspapers - local and national

Small to medium businesses who place job adverts in the local papers often seek older workers who have had a steady work history. Local employers are usually aware of the companies where candidates have previously worked and have a good idea of other companies' reputations.

Professional and senior vacancies tend to appear in national papers - usually broadsheets. These papers feature certain types of job on different days of the week. For example, The Guardian features media jobs on Mondays, education on Tuesdays, public and social sector on Wednesdays and IT on Thursdays.

Professional or specialist journals

Libraries stock a selection of specialist journals containing features about latest developments in their sector.

Jobcentres

Jobcentres offer the following facilities:

- Jobpoints - touch-screens with up to 400,000 job vacancies, which allow you to search for jobs suitable for you
- Jobseeker Direct - a phone service whose advisers offer details of job vacancies, send out application forms and arrange interviews. Tel 0845 6969 234

Jobcentre personal advisers can help you find the vacancies that are right for you. They can also tell you about government training schemes open to you. They'll consider:

- your work experience
- your skills
- your qualifications

The internet

Most large organisations have details of vacancies on their website. You can also find job vacancies on:

- Recruitment and employment agencies websites
- Newspapers' websites
- See overleaf for details of job vacancies on the internet.

JOB SEARCH

Job vacancies on the internet

Most job vacancy websites allow you to search for the types of vacancies you're interested in. You can usually specify the type of job, the level, the salary, the location, etc. Some sites will even notify you when suitable vacancies are posted on their site.

Some of the main job vacancy websites are:

Total jobs

www.totaljobs.com

Monster

www.monster.co.uk

Jobcentre Plus

www.jobcentreplus.org.uk

Fish4Jobs

www.fish4jobs.co.uk

Directgov over 50s

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Over50s/Working/LookingForWork/index.htm

Recruitment and employment agencies/consultants

Recruitment and employment agencies are like brokers - they recruit and fill vacancies on behalf of employers. Employers use agencies because recruiting is time-consuming and often expensive.

Using a recruitment agency

Recruitment agencies can serve their purpose. They can be used if you are looking for temporary work, seeking a short-term contract, a more flexible work life, or entering the workplace after time spent away.

They will interview you first and test your skills. You may be asked to undertake a verbal reasoning test or numerical reasoning test (practice tests are available online from SHL website www.shldirect.com) so they can measure your ability, or a typing speed test if you are going for a secretarial position. They will take your personal details and contact you when a suitable vacancy comes up. They may interview you themselves for the job or set up an interview with the employer. Most will advertise their vacancies in their High Street branches or on their website.

How do you find recruitment agencies?

Recruitment agencies are listed in Yellow Pages or you can use a search engine like Google.

nextstep partnerships

www.nextstep.org.uk

nextstep is a government initiative which delivers information, advice and guidance on work and learning for anyone aged 20+.

JOB SEARCH

Tap into the hidden job market

The old approach to job seeking was to open the paper and look for adverts. There are many jobs still available that are not advertised. This can be due to an internal worker filling the post, someone telling their friends or family about the job vacancy, or someone contacting the company on spec and asking if they have any vacancies. You need to start thinking about who your contacts are and make sure you use them to tap into the hidden job market. See the list below of possible contacts.

Who are your contacts when you are job hunting?	
Friends	Neighbours
Through any sports clubs you attend	Through your hobbies
Church/temple/mosque/synagogue	Clubs and organisations you belong to
Trade unions	Social events
Work colleagues – present	Work colleagues – past
Work colleagues – moved on	Work colleagues – retired
Relatives	In the community
From school	From college or University
From courses	From meetings

Networking and word of mouth

Networking is all about making the most of contacts. These could be work contacts or friends and family. Let everyone know you're looking for a certain type of work. Each person might tell somebody else, and they may tell somebody else and so on. The more people who know you are looking for work the more chance you have of being told about a job that has not been advertised.

Contact employers directly

Use the Yellow Pages or other business directories to get names and contact details of suitable employers.

Advertise your skills locally

You could consider advertising your skills locally in the post office window or local newspapers. If you are interested in a part-time job or freelance work, (eg book keeping, translating, word processing, private teaching/tutoring, designing, gardening, etc) this could be the way you will find work.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

OVERVIEW

Anyone who has been in steady work for a number of years may not have experienced competency based interviews, sometimes known as behavioural interviews.

This type of interview has been around since the 1980s, but for much of that time it was used only by large organisations or government agencies to any great extent.

Research shows¹ this type of interview is now becoming popular with both large and small organisations. Any clients considering changing their job can benefit from understanding this specific interview format.

Nowadays, the cost of recruitment has gone sky high. The average UK company pays over £4000 to fill each vacancy.² With costs running high, organisations are keen to 'get it right the first time' and not have to re-advertise the job if the first candidate proves to be unsatisfactory.

Aims:

To provide a comprehensive overview of the structure of the competency based interview for both adviser and client.

In this unit:

- An overview of competency based interviews and how they work
- How candidates can prepare in advance for this type of interview
- The STAR model
- Example of an answer applying the STAR model
- What happens after the candidate has gone
- Typical questions in a competency based interview
- Useful websites
- Appendix 1 - Example of interviewers' Rating Score sheet
- Appendix 2 - Example of an interview Summary Rating sheet

¹ "Interviews based on the contents of the CV/application form are found to be the most frequently used selection method (77%), followed by competency-based interviews (63%)."

² "The average recruitment cost of filling a vacancy per employee is £4,333, increasing to £7,750 when organisations are also calculating the associated labour turnover costs."

Source: Recruitment, Retention and Turnover CIPD Annual survey 2007

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

? What is a competency based interview?

Competency based interviews follow the idea that past behaviour (competency) is the best indicator of future behaviour. The interviewer will be looking for specific examples of when and how you demonstrated particular behaviours.

? How does it work?

The interviewer will want specific examples of when and how you demonstrated particular competencies (behaviours) in your previous jobs.

Prior to the interview each position is assessed for the skills and competencies and characteristics that relate to job success.

- This would normally be around three to six competencies.
- Interview questions are then developed to probe into these areas.

This is considered a *fair* process as all candidates are asked the same questions and notes are taken in order to evaluate candidates.

👉 Important

Older candidates are not at a disadvantage with this type of job interview and will be evaluated in the same way as other candidates. However, to get the job offer, they need to provide strong examples of when they have used their skills and competencies in their previous jobs.

? What should you expect in the interview?

Competency based interview questions are slightly different to the traditional style of interview. They will tend to focus on past situations and your behaviour in those situations. For example, questions are likely to start with:

"Please give me an example of when..."

"Describe a situation when..."

If the interviewer is not satisfied with your reply he/she will probe further until they get the information they are looking for.

? What does the interview focus on?

Most interviews will focus on between three to six key areas. The key skills are usually those that are related to *that* particular job role, for example, a position in a call-centre could concentrate on teamwork, customer service, or computer skills. You may also be asked about your knowledge or experience of working in a similar role previously.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

? How can you prepare for this type of interview?

You can prepare yourself for this type of interview by:

- reviewing the job description carefully and identifying the skills likely to be assessed
- identifying relevant situations and experiences in your past
- recalling examples of when you have successfully used these skills

Well structured answers from you that focus on the competency required are extremely powerful and can win you the interview. The STAR model will help you structure your answers and provide examples of when you used the skills.

The **STAR** model stands for :

Situation - describe a situation or problem that you have encountered

Task - describe the task that the situation required or your ideas for resolving the problem

Action - describe the action you took, obstacles that you had to overcome

Results - highlight outcomes achieved

Examples

Examples of typical competency based interview questions can be found on p.4.

Websites featuring information on competency based interviews:

Middlesex University

www.mdx.ac.uk/campus/support/careers/docs/int.pdf

Wellington University, NZ

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/careers/students/job_hunting_preparation/interviews/behavioural_interviews.aspx

? A question from the interviewer on customer service skills could be:

Can you give us an example of when you have dealt with an upset or angry customer in the past?

Think about:

- What was the situation?
- Why had it happened?
- What did you do?
- How was the situation resolved?

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

Example of an answer applying the STAR model

Describe the Situation and the Task briefly.

“In my last job at Taylor Insurance I took a call from a very angry customer who had been given a really high renewal quote for his car insurance. He told me he wanted to cancel the policy and go to another company. (Situation)

The customer went on and on complaining and I couldn’t get a word in. Eventually, I managed to calm him down by saying that I would go through his policy and see if there was anything we could do to bring the cost down.” (Task)

Focus more on the Action and Result.

“He was still angry, so I told him I would do my best to help him, but he needed to co-operate with me to let me do this. I looked up his details in the computer and went through his insurance policy with him. I found that he had added his 19-year-old son on the policy, and this was why he had such a high premium. The customer informed me that his son had joined the armed forces and didn’t live at home anymore, so he didn’t need to have him on the policy. (Action)

I was able to inform him that if his son only came home to visit for a few days, he could let us know the dates in advance, and we could insure him for a small cost just for those particular days.

The good result was that the customer renewed his policy with us, and it had been greatly reduced. He also thanked me for taking the time to go through his policy.” (Result)

More probing...

You should answer using the STAR model, keep the answer brief and to the point. Interviewers will ask for more information if they need it. For example, after hearing the answer above the interviewer may then ask you:

“Have you dealt with many irate customers?”

“How did you feel when the customer thanked you?”

After the interview

After the interview, recruiters will rate all candidates on a score sheet, an example of this can be found in Appendix 1.

What are they looking for?

They will be interested in the candidates who have the highest scores. The strongest contender will usually be the one who has impressed all the interviewers. See Appendix 2

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

POSSIBLE COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS

Teamwork skills

- What experience have you had of working in a team?
- Describe a situation where you were in a team and conflict arose? What did you do?
- How would you describe a successful team?
- Give me an example of when your skills really helped the team's performance.

Communication skills

- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even though you may not have liked that individual (or vice versa).
- Tell me about a time when someone at work misunderstood what you said.
- Give me an example of when your active listening skills really paid off for you.

Customer Service skills

- How would you describe good customer service?
- Describe a situation where you provided a service to a client beyond their expectations.
- Tell us of the most difficult customer service experience that you have ever had to handle – perhaps with an angry or irate customer.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.

Problem-solving

- What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision?
- Tell me about an unpopular decision you have had to make.
- How do you work under pressure?
- What significant problems have you had to face this year?

Self-knowledge

- How would you describe yourself?
- How do your skills relate to our needs?
- What are your three major accomplishments?
- Why do you want to come and work for us?

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

Example of interviewer's Rating Score sheet

Candidate's name: Jennifer James Candidate's name

Position: Customer Service Agent Position applied for

Rate each competency on a scale of 1–5 by circling the rating.

5–4 = Very strong evidence of desired competency
(Provided several specific and complete answers) How interviewers will rate you

3–2 = Some evidence of desired competency
(Provided only one specific and complete answer)

1 = No evidence of desired competency
(Could not provide any specific examples or provided incomplete or vague examples)

Competency	List of the competencies required for this job role	Score	Your replies and examples are scored here.
Customer service		1 2 3 4 5	
Team working		1 2 3 4 5	
IT Skills		1 2 3 4 5	
Adaptability		1 2 3 4 5	
Assertiveness		1 2 3 4 5	
Sensitivity to others		1 2 3 4 5	

Candidate's motivators and reasons they want the job

List candidate's motivators identified as a result of questioning:

Poor IT skills, but a good team player although lacks confidence.

Strong customer handling skills and keen to develop.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

Example of an Interview Rating Summary Sheet

Candidate's name: Dean Farrow Candidate's name

Position: Customer Service Agent Position applied for

Rate each competency on a scale of 1–5 by circling the rating.

5–4 = Very strong evidence of desired competency
(Provided several specific and complete answers) How interviewers will rate you

3–2 = Some evidence of desired competency
(Provided only one specific and complete answer)

1 = No evidence of desired competency
(Could not provide any specific examples or provided incomplete or vague examples)

Record each interviewer's rating for each competency Different interviewers will add their comments about your performance

Competency Name

List of the competencies required for this job role

Summary of Ratings

	interviewer's name Mary Rating	interviewer's name Stephen Rating	interviewer's name Mark Rating
Customer service	3	3	3
Team working	4	3	3
IT Skills	2	2	2
Adaptability	3	2	2
Assertiveness	3	3	4
Conflict management	1	1	1
Total	16	14	15

Candidates with the highest points will be considered first

List candidate's motivators identified as a result of questioning:

Candidate's motivators and reasons they want the job

Likes to work in a team setting, with some independence. Keen to develop and grow.

Seeks a flexible work environment, acknowledges need for more development when dealing with conflict.

WORKING WITH PROFESSIONAL/MANAGER CLIENTS

OVERVIEW

Working with 50+ professional/manager clients can be a challenge, especially if they have been victims of job redundancies. Many will have been in a position of authority and may have been in steady employment for a number of years. Consequently, it can come as a shock for them to discover they have to start job hunting for a new position.

Individuals in this group can suffer low self-esteem and are often not prepared for the realities involved in finding new positions in the today's competitive job market. For many, a natural reaction is to look for positions similar to the one's they have had. However, this approach can prove to be soul-destroying as companies down-size or introduce flatter management systems, which means managers jobs are often the first to go. Compromises may need to be considered by this client group to re-enter the 21st century workplace.

Aims:

To provide a comprehensive overview of how professional/manager clients can plan a return to the job market or a career change using tested strategies.

In this unit:

- How you can help professional/manager clients
- Using Recruitment Agencies – Handout 15.1
- Useful websites – Handout 15.2
- Direct Approaches – Handout 15.3
Appendix 1 – Example of a speculative cover letter
- Hidden Job Market – Handout 15.4

How can you help the older professional/manager client?

- *Clients may need to work out their individual needs*

If you feel your clients could benefit from being more self-aware and discovering their individual needs, use the exercises and quizzes featured in the previous Units 1 – 14. These exercises can prove helpful if clients are looking for a complete change of career, or want to work out their priorities and career drivers. The *Dealing with Redundancy* Handout in Section 2 of the guide offers advice to those who have lost their jobs through redundancy.

Resources to use: Units 1 – 14

Dealing with Redundancy Handout
Case Study for clients motivation

- *Clients have difficulty securing job interviews*

Clients may come to see you only after they have tried for weeks (or months) to secure job interviews. Their lack of success could be due to the fact that they are targeting large organisations, and in some cases, very similar to the ones they have just left. Clients need to be aware of the thriving small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the UK and how a direct approach can be more successful with these smaller organisations.

Resources to use: Direct Approaches – Handout 15.3

Appendix 1 – Example of a speculative cover letter
Hidden Job Market – Handout 15.4

WORKING WITH PROFESSIONAL/MANAGER CLIENTS

How can you help these clients? (cont.)

- *Clients are not having much success using recruitment agencies*

To reap the benefits from recruitment agencies clients need to understand how they operate and how they can make them work in their favour.

Resources to use: Using Recruitment Agencies – Handout 15.1

- *Clients have been told that they are 'over-qualified' for many positions*

This can be an obstacle for older clients who have many years' experience in a senior position. However, the best way to tackle this situation is for clients to make it clear why *they have chosen* that position, in that company. For example, the company may be expanding into new markets, or introducing new products, for this reason the client would like to work for them. Or the client now feels that they would like to mentor or assist younger members of the team, without direct responsibility.

Employers need to feel reassured that taking on an older professional won't cause a threat to any existing younger members on the management team. Therefore, the client has to make it clear to the employer that they have *deliberately* chosen to apply for a lower status job. However, they need to have sound reasons for doing this well prepared, as they could be challenged by the interviewer or employer.

- *Clients are not having much success with internet job searches*

Whilst the internet is a useful medium to find information, it can also confuse the user by providing too much information. Clients can benefit from the *Useful Websites* Handout which includes the major job search websites, including those for executives, networking sites, company information websites and sites providing the latest news.

- *Clients are finding it difficult using the traditional approach to job hunting*

The traditional approach, ie sending off CVs in response to job adverts, may have worked a few years ago, but today's job market is too competitive for that approach only.

Adopting a proactive attitude, and using a variety of approaches will secure more rewards. For this client group networking can often be the answer. By letting as many people as possible know they are looking for a job, they are increasing their chances of finding work. The *Hidden Job Market* handout provides a list of contacts they can consider using.

Some clients may wish to consider using social networking websites such as *FaceBook* and *LinkedIn*, both of these sites are featured in the *Useful Websites* Handout. Professional clients can also benefit from the networking sessions at Executive Job Clubs or help groups specifically for professionals.

Resources to use: Useful Websites – Handouts 15.2

Hidden Job Market – Handout 15.4

- *Clients are interested in becoming self-employed*

Self-employment is now becoming a serious option for many people aged 50+ who wish to take some control of their working life and fulfil lifelong ambitions.

Resources to use: Infosheet 3 on *Self-employment* in Section 2 offers advice on this area.

PROFESSIONAL/MANAGER - USING RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

OVERVIEW

? What are recruitment agencies?

A recruitment agency provides services to both employers and job seekers. They make profits by successfully placing job seekers into specific jobs, and charge the employers (not the job seeker) a fee for doing so. They also place temporary staff in organisations, charge employers an hourly rate, and the worker is paid by the agency.

? Are there different types of recruitment agencies?

Agencies can be high-street-based and deal with a wide range of opportunities. There are also a number of specialist agencies, that focus on one or two sectors particularly. You will find a huge range of online recruitment agencies. To track down the right ones for you, have a look at the following websites:

www.rec.uk.com

www.agencycentral.co.uk

www.jobs1.co.uk

? What sort of recruitment agencies to choose?

Agencies 'select' themselves on the basis of:

- Location – national, regional, local
- Industry – accountancy, finance
- Salary range: Typically £25k, £25k–£50k, £50k+

? What are the implications of recruitment agencies being commercial organisations?

- Recruitment agencies are profit-making, and their primary aim is to make money, not to ensure your happiness, although your happiness is a typical by-product!
- Agencies are often interested only in those people they can place in jobs fairly easily.
- As time is money for recruitment agencies, they will usually move quickly.

? Are they working for you or their employer client?

Agencies need to place people in well-paid jobs, and the quantity of placements is important for them. There is a question of whether you end up in the right job for you, or whether you get the first job on their books that might suit.

It is true to say that recruitment agencies do rely on repeat business and many also have to refund a percentage of their fee to an employer if the individual doesn't stay with that organisation for an agreed period of time. Consequently, it is important that you remain pro-active when seeking information about the job role and the company they offer to you.

PROFESSIONAL/MANAGER - USING RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

? Why do employers use recruitment agencies?

Employers will use recruitment agencies for a whole host of reasons:

- a last-minute opportunity
- the need to avoid putting their name in the press
- a low company profile
- lack of sector knowledge
- or they may want to contract out their recruitment activity because they do not have the staff time to manage it themselves.

? Why should you use an agency?

There are many reasons why you might want to use an agency:

- You may find yourself looking for a job in a sector that relies heavily on recruitment agencies for their management and professional intake.
- You may want to try out a particular sector for a shorter period of time.
- The specific organisation you are interested in may use a recruitment agency for their professional recruitment.

If you think that using an agency will save you time, then you may be right, but for all the wrong reasons, particularly if you aren't that fussy about the job or employer you get. To make the most of what a recruitment agency can offer, you really do need to get some focus and think through what you want before you approach them.

★ Tips for getting the most out of your recruitment agency

1. *Build a good rapport with the recruitment agent* – they will typically work much harder for candidates that they get on with – it's human nature.
2. *Shop around* – not all agencies are the right one for you, so go and talk to two or three before deciding which to go with.
3. *Know the rules* – make sure you understand what a recruitment agency can and cannot do for you within the law. The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) also provides best practice guidelines or visit their website www.rec.uk.com.
4. *Explain clearly and carefully what you want* – if you take time at the start, it can reduce misunderstandings and wasted efforts, and ensure you get the job opportunities that interest you.
5. *Don't underestimate the power of a recruitment agent* – in some cases they will not only be putting your CV forward, but they will be making initial pre-selection decisions for the company and even running assessment centres.
6. *Work quickly* – if they contact you with an opportunity, respond as soon as possible. Agencies thrive under time pressure, often because the employers they work for ask for help at the last minute. Late responses may lead to disappointment.

★ Tips for getting the most out of your recruitment agency (cont.)

7. *Keep an eye on the results* – if your requirements are reasonable and the market is also reasonably buoyant, then you should hear about potential opportunities within a few days. If you don't hear anything, then get back to them and politely ask why, encouraging them to be honest with you.
8. *Keep control* – make it clear that you want to make decisions about who sees your CV. Some less professional agencies can flood the market with your CV, and if you are also applying to other companies independently, then employers could have two of your applications on their desk at once – this can leave you looking a bit desperate.
9. *Be selective* – if you hand your CV to four recruitment agencies, then you may find every employer receives your CV four times!
10. *Use their knowledge* – if you get a good recruitment agent, they will often know the market well. They are a great source of market information, especially regarding salaries and benefits.

Adapted from the Careers Service Oxford University

★ Consider using Business Directories to research organisations found either through Recruitment Agencies or by a direct approach

■ Executive Grapevine

An annual publication called *Executive Grapevine* contains details of most of the search and selection firms in the UK (there is also an international edition). You should be able to find a copy in a good reference library and much of it is available online www.askgrapevine.com. Select a number of organisations to research and conduct a direct approach.

Information listed in *Executive Grapevine*:

- Company profile
- Consultant biographies
- Function, industry or programme specialisations
- Salary range of assignments
- Fees, Guarantees and Off-limits
- Major clients
- Companies index by location, function, industry, areas of specialisation and level
- Consultants index by recruiting or programme area

Grapevine magazine also available online: www.thegrapevinemagazine.com

■ KOMPASS

Kompass is a leading provider of business information that can be used for multiple purposes such as sales, marketing, procurement and research. The information is typically used for: finding suppliers of products or services, generating new sales leads, creating marketing lists, researching companies and markets.

Website: www.kompass.co.uk

? The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC)

The REC operates 12 specialist groups representing just some of the various niche markets within the recruitment industry. Each group was created at the request of members when there have been specific issues affecting their markets and their businesses.

The 12 groups are:

- AER (Association of Executive Recruiters)
- Childcare
- Construction
- Drivers
- Education
- Engineering & Technical
- Hospitality
- IMA (Interim Management Association)
- IT & Comms
- Medical
- Nursing & Social Care
- R2R (Recruitment to recruitment)

Website: www.jobseekers-uk.com/member-directory/details-rec-members

PROFESSIONAL/MANAGER – USEFUL WEBSITES

Using the internet to find recruitment agencies and useful websites:

Wrinklies Direct - www.wrinklies.org

Prime50plus www.prime50plus.co.uk

Job vacancy websites:

www.monster.co.uk

www.reed.co.uk

www.totaljobs.com

www.workthing.com

www.executivesontheweb.com

www.jobserve.co.uk (can be used to locate agencies and consultants in your particular search area)

www.exec-appointments.com

www.goldjobs.com

www.rpint.com - for senior jobs overseas (e.g. USA)

www.gaapweb.com (enter criteria to receive email alerts)

www.bluelinecareers.co.uk (for justice, police courts jobs, etc.)

www.capita.co.uk (civil service jobs)

Other useful websites

www.firstdivisionjobs.com

www.peoplebank.com

www.michaelpage.net

www.fish4jobs.co.uk

www.tiptopJob.com

www.localjobs.com

Broadsheets

Financial Times - www.ft.com/jobsclassified

The Guardian - <http://jobs.guardian.co.uk/>

Daily Telegraph - <http://jobs.telegraph.co.uk/>

Times and Sunday Times - <http://jobs.timesonline.co.uk/Jobs/JobSearch.aspx>

also www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/career_and_jobs/

Independent - <http://jobs.independent.co.uk/jobs/INM/index.asp>

Networking websites:

www.ecademy.com

www.linkedin.com - Helps find where people are; search by company, sector, seek out companies to write to, people in those companies to contact.

www.xing.com (was www.openbc.com) - another networking group.

www.friendsreunited.co.uk - helps find friends/colleagues you've lost contact with.

www.facebook.com - Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around them.

Sites providing company information:

Executive Grapevine - www.askgrapevine.com

Contains details of most of the search and selection firms in the UK (international edition also available). You should be able to find a copy in a good reference library and much of it is available online.

Hoovers - www.hoovers.com/freeuk

Basic information on larger UK and international companies.

Kompass - www.kompass.co.uk

Global database of 2.15 million industrial and commercial companies in 70 countries

Yahoo Finance

<http://uk.finance.yahoo.com>

For quoted companies, gives very useful overviews with profile, key people and financials, etc. You need to search the company symbol/ticker to get best use of the site.

Google news

<http://news.google.co.uk>

Searches lots of different sources, and the *advanced search* is helpful to narrow down the results.

BBC News

<http://news.bbc.co.uk>

BBC news website

Financial Times

<http://news.ft.com/home/uk>

For very recent information

PROFESSIONAL - DIRECT APPROACHES

DIRECT APPROACHES

A 'direct' or 'speculative' approach is one aimed at a company that you believe has the sort of work that you can do, but doesn't advertise or use agencies, and you have no contacts there.

? IS THIS METHOD SUCCESSFUL?

This method can be successful but it relies on a structured, organised approach and commitment from the job seeker. If the positions you seek in your targeted sector are limited, it makes sense to use creative methods of job hunting as well as the traditional approach.

? WHAT TYPE OF ORGANISATION CAN YOU APPROACH?

- **Large corporate environments**

In general, large companies have structured recruitment policies and they usually advertise each vacancy then select accordingly. However, if they have not been able to attract the right candidates, they could still have job openings; it is always worth contacting them. But be aware that many large organisations are restructuring or downsizing nowadays and they could be making job cuts at management level. You may even have been a victim of this process too in the past, so targeting small to medium enterprises (SMEs) can be a good alternative - see below.

- **Public sector organisations** - such as councils, schools, police, NHS and health authorities.

As most of these organisations are government funded, they have to adhere to strict equal opportunity and diversity policies, which can often be to the advantage of an older candidate. However, a speculative approach may not always be successful unless you know someone who works in one of the organisations who can provide you with advance knowledge of recruitment campaigns, etc.

- **Small to Medium Enterprise (SME)**

The small to medium enterprises are good prospects for the direct approach. Often their recruitment methods are not so rigid and due to time or cost constraints they can be open to a more entrepreneurial style of approach.

? HOW TO PLAN A DIRECT APPROACH

Step 1. Choose your targeted organisations

Start with around 10 organisations and be prepared for a high level of commitment and a business focused approach to the process. If you feel this number is unmanageable consider starting with just 5 organisations and add to your list as you become more confident.

- *Research the organisations*

Do your research and make sure you are familiar with all aspects of the company's products or services and their plans for the future.

- *Match the organisations to your wants and needs*

Ask yourself if working for these organisations will satisfy your needs. Ask your adviser for information on career drivers and values, both of which can help you decide if a job role in a particular company is for you.

PROFESSIONAL - DIRECT APPROACHES

HOW TO PLAN A DIRECT APPROACH

Step 2. Include a general CV and a speculative letter

- *The general CV*

Whilst it is always good to have a targeted CV prepared when you know exactly what an advertised job entails, it is a little more tricky to know what an employer wants when they haven't advertised the position. A general CV should display your broad range of skills, experience and ensure you meet the overall requirements for the industry sector, adding any extra information you have picked up from your research.

- *The speculative letter*

Your letter needs to show that you have researched the company and the different roles and jobs in the organisation. You need to make it clear why you are targeting them, and what makes you of particular interest to them. Each speculative letter you send should be different, a standardised approach is unlikely to succeed. The speculative letter accompanies your CV. Both documents are your chance to promote yourself on paper.

What to put in your speculative letter

- *Paragraph 1 – Why you are writing*

An opening paragraph explaining why you are writing – you can be direct here, say that you are interested in working for this company, that you want to find out more about the jobs in the company, that you would like to arrange an interview and that your interest in this particular organisation was triggered by reading an article about them in... (magazine article, local paper, broadsheet, professional journal, etc).

- *Paragraph 2 /3 – Why you are suitable and what you have to offer*

The next paragraph should be about you – it needs to draw attention to your experience and describe your suitability for a job in this company. The more research you do here about the work of the organisation, the more you can impress the reader. Use the rules of marketing with shorter, sharper sentences, key action words which focus attention and demonstrate your skills, eg analysing, motivating, monitoring, negotiating, etc.

- *Paragraph 4 – What happens next?*

End the letter with a polite message and a definite future action point, eg *“I am extremely interested in working for Chambers Telephone Marketing and would very much appreciate the opportunity to further discuss my suitability for a management post in marketing. I will call you during the course of next week, but please feel free to contact me before then if you wish, either by email: jonbrent@busymail.com or by telephone on (01111) 888 000.”*

See Appendix 1 for an example of a speculative letter.

HOW TO PLAN A DIRECT APPROACH

? Step 3 – Who to send it to?

Do not send your speculative letter to an unnamed person in HR or recruitment. It is important for the person reading your letter to know that you have taken the time to find out who they are and what they do. Call the organisation and confirm the name, job title and address of the person responsible for recruitment for the type of job you are applying for.

? Step 4 – How long do you wait for a reply before taking further action?

You should usually wait around a week to give employers time to read and digest your CV and speculative cover letter. If you have not received any reply after that time, call the company and ask to speak to the person you sent your letter to. You may have to get past the receptionist or the 'gatekeeper' to have access to certain people. If they ask you why you are calling, say it is regarding a letter sent recently and you want to confirm whether they have received it.

? Step 5 – What to say when you reach the right person

a) If they cannot remember receiving your CV
Ask if you can send them another copy

b) If they do recall receiving your CV

Engage them in conversation, but don't be too aggressive and immediately ask if there any job vacancies, try to build a rapport with the person on the phone and gain as much information as possible.

Questions you could ask:

1. I wrote to you a week ago enquiring if you had any possible manager/professional positions, did you receive my CV and letter?
2. I realise you may not have any vacancies at present (if they have told you this) but could you keep my CV on file in case a suitable position turns up?
3. What is your normal recruitment procedure?
4. When do you think you will be recruiting again?
5. What advice can you give me about gaining a position in your company?
6. Could I call you in a weeks/months time to find out if there is any change in the situation?

APPENDIX 1 – Example of a speculative letter

Mrs Julie Henderson
HR Manager
Chambers Telephone Marketing
George Street
Flint-on-sea
Essex CO5 0SU

Thursday 9 August 2007

Dear Mrs Henderson

I was interested to read in the UK Marketing Gazette about your company's plans to expand into Europe and acquire new global accounts.

As you will see from my enclosed CV, I have 20 years' experience as a Marketing Manager and have worked for many blue chip companies including Brankley and Brankley, where I was responsible for major overseas accounts with a budget of £2m, increasing the client-base by 22% in less than two years.

I have a great deal of experience in identification of new growth opportunities, as well as new sales areas for development, which lead to an overall increase in revenue.

I am keen to find a new challenge and am attracted to Chambers Telephone Marketing as a young company with a rapidly increasing list of clients. I feel that with my experience and successful track record in marketing, I would be able to make a significant contribution to your company.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this matter further. I will telephone you next week to see if this is appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Brent
T : (01111) 888 000
E : jonbrent@busymail.com

PROFESSIONAL - HIDDEN JOB MARKET

ACCESS THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET

Many job openings are not advertised, creating what seems like a hidden job market. Information about available work is circulated through managers' network of co-workers, business associates, friends and acquaintances.

? How can you find out about these jobs?

- Research potential employers and sectors
- Contact potential employers
- Use your network
- Do a speculative letter-writing campaign
- Join a Job Club
- Visit job/career fairs

? What is happening in your local labour market?

Research potential employers. Visit their websites and look through professional journals to get up-to-date information on what they are currently doing.

? Labour Market Information – Who is recruiting?

- a) Contact potential employers.
- b) You have a list of potential employers, but you don't know if they have any job openings.
- c) It's time to phone HR or a recruitment manager.

Preparation

Prepare by reviewing your CV and practice what you're going to say.

Write down your opening words in case you get flustered. Here is a sample 'script'.

*"Hello, my name is, I understand that your company produces/offers.....
..... and that's my area of career interest. I was wondering if you had any current
job openings."*

- If the contact says no, ask if they anticipate any openings in the future or if they know of anyone in the same line of business who does.
- Make sure that you get the full name and title of the person you're speaking to.
- Keep your CV in front of you in case the manager asks you questions.
- If the manager seems interested, ask if you could meet with him/her to discuss possibilities in more detail.
- If the manager can't meet with you, ask if you can send in your CV.
- Whatever happens, thank your contact, re-state your interest in working for their organisation.
- Keep the information on your contact and the organisation. You never know when you might need it again.
- Use your network of contacts ask your adviser for a list of networking websites.
See list of contacts on p.2.

PROFESSIONAL - HIDDEN JOB MARKET

LIST OF CONTACTS

Who are your contacts when you are job hunting?	
Friends	Neighbours
Through any sports club you belong to	Through hobbies
Church, temple, mosque, synagogue	Clubs
Trade unions	Social clubs
Work colleagues – present	Work colleagues – past
Work colleagues – moved on	Work colleagues – retired
Relatives	In the community
From school	From College or University
From courses	From meetings

SECTION TWO: WORLD OF WORK

2

SECTION TWO - WORLD OF WORK

The workplace in the UK is changing rapidly. This century will see new demands for work-life balance, more people working from home and an increase in part-time, freelance and portfolio careers. We look at flexible working and what it can mean to older workers.

New legislation has addressed age discrimination in the workplace. This section provides information to help clients stay up-to-date with some of these changes.

Infosheet 1	Working with employers/Age legislation
Infosheet 2	Jobcentre Plus
Infosheet 3	Self-employment
Infosheet 4	Flexible working
Infosheet 5	Dealing with redundancy Includes client Handout

OVERVIEW

How will the new regulations affect the 50+ age group?

It is now unlawful for any employer to discriminate against anyone on the basis of age, unless they can justify their actions, or it is covered by one of the exemptions included in the new law. Impacts of the latest changes in age legislation are as follows:

■ Recruitment

With the new regulations, employers will generally not be allowed to refuse to hire someone because of their age. But there is an exception to this rule if the applicant is over, or six months away from 65 years of age, or the employer's normal retirement age, if this is higher.

■ What about job adverts?

Employers should not include age limits in job adverts, and should avoid using words which could suggest they are looking for applicants from a particular age group. For example an advert which states that the company requires a 'young, enthusiastic' person could be used as evidence of age discrimination.

■ Promotion and fair deal at work

The new law gives older workers the right not to suffer a disadvantage at work because of their age. This means they should not have less favourable terms and conditions, or access to promotion opportunities, than younger colleagues, because of their age.

■ Adult Education and Training

It's not just people who are employed who benefit from the new legislation. People in adult education and training are protected, too, as course providers are not allowed to discriminate on the grounds of age. All further education, higher education (including university courses), adult learning and training which provides skills relevant to work is covered by the legislation. Training provided by employers and other organisations on their behalf is also included.

■ Retirement

The new law creates a new 'default retirement age' of 65 (this will be the same for men and women). This means that if an employer tries to force an older worker to retire under the age of 65, they can claim for age discrimination and for unfair dismissal. To force retirement under age 65 employers will have to justify it.

■ Redundancy

The new law abolishes the upper age and lower age limits for statutory redundancy payments, so people aged 65 and over are now entitled to redundancy pay calculated in the same way as for younger people.

■ Unfair dismissal

Employees over the age of 65 will now be able to challenge for unfair dismissal. The new law gets rid of the previous upper age limit, which means that employees over age 65 will be able to challenge an employer's decision to dismiss them, as long as they meet the other eligibility requirements, such as having at least one year's service.

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (AGE) REGULATIONS 2006

What the regulations say – in summary

These regulations apply to all employers, private and public sector vocational training providers, trade unions, professional organisations, employer organisations and trustees and managers of occupational pension schemes. In this context an employer is anyone who has employees or who enters into a contract with a person for them to do work. The regulations cover recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals and training. They do not cover the provision of goods and services.

The regulations make it unlawful on the grounds of age to:

- discriminate directly against anyone – that is, to treat them less favourably than others because of their age – unless objectively justified
- discriminate indirectly against anyone – that is, to apply a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people of a particular age unless it can be objectively justified
- subject someone to harassment. Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them having regard to all the circumstances including the perception of the victim
- victimise someone because they have made or intend to make a complaint or allegation or have given or intend to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination on grounds of age
- discriminate against someone, in certain circumstances, after the working relationship has ended.

Employers could be responsible for the acts of employees who discriminate on grounds of age. This makes it important to train staff about the regulations.

Upper age limits on unfair dismissal and redundancy have been removed.

There is a national default retirement age of 65, making compulsory retirement below 65 unlawful unless objectively justified.

Employees have the right to request to work beyond 65 or any other retirement age set by the company. The employer has a duty to consider such requests.

There are limited circumstances when discrimination may be lawful.

Taken from *Age and the workplace* leaflet produced by ACAS - see details on the next page.

ENGAGING WITH EMPLOYERS from advice resources

Engaging with Employers is a suite of training resources. The training provides information, advice and guidance (IAG) practitioners with the knowledge and tools they need to deliver effective IAG in the workplace.

■ What's included?

Trainer Pack

The Trainer Pack provides the information and ideas needed to prepare, organise and run a training session for IAG practitioners. It contains detailed notes, a PowerPoint presentation, handouts and proformas.

Download the Trainer Pack:

www.advice-resources.co.uk/adviceresources/general/guides/employers/trainer.pdf/

■ Delegate Pack

The Delegate Pack includes all the training and information resources that can be used both during and after the training day.

Download the Delegate Pack:

www.advice-resources.co.uk/adviceresources/general/guides/employers/delegate.pdf/

■ Who is it for?

All trainers and delegates on the Engaging with Employers course.

■ What is the purpose of the Engaging with Employers course?

The Engaging with Employers training course has four key learning objectives. It should enable a delegate to:

- make contact with a wide range of employers in their area
- handle telephone calls and meetings with employers confidently and professionally
- develop positive relationships with employers
- increase the take-up of IAG services within their locality.

The Age and Employment Network (TAEN)

www.taen.org.uk

An organisation which works to remove age barriers to opportunity, by explaining, consulting, sharing, advising and pioneering ideas and action.

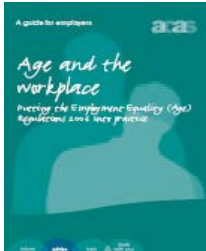
WORKING WITH EMPLOYERS/AGE LEGISLATION

USEFUL INFORMATION

ACAS

Age and the workplace

www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/r/j/Age_and_the_Workplace.pdf (875KB) 



ACAS has published good practice guidance on the regulations 'Age and the workplace' PDF file is available free of charge to download from their website or can be ordered from the publications orderline on:

Tel: 08702 42 90 90

Age Concern

www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/age_discrimination.asp



The UK's largest charity working with and for older people.

Download an informative guide to the new age discrimination law, which came into effect on 1 October 2006, and find out what it will mean for individuals.

www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/Documents/Your_Rights_Mini-guide.pdf (224KB) 

Agepositive

www.agepositive.gov.uk/legislation/index.asp

Part of the Department for Work and Pensions, responsible for strategy and policies to support people making decisions about working and retirement.

Are you over 50?

A practical guide to advice, support and services across government.

www.agepositive.gov.uk/publications/ACF2A5.pdf (619KB) 

Directgov

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/DiscriminationAtWork/DG_10026429

Information on regulations, legislation and public services all in one place.

JOBCENTRE PLUS

Jobcentre Plus

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Jobcentre Plus is a government agency supporting people of working age from welfare into work, and helping employers to fill their vacancies. Part of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) they play a major role in supporting the Department's aim to 'promote opportunity and independence for all through modern, customer-focused services'.

New Deal 50 Plus programme – who can join?

Under the New Deal 50 Plus programme specialist help is available from Jobcentre Plus personal advisers throughout the country for anyone aged 50 or over who are not working for a variety of reasons. The New Deal 50 Plus programme offers retraining opportunities and other benefits.

Anyone can join the programme if they are aged 50 or over and are in receipt of and have been receiving any one or more of the benefits below for at least 6 months:

- Income Support (IS)
- Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Incapacity Benefit (IB)
- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Pension Credit.

Individuals may also be eligible if they have been receiving National Insurance credits or Invalid Care Allowance or Bereavement Allowance.

New Deal 50 plus is also available to those whose partner has been receiving an increase in benefits for them for at least 6 months.

Contact details

For information about New Deal

Tel: 0845 606 2626

7am to 11pm, seven days a week

Or textphone:

0845 606 0680

7am to 11pm, seven days a week.

For more information visit:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Jobseekers/JobsAndCareers/DG_10030662

Work trials

A work trial is a trial of up to 15 working days in an actual job vacancy with an employer and is entirely voluntary.

Who can qualify?

Work trials are for those who have been:

- unemployed for 26 weeks or more (although there are some exceptions to this), and
- receiving a qualifying benefit (for example, Jobseeker's Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Income Support).

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/jcp/Customers/Programmesandservices/Worktrial/index.html

Out of work - help looking for work

For clients who are looking for a job or not able to work at the moment

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/outofworkhelplookingforwork/index.html

Inspire

Magazine from Jobcentre Plus providing useful information on:



Mentoring
Employability skills
CVs and much more.

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/stellent/groups/jcp/documents/websitecontent/dev_013335.pdf
(1.06MB)

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

OVERVIEW

For many people aged 50+ the prospect of self-employment can seem attractive. Research undertaken by National Statistics for *Focus on Older People* shows that self-employment is more common among older workers than among those under 50; also men in their 50s who were self-employed were much more likely than those who were employees to still be working ten years later.

Aim: Provides a summary of the obstacles that older clients can face when considering self-employment. The research undertaken by PRIME, the only national organisation dedicated to helping people aged over 50 to set up in business, paints a clear picture of the barriers faced by many in this age group.

A summary of the obstacles featured in the report is provided below, the full report can be found on p2.

Use It or Lose It

A study of the obstacles to self-employment among over-50s in the East of England.
PRIME/East of England Development Agency (EEDA) Research Report

Respondents targeted:

- Over-50s who have recently become self-employed, via telephone survey and focus group
- Over-50s who are currently economically inactive, via focus groups
- Advisers and service providers to the above, via interviews and focus groups

Summary of obstacles to self-employment among over-50s in order of importance

1. Lack of funds
2. Concerns over financial risks involved
3. Confidence
4. Fear of failure
5. Lack of awareness of the idea of self-employment
6. Lack of business skills
7. Lack of support
8. Concerns over health or energy

Financial considerations are, as indicated by the survey, the largest obstacle to self-employment raised by this age group. This general description though, may include concerns over:

- o adding to existing debt
- o loss of benefit
- o lack of collateral for financing a new business
- o risk to any investment made.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Use It or Lose It

A study of the obstacles to self-employment among over-50s in the East of England.
PRIME/East of England Development Agency (EEDA) Research Report

Points of interest:

- Despite all respondents choosing self-employment, the majority would still prefer to work with others than work alone.
- Only 25% had considered taking up a franchise and none had taken this route.
- Those who run businesses in later life experience no discrimination against them as suppliers on age grounds; quite unlike what they might experience as job seekers.
- Many candidates had no understanding of how to research their potential market.
- Several interviewees admitted to literacy difficulties. Others find their inability to read advice and forms a significant barrier to action.
- Carers face a particular barrier even when convinced of the desirability of self-employment. Their ties to home, often without access to respite or help, can prevent them from capitalising on skills and motivation.
- Immigrants may face a range of obstacles, some similar to those people with learning difficulties. Most immigrants who sought business advice (in the east of England) have been under 50 years of age.
- Many individuals are hard to reach even when Information, Advice and Guidance, which might be of value to them, exists. They may be tied at home by disability or caring; unable to access information through language, literacy difficulties or lack of computer skills and access. These are the very people who, excluded from employment, may well be suited to self-employment in some respect, but without hearing more about it and the services available to help those who wish to try it, they will not make progress.

How can you help clients overcome these obstacles?

1. Major factors inhibiting the self-employment option for many 50+ clients is the simple lack of awareness and lack of funds. The PRIME eight-page workbook is designed to help people find the right self-employment idea, and based on feedback from workshops around the county and is available on p3. Clients should contact PRIME for more details.
2. Refer clients to the local **Business Link** or similar, who will offer free or subsidised workshops covering important aspects for those wishing to start their own business.
3. **Jobcentre Plus** clients should contact their personal adviser and ask for information on self-employment and the support available to them. The JCP leaflet *Ever thought about working for yourself?* could prove helpful, this is available to download on p3.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

USEFUL INFORMATION

PRIME

www.primeinitiative.org.uk

PRIME is the only national organisation dedicated to helping people aged over 50 to set up in business. A not-for-profit company whose aim is to release the untapped potential of 50+ enterprise. Helpline Tel: 0800 783 1904



PRIME has produced a free eight-page A4 workbook designed to help people find the right self-employment idea. It's based on a successful series of workshops held around the country.

http://primeinitiative.org.uk/whatsnew/docs/Ideas_for_business_a_PRIME_self-employment_workbook_small.pdf (294 KB) 

A Study of Obstacles to Self employment Among the Over 50s in the East of England Research from PRIME/East of England Development Agency (EEDA)

For more information on this report contact East of England Development Agency (EEDA)
www.eeda.org.uk/

Ever considered working for yourself?

Jobcentre Plus

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Jobcentre Plus provides information on how people make transitions from being on benefits to becoming self-employed.

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/Disabled_People_and_Carers/Ever_thought_of_working_for_yourself/index.html

Business Link

www.businesslink.gov.uk

Official government service, providing advice and information for new and small businesses. Independent advice about starting and running a business and provides information on where to can get advice and more information. Helpline Tel: 0845 600 9 006

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

USEFUL INFORMATION

InBiz

www.inbiz.co.uk

Inbiz is an organisation which helps to stimulate, promote, develop and support individual and group enterprise and initiative amongst all sectors of the community. InBiz was established in 1990 to provide support to the long-term unemployed, benefit dependent individuals wishing to move into self-employment.

Various locations throughout the UK. Visit the website to find local branch.

Companies House

www.companies-house.gov.uk

Check on existing registered company names, trademarks and much more via the site search facility.

Companies House Contact Centre on 0870 33 33 636.

Minicom - 02920 381245 or by email at enquiries@companies-house.gov.uk

Lines are open 08:30 – 18:00 UK time Monday to Friday, except national holidays

FLEXIBLE WORKING

OVERVIEW

As people grow older, their priorities change, and often they want to balance work with other interests and obligations. Many older workers, women in particular, leave full-time employment to take up, often poorly paid, part-time jobs. However, the introduction of flexible working hours may provide them with more options.

Aim: Provide an overview of flexible hours and signpost to publications featuring employment rights for part-time workers, agency workers, and homeworkers.

Changes to the Employment Act 2003 to include carers of adults

In April 2003 the Employment Act introduced the right for parents of young and disabled children to apply for flexible working:

From April 2007 this right has been extended to cover *carers of adults*. The definition of carer is an employee who is or expects to be caring for an adult who:

- is married to, or the partner or civil partner of the employee; or
- is a relative of the employee; or
- falls into neither category but lives at the same address as the employee.

The 'relative' definition includes parents, parent-in-law, adult child, adopted adult child, siblings (including those who are in-laws), uncles, aunts or grandparents and step-relatives.

Employees must have:

- worked for their employer for 26 weeks continuously at the date that the application is made
- not have made another application to work flexibly under the right during the past 12 months.

A description of flexible working can be found on p.2.

Trends in pathways between career and retirement

There are many types of pathway between a 'main' career job and full retirement. A study of transitions (Lissenburgh and Smeaton, 2003) suggests that:

- almost as many people leaving permanent full-time jobs between 50 and state pension age go into *part-time*, *temporary* or *self-employed* work as retire directly. However, access to higher quality 'bridge' jobs is greater for certain groups.
- *self-employment* - the type of bridge job that most commonly provides job satisfaction for older workers - is most commonly taken up by men, particularly those with qualifications. See Infosheet 3 - Self-employment for more details.
- Women more commonly take up *part-time* work, often at lower rates of pay. An important element is the strength of the individual's previous networks when in work (Barnes et al., 2002).

Part-time workers make up 25% of workers in Britain and 80% of them are women.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

What is 'flexible working'?

'Flexible working' is a phrase that describes any working pattern adapted to suit a clients needs.

The following description can be found on the ACAS website – www.acas.org.uk

- **Part-time working** For example, an employee might start work later and finish early in order to care for a relative.
- **Flexi-time** Employees may be required to work within essential periods but outside 'core times' they often get flexibility in how they work their hours.
- **Job-sharing** Typically, two employees share the work normally done by one employee.
- **Working from home** New technology makes communication with office and customers possible by telephone, fax and email from home, car or other remote locations.
- **Term-time working** An employee on a permanent contract takes paid or unpaid leave during school holidays.
- **Staggered hours** Employees in the same workplace have different start, finish and break times - often as a way of covering longer opening hours.
- **Annual hours** This is a system which calculates the hours an employee works over a whole year. The annual hours are usually split into 'set shifts' and 'reserve shifts' which are worked as the demand dictates.
- **Compressed working hours** Employees work their total agreed hours over fewer working days – for example, a five-day working week is compressed into four days.
- **Shift-working** Shift-work is widespread in industries which must run on a 24-hour cycle, such as newspaper production, utilities and hospital and emergency services.

Clients can combine any of these working patterns to come up with something to suit their circumstances.

Who can apply for flexible working?

For more information on flexible working and who can apply for it, download this leaflet:



ACAS Advisory booklet - Flexible working and work-life balance

This leaflet is intended to help employers and employees agree flexible working arrangements that can provide benefits to both individuals and their organisations.

www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/a/o/B20_1.pdf (546kb) 

FLEXIBLE WORKING

To view latest legislation on 6 April 2007 visit the DTI website*

* **Guidance from the Department of Trade and Industry**

www.dti.gov.uk/employment/employment-legislation/employment-guidance/page35663.html

This revised Guidance has been produced to reflect changes to the legislation on the right to request flexible working which came into effect on 6 April 2007. The principal change is that the right to request flexible working has been extended, through new powers in the Work and Families Act 2006, to employees who are carers of certain adults.

This Guidance is intended to provide a general overview of the law. More detailed guidance on particular aspects of the legislation is available from other sources. Contact details and links where appropriate are provided throughout this Guidance.

Working Families - Interactive Flexible Working Guide

http://workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/family_zone/flex_work_guide

An **interactive guide** that can help people consider what arrangements would be realistic for them and their family and their workplace. By working through the guide users you will end up with a firm proposal on flexible working which has the maximum chance of success.



Or download a 'Flexible Working' PDF factsheet from the Working Families website.

Free Legal Helpline Tel: 0800 013 0313

www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/family_zone/factsheets/pdfs/flexible_working.pdf 
(221 KB)

Worksmart information on your rights at work from the TUC

www.worksmart.org.uk

Information in the form of question and answer or as pdf files to download.

Part-time workers - www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/part_time_workers

Flexible working - www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/flexible_working

Agency workers - www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/agencyworkers.pdf (636 KB) 

Homeworkers - www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/homeworkers.pdf (1.00MB) 

DEALING WITH REDUNDANCY

OVERVIEW

By now, most of us know of someone who has found themselves in a redundancy situation as the job they were hired for, no longer exists. Organisations are having to down-size, merge, outsource or restructure in an attempt to stay competitive in today's commercial arena with emerging markets, such as India and China, taking a share of the market.

Aim

To provide general information and advice only, and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law relating to redundancy. Legislation on redundancy is complex and clients should be referred to the relevant organisations, eg ACAS or CAB who can provide expert advice in this specialised area. The *Dealing with Redundancy* Handout provides general information and contact details for your clients who are facing redundancy.

? A person can be made redundant when:

- the work the person does is no longer needed, for example, the employer's business is failing or the employer is moving into a new line of business which no longer needs the person's skills, or a new process is introduced which means the job is unnecessary
- the employee's job no longer exists because the work is being done by other employees
- the workplace has closed because the employer has ceased trading but is not insolvent
- the employer's business, or the work the person is doing, moves to another area
- the person is laid off or put on short-time working
- the employer's business is transferred to a new employer
- the employer's business becomes insolvent
- the employer was the sole proprietor of the business and dies.

? Who is entitled to a statutory redundancy payment?

Not all employees are entitled to a statutory redundancy payment, they should meet these conditions:

- be an employee. Self-employed people or members of a partnership do not qualify
- have worked for the firm for at least two calendar years continuously since the age of 16
- not be in an excluded occupation.

If employees do not meet these conditions, they won't get a statutory redundancy payment, even if they are genuinely redundant.

Anyone excluded from statutory redundancy pay may be entitled to contractual redundancy pay (they need to check their contract of employment).

The upper age limit of 65 years to claim a statutory redundancy payment no longer applies if the individual was made redundant from 1 October 2006.

Information adapted from the Adviceguide website www.adviceguide.org.uk from CAB

DEALING WITH REDUNDANCY HANDOUT

FACING REDUNDANCY

In today's changing times organisations are constantly having to restructure. Unfortunately, this can mean they may go through the process of down-sizing, outsourcing or a whole company re-organisation. Redundancy is now a fact of life, however, for some people, it presents them with an opportunity to start afresh and look for something new.

Coming to terms with the situation

Many people are made redundant each year and no sector is safe from redundancy. Redundancy can be caused by falling profits, increased competition, takeovers, mergers, technological advances and even poor management.

- try not to take it personally - the job was made redundant, not you
- focus on moving forwards rather than looking back

It's natural to feel upset and it may help you to talk it over with your friends and family.

What you need before you leave

Before you leave your employer:

- pick up your P45
- get written details of your redundancy payment and package.

Make a note of the contact details of:

- your line manager
- trade union representative
- human resources department
- pension fund trustees
- any details of private health insurance

Make good use of any additional benefits offered

Your employer might provide free careers guidance to help you decide on your next move. Some will offer money for training. Whatever they offer, make the most of it. If you're not offered careers guidance by your employer, you can call the **Careers Advice Service** on 0800 100 900 and ask to speak to a **Career Coach** who will help you think about your options. Or if you wish to have a face-to-face session with an adviser, find the nearest **nextstep** network near you visit www.nextstep.org.uk.

What are you entitled to?

Redundancy issues are complex so you should seek professional help. A professional adviser can explain your rights and look at your financial options. You can also get advice on negotiating with your employer from:

- your trade union
- professional bodies
- your local Citizens Advice Bureau
- independent financial advisers
- employment law experts



Useful contact details on redundancy are provided on p3.

DEALING WITH REDUNDANCY HANDOUT

What is the next move?

Weigh up all your options carefully – this way you'll make the best and most informed decision. The **nextstep** service can help you look at updating your CV, look at training courses and updating your skills. See local provision by visiting their website on www.nextstep.org.uk or speak to the **Careers Advice Service** on 0800 100 900 to find out the support available, or visit the website www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice

Improve your skills

Learning something new is always a good idea. If you're going for a complete career change you'll probably have to gain new knowledge and skills to make the change. But even if you're trying to get into the same type of work as before, updating or broadening your skills is still a good idea, because it:

- shows you can take care of your own learning and development
- proves you're a motivated, positive individual

Courses are run at colleges, universities, private course providers, **learnirect centres** and adult education centres. If you're not working you may get help with the fees. If you can't commit to a regular timetable and want to work at your own pace, you could do a distance learning course.

Best place to look for job vacancies

You can find this out by keeping in touch with the local press, reading trade magazines and checking out vacancies at your local Jobcentre.

- look in the papers for vacancies
- trade/professional magazines
- use the internet
- register with employment agencies
- send your CV out on spec
- cold call companies to ask about vacancies
- check the vacancies in the Jobcentre.

If you're cold calling or sending out your CV make sure you send it to the person in charge of hiring in the organisation; not the Human Resources Department.

Networking is a good way of finding out about vacancies as the majority of jobs aren't advertised. Networking is about letting as many people as possible know that you're seeking work. This includes friends, family, ex-employers, future employers. The more people who know you're looking for work, the higher the chances will be that you'll hear of something.

Don't target just one job or organisation. Apply for as many relevant jobs as you can. But don't apply for jobs you're not suited to or qualified for. It's better to spend time on applying for the jobs you've got a better chance of getting.



Ask your adviser for more information on CVs, job search and speculative letters.

DEALING WITH REDUNDANCY HANDOUT

Citizens Advice Bureaux - To find your local CAB branch look in the telephone book under 'C'
www.adviceguide.org.uk


The Adviceguide website is the main public information service of Citizens Advice, providing people with round-the-clock access to CAB information on their rights – including benefits, housing and employment, and on debt, consumer and legal issues.

Redundancy – Questions and answers covering most aspects of redundancy
www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/employment/redundancy.htm

Age Discrimination – Questions and answers covering most aspects of age discrimination
www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/your_rights/discrimination/age_discrimination_at_work.htm

Factsheets available to download:



Age Discrimination factsheet (51 KB) 
www.adviceguide.org.uk/e_age_discrimination_at_work.pdf

Redundancy factsheet
www.adviceguide.org.uk/e_redundancy.pdf (52 KB) 

Redundancy Help

www.redundancyhelp.co.uk

Providing independent redundancy help, although some services are costed, they provide useful information in all areas of redundancy, including a Redundancy Pay Calculator - Ready Reckoner, free of charge.

ACAS

www.acas.org.uk

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) offers free, confidential and impartial advice on all employment rights issues. Call the Acas helpline on 08457 47 47 47 from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday.

nextstep

www.nextstep.org.uk

Providing high quality information, advice and guidance on work and learning for anyone aged 20 plus.

Directgov

www.direct.gov.uk

Government agency providing useful information on all areas of redundancy.

The Careers Advice Service

Call the Careers Advice Service on 0800 100 900 or www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice

SECTION THREE: MONEY MATTERS

3

SECTION THREE - MONEY MATTERS

The information in this section includes the latest changes to Government policies on the retirement age. Many older workers will now be considering working longer and should be aware of how this will impact on their financial plans for the future.

An overview is provided of recent changes to the State Pension, however, as pensions and retirement issues are complex and depend on each individuals' personal circumstances, we have signposted to the relevant financial and government websites, who provide the latest official updated facts and figures.

Infosheet 6 Retirement
 Pensions
 Financial Planning

OVERVIEW

This infosheet provides a brief overview of retirement age and information on pensions including:

- Basic State Pension
- Flexible Pensions
- Graduated Pensions
- Pension Credits
- State Pension Deferral

Aim: To provide an overview of recent changes to retirement and pension information only. Clients often require specific professional advice delivered by an FSA (Financial Service Authority) registered adviser. Therefore, a comprehensive list of useful organisations who can provide specialist information and advice on retirement, pensions and financial planning is available on p3–5.

RETIREMENT AND PENSIONS OVERVIEW

? What do we mean by retirement?

Retirement is when people start to take benefits from their pension. They can usually do this from age 50, but the minimum age from which individuals take their benefits is going up from 50 to 55 by 2010. The precise timing may vary between pension schemes, individuals should check with their pension scheme provider.

? What is the State Pension?

State Pension is paid to those entitled to claim it having reached State Pension age. It is based on National Insurance (NI) contributions and it is made up of different elements. More information on NI contributions is available on HM Revenue & Customs' website, found on p.4.

? State Pension age

The State Pension age for men is 65 and is between 60 and 65 for women. The State Pension age for women will increase gradually from 2010, so that by 2020 it will be 65.

The increase in the State Pension age will not affect women born on or before 5 April 1950. Women born between 6 April 1950 and 5 April 1955 (inclusive) will have a State Pension age between 60 and 65. Women born on or after 6 April 1955 and before 6 April 1959 will have a State Pension age of 65.

The state pension age for both men and women is to increase from 65 to 68 between 2024 and 2046, with each change phased in over two consecutive years in each decade. The first increase, from 65 to 66, will be phased in between April 2024 and April 2026; the second, from 66 to 67, will be phased in between April 2034 and April 2036; and the third, from 67 to 68, between April 2044 and April 2046.

RETIREMENT AND PENSIONS OVERVIEW (cont.)

? How much is the Basic State Pension?

The full basic state pension from 6 April 2007 is as follows:

Single person £87.30 per week and Married Couple £139.60 per week

It is important to remember however, that the rates quoted are the maximum, should anyone not have the full contribution record then they will be entitled to less than the above amounts.

? What is a flexible pension?

Since April 2006, simpler rules have been applied to both personal and company (occupational) schemes. The new rules allow most people to pay more into their pension schemes – and on more flexible terms. More details on flexible pension schemes can be found in the FSA's booklet '*Just the facts about pensions*' – includes a useful jargon buster section. www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk/pdfs/pensions.pdf

? What is a Graduated Pension?

The rate of pension is dependent on how many contributions a person has made between April 1961 and April 1975. For every £7.50 (man) or £9 (woman) of graduated contributions paid they get 10.2 pence.

? What is Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is an entitlement for people aged 60 or over living in Great Britain. This could mean extra money every week. Pension Credit guarantees everyone aged 60 and over an income of at least:

£119.05 a week if you are single

£181.70 a week if you have a partner

? What is State Pension Deferral?

State Pension deferral means anyone can put off claiming their State Pension when they reach State Pension age. They can also choose to stop claiming it after having claimed it for a period. Since the State Pension was introduced, people have been able to earn extra State Pension in this way.

More useful websites on retirement, pensions and financial planning are featured overleaf.

MONEY MATTERS

USEFUL WEBSITES OFFERING ADVICE ON RETIREMENT/PENSIONS/FINANCIAL PLANNING

Organisations that offer advice and support on the financial and emotional aspects of retirement:

Age Concern

www.ageconcern.org.uk

Age Concern, an organisation which supports all people over 50 and provides services such as day care and information, in addition to campaigning on age discrimination and pensions. Helpline Tel: 0800 009 966

Are you over 50?

A practical guide to advice, support and services across government.

www.agepositive.gov.uk/publications/ACF2A5.pdf (619 KB) 

Age Positive

www.agepositive.gov.uk/publications/Pensions_guide.pdf (1.59MB) 

Department for Work and Pensions and DTI have published Guidance on Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 and their impact on occupational and personal pension schemes.

Department for Work and Pensions



www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/penret

The Department is responsible for a range of benefits and services for pensioners and people planning pensions. Numerous helpful guides to download.

Tel: 08456 060 265

Directgov

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Over50s/RetirementAndPensions/index.htm

Government website with comprehensive information on retirement and financial planning for the over 50s.

Financial Service Authority (FSA)

www.fsa.gov.uk/register/home.do

The Financial Service Authority (FSA) keeps a list of registered financial advisers which can be checked at anytime by visiting their website.

Also available from the FSA - two free guides which set out useful tips to help manage retirement, whether approaching retirement or for those who have already retired.

Retiring soon and *Managing in retirement* visit www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk

Plain English Campaign

www.plainenglish.co.uk/pensionsguide.pdf (368KB) 

Complicated terminology in the pensions sector explained in plain English.

USEFUL WEBSITES OFFERING ADVICE ON RETIREMENT/PENSIONS/FINANCIAL PLANNING

HM Revenue and Customs Enquiry Centres

www.hmrc.gov.uk/enq/index.htm

Enquiry Centres are open every weekday. Some Enquiry Centres however will not open until 9.30am on either a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday for staff training. See website for various telephone numbers.

Mentoring + Befriending Foundation

<http://mandbf.org.uk>

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation aims to ensure that mentoring and befriending are at the centre of current and future national volunteering strategies.

Tel: 0161 787 8600

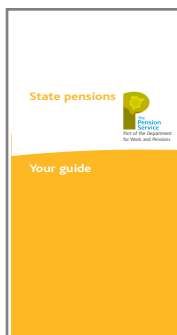
Help the Aged's SeniorLine

www.helptheaged.org.uk

Free telephone advice and information service available throughout the UK. Fully trained advice workers give advice and information on the following issues: Welfare and disability benefits; Community Care; Housing Options and adaptations.

Tel: 020 7278 1114

State Pension - Your guide www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/resourcecentre/pm/pm2.asp



Explains whether individuals are likely to get a State Pension and how to work them out. It includes more details about the State Second Pension.

Call on Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 8.00pm
Tel: 0845 60 60 265

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

www.veterans-uk.info

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, which administers the War Pension Scheme and provides welfare services to former servicepeople and their dependents.

Helpline - Tel: 08001 692 277 Helpline when calling from overseas Tel: +44 1253 866 043

The Royal British Legion

www.britishlegion.org.uk

The Royal British Legion is the UK's leading charity providing financial, social and emotional support to millions who have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and their dependants.

For enquiries call Legionline on 08457 725 725 (charged at local rates)

USEFUL WEBSITES OFFERING ADVICE ON RETIREMENT/PENSIONS/FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS)

www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk

An organisation which assists the public to resolve pensions problems and provides information and guidance on state, company, personal, stakeholder and occupational pensions.

National helpline Tel: 08456 012 923

Pensions Reform factsheet

www.dwp.gov.uk/pensionsreform/factsheets.asp

This factsheet sets out revised projections of spending on pension benefits, and estimates of pension income in the future under pension reform. The revised figures take into account a number of changes including new economic assumptions, minor improvements in modelling, and they present the figures in 2007/08 prices and earnings terms.

The Pension Protection Fund

www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk/index/scheme-member.htm

Pays out compensation for certain company pension funds where an employer became insolvent on or after 6 April 2005.

Tel: 0845 600 2541

Pension Tracing Service

www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/atoz/atozdetailed/pensiontracing.asp

Provides a tracing service for those who think they may have an old pension, but are not sure of the details. The Pension Tracing Service can usually help them by tracing it.

Tel: 0845 600 2537

Funding Directory

www.advice-resources.co.uk

A fully searchable database of funding opportunities from non-charitable sources (eg adult learning grants and career development loans). It includes a deadline prompt and news updates to keep the user informed. See advice resources website for more details.

SECTION FOUR: HEALTH AND CARING

4

SECTION FOUR: HEALTH AND CARING

This section looks at recent research which indicates that ill health and disability can affect older workers' lives and how their chances of becoming ill may increase with age. Caring for others is one of the factors that greatly impacts on the quality of life of older workers, as they struggle to hold down jobs, care for children or grandchildren, and also ageing relatives.

Infosheets provide a list of organisations who offer specialist advice on issues relating to health, disability and caring for others.

Infosheet 7 Ill Health
Infosheet 8 Disability
Infosheet 9 Caring for others

ILL HEALTH

OVERVIEW

Workers aged 50+ experience a wide range of circumstances in terms of family situation, health, responsibilities and interests outside work. A range of factors affect many workers' lives as they get older and these can play a major role in their decisions to stay in work or not; three important factors are health, disability and caring for others.

Included in this section:

- Health issues faced by the older workforce
- Signpost to other organisations who provide specialist advice on health, disability and caring for others.

HEALTH AND CARING ISSUES FACED BY OLDER WORKERS

Older workers can face long-term health issues and this can affect their chances of staying in paid employment or working full-time hours. Many people in this group have to juggle careers, a second bout of childcare by looking after grandchildren and looking after elderly parents.

This set of circumstances is often referred to as the 'care sandwich' and can cause stress and anxiety to many older individuals as they struggle to hold down a job and provide care for others.

The *Crossroads after 50 Improving choices in work and retirement* report from the John Rowntree Foundation highlights some of these points, for example:

- Problems with health and fitness: Overall, people are living and staying healthy for longer, yet for a large minority, long-term health issues have a serious effect on their later working lives.
- One in seven people aged between 50 and state pension age is claiming Incapacity Benefit (compared with 1 in 20 aged 25–49), and this accounts for half of those in this age-range who are not working.
- Caring responsibilities: The 2001 Census showed that more people in their **fifties** than in any other age group are unpaid carers – about one in five of the population of this age. In particular, many care for older relations and for grandchildren (one in three people are grandparents by 50). Such responsibilities tend to be more hidden and less recognised by employers and colleagues than care of dependent children, adding to the pressure of juggling work and other obligations.
- Family and community obligations: As people go through life, their perspectives and priorities change. In some cases, pursuing one's career may become less important in later life relative to other obligations such as community and family roles.

ILL HEALTH

HEALTH AND CARING ISSUES FACED BY OLDER WORKERS (cont.)

- Changes in family circumstances, such as a partner having health difficulties or retiring, can be an important influence. These factors do not mean that older workers are all less focused on work, or that they are less committed to their jobs, than younger ones.
- Some things that happen later in working life – including marital separation and children leaving home – can potentially help to strengthen ties with the labour market (for example, separated women may need to build up their own pension). Moreover, where older workers feel valued, they can often manage to reconcile competing work and life priorities.
- Where negative assumptions are made about older workers' competence or commitment, feeling undervalued at work can help increase the priority given to domestic concerns. Thus, personal and workplace factors can interact with each other.

An important study in the 'Transitions After 50' programme provides new evidence of the relationship between caring over fifties and participation in the labour market (Mooney and Statham 2002).

No widespread evidence was found of people giving up work to take on caring responsibilities. However, the report suggested that the main impact on older workers was the extra burdens and stresses created on them while they continued working.

These stresses were less likely to have a negative impact on aspects of work than on life outside work. In other words, people typically put their work and caring responsibilities first, and as a result their own personal lives and welfare can suffer.

In addition, the *Labour market transitions among the over-50s* report commissioned by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) provided data on 26,000 men and women aged between 50 and State Pension Age (SPA) over the period 1993-2003 and concluded:

'With an older population, issues of health become increasingly relevant and roughly 40-45 per cent of the population suffered from a health problem for a year or longer. This was slightly more common among men than women. Most common problems were musculo-skeletal, circulatory and respiratory. Approximately a quarter of men and women received benefits.'

Poor health is the commonest reason people aged between 50 and state pension age leave a job and nearly half (45 per cent) have suffered a health problem for at least a year. Older people in the UK are much more likely to be economically inactive due to a disability than in any other EU or OECD country, this is especially true for over 60s.

Ready, willing and able report Trades Union Congress

ILL HEALTH

USEFUL INFORMATION

Help with health costs

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4078082



This booklet gives guidance about NHS charging arrangements in England.

It sets out information about who does not have to pay charges and about help available with the cost of the following for those on a low income:

NHS prescriptions, NHS dental treatment, sight tests, glasses and contact lenses, necessary costs of travel to receive NHS treatment under the care of a consultant, NHS wigs and fabric supports.

How to find out more?

To find out more pick up this leaflet **Help with health costs (HC11)**.

To claim help under the low-incomes scheme, use form HC1. Both may be available at GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists and opticians, or call **08701 555 455** to order one. To order an HC1 form and receive advice on filling it in, or information and general advice call **0845 850 1166**.

For a full list of medical conditions that offer patients free NHS prescriptions, go to the NHS website at www.dh.gov.uk/helpwithhealthcosts or call Tel: **0845 850 1166**

Citizens Advice Bureaux

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureaux give free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to help solve problems. To find the nearest CAB, including those that give advice by e-mail, use the link above or look under C in the phone book.

Breast screening

Women aged between 50 and 70 are entitled to free breast screening and will be invited every three years. Women aged over 70 are still entitled to free screening and can refer themselves every three years to their GP.

Breast Cancer Care helpline on 0808 800 6000

www.breastcancercare.org.uk

Breast Cancer Care provider of information, practical assistance and emotional support for anyone affected by breast cancer, provides free help, information and support.

NHS Cancer Screening Programme - information leaflets available from the website

www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk

ILL HEALTH

GENERAL INFORMATION

Prostate cancer

www.prostate-cancer.org.uk

Prostate Cancer Charity's confidential helpline on 0845 300 8383 (textphone 0845 300 8484 for those with a speech or hearing difficulties).

Cancer BACUP

www.cancerbacup.org.uk

Information service, providing accurate, up-to-date and authoritative cancer information, resources. Free UK helpline on 0808 800 1234.

Healthy weight check

www.eatwell.gov.uk/healthydiet/healthyweight/bmicalculator

Check out the BMI calculator on the Food Standards Agency which works out bodymass index (BMI).

Need more information?

www.patient.co.uk

Comprehensive, free, up-to-date health information as provided by GPs to patients during consultations.

NHS Direct

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Official website for the NHS 24 hour telephone on 0845 46 47.

Eat well for older people

www.eatwell.gov.uk/agesandstages/olderpeople/

Campaign and information from the Food Standards Agency.

Heart UK

www.heartuk.org.uk

Charity providing some information for patients about coronary heart disease. Emphasis on cholesterol and lipids. Tel: 0845 450 5988.

Diabetes UK

www.diabetes.org.uk

Includes *Diabetes InfoBank* diabetes healthcare services in local areas
Diabetes UK Careline on 0845 120 2960.

ILL HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Awareness Guide from advice resources

A new guide developed by Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) to assist IAG practitioners working with clients who have mental health issues.

What is it?

A guide developed by the Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Practitioners working with clients who have mental health issues.

How do I access it?

The guide is in PDF format and there are versions for the adviser, the manager and the client. The client's guide is also downloadable as a word document to enable interaction on screen. Section 15 of the adviser and manager's guides are also downloadable as word documents to enable interaction on screen.

For an overview of the Mental Health Awareness Guide visit the advice resources site:

www.advice-resources.co.uk/adviceresources/general/guides/mental_health/

What's included?

The Guide includes sections on:

- What are mental health issues
- Exploring how mental health impacts on peoples access and use of IAG Services
- How to work with clients who have mental health issues, and
- Action plans for organisations

The National Association for Mental Health

The information line of The National Association for Mental Health (Mind) is 0845 766 0163. Website: www.mind.org.uk has information on local support groups.

Advice Guide

www.adviceguide.org.uk

Guide available for download from the advice guide website

Help with mental health problems

www.adviceguide.org.uk/h_help_with_mental_health_problems.pdf (53 KB)

Other information on Adviceguide that might help:

- Community care
- Patients' rights
- NHS complaints
- Help with health costs
- Disability discrimination
- Benefits for people who are sick or disabled

DISABILITY

AbilityNet is a national charity helping disabled adults and children use computers and the internet by adapting and adjusting their technology. Call 0800 269545 for information.
www.abilitynet.co.uk

Directgov

Government website full of useful information regarding all aspects of disability.
www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/index.htm

Disability Discrimination Act

Copy of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 available to download.
www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm

Disabled people's rights in everyday life

Part of the Directgov website. Helps people to find out about their rights as a disabled person in different areas of life, including in employment, health and education.
www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DG_4019061



Leaflets from Jobcentre Plus

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Disability Discrimination Act - disclosing your disability

Help with getting benefits for people with a disability or illness

Disability Living Allowance

Disability Discrimination Commission

Guidance about disability discrimination is available from the Disability Discrimination Commission. Helpline 08457 622 633 or website www.drc-gb.org.

Disability Awareness for nextstep advisers

www.advice-resources.co.uk/adviceresources/general/guides/disability/

A range of material which covers areas including the DDA, work-based learning and welfare benefits for disabled people. Useful links and references.

Shaw Trust

www.shaw-trust.org.uk

Shaw Trust is a national charity that provides training and work opportunities for people who are disadvantaged in the labour market due to disability, ill health or other social circumstances. Tel: 01225 716 300

CARING FOR OTHERS

Facts about carers:

1. Britain¹ has an estimated 5.7 million carers and one in six households (17%) contains a carer. In Northern Ireland, there are an estimated 250,000² carers. Most caring is based on close personal relationships.
2. The proportion of adults who are carers varies between the countries and regions.
3. Women are more likely to be carers than men - 58 per cent of carers in Britain are women, compared with 42 per cent who are men.

1 Informal Carers Office for National Statistics, 1998

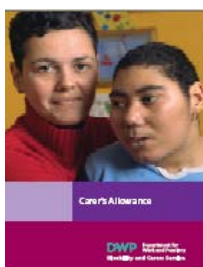
2 Source of data on carers in Northern Ireland is the Continuous Household Survey, 1995/96

Characteristics of carers

- 3.3 million women and 2.4 million men
- Most likely to be aged 45–64
- 9 out of 10 carers care for a relative
- 2 out of 10 for partner or spouse
- 4 out of 10 for parent(s)
- 18% of carers look after more than one person.
- One half of all carers look after someone aged over 75

What is Carer's Allowance?

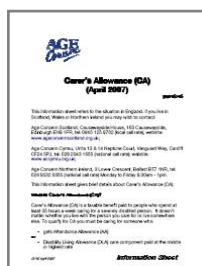
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/stellent/groups/jcp/documents/websitecontent/dev_011815.pdf



DWP leaflet
Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is a benefit for carers of people who are severely disabled. Tax may have to be paid on this benefit.

Carer's Allowance is a benefit paid to people caring for others. Anyone looking after a severely disabled person for at least 35 hours a week, may be able to claim Carer's allowance. More information is available from the above website, choose **Carer's Allowance** from the list of leaflets and guides.



Age Concern leaflet
Information on Claiming
Carers Allowance

Information on claiming Carers Allowance from Age Concern

www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/Documents/IS15CarersAllowanceApr2007.pdf (62KB)

Claim carer's allowance online

www.dwp.gov.uk/carersallowance

This service allows carers to send an electronic claim or report a change in circumstances.

SECTION FIVE: FREE TIME

5

SECTION FIVE: FREE TIME

Nearly 28 million people in the UK have recently been involved in some sort of volunteering, and that number is growing all the time. Research into the benefits of volunteering indicate that volunteering can enhance employability by helping to develop skills and improve job prospects, both necessities in today's economic climate. A list of organisations who welcome volunteers of all ages is provided.

Both travel and career breaks have become popular with all age groups over recent years. We signpost to organisations who provide information for those in the 50+ group who may be considering living abroad, or taking time off work as a career break or who wish to travel.

Infosheet 10 Volunteering

Infosheet 11 Travel/Career breaks

VOLUNTEERING

OVERVIEW

Why should anyone aged 50+ volunteer and what are the benefits? We look at the results of a survey carried out with 200 leading UK businesses, which shows interesting results. Volunteering can help older people feel good about themselves, meet new people whilst learning new skills that they can take into the workplace.

Aim:

- List the benefits of volunteering for older people and show how employers value candidates with volunteering experience
- List the reasons why older people volunteer
- Signpost to organisations who welcome older volunteers

? Can clients aged 50+ benefit from volunteering?

They certainly can. Volunteering can help anyone wanting to learn new skills, build their confidence or consider a career change.

Research into the benefits of volunteering indicate that volunteering can enhance employability by helping people to develop skills and improve job prospects, both necessities in today's economic climate. In addition, volunteers can road test different kinds of work, in different environments without the risk of leaving their jobs.

A survey carried out by TimeBank through Reed Executive among 200 of the UK's leading businesses revealed some interesting information about volunteering, as follows:

- 73% of employers would employ candidates with volunteering experience over other candidates with no experience
- 94% of employers believe that volunteering can add to skills
- 58% say that voluntary work experience can actually be more valuable than experience gained in paid employment
- 94% of employees who volunteered to learn new skills had benefited either by improving their salary, or being promoted.

The reasons why older people volunteer:

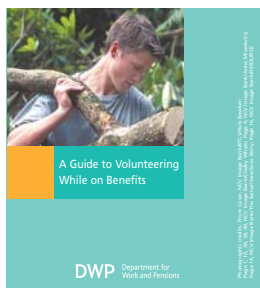
- transition period from paid employment to retirement
- children left home, time on their hands
- gain a sense of self-worth
- increase personal development
- meet new people, from all walks of life
- give something back to the community
- coping with a bereavement
- want join a network

For those not in work, it is possible to volunteer without losing any benefits, see details of Jobcentre Plus leaflet on volunteering overleaf. For anyone already in employment, volunteering can help them change career direction, whilst helping them to appreciate, and understand real commitment and build a network of contacts.

VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING WHILE ON BENEFITS

www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2006/vg1-2006.pdf (1.44MB) 



Nearly 28 million people in the UK have recently been involved in some sort of volunteering - and that number is growing all the time. In the past, some people have been put off volunteering because they've been worried that it might affect their benefit. This leaflet explains how it is possible to become a volunteer while on benefits.

REACH

www.reach-online.org.uk

REACH matches the skills of experienced people to the needs of voluntary organisations. Call 020 7582 6543

Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP)

www.csv-rsvp.org.uk/site/home.htm

RSVP, the retired and senior volunteer programme, is a free standing programme within CSV, which encourages the growing number of older volunteers in their local area in England, Scotland and Wales. Call 020 7643 1385

DO IT

www.do-it.org

'Do it' was launched in 2001 with the first, and still the only, national database of volunteering opportunities in the UK.

BTCV GREEN GYM

www2.btcv.org.uk/display/greengym_how

Keep fit while volunteering with the Green Gym. Groups meet in their local area at least once a week. A Green Gym session lasts for up to three hours. During this time volunteers will be doing environmental conservation or gardening activities with a trained leader. For information call: 01302 388 888

CSV

www.csv.org.uk

New health report jointly commissioned by CSV, British Red Cross, Help the Aged: Making a difference through volunteering: the impact of volunteers who support and care for people at home. Researched by the Older People's Programme (OPP).

"In 1997, 22 million people volunteered in the UK. 11 million people said they were waiting to be asked." *

*Source: National Centre for Volunteering

To order a copy of the full report please email awickens@csv.org.uk or call 020 7643 1402 or download the Executive Summary.

TRAVEL/CAREER BREAKS

The Career Break

www.thecareerbreaksite.com

Website offering assistance with all aspects of taking a career break from printing off checklists to looking at timelines. Useful information provided on tax and visas.

Senior Railcard

www.senior-railcard.co.uk or call 08457 484 950

Anyone aged 60 plus, can save a third on most Standard and First Class rail fares throughout Britain when purchasing a Senior Railcard.

Journey Planner

www.transportdirect.info/TransportDirect/en/

Access door-to-door journey planner, to and from anywhere in Great Britain, with this online planner.

Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC)

www.dptac.gov.uk/door-to-door/03/index.htm or call 020 7944 8011

The Government set up the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) in 1985 as an independent body to advise it on the transport needs of all disabled people.

Preparing to move or retire abroad?

www.direct.gov.uk/en/BritonsLivingAbroad/BeforeYouGo/DG_4000018

Directgov website covering issues such as pensions, tax and health care costs for anyone considering moving abroad – provides a checklist of the essentials.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

www.fco.gov.uk

General enquiries: 020 7008 1500

Travel advice: 0845 850 2829 (BT-4p per min, other networks vary)

Visa enquiries: 0845 010 5555 or textphone +44 (0)20 7008 8457

Keep safe - online help for people planning a trip abroad

www.direct.gov.uk/en/BritonsLivingAbroad/BeforeYouGo/DG_4000021

When planning a trip or a longer stay in a foreign country, it's important to think about what to do in an emergency. Basic safety tips to help everyone relax and enjoy their time abroad provided by Directgov.

Enjoy 50 plus

www.enjoy50plus.co.uk

Easy-to-use directory to find online resources for this age group.

Age-matters

www.age-matters.org

Website for seniors, providing easy access to advice, information, products and services for all ages.

Research commissioned by benefits and HR consultancy Aon Consulting reveals that nearly six in 10 employees are interested in taking a career break.

SECTION SIX: LIFELONG LEARNING

6

SECTION SIX: LIFELONG LEARNING

We now live in a knowledge and information society as manual jobs are fast disappearing in the UK. Lifelong learning is the only way to keep up with current changes in our workplace. Employers also seek candidates who can demonstrate a constant need to learn and gain knowledge throughout their working lives.

This section covers study options available, and a breakdown of the value of qualifications, with a section on Skills for Life.

Infosheet 12 Learning and qualifications

Infosheet 13 Skills for Life

LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

“In the early 1960s only 6 per cent of under-21s went to university, whereas today around 43 per cent of 18–30 year olds in England enter higher education.”

This quote by Charles Clarke, former Secretary of State for Education and Skills helps demonstrate why many older workers lack formal qualifications. In the 1960s and 1970s, many teenagers left school clutching a few GCEs and looked forward to starting an apprenticeship with local manufacturing and engineering firms. Very few students went on to higher education, as the quote above confirms.

During that era, Britain had a strong industrial base including shipbuilding, steel foundries and coal mining industries. Unfortunately, these sectors have been gradually eroded and we have moved from an information age to a knowledge age. The ability to obtain, assimilate and apply the right knowledge effectively, will become a key skill in the next century. Workers will no longer be judged solely by qualifications gained in the past, but will also be assessed by their capacity to learn and adapt to an ever changing future.

Lifelong learning is the way forward.

How to improve our future potential without formal qualifications

Anyone thinking of changing jobs or returning to work without formal qualifications should consider taking refresher courses in the following three subjects to get ahead:

■ Improve number/maths skills

Most jobs will involve using numbers skills at some point so it's a good idea to brush up on maths and put their skills to the test. There are a variety of courses to suit all levels, both tutor-led and online.

■ Improve English skills

Being able to read and write well affects us all on a day-to-day basis. Being able to communicate can be key to landing a dream job. A CV with spelling mistakes and bad punctuation is less likely to get noticed and could ruin any chance of an interview, so brushing up on English skills can ensure a head start.

■ Improve IT skills

The European Computer Driving Licence (or ECDL) is an internationally recognised qualification for computer users everywhere. The ECDL helps users gain confidence with computers taking them through a wide range of common IT software packages.

Courses can be taken at a local college or online. Contact the **Careers Advice Service** for more details on local provision call 0800 100 900 or www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice

LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

A National Qualifications Framework (NQF) exists in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and was revised following public consultation completed in November 2003.

A Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) also exists.

The following table shows how these frameworks relate to one another

Framework for higher education qualifications	National Qualifications Framework (as implemented from Spring 2004)	Previous National Qualifications Framework
D (Doctoral) - Doctorates	8 - Vocational diplomas	5 - Higher levels
M (Masters) - Masters degrees, post-graduate certificates and diplomas	7 - Vocational certificates and diplomas (NVQ5)	4 - Higher levels
H (Honours - Bachelors degrees, graduate certificates and diplomas)	6 - Vocational certificates and diplomas	
I (Intermediate) - Diplomas of Higher Education and Further Education, Foundation Degrees, Higher National Diplomas	5 - Key Skills Vocational certificates and diplomas (NVQ4)	
C (Certificate) - Certificate of Higher Education	4 - Vocational certificates and diplomas	3 - Advanced
—	3 - Key Skills, Vocational certificates and diplomas, A-levels, (NVQ3)	
—	2 - Key Skills, Vocational certificates and diplomas, Basic Skills, GCSE (Grades A* to C), (NVQ2)	2 - Intermediate
—	1 - Key Skills, Vocational certificates and diplomas, Basic Skills, GCSE (Grades D to G), (NVQ 1)	1 - Foundation
—	Entry - Basic skills, Certificates of achievement	Entry

More information on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) can be obtained from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) www.qca.org.uk

More information on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) can be obtained from Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI/default.asp

LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

National Learning Directory

www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice

More than 950,000 courses from over 10,000 providers. Some courses are aimed at anyone thinking of returning to learning or getting a job.

■ Return to Learn course

A return to learning after a break can be a daunting prospect. These type of courses are for anyone who is computer literate and wishes to prepare for more traditional learning, which could be an NVQ, college course or an access course, for example:

■ Getting a job course

These type of courses are designed to identify various job roles and how to go about getting them.

Learning with the BBC

■ Ready to Learn from the BBC

www.bbc.co.uk/learning/readytolearn

Case studies of six individuals who show how learning changed their lives (also on video):
Better English • Better job • New skills • New life • Childcare support • Disability support

■ BBC - Absolute Beginners' guide to using your computer

www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/abbeg/abbeg.shtml

Interactive guide taking users through easy steps to use their computer.

■ BBC Key Skills

For anyone wishing to practice their key skills:

- Communication Skills - www.bbc.co.uk/keyskills/comms/index.shtml
Writing a Good Report | Effective Presentations | Pressure Groups | Writing An Essay
- Application of Numbers - www.bbc.co.uk/keyskills/number/index.shtml
Booking a Holiday | Shopping & VAT | DIY Project | Organising A Gig | Kung Fu Angles Game
- ICT - www.bbc.co.uk/keyskills/it/index.shtml
Using a Spreadsheet | Safety | Viruses | The law | Data Processing

■ BBC Learning Zone

www.bbc.co.uk/languages

BBC Learn languages programme encourages learners to learn a bit at a time, in their own time. Features most European languages, plus Mandarin Chinese, a guide to Urdu and working with the Japanese.

LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

■ Adult Learners' Gateway

www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/index.htm

A DirectGov site providing links to advice on adult learning and information on government policy.

■ Campaign for Learning - National Workplace Learning Network

www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/WorkplaceLearningNetwork/

The Campaign for Learning's National Workplace Learning Network has been set up to support individuals and organisations to develop a culture of learning in the workplace. Membership is free and is open to anyone with an interest in workplace learning.

■ nextstep

www.nextstep.org.uk

nextstep offers free and impartial information and advice on learning and work to all adults who are 20 years and over. The organisation is funded by the Learning and Skills Council, so there is no charge to the client.

■ Support4learning

www.support4learning.org.uk/education/adult_and_community_learning_.cfm

This site exists as a signpost to relevant organisations and resources in a number of key areas. This section focuses on adult community learning.

■ Workers' Educational Association

www.wea.org.uk

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) is the UK's largest voluntary provider of adult education. Ever since it was founded in 1903, in order to support the educational needs of working men and women, the WEA has maintained its commitment to provide access to education and learning for adults from all backgrounds, and in particular those who have previously missed out on education.

SKILLS FOR LIFE

OVERVIEW

Adults who lack literacy and/or numeracy skills are at a disadvantage in the workplace where these skills are vital. Many people in the older workforce have basic skills needs, but have found coping strategies over the years to get by. Today, the threat of redundancy for the low-skilled is a reality and to find new work may prove very difficult for this client group, unless they are encouraged to return to learning.

This section will cover the main points of the Skills for Life agenda including:

- What is the Skills for Life strategy?
- What are the Skills for Life targets?
- Why do we need a Skills for Life strategy?
- How you can identify signs of clients' basic skills needs
- How clients lacking literacy or numeracy skills can struggle at home and work
- What is the Leitch Review?
- What are the Leitch Review recommendations?
- Useful contacts

What is the Skills for Life strategy?

Skills for Life is the Government's basic skills strategy, launched in 2001 to tackle the legacy of adults with poor literacy, numeracy and language skills in England. The strategy aims to help create a society where adults have the skills they need to find and keep work and participate fully in society.

What are the Skills for Life targets?

Skills are of critical importance to the UK economy. They have an impact on prosperity, employment and social justice. The government is committed to improving the literacy and numeracy skills of 2.25 million adults by 2010.

Why do we need a Skills for Life strategy?

In 2006 16 per cent of the working age population in England – over 5 million people – lacked functional literacy and 21 per cent (nearly 7 million) lacked functional numeracy. This has an enormous effect on the UK's economy as low basic skills cost a typical business with 50 employees £165,000 a year and the UK economy as a whole a staggering £10 billion a year.

How many people aged 50+ have a basic skills need?

It is difficult to say precisely, as many government statistics count adults in groups of post-16 or post-19 age brackets. We must also take into consideration, the fact that many older workers do not wish to disclose their lack of basic skills, and therefore remain undetected.

SKILLS FOR LIFE

? How do adults with literacy and numeracy needs cope?

Many adults, particularly older ones, have found coping strategies to hide their lack of skills from others. The use of informal basic skills screening can help IAG advisers identify some signs of a client's basic skills need during an IAG session.

INFORMAL BASIC SKILLS SCREENING

Adults with literacy, language and numeracy skills needs are often unwilling to disclose this, and may have developed coping strategies that mean they are not easy for you, as an adviser, to detect, especially if the individual has been coping for many years without these skills.

Informal screening in an interview can highlight some of the signs that a learner may be coping with a possible literacy, language or numeracy skills need, in simple terms English and maths skills need.

Listed below are some signs that could be indications that your client has a basic skills need. Of course, there may be other reasons for these points, and the client may have genuinely forgotten their glasses on that day.

These points can often be noted during an interview:

- Saying they will not be able to read today as they have forgotten their glasses.
- Bring along other 'distractions', eg a mobile phone.
- Being in too much of a hurry to complete forms or wanting to take them away.
- Bringing along a friend/partner because they always deal with that sort of thing.
- Asking where to sign, or signing without reading the form.
- Appearing to be evasive or distracted when asked about their skills or education.
- Getting aggressive or frustrated with the interview/learning process.
- Arriving late or missing appointments.
- Being unsure about the time – How long ago? For how long?

*Taken from – 'A professional development guide for frontline staff, providing IAG in support of Skills for Life'
LSC May 2003*

SKILLS FOR LIFE

? What are the difficulties older adults face when they lack literacy or numeracy skills at home and work?

What is literacy?

Literacy covers the ability to:

- speak, listen and respond
- read and understand
- write to communicate.

Literacy at work

Workers who are not confident with their reading, writing or oral communication skills will be at a disadvantage in the workplace where these skills are vital.

Workers may struggle to:

- read and understand written information required for a job
- fill out forms or write reports – most employees need to be in a position to complete basic work documentation, including accident reporting
- write messages, memos or notes to colleagues
- follow instructions
- communicate with colleagues or customers
- read and understand written material and other communications
- access work-based training opportunities or train towards promotion
- cope with any rapid changes taking place within the workplace.

Literacy at home

Limited literacy skills may also have an effect on:

- understanding children's school reports
- reading road signs or written directions
- reading the terms and conditions linked to credit, loan or mortgage agreements
- following a recipe or DIY instructions
- social opportunities resulting in difficulties in engaging with a wide range of community activities.

What is numeracy?

Numeracy covers the ability to:

- understand and use mathematical information
- calculate and manipulate mathematical information
- interpret results and communicate mathematical information.

Numeracy at work

Poor numeracy skills can affect workers by making it harder for them to:

- estimate numerical information needed for a job, including quantities, costs and timings
- calculate customer change without using a calculator
- make quick mental calculations required for a particular job
- understand payslips (cont.)

SKILLS FOR LIFE

? What are the difficulties older adults face when they lack literacy or numeracy skills at home and work? (cont.)

Numeracy at work

- understand tax or pension deductions
- read the time or understand a bus or train timetable – a lack of these skills can impact on people's punctuality
- access work-based training or promotion opportunities.

Numeracy at home

Poor numeracy skills limit the ability to:

- help children or grandchildren with their maths homework
- work out the correct change at a supermarket or shop
- calculate exchange rates for buying or using foreign currency
- calculate gas, mobile phone and electricity bills
- understand or calculate interest rates accurately on loans, mortgages or credit cards
- calculate measurements and work out costs for DIY work.

Literacy and workers

Most adults develop their skills up to the level needed for work and everyday life. Literacy problems often arise when people are required to do something new in their workplace. This can have a negative effect particularly on older workers who have lost their jobs through redundancies and need to seek new work in different sectors.

? What is the Leitch Review?

The Government commissioned the Leitch Review to identify the UK optimal skills mix in 2020 to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice, and to consider the policy implications of achieving the level of change required. This important report, released on 5 December 2006, was chaired by Lord Sandy Leitch.

? What are the Leitch Review recommendations?

Leitch recommends a trebling of current efforts to tackle Skills for Life needs. He recommends that by 2020 95 per cent of the adult population have functional literacy and numeracy skills. This new target would help an additional 2 million adults with their literacy skills and an additional 4.6 million adults with their numeracy skills by 2020. Download the latest Leitch 2007 report from the DIUS website here: www.dius.gov.uk/publications/leitch.html

? What can you do to help clients with Skills for Life needs?

Clients can often feel embarrassed when discussing their basic skills needs. However, if the adviser takes time to build rapport with the client, before enquiring about whether they need to 'brush up' on any particular skills for a new job, the client may feel comfortable enough to disclose their skills needs. See '**Identifying and Meeting Need**' booklet on p.7. This booklet has been produced by the Basic Skills Agency to help people who give employment advice in a range of contexts. Useful websites are provided on p5–8.

SKILLS FOR LIFE

SKILLS FOR LIFE STATISTICS – WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO...

6.8 million people aren't functionally literate

5 million people in the UK have serious difficulty with numbers

38% of Jobcentre Plus customers lack functional literacy

45% of Jobcentre Plus customers lack functional numeracy

Source: Leitch Review 2007

■ MOVE ON

www.move-on.org.uk

Move On is a national project aimed at helping adults to brush up their skills and gain the National Certificate in Adult Literacy or Numeracy.

Move On Maths test

www.move-on.org.uk/ilr/numeracy/welcome.asp

The Learner Route is designed to help learners prepare for the numeracy Level 1 and Level 2 tests. Learners passing this National Test will gain a qualification in maths, the National Certificate in Adult Numeracy.

Move On English test

www.move-on.org.uk/ilr/literacy/welcome.asp

The Learner Route is designed to help learners prepare for the literacy Level 1 and Level 2 tests. Learners passing this National Test will gain a qualification in English, the National Certificate in Adult Literacy.

Move On Mini test

www.move-on.org.uk/testyourskills.asp

■ ESSENTIAL SKILLS SUPPORT UNIT

www.essu.org/resources/skills_testnew.pdf

A mini test available to download as a pdf document from the Essential Skills Support Unit for Hampshire and IoW.

Top 50 Book resources from ESSU

www.essu.org/resources/resources_top_50.pdf

List of the top 50 books and resources voted most useful for essential skills tutors and learners, by tutors across the county.

Top Resources for ICT, ESOL and other themed areas, plus those mapped to the Adult Core Curricula from ESSU

www.essu.org/resources/Resourcesdoc.pdf

SKILLS FOR LIFE

SKILLS FOR LIFE FROM LEARNDIRECT

■ **Skills City courses** from learndirect offer help to anyone who is worried that their reading, writing, speaking or listening skills are holding them back at work.

The courses are set in real-life workplaces. A friendly supervisor helps student to practice the really important word skills that we need every day and helps:

- Spell correctly • Understand the rules of grammar • Listen to and follow instructions
- Read written English • Use a computer for writing • Understand and fill in forms

■ **Skills City from learndirect focus on three major work sectors:**

Distribution – <http://catalogue.learndirect.co.uk/courses/100029BS003/>

Manufacturing – <http://catalogue.learndirect.co.uk/courses/100029BS005/>

Retail – <http://catalogue.learndirect.co.uk/courses/100029BS004/>

HELP FOR EMPLOYERS

■ **Get On At Work**

www.move-on.org.uk/getonatwork.asp

Get on at work is a practical approach that offers an effective solution to meeting organisational improvements and business objectives, for example:

- meet health and safety requirements • increase productivity • reduce absenteeism
- reduce errors/wastage • improve customer relations • be seen as a learning organisation
- contribute to an Investors in People award.

Who is it for?

- Supervisors and junior managers, especially those promoted internally who may want to brush up on some aspects of literacy or numeracy
- Non-qualified employees who want to have their skills recognised
- Qualified employees who have secured higher level qualifications while still having some gaps in the English or maths they need at work, perhaps because their **qualifications were achieved some time ago.**

SKILLS FOR LIFE

■ **Basic Skills Agency**

www.basic-skills.co.uk

The Basic Skills Agency at NIACE is committed to finding, developing and disseminating good practice in literacy, language and numeracy.

■ **Skill for Life Improvement Programme**

www.sflip.org.uk/resources/skillsforliferesources.aspx

Skills for Life resources - free to order and free delivery. Over the past five years, a wide range of resources have been produced as part of the Skills for Life Strategy, visit the site to see what is available.

■ **Identifying and Meeting Need - Basic Skills Agency**

<http://archive.basic-skills.co.uk/resources/detail.php?ResourceID=1615948013>

This booklet can be downloaded from advice resources website or paper copies can be ordered for £2.00 by ringing 0870 600 2400 and quoting A12141.

What's included?



This booklet has been produced by the Basic Skills Agency to help people who give employment advice in a range of contexts including:

- Colleges
- Workplaces
- In the Community
- In Job Centres

Who is it for?

It gives pointers to help advisers to talk about basic skills needs.

What are the key benefits?

It has been designed to increase understanding about what basic skills are and why they are so important.

- Offers explanations of what is meant by basic skills
- Demonstrates particular approaches for specific groups
- Identifies basic skills needs

SKILLS FOR LIFE

■ Survival Skills in the Workplace - Basic Skills Agency

For those clients with a basic skills need, the Basic Skills Agency has produced useful *Survival Skills in workplace* leaflets in a variety of work settings to help clients and IAG advisers work out the skills gaps with clients.



- Administration
- Catering and Hospitality
- Childcare and Education
- Construction Industry
- Direct care
- Hairdressing
- Horticulture
- Motor Vehicle Servicing
- Policeforce **new**
- Retail
- Working in a Gym **new**
- Working a Travel Agency **new**

The survival guides are to help people of all ages to make choices about vocational courses and careers. The leaflets provide accessible information about the reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematical demands of a range of occupations. They are available to download free of charge from the Basic Skills Agency website: www.basic-skills.co.uk enter 'Skills and Work' on the web search facility or order copies from the helpline 0870 600 2400.

■ "If I were..."

A Resource for people with few or no qualifications

A practical introduction to jobs with few or no entry qualifications. Comprises 155 leaflets, describing in clear, simple terms a wide range of jobs open to students with few or no qualifications, If I Were is also a resource to use with students with moderate learning difficulties.

Each leaflet looks at:

- skills and the qualities required for a particular job
- the availability of the work
- the training required
- how to find a job

Checklists helps students assess their suitability to help them find the job that's right for them. There are teacher's notes to support the use of the leaflets in the classroom.

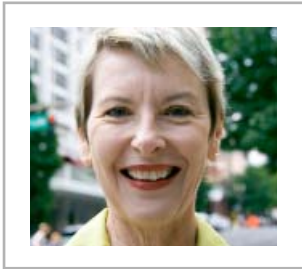
ISBN: 978 1902876924

For more information visit the Nord Anglia Lifetime Development website:

http://eshop.nald-sw.co.uk/product_info.php?products_id=66

CASE STUDY No.1

MARY DUNMORE



Mary Dunmore (52) had been unemployed for 18 months before she found work as a self-employed florist. Mary was interviewed by an adviser as part of the **New Deal 50 plus scheme**. Her personal adviser at the Jobcentre helped Mary to build her confidence and claim the **New Deal 50 plus employment credit** while she got her business off the ground.

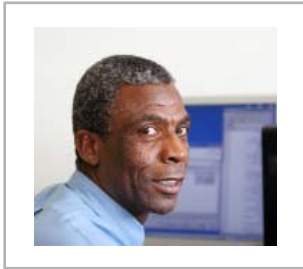
“I was keen to set up my own business as a florist. I was able to use the New Deal 50 plus training grant to access training, which meant that I was able to take a part-time floristry course, which really increased my expertise.”

Mary also made contact with her local **Business Link**. “I received invaluable help from my local Business Link adviser, he gave me advice about finding finance, networking and the boring, but necessary things like the legal side of starting up a business. I also went to Business Link workshops to help me with the business planning and financial aspects of my business.”

Mary declares: “I’m extremely happy to be working again and relishing the challenge of running my own business.”

CASE STUDY No.2

MARTIN RUSSELL



Martin Russell (54) had worked for a large manufacturing company as an assembly worker for over 20 years. His company decided to close the UK plant in the Midlands and move the manufacturing unit to Eastern Europe. Luckily, his company organised support for those employees whose job roles were to be made redundant in the restructure. They arranged for **nextstep** advisers to deliver careers advice and information about education and training.

There were few opportunities in the manufacturing sector in Martin's area, so during his interview with a nextstep adviser he suggested that he would like to become a security guard. "I fancied a change from the routine of assembly work to a job which gave me more flexibility and the chance to meet people."

The nextstep adviser was able to organise a free course for Martin to **re-train** as a security guard and gain his security licence. Now he is happily settled in a new career and confirms: "I finished the course, got my security licence and I eventually found work as a security guard for a large retail store in Birmingham."

CASE STUDY No.3

SURINDER CHARU



Surinder Charu (51) left school with two GCE 'O' levels to work as an office junior with an insurance company. She married and left her job to start a family. Sadly, Surinder lost her husband and became a widow at an early age, which meant she had to take responsibility for bringing up her two children. Her career was put on hold as she had to stay at home as a lone parent and take care of her young children.

When Surinder's children eventually left home, she felt a sense of isolation and says: "I was at a bit of a loss really. I wanted to go back to work because I missed the social contact when my children left home. The problem was that I really lacked confidence because I'd spent so long at home, and I felt I hadn't got the skills that would get me back into the job market.

The Jobcentre put me in touch with our local FE college and the course adviser recommended a confidence-building course. After that, I contacted the **Careers Advice Service** and was able to take the **Skills and Interests Assessment**, which made me think about working with children. My local college was running childcare courses and I felt confident enough to join at foundation level."

Surinder was accepted on a childcare course and was able to receive financial help through an **Adult Learning Grant**. She was also successful in securing some financial help from the college for course fees. She confirms: "I'm really enjoying getting back into studying and it's reassuring that there is a real age mix of people on our course. My confidence has also taken a boost and I'm looking forward to applying for childcare vacancies as soon as possible. This has taught me that you're never too old to train for a new career."

CASE STUDY No.4

KEITH MCDONALD



Keith visited his local **nextstep** service looking for help to redesign his CV after taking early retirement from a local college. He had worked at the college for almost 25 years as a Lecturer in Electrical Installation and was now keen to enjoy his retirement.

However, as Keith was only 59-years-old, he felt he was not quite ready to stop work completely.

He had always been in full-time employment, firstly qualifying as a teacher, then joining the Royal Navy as a Petty Officer. After a few years, he decided to consolidate all this skills and knowledge and began working as a college lecturer.

Keith needed to maintain a certain income and as he was a 'people's person' and good communicator, he realised he did not want a job with the same responsibility as his previous role. After undertaking various career matching programmes, including the **Skills and Interests Assessment** from the **Careers Advice Service**, he felt the job role of electrical repair technician would be something that interested him, perhaps in a retail setting.

Keith redesigned his CV to target this area of work and took it to a couple of the repair shops in town. A week later, he received a call inviting him for an interview and he is now working 8 hours a week, giving him the small income he needed and allowing him to spend much deserved time on his other interests of cycling and gardening.

USEFUL CONTACTS

GENERAL

■ Age Concern

Supports people over 50, provides day care, information on age discrimination and pensions.

Phone 0800 009966

Open 8am to 7pm, seven days a week

Email ace@ace.org.uk

Website www.ageconcern.org.uk

■ Citizens Advice

Offers advice on a wide range of subjects from housing to health, to debt and consumer issues.

Phone 020 7833 2181

Website www.adviceguide.org.uk

■ Community Legal Service Direct

An organisation which is the first point of call for legal help and information in England and Wales.

Phone 0845 345 4345

Open 9am to 5.30pm, seven days a week

Email webadmin@clsdirect.org.uk

Website www.clsdirect.org.uk

■ Counsel and Care

Offers advice and help for older people.

Phone 0845 300 7585

Email advice@counselandcare.org.uk

Website www.counselandcare.org.uk

■ Help the Aged Seniorline

Gives people over 50 free advice leaflets and a welfare rights advice line:

Phone Seniorline 0808 800 6565

Email seniorline@helptheaged.org.uk

Website www.helptheaged.org.uk

■ Pensioners' guide

A free guide for people aged 60 and over. It contains valuable information on a wide range of topics.

Phone 0845 6 065 065 (textphone 0845 6 064 064)

Website www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/leaflets

USEFUL CONTACTS

GENERAL

- **The Royal British Legion Legionline**

Provides financial, social and emotional support to former and current service people and their dependants.

Phone 08457 725 725

Open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm

Website www.britishlegion.org.uk

- **Veterans Agency**

Deals with the War Pension Scheme and provides welfare services to people who used to be in the services.

Phone 0800 169 2277 (textphone 0800 169 6758)

Helpline when calling from overseas +44 1253 866 043

Email help@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk

Website www.veteransagency.mod.uk

WORLD OF WORK

- **Age Positive**

Promotes the benefits of employing a mixed-age workforce, including older people.

Email agepositive@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Website www.agepositive.gov.uk

- **Jobcentre Plus**

Can help find the right kind of job: full-time or part-time, temporary or permanent.

Phone 0845 6060 234 (textphone 08456 044 022)

Open weekdays 9am to 6pm, and Saturday 9am to 1pm

Website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

- **New Deal 50 plus**

A programme for people aged 50 or over who have been out of work and claiming benefits for at least six months.

Phone 08456 062 626 (textphone 08456 060 680)

Website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/New_Deal/index.html

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USEFUL CONTACTS

WORKING LIFE

■ The Age and Employment Network (TAEN)

An organisation which works to remove age barriers to opportunity, by explaining, consulting, sharing, advising and pioneering ideas and action.

Phone 020 7843 1590

Email info@taen.org.uk

Website www.taen.org.uk

■ ACAS

Acas Helpline answers your employment questions in one confidential phone call.

Phone 08457 47 47 47

Monday - Friday 08:00 - 18:00 for Minicom users Monday - Friday 08:00

Website www.acas.org.uk

MONEY MATTERS

■ Financial Services Authority

An independent organisation which regulates the financial services industry in the UK.

Phone FSA Consumer Helpline 0845 606 1234

Open Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Email consumerhelp@fsa.gov.uk

Website www.fsa.gov.uk

■ HM Revenue & Customs

The new department responsible for the business the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise used to carry out. Find the contact point for your enquiry from the website below and look in your local phone book.

Website www.hmrc.gov.uk/menus/contactus.shtml

■ The Pension Service

The Pension Service is a part of the Department for Work and Pensions, that works out and pays pension entitlements

Phone 0845 6060 265 (textphone 0845 6060 285)

Open Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Website www.thepensionsservice.gov.uk

USEFUL CONTACTS

■ Pensions information

Various leaflets available covering all aspects of pensions including, state pensions, occupational pensions, personal pensions, pensions for the self-employed, pensions for women, contracted-out pensions, stakeholder pensions and pensions for carers.

Phone 0845 7 31 32 33 (textphone 0845 604 0210)

Website www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

■ Pensions Tracing Service

Provides help with tracing an old pension.

Phone 0845 600 2537 (textphone 0845 300 0169)

General enquiries when calling from overseas +44 19 1218 2466

Website www.pensionservice.gov.uk/atoz/atozdetailed/pensiontracing.asp

■ The Pension Advisory Service (TPAS)

Helps the public with pension problems and provides information and guidance on State Pensions; company, personal, stakeholder and occupational pensions.

Phone 0845 601 2923

Email enquiries@pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk

Website www.pensionadvisoryservice.org.uk

■ Public Guardianship Office

An organisation which handles the financial affairs of someone mentally incapacitated through illness or injury.

Phone 0845 330 2900

Email custserv@guardianship.gov.uk

Website www.guardianship.gov.uk

HEALTH AND CARING

■ Carer's Allowance Unit

Has information on Carer's Allowance, the main state benefit for carers, including eligibility and how to make a claim.

Phone 01253 856 123 (textphone 01772 899 489)

Email cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Website www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/benefits/carers_allowance.asp

USEFUL CONTACTS

■ Carers UK

The association provides information on benefits and how to access support services within your area.

Phone 0808 808 7777

Open Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10am to midday and 2pm to 4pm

Website www.carersuk.org

■ Alliance for Health and the Future

Promotes healthy and fulfilling lives for people of all ages, and produces leaflets on maintaining good health as we grow older.

Email lifeguide@healthandfuture.org

Website www.healthandfuture.org Go to Activities & Publications/Publications/Lifeguides

■ CancerBACUP

Provides help for people living with cancer.

Phone 0808 800 1234

Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.30pm

Website www.cancerbacup.org.uk

■ NHS Direct

NHS Direct is at the forefront of 24-hour health care – delivering telephone and e-health information services day and night direct to the public.

Phone 0845 4647 for nurse advice and health information.

The helpline is open 24 hours.

Website www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk