

# *Climb a Mountain*

and

# *Reach for the Stars*

**A Guide to Setting Life Goals and Finding A Job**

For young adults with 22q11.2 deletion

July 2010



By Michelle Hiseman

## Max Appeal!

Supporting Families affected by DiGeorge Syndrome/VCF3/22q11.2 deletion



# You've Got Mail

Dear Reader

Leaving school and finding a job is a scary, but exciting time for young people. However, the current economic crisis is making it much more difficult for the under 25's. Remember that your first jobs are stepping stones to the one which will make you feel fulfilled. Being employed, full or part-time, with an agency or directly, will open up more opportunities than if you stay at home hoping "*something might turn up*". Potential employers of the future will be more impressed with a good work ethic, your ability to hold a job and your desire to work rather than if you stay unemployed. Job Hunting requires planning and work. Don't be too fussy, and consider taking a job that you may not really want and use it to gain experience and practice your skills – it is easier to find a job you want when you are already in work.

Whilst having basic maths and literacy skills are valued, according to a recent survey, employers who recruit school/college leavers place more value on good Communication Skills, a good Work Ethic and Personality than academic attainment. Employers don't expect those leaving education to be "job ready" but they do want the right attitude – turn up on time, learn the work, do it to the expected standard and work well with colleagues.

Having a job is only part of the story of the rest of your life. In order to make the most of your opportunities, you need to have a positive frame of mind and work towards goals. The title of this booklet is *Climb a Mountain and Reach for the Stars* to reflect the uphill struggle of life many of us face, some more than others. It also highlights the importance of constantly moving forwards and looking upward beyond the summit towards the stars, striving to be more than we are today. We may not get all the way, but we will go an awful lot further and feel much better about ourselves, than if we stop to look down and backwards.

This booklet gives general basic advice, but if you want specific help in your own job search or more help finding out what you want to do with your life, please contact me, in confidence, at [michelle@maxappeal.org](mailto:michelle@maxappeal.org).

Good Luck!

*Michelle Hiseman*

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# Got the T-shirt

Be inspired, you are not alone. Here are a few of the many stories of people who have not allowed their disability to stop leading a fulfilling life. It's not easy but it is possible.



**Quinn Bradlee** has VCFS, although was not diagnosed until he was 14 years old. He is the author of *A Different Life, growing up learning disabled and other adventures* which chronicles his early life as he struggled with the medical, social and academic challenges he faced as a result of having VCFS. He has recently co-authored another book with his father and is the founder and manager of the website *FriendsofQuinn.com*, a forum for those with learning disabilities. He has also undertaken many public speaking engagements and television interviews. In his twenties at the time of writing and recently engaged to be married, Quinn has found his niche in life, promoting awareness of those living with Learning Disabilities, particular as a result of VCFS.

Quinn says in his book: *"...don't be ashamed about it...the truth is that you have to play the cards that you're dealt. We all fold sometimes. Sometimes people have the guts to ante up again. It's hard, but you have to try to be one of those people."*

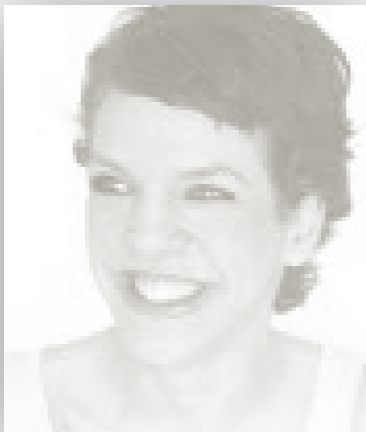


**Ciorstaidh Eales** has DiGeorge syndrome and although she struggled at school (which she admits she didn't really like) she managed to get enough GCSEs and A levels in Geography, Music Technology and Art to get into University. She is now studying for a Geography degree, including spending time at an American University as an exchange student. She says in a recent article published in the MaxAppeal newsletter *"It's a lot of hard work, but definitely worth doing. I know my grades aren't great so I try and do everything else to make my CV interesting"*.



As a child **Brooke Ellison** enjoyed dancing and karate but at the age of 11 years she was knocked down by a car. She is now paralyzed from the neck down (quadriplegic) and has to have a carer 24 hours a day to help her with her most basic needs in life such as feeding. A machine breathes for her and she uses her mouth to control her wheelchair. Her autobiography *Miracles Happen*, co-written with her mother, was recently turned into a film. Rather than dwell on what she couldn't do she focussed her energies on what was possible. After a year in hospital, she returned to school, studied hard and eventually became the first quadriplegic to graduate from Harvard University in the USA, one of the top universities in the world. She was chosen by her fellow students to give the graduation speech – a high honour in American Universities. Since then her determination to make something of her life and make a difference has given her a career as a motivational speaker, with her story appearing in many US magazines and on top rated TV shows.

Brooke says on her website : *"One of the few guarantees in life is that it will never turn out the way we expect. But, rather than let the events in our lives define who we are, we can make the decision to define the possibilities in our lives."*



**Francesca Martinez** has Cerebral Palsy and in the 1990's she first became known as an actress in the children's drama series *Grange Hill*. She has since appeared in *Holby City*, *Casualty*, *Doctors* and *Extras* as well as several radio programmes. However, she is best known as the multi-award winning stand-up comic, who has had international sell-out tours and appears regularly at the Edinburgh Festival.

Francesca says on her website: *"I just see myself as someone with a different set of can's or can'ts. I can't run or drink through a straw, but I can stand on stage and tell jokes – I can do things that other people can't do."*



**Helen Keller** was born in 1880 at a time when disabilities were dealt with very differently than today. At the age of 19 months she contracted an illness which left her deaf-blind and which meant she had almost complete lack of language. A teacher taught her to communicate using a special form of sign language which allowed Helen to break free from her isolation and become the first deaf-blind person to gain a Bachelor of Arts degree. Afterwards she became a world renowned speaker, prolific author and campaigner for women's rights, anti-war and other socialist causes. In 1965, three years before her death, she was elected to the *National Women's Hall of Fame*, a high honour in the USA. Over forty years after her death, Helen Keller is still an inspiration to many and her influence remains through her writings and charitable foundations which help deaf-blind people today.



**Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson** was in a wheelchair by the age of ten. She loves sport and is very competitive. She is genuinely restricted in some aspects of her life but that did not stop her becoming one of the greatest athletes in the Paralympic games. Between 1988 and 2004 she won a total of 11 gold medals for the 100m, 200m and 400m wheelchair events, plus winning six wheelchair marathons. In 2000 she came third in the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year and is now one of the most powerful women in the world of sport. She is married with one child and she never uses her disability as an excuse – she just had to take a different route to achieve her dreams.

# New Horizons

**“Independence is the scariest word in the dictionary.”**

*Quinn Bradlee*

Leaving school is a huge change and a scary time for most young people. Gone are the years where you are a child and the important decisions are made for you. Now you are an adult, able to make your own decisions and for the first time in your life your days, weeks and years are not scheduled for you. When you leave school you are in an excellent position to take more control and live your life more in harmony with your abilities, emotions and interests. However, how many of you are feeling positive, joyous and confident at this point?

Having 22q11.2 deletion means you are likely to have struggled at school and be learning disabled. This is NOT a character flaw and you are NOT stupid, lazy or unmotivated. Your brain is wired differently and with the correct learning and employment support you are capable of learning and succeeding. Many studies show that people with learning disabilities have average to above average intelligence (Bogod, 2009). The problem with our school system is that if you don't 'fit' you can be labelled as abnormal, stupid or lazy. If your educational needs have not been met then that is the fault of the system, not you. The emphasis on academic achievement fails to recognise the wide range of important skills that people contribute to make a successful society.

You may have grown up ashamed and angry of having a learning disability and taken to heart the negative comments and thoughts, reducing your motivation. Your confidence and self-esteem may be low. As you move into adulthood you may even find that you struggle more as you try to cope with the fast pace changes, lack of routine and sheer 'hugeness' of what life has to throw at you. Fear and the emotional fallout of being learning disabled can be very debilitating. You may fear being humiliated at work, of being socially inadequate or being ridiculed, particularly when criticism is related to a *perceived* lack of intelligence by others. Maybe you often hide away or mask your issues (e.g. laughing at joke you don't understand just because others laugh). A fear of rejection may leave you feeling isolated. You may be more sensitive emotionally and really take to heart negative comments and ridicule from your peers and family. You may have more difficulty adjusting to change and therefore may be seen as inflexible by others. All these emotional struggles raise the anxiety levels, which will be intensified by all your negative past experiences. Not to mention that you've just come out of the teenage years with all the emotional, physical and hormonal turmoil that brings!! All these emotions are normal. What is normal? Normal is that everyone is different and unique (even identical twins!).

There is a way forward and you too can *Get the T-Shirt*. The information in this booklet will help you organise your thoughts and give you the basic skills to help you to lead a fulfilling life and find a job.

# ***Beach Dweller, Passenger or Sailor?***

**“Change is growth...you can choose what to change.”**

Stephanie Roth-Nelson, S.E.E.K.,

**“Live the life that *you* want NOT what pleases everyone else.”**

Dr Phil McGraw

Your life is a journey. Since birth you have been carried and driven along the rough bouncy roads of childhood and now you are standing on the beach looking out at the great ocean of life. Looking out across the ocean, you can go in any direction, at any time. The decision is truly yours.

Without a plan or an idea of where you are heading you will become either a

## ***Beach Dweller***

You will stay on that beach, paralysed by fear, surviving and watching everyone else set sail and getting on with their lives. When a storm hits you'll get very wet and even more miserable.

Or a:

## ***Passenger***

Jump on the first ship that comes along, because that's what others are doing and go where it takes you, letting others control your journey. When the storms hit you could find yourself adrift in a lifeboat waiting for someone to pick you up and see where they take you.

## **Be a Sailor**

With a plan, map and compass you will have a definite idea of where you are going and be able to sail your own boat, with you in control. When the stormy seas of life put you off course, you will know which direction to point your boat and sail towards your goals.





# Success

Success is defined as : “The achievement of something desired, planned or attempted.”

www.thefreedictionary.com

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure.”

General Colin L. Powell

“Always aim for achievement and forget about success.”

Helen Hayes

No matter who you are, there are **two key factors which help people to be successful**, even those with learning and physical disabilities:

- **Positive Attitude** towards life – how you deal with what life throws at you
- **Setting Goals** – to give yourself a direction and purpose

Many people also have someone they can turn to for advice, give constructive feedback or just bounce ideas off, for example, a family member, friend, teacher, or work colleague. In this age of the internet, safe blog sites such as *FriendsofQuinn.com* and emailing distant friends from MaxAppeal, are a great way to connect with others like yourself and discuss your common issues.

But first we need to define success:

For most people the definition of success is a high flying job and/or fame and lots of money. But how realistic and accurate is this? Many people who chase this type of success often end up disillusioned, unhappy and empty. Success and fulfilment are very personal and different for everyone. For example, for someone who is severely depressed, a huge success is getting out of bed in the morning – it all depends on what you are working towards and how you define it.

According to Brain Tracy, a life coach and specialist on the psychology of achievement, there are **six criteria for success**:

- **Peace of Mind** – going to bed and waking up without fear, anger or guilt.
- **High levels of health and energy** – being at your peak fitness helps boost energy levels.
- **Loving relationships** with family and friends.
- **Financial Freedom** – not having to worry about if you can afford the rent or put food on the table.
- **Worthy Goals and ideals** – having a clear goal and purpose for your life.
- **Personal Fulfilment** – achieving the goals which are important to you.

None of the above involves a highly paid job in the city or fame and fortune. Accept yourself for who and what you are; be proud of yourself, **work towards what is important to you**.

# KISS A FEW FROGS

**“...sometimes things that look hard aren’t that hard if you do them.  
Or even if they are hard, they end up being worth it.”**

*Quinn Bradlee*

Focus on what you are good at, but sometimes it’s difficult to know what that is. There is a saying that *you have to kiss a lot of frogs to find the prince*. Similarly, you have to try a range of different activities before you can find which you like and/or are good at. Try new challenges, even if you and others think you can’t do it – you may surprise yourself. If it doesn’t work out, at least you had a go. Often just taking part can be rewarding – you may learn more about yourself, make new friends or just have a good laugh or another more relevant opportunity will present itself.

If you enjoy an activity, it doesn’t matter if you’re not good at it, do it because you enjoy it. Chart your *personal* progress and avoid comparing yourself with others. Push yourself and tackle the activity task in small chunks. Aim to do your best at everything you do. Even some small positive changes can really make a marked difference on your outlook in life. A positive mindset can really make that difference you are looking for. YOU need to make it work and making your own future is by far the best thing you can do for yourself.

Quinn Bradlee says in his book that he is always fighting expectations, which “feels like battle after battle, day after day.” If you think positively about yourself then others will too. However, there will always be people who will react negatively towards you – this attitude is *their problem*. Walk away and have nothing to do with them or minimise contact. If they are close family, firmly explain that you disagree and that their comments are hurtful and unhelpful. **IT IS NOT EASY** and there will be times when you feel really down about your situation. When anger, depression, fear, or other negative feelings get you down try one or more of the following:

## **Journal Writing**

Diffuse your anger and frustration by writing down how you feel in a journal and get it out of your system. Think about what is upsetting you. What can you do about it? How can you overcome your feelings?

If you are angry at someone, try writing down how they may be feeling and why they hold their point of view. For example, you may be angry at your parents. Through writing down why they feel this way, you may discover that they are scared to let you have your independence in case something happens to you. All your life they have been suffering alongside you when you were in hospital and fought your corner with the education system. It’s difficult for them to let go. Understanding their point of view will help you to find a way forward.

Finish by listing three things which have made you smile in the last 24 hours (e.g. a comment from a friend, a TV programme, a smile from someone else, etc.)

## **Express yourself through art**

For example, paint, draw, play or listen to music, write a song, dance, sculpt, watch a funny programme or film, make a model, collage, write a poem, photography....etc. You don’t have to be good at art for it to be worthwhile – this is a personal expression of your feelings and doesn’t have to be shown to anyone else. Art allows you to channel your thoughts, relax and give yourself time to think your feelings through.

**Make a List** of all the things you are good at, your achievements and what people like about you. It doesn’t have to be a long list, but read it through and realise that that actually you are doing OK and that you are a worthwhile person.

**“It’s O.K. to be a late bloomer...even when you see no point in living, which has happened to me many times, there are things you can do that other people can’t. You just have to find them.”**

*Quinn Bradlee*

# Goals

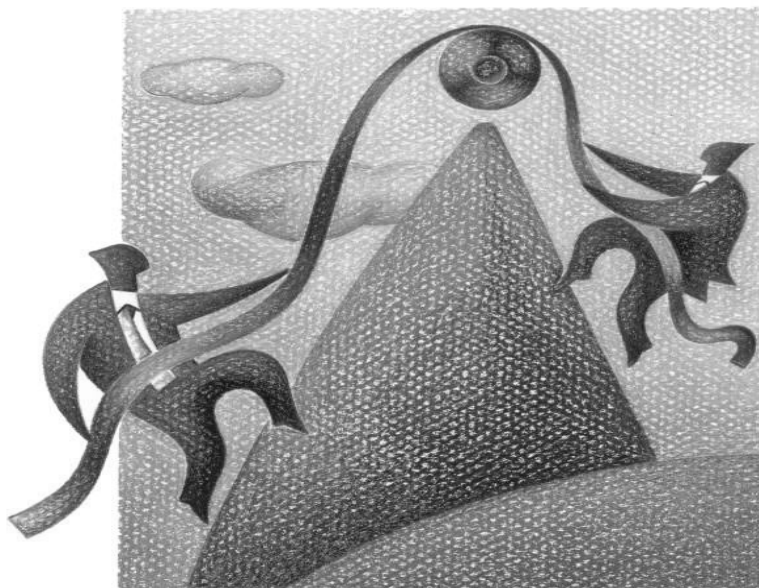
If you want to succeed in any aspect of life, it is important to know what you are aiming for. You need to set life goals. Goals allow you to focus your mind, energy and activities towards achieving what you want in life. You must leave your *comfort zone*, which is safe and secure. Reaching a goal often encourages new behaviour, requires effort and doing something new. Goals should reflect **your own** values and beliefs. They should be challenging but achievable – have confidence in yourself. You will make mistakes, they are an essential part of learning.

## EXERCISE

Set yourself the goal of finding a job. Now list ALL the reasons **why** you want a job and what you hope to accomplish in the long term. These will help focus your mind and keep you motivated.

**“Have faith in yourself,...., Live life to the full, Never give up”**

*Richard Branson*



## **Goals should be S.M.A.R.T.** (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-based)

### **SPECIFIC**

Be clear about what you are aiming for.

Break down large goals into smaller tasks – it will be easier to see how you are progressing and what you have achieved.

Use *action* words when writing your goals i.e. *organise, develop, plan, build*. It is better to say what you want rather than what you want to avoid. So instead of “stop smoking” as a goal, you write down “Become healthier” and part of your action plan will be to stop smoking.

**How** are you going to achieve your goal? Make a plan.

Are your goals worth the effort required? Make a list of the time and energy versus the benefits of achieving the goal. When you achieve your goal, do you really want it? Do you want the consequences? For example, you may put all your effort into being the best in your chosen career, the consequence could be no relationship, friends or social life. If you want both, you need to set a goal which includes both career success and a happy family life and find a plan to make both happen.

*“Don’t just focus on yourself. Every action has consequences for the wider system in which we live. Every goal we pursue will have consequences for ourselves and other people. Right from the start, we need to take this into account.”*

Joseph O’Connor & Andrea Lages, Life Coaches

### **MEASURABLE**

Write a goal in a way that is measurable rather than abstract. For example, instead saying “I want to become more confident” set a specific task such as “Give a 15 minute talk at the next MaxAppeal Conference” – achieving the specific task will help you reach your larger goal of gaining confidence.

### **ACHIEVABLE**

Goals need to be challenging but achievable. Understand your genuine limitations but avoid using them as an excuse not to try to achieve your dreams. Avoid acting like a victim and feeling sorry for yourself. Never blame others for your situation, take control and don’t let your circumstances control you. It is not the challenges that life throws at us that count, it is how we deal with them that is important.

If you start to make a lot of excuses, it is a sign that you are taking on too much and need to review your goals.

## REALISTIC

To truly achieve a goal you need to have the ability and desire to do it. You also need to believe that it is possible.

Too easy and your motivation and sense of achievement will be low. A goal needs to be difficult enough to stretch your abilities and belief but not impossible. You may want to join the army or be a fighter pilot. This is not going to happen if you have health problems and/or a learning disability. However, try to find a civilian job which supports the military. For example, recently a job was advertised for an assistant photographer, with full training given on the job. The company works almost exclusively on military contracts.

## TIME-BASED

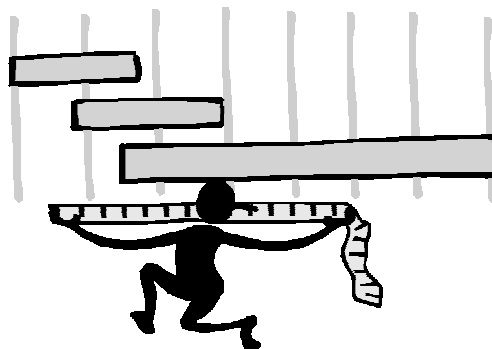
You need to set a timeline to include:

- when you want to achieve your main goal,
- when other smaller goals need to be achieved.
- review dates

Deadlines should not be too generous nor impossible to reach. Think about how long will be needed to realistically achieve your goals. Take into account other factors which might affect your timeline such as, finance, work or family commitments – REMEMBER these may affect your deadlines but are *not excuses* to stop you following your plan!

Setting a goal doesn't make it happen. You need to plan and take action to ensure that it is achieved. Reviewing your progress is an important part of the process. You assess what you have achieved, look at what has worked and not worked and make changes to your plan or goals if necessary

Avoid saying "one day I will....." or "when the time is right...." – one day will never arrive and the time will never be right!!!



# M.O.P.S

(Mistakes, Obstacles and Problems)

**“When you can’t solve a problem, manage it.”**

*Dr. Robert H. Schuller*

**“Some of the best lessons we ever learn, we learn from our mistakes and failures. The error of the past is the success and wisdom of the future”.**

*Tyron Edwards*

Life and people are not perfect – *everyone* makes **mistakes** or has things that don’t work out. Accept that fact and move through your problems towards a solution and your goal. It is not making a mistake that is important but *how you deal with them and what you learn from them*. Look at what went wrong and assess how you could have done it differently. Look at how you can avoid making the same mistake again, change your action plan if necessary and if possible try to put right the mistake you have made. Avoid trying to hide or lie about your mistakes. Accept responsibility and deal with the consequences.

One of the biggest **obstacles** you may encounter will be the attitude of other people. They may not be supportive of what you want to achieve, say it’s not possible and try to stop you. Getting another opinion is useful but lack of belief in others is a drain on you, so avoid them if you can. If they are your close family, thank them for their opinion and ignore their negative attitude – it will be difficult but you need to have faith in yourself. If you want to discuss your plans, choose someone who will give you helpful feedback and advice, but the choices and decisions are yours and yours alone.

Your journey towards your goal will not be easy and sometimes you will encounter **problems**. When this happens do not give up or get disheartened. Assess the situation and decide how best to deal with it and move on towards your goal again. You may need to consult other people and sometimes the problem, for example, a health issue, may stop you continuing on your path towards your goal. If this is the case then review your action plan and find another way.

***Life is not life unless you make mistakes.***

*Joan Collins*

***...’failure’ is not the falling down, but the staying down.”***

*Mary Pickford*

**“I have learned more from my mistakes than from my successes.”**

*Unknown*

# Stress Management

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Stress is a normal part of life. Sometimes, stress is good. When you are nervous before a test or a date, stress helps you to be alert and try your hardest. Wanting to do well or be successful is a good thing. A small amount of stress can help you to achieve your goals.

But sometimes, school or social situations can be overwhelming and the stress caused by them can paralyze you rather than pushing you into action. This type of stress can be harmful to your health and to your emotional well-being. Understanding your stress, your stressors and how to combat stress can help you to do your best without feeling overwhelmed. Below are ten tips to help you reduce stress when you are feeling overwhelmed.

- 1) **Be realistic.** Trying to be perfect is normal but not practical. No one is perfect and you are only adding stress to your life if you are pushing yourself to be perfect or expecting the people around you to be.
- 2) **Accept it is okay to ask for help.** If you require help in schoolwork, completing chores at home or at a job, ask someone for assistance. Asking for help is much better than not completing a job or leaving it half undone because you are not sure what to do or did not understand the assignment or instructions. Everyone needs help at some time or another.
- 3) **Review your schedule.** If you are feeling overwhelmed because of the many responsibilities, review your commitments and activities you are involved in and decide if you want to cut down. Choosing to do less may give you the opportunity to do what you have left well. Decide what is most important and keep those activities. You may also want to alternate activities, choosing music lessons during one or two semesters at school and drama during the other semesters, allowing you to experience and learn both activities but giving you more time to enjoy both.
- 4) **Keep a bedtime schedule.** Try to go to bed at the same time every night. Getting enough sleep can help you both emotionally and physically. It can also help you to better cope with any stressors that may come up during the day. Although it is tempting to stay up late as you reach your teen years, it is important to stay on a schedule to make sure you get the proper sleep each night
- 5) **Exercise each day.** Exercise has been shown to reduce stress and depression. Making sure you get some exercise each day can help you to remain alert and help you focus on your schoolwork.
- 6) **Eat right.** Teens are often content living on a diet of fast food, but your body needs a balanced diet. Eating the right foods can help you to function, even in stressful situations.
- 7) **Solve small problems as they come up.** Letting small problems go can make them develop into large problems. Solving small problems as they arise helps to keep you feeling more capable and will allow you time and energy to devote to larger problems.
- 8) **Learn relaxation techniques,** such as deep breathing exercises, meditation or visualization techniques to help cope with daily stresses. These type of techniques can be used on a daily basis to help your mind stay balanced and can be used in a highly stressful situation to help you cope immediately.
- 9) **Develop a support system.** Having people to talk to or people you can count on when you need assistance can help you cope better. Knowing there is someone to talk with in a stressful situation can make it easier to cope with. Having a support system to reach out to when you need assistance is also helpful.
- 10) **Make sure your schedule includes fun activities.** So many times our life is filled with schoolwork, jobs, chores and other lessons. Make sure you include activities you enjoy, are fun and can help you relax.

Reference: Stress Management for Teens, Written by Eileen Bailey and published on FriendsQuinn.com, 2009. HealthCentral.com, All rights reserved.  
<http://www.friendsOfquinn.com/manage-280168-5.html>

# Options

## Higher and Further Education

Don't be put off by further study – college and university is very different from the school environment. The advantage of further and higher education is that **you choose to study what you are interested in**. When choosing a college or university, ensure you investigate the support that they offer for your particular learning or physical needs. Most have a Disability Advisory Service or similar. Don't be afraid, too proud or ashamed to ask or accept any help that is on offer, it is there to help to make your student life easier. Consider locations which have smaller, well laid out campuses or don't need you to move around too much between buildings.

To find a course that might suit you whether it is a degree, diploma or professional certificate contact your local college or browse these websites:

For good general advice on choosing a course, college or university:

[www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk).

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/educationandlearning/universityandhighereducation/decidingwheretostudy/dg\\_4017740](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/educationandlearning/universityandhighereducation/decidingwheretostudy/dg_4017740)

To find a specific course try:

<http://www.ucas.com/students/coursesearch/index.html>

[www.ukcoursefinder.com](http://www.ukcoursefinder.com)

(PowerSearch button is particularly useful or take their online questionnaire to find a suitable course)

If you prefer *distance learning* (study in your own home at your own pace) then take a look at the Open University and ICS, both offering a range of recognised qualifications in a variety of subjects and skills:-

[www.icslearn.co.uk](http://www.icslearn.co.uk)

[www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk)





## Apprenticeships

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

An apprenticeship is well worth serious consideration as you will be trained in a skill you are interested in whilst earning money and working.

### What is an Apprentice?

Apprentices are employees who work alongside experienced staff to gain job-specific skills. They receive training, off-the-job, usually on a day release basis, with a local training provider, for example, a college or training company.

There are over 180 choices of modern apprenticeships covering a wide variety of industry sectors:-

Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care  
Arts, Media and Publishing  
Business, Administration and Law  
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment  
Education and Training  
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies  
Health, Public Services and Care  
Information and Communication Technology  
Leisure, Travel and Tourism  
Retail and Commercial Enterprise

Some of the more unusual apprenticeships available include Game Testing (for computer games), building sets for theatres and ground crew at airports as well as the more familiar trades of forestry, animal welfare, beauty, administration, warehousing, purchasing, plumbing, and carpentry.

## Princes Trust

[www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk) (courses are in the *Need Help?*, *Courses* section)

Telephone: 0800 842842

The Prince's Trust is most well known for helping young people set up their own business, but they also run courses for unemployed 16-25 year olds. These courses give young people the skills and confidence they need to get jobs.

## Voluntary Work

[www.volunteerng.org.uk](http://www.volunteerng.org.uk)

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/Gettinginvolvedinyourcommunity/Volunteering/index.htm>

<http://www.timebank.org.uk>

<http://www.vso.org.uk/volunteering>

Volunteering is an excellent way to get experience in an area of work in which you are interested and can be fitted around an existing job. As well as making an important contribution to your community, it looks good on your C.V.! Another approach is to contact companies directly and ask for short term, unpaid work experience in return for a personal reference.

## Full Time Work

Your first job(s) are not necessarily going to be the dream job you'd hoped for. Remember, it is a starting point, with emphasis on gaining work experience. The more experienced, skilled and qualified you become, the nearer to you are to getting the job you really want.

## Part-Time Work

Part-time work can be overlooked, but sometimes it is all that is available, especially in a recession. Taking on a part-time job gives you work experience and an opportunity to get to know a company. When full-time positions are available, they are often posted on the company notice boards or maybe you hear about it at coffee break. This advance notice gives you the opportunity to get an application in quickly or have an informal chat with the relevant people. You will already know the company and they know you. As long as you have been a good employee, this is can be a good way to find full-time work.

## Employment Agency

Not all jobs are advertised in the local papers or job centres. Often companies do all their recruitment through employment agencies. Registering with an agency has several main advantages:

- You will have a chance to apply for jobs you would not normally know about.
- Agencies can help with compiling a C.V. , give careers advice and some offer training to improve your skills.
- Working for them as a temporary worker can be the quickest way to get work experience in a variety of work settings. Be prepared for mundane work but remember, as with part-time work, it can be a good way to find out about full-time opportunities. Often a temporary contract can lead to permanent work once a company is satisfied with you.
- Some agencies specialise in particular industries such as accounting, industrial or teaching. Others are generalists who have vacancies in a wide variety of industries and jobs. Often you don't need to make an appointment, you can drop in. Have a C.V. prepared, dress smartly – you need to make a good impression. Don't be surprised if they ask you to come back for a more in-depth, informal interview and tests to assess your skill levels, personality and experience. A good agency will make you feel relaxed and give you a good idea about the type of work available. If you are a good employee, the agency will be more likely to give you better opportunities as you become more experienced.

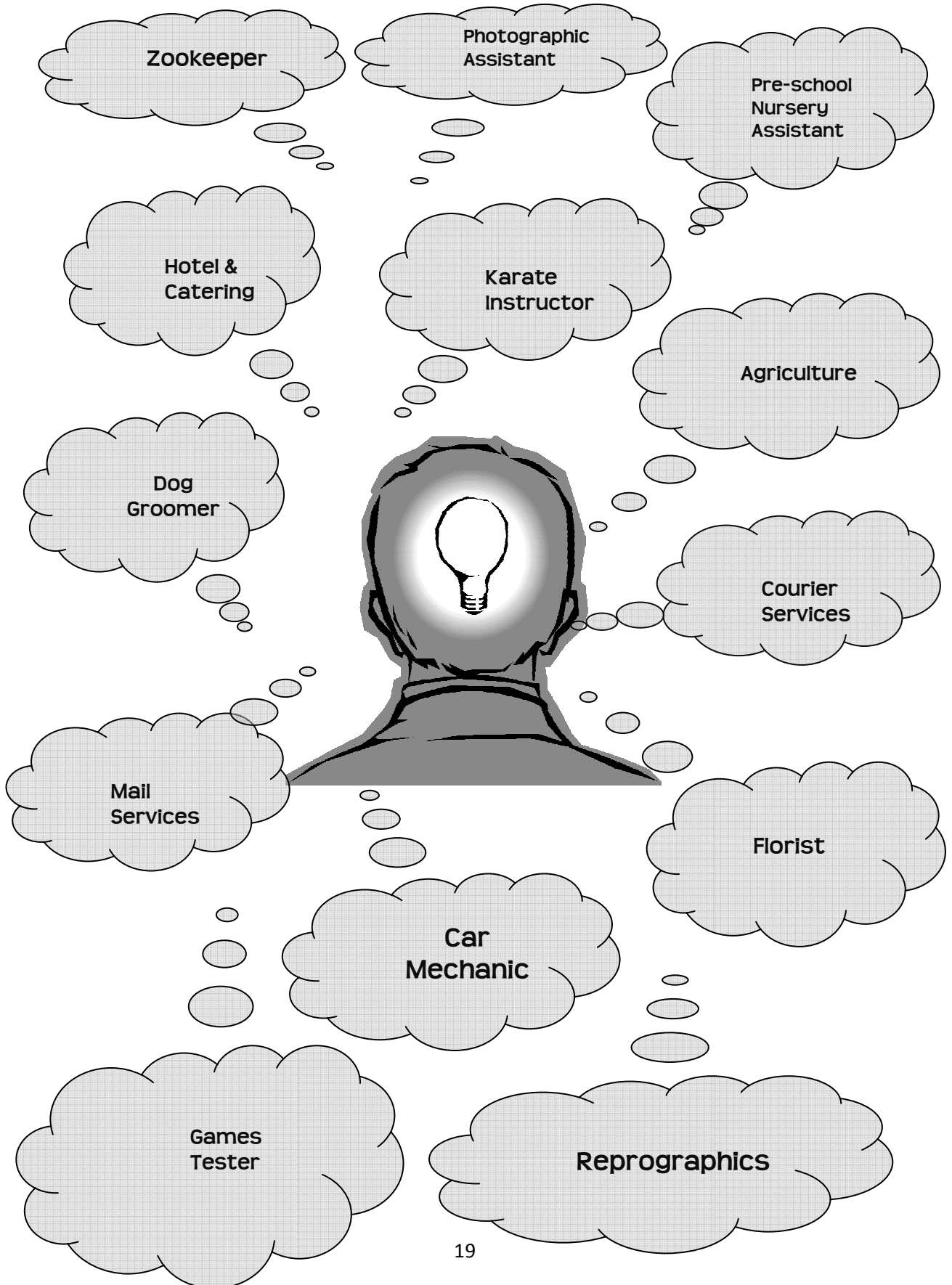
## Self-Employed

This is not an easy option – you are responsible for your own tax and administration which must be done properly by law. You are likely to be working more hours than if you were employed by someone else and your income is not guaranteed or constant. You need to have good self-discipline to make it work.

The Prince's Trust supports young people with business ideas ([www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)), giving grants and advice.

There are established organisations which offer self-employment opportunities such as Kleeneze, Betterware, Mini IQ, Forever Living Products, Pampered Chef, Usbourne books, and Avon. These types of companies offer either party plan options or delivering catalogues. You are required to build up a network of clients, take orders, process and deliver them.

# Ideas



# Job Hunting

When you first leave school, do not expect to go straight into your dream job or one that is well paid. At this stage of your career you need to focus on gaining work experience and working towards your goals. It is impossible to cover more than the basics here but if you want more detailed information, two good books for job hunting advice are *What Color is Your Parachute?* By Richard Nelson-Bolles and *How to Get a Job you'll Love* by John Lees.

## “Will you hire me?”

NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO  
NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO  
NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO  
NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO YES

*Tom Jackson, (cited What Color is Your Parachute?)*

The above quote highlights the reality of job hunting – it can be a long process with lots of rejections. It is important to keep trying and don't take the rejections personally. It is a stressful process, but you can improve your chances. When you are unemployed your job is to find work. Get up in the morning with a plan, sit down and put effort into it as if you were working. When you get demoralised, remain focussed on your goal of finding a job and review your plan. Do you need to undertake more training? If so, how? Do you need to apply for a grant for further study? Which organisations can help you? Some job centres have a Job Centre Plus Advisor – talk to them.

## Where to look for job vacancies

Employment Agencies  
Network of friends & family – ask them to look for opportunities  
Specialist job vacancies newspapers – available from newsagent  
Job Centre  
Job section in newspapers  
Notices in shops  
Online

Most libraries usually have copies of the local and national newspapers and have access online, as well as other resources such as books giving you more detailed information on job hunting. The Librarians should be able to help you look for the correct information.

## Application form

Sometimes companies insist on an application form being completed. The advert usually states who to contact – ask for two forms and take two photocopies. Practice completing the answers. Get someone to check the answers, spelling and grammar. When you are happy, NEATLY complete the form in black ink (making it easy to photocopy).

## Equal Opportunity Forms

Many companies will ask you to complete an Equal Opportunities form for monitoring purposes. This information helps them improve their recruitment and employment practices, as well as inform government statistics. This form goes directly to the Human Resources department and is not used to judge your ability to do the job. The people who are recruiting do not see this form.

Never lie on your application form or C.V. You will be found out and your employment could be terminated immediately. The trick is to present the information in a positive and interesting way. The aim of your application is to get you an interview.

Only include a short summary of relevant information. The detail will be in the interview should you get one. If you do not have the direct experience they are looking for but have a genuine interest, mention it and state you are willing to train in that skill. For example, an advert for a car mechanic may ask for experience of working on vintage motor cars. You may only have experience on modern cars but have always had an interest in vintage cars, attending rallies as a child – tell them this. Also, mention that you would be willing to undertake the necessary training and certification to reach the required standard for a job. It is possible that none of the applicants have vintage car experience or if they do they are not suitable for other reasons. Therefore, having the *potential* to be the employee they want may just be good enough to get you the job.

Get your application in as early as possible and leave yourself plenty of time to get it prepared. If you make a mistake, re-do your C.V. or application form (ring up for another one if necessary) and never use white-out fluid. Ensure there are no spelling or grammatical errors – get someone else to check it and use a dictionary if necessary.

### Should you add a photograph?

Some application forms will ask for a photograph so you have no choice. But should you provide one voluntarily either on an application form or C.V.? Research by Searle (2008) has found that a photograph will make little difference if the C.V. is already good. However, on an average C.V., adding a good photograph boosts the candidate and they are likely to receive more invitations to interview. If you are going to add a photograph it must be very good. Remember it is human instinct to make a very quick judgement about a person when presented with a face, either as a photograph or in person. Make sure your photograph is:

- Portrait (i.e. face and shoulders only)
- You are smartly dressed and your hair is immaculate
- If you decide to wear glasses make sure they are clean and straight
- If you wear a hearing aid, remove it. The fact is, people are likely to be unconsciously prejudiced. This may be controversial but remember your aim is to get an interview. At the interview they will see you wearing it so you are not hiding your disability.
- Girls – keep your make-up subtle with a natural look.
- Keep jewellery and hair accessories subtle so it is not distracting. Boys, if you wear an earring consider removing it/them (the person recruiting you may be from a generation that frowns upon males wearing earrings – do you want to take the risk?) If you do decide to wear one, make sure it is a subtle stud.
- **SMILE, look relaxed and friendly.**

Keep your application professional and avoid using fancy gimmicks, coloured or odd-sized paper. These will only irritate the recruiter and annoy the admin person who cannot photocopy or file it properly (and their annoyance may get back to the recruiter and influence their decision).

**A trait**, also known as temperament or type, is not a transferrable skill but a quality which distinguishes you as a person. Examples, are good timekeeping, Energetic, Dependable, Enthusiastic, Perseverance, Reliable, Thorough, Creative.

**A skill**, is an accomplishment gained through training.

## EXERCISE

List your skills/abilities/traits that you are good at:

For example:

Powerpoint presentations

Able to repair and maintain cars

Good with animals

Makaton Signing

Perseverance

Willing to learn new skills

Good at remembering lists

Able to play the piano

Good timekeeping

Reliable

Imagine your dream job. Write down what it is that you like about it:

For example,

Do you like being part of a team or working on your own?

Do you like to work indoors or outdoors?

Do you want to work shifts, weekends or nights?

Would you prefer to work in a small business or a large multinational?

Do you want to work with your hands, meet people, stay in an office or drive?



# Covering Letter

Your name  
Your Address  
Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Person you are writing too  
Address of person you are writing too

Dear *[Name of person you are writing too]*

**Re: [Position you are applying for] Car Mechanic**

*[state the job you are applying for, where you saw it advertised and that your CV or application form is enclosed] For example:*

In response to the recent advert in The Courier newspaper for a car mechanic, please find enclosed my Curriculum Vitae.

*[State what attracts you to the job, why you want to work for the company and a quick summary of your relevant strengths] For example:*

My ambition has always been to work with cars and your company has a good reputation for customer service and quality of work. At school I worked hard and had a good attendance record. For my school work experience, I shadowed a mechanic at a local garage and learned how to valet cars.

References are available on request and I look forward to hearing from you. *[Never say "I hope...." keep it positive]*

Yours sincerely

*Signature*

Your Name

Enc. *[This is short for enclosure and indicates other paperwork is attached]*

# Curriculum Vitae

This is a summary of the **essential relevant information** to get you the interview and give the interviewer something to discuss in more detail. No more than 1 page of A4, plain white, good quality paper for school/college leavers. Use black ink for easy photocopying. Only reveal your gender if you have a name which could cause confusion, by stating 'Mr' or 'Ms' when writing your name on the covering letter. You do not need to put your age or date of birth. You do not need to write Curriculum Vitae anywhere.

Full Name  
Full Address Detail  
Telephone number and email address.

## **Skills and Abilities** (list as bullet points)

For example:

- Produce Powerpoint presentation
- Confident computer user (list any packages you can use e.g. Word, Excel, Powerpoint)
- Work to deadlines (in the interview you can prove this by highlighting that you always handed in your homework on time)
- Willing to learn and undertake further training
- Taught friends how to.....

## **Work Experience** (short paragraph describing the work undertaken)

Voluntary or paid; through school or in own time

## **Other achievements/honours** (bullet points with short sentences)

For example, raising money for charity, playing a musical instrument at a local concert, learning a language, completed a course at evening class, learning to ride or canoe.

## **Interests/likes**

For example, sports (playing or watching), films, music (playing or listening), collecting, driving, creative writing, being outdoors, project work, meeting new people, gardening, building things, cooking

## **Qualifications** (list as bullet points, highest level first)

Academic and/or vocational

## **Certificates of achievement** (List as bullet points)

From school, sports, after school clubs, organisations

## **Membership of clubs** (list as bullet points)

At school or elsewhere, for example, Scouts, Karate, Chess, Art, Music



## **Exercise**

List all the relevant information for putting into your C.V. and discuss it with someone who knows you well. They may be able to point out additional relevant information to add.

### **Skills and Abilities**

### **Work Experience**

### **Other achievements/honours**

### **Interests/likes**

### **Qualifications**

### **Certificates of achievement**

### **Membership of clubs**

# BEWARE!

**AVOID** notices on lamp posts etc which advertise “Earn £500 per week” or “Start your own business” & “Be your own boss” or similar. A “business opportunity” may be sold either online or via classified ads to the potential home worker. These adverts make huge promises and rarely pay out the promised earnings and often want money up-front. Also, beware of similar adverts online or those emailed to you via well known online recruiting sites. They often sell your information to other scam organisations usually selling mentoring schemes.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY THEM

Use common sense: If it looks too good to be true (e.g. £500 per day for completing questionnaires) it usually is.

Beware of any job that demands you give them any money up-front, it is usually a scam.

Home working scammers seldom tell you what is involved in advance of you paying them money.

Scams often say that no training is necessary, but are very vague about the job role.

**NEVER** pay for equipment and materials first. Responsible firms, for example, party plan schemes will give you your kit and you pay it back from your sales.

**NEVER** give anybody your bank account details who you have not verified as legitimate and only once a contract of employment has been signed. The only people who should have your bank details are the payroll and/or Human Resource department (also known as Personnel).

**Job seekers who use online job search web sites must be careful** to avoid a type of job scam in which the applicant is **asked to accept payment to his or her own bank account**. These are known as payment-forwarding or payment-transfer scams – **THEY ARE ILLEGAL!** (i.e. you will be breaking the law and get into lots of trouble). Payment-transfer scams involve a con artist who pretends to be an employer. The con artist uses a job ad to lure an unsuspecting job seeker, or they may use information from a C.V. they have found online. Such con artists can be quite convincing, and may even steal company names and corporate logos to convince victims that they are legitimate employers.

# The Interview

## The day before

**Get your clothes ready** Dress smartly – you don't have to have a suit, but smart trousers, shirt and tie for men, smart blouse with skirt or trousers for women. Make sure your shoes are polished. Practice walking into a room and sitting down whilst wearing the outfit you intend to wear. Practice sitting without slouching (in front of a mirror is best). What do you look like? Do you give a good impression? Are your clothes comfortable and not too revealing? If you have a strong dress style, tone it down but don't hide it.

**Plan your journey.** Check bus and train times if appropriate. Contact the Company for directions if needed or plan your route on a website such as Google Maps. Arrive at least ten minutes early. Take into account the amount of time it will take to get there, park and find your way to the interview location.

**Check the company website.** Familiarise yourself with the products and services, number of employees and get a general 'feel' for the company. If they have a section for *News* or *Press Releases*, have a look to find out what has been happening in recent months. If appropriate you can use this information in your interview.

**Read through Company Information** you have already been given, such as a job description and company brochure.

**Make notes.** Most interviewers will ask if you have any questions you would like to ask. To make a good impression be prepared to ask at least one good question (as long as the subject has not already been discussed in the interview!). If you don't have a good memory, NEATLY write several questions on a postcard size piece of card and refer to it in the interview. Ensure the questions will help you to understand more about the job and the company you are applying for. Potential questions to ask in an interview (in no particular order!) are:

1. How many other people work in the team?
2. How will my performance be measured?
3. What tasks will I be responsible for?
4. What is a typical work day for this job?
5. When are you looking for someone to start?
6. When can I expect to hear from you?
7. Would you like a list of references or any additional information from me?
8. How will I be trained for the job?

**Remember** only ask the question if the information has not already been given either in the interview or as part of the official paperwork (for example, a job description).

Think about what other information an interviewer may be interested in. This will help you to be prepared to include it in your answers. There are no correct answers but as a guide here are some examples of typical questions taken from John Lees book *How to Get a Job You'll Love*.

- **Tell us about yourself?** Prepare and practice a *brief* summary.
- **Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?** Think about what you want to achieve in your work and one personal achievement (e.g. living independently).
- **Why do you want the job?** Even if you're not sure, be confident in your answer without lying. For example, if the job is for a trainee vet's assistant, you could say that *"I enjoy working with animals and want to work in a caring profession. I like to be kept busy and am keen to undertake further training."*
- **What kind of person are you?** Avoid saying *"I am....."* Talk about your traits and abilities and relate to how you have achieved something. For example, *"My reliability meant that I had a good attendance record at school and always handed my homework in on time"*.
- **Why did you leave your previous job....? or Why are you currently unemployed?** Practice short, simple, positive responses. For example, *"my last job was a Saturday job while I was at school. I am now ready for a full-time position."* Or *"I have recently left school and working hard to find my first job."*
- **How do you cope in a crisis?** Prepare one or two good examples of when you have dealt positively in a crisis, either at school, work or in your personal life. Don't lie. If you find such situations difficult try an answer such as *"After the initial confusion and anxiety, I asked for help and I....."*
- **What are your weaknesses?** Remember more weight is given to negative information. Think of one or two weaknesses and think of answers that will turn the conversation around to your strengths. For example, *"I find busy, fast pace environments confusing, but do well on tasks that require repetition and consistent standards. That is why I would be a good employee on your production line."*

**Practice** opening a door and walking into a room and sitting down with confidence. Avoid looking down as this will round your shoulders and make you look as if you are lacking in confidence. No matter how nervous or unconfident you feel, walk with your shoulders back and looking ahead.

**Practice a good handshake** with family and friends - not too firm and definitely not limp. A good handshake gives a good impression. Ensure that you give good eye contact (for no longer than three seconds) while shaking hands.

**Practice good eye contact** with family and friends while you are talking to them. As a guide, 3 seconds is good. If you are talking to more than one person, swap your eye contact to the other people and back again in turn. If you are talking one to one, after your three seconds look at another part of the face such as the mouth and back up to the eyes again. Good eye contact helps create a good rapport. However, never stare as this will make the interviewer(s) uncomfortable or feel threatened. Also, different people have different styles, so try and take your cue from the person you're talking to, if they stare more, extend your eye contact to 4 or 5 seconds, if they look away frequently reduce your eye contact to 2 seconds. Most important of all try to relax and be yourself.

**Prepare a list of referees** to give to the interviewer if needed. This should be neatly typed and include your name, position you are applying for and for each referee: full name, contact details and what they do for a living and how they are connected to you e.g. teacher, scout leader, Karate instructor, current employer. They should be people who are willing to vouch for your character and work standards – try and obtain their permission before you include them on the list. As a school leaver the most you may have worked is a weekend or holiday job – that's OK. Even if you have never worked, your school and clubs are a

good source of information to a potential employer who will be looking for a record of good attendance (excluding medical absences), attitude to work/challenges, how you get on with others etc. This information gives the employer clues to your **potential** in the world of work.

**Prepare the details** of British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) typed on a piece of paper to give to the interviewer if needed.

## On the day

Give yourself enough time to prepare. Girls – make sure your makeup and jewellery is subtle and not distracting. Boys, if you do decide to wear an earring, make sure it is a small, flat stud. Ensure that your clothes are ironed, not missing buttons or have frayed hems. Make sure your hair is washed, nails manicured and shoes polished. Have a good breakfast.

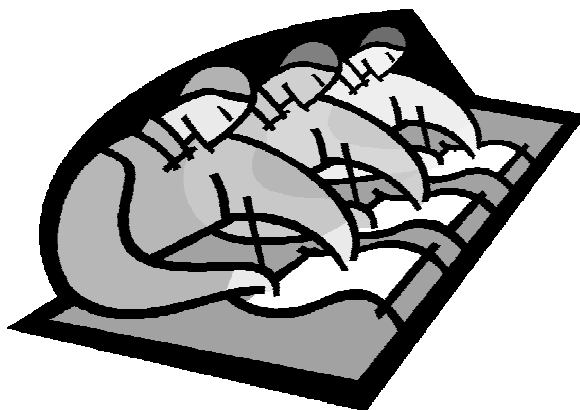
## Types of Interview

**One to One Interview.** This where the interview is between you and one interviewer.

**Panel Interview** is when there is two or more interviewers. The more people the more intimidating it can feel. Keep calm and ensure that you switch eye contact and engage with all the interviewers throughout the interview.

**Assessment Centre** is a series of interviews, tests and team activities to assess your abilities in different situations.

**Psychometric Test** is a test, either carried out on computer or with pen & paper. They usually consist of multiple choice answers to questions assessing personality traits or information processing skills.



## At the interview

### Never arrive late.

While you are waiting take a few deep breaths (breathe in through your nose, breathe out slowly and quietly through your mouth). This will help to settle your nerves.

**Switch off your mobile phone** and put away your iPod.

Don't chew gum or eat. Only drink water but not too much and go to the toilet beforehand. You don't want to smell of coffee or be desperate for the toilet during the interview!

When you meet the interviewer shake hands confidently, with eye contact and say '*Good morning (or afternoon), my name is ....*'

Avoid using slang phrases such as "Hi Ya!" "Cheers", "Ta", Use proper English such as "Hello" and "Thank you!"

Sit comfortably upright. Look interested, giving regular eye contact to the interviewer(s), don't look around, yawn or fidget.

**Listen** carefully to the interviewer.

Talk clearly. If necessary pause and think for a short time before answering the questions.

Focus on your accomplishments, skills, abilities and relevant experience. If the subject of your learning and/or physical difficulties comes, don't be embarrassed. Turn it into an opportunity to once again highlight what you *can* do, what the disability has taught you and the specific skills that could be transferred e.g. a knowledge of Makaton would be a useful skill in a pre-school/nursery. You don't need to go into too much detail which would be too much information for an interviewer to absorb. A good response may be: *"I struggle with maths calculations but with a calculator, a quiet corner and a bit of extra time I can do it."* Think about what the job involves and how your abilities will contribute. This would be a good moment offer to give the interviewer the details of BASE explaining that they can advise on how to provide supported employment, such as a job coach, when you start. The interviewer needs to know that your disability is not a problem and this offer of help shows initiative and makes their job easier (a plus point).

If you are asked if you are willing to undertake extra training – answer: Yes!

Interviewers often take notes, this is normal so avoid letting it worry you.

When the interview has finished, shake hands confidently, with eye contact and say '*Thank you for your time*'.

After the interview, take some time to relax and calm your nerves and thoughts. Think about what you did well and how you could improve. Each interview is a learning experience. Most importantly of all, regardless of how you think it went – give yourself a huge pat on the back. Getting an interview is a huge achievement plus you have had deal with nerves and put yourself in a strange high pressure situation - it's tough for most people. Regardless of the outcome, you did it, well done!! If you do not get the job, don't take it personally. There are many factors that go into the final decision. Contact either the interviewer or the Human Resource department, by telephone or email, and *politely* ask for feedback on how you did and why you were not considered suitable. Not everyone will respond but those that do can provide very useful feedback. Again don't take any negative comments personally. Think about what they can teach you and how you can improve.

# ***How to disclose your disability***

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 covers you against being treated less favourably in all areas of the employment including the application process, during employment, promotion, transfer, training and redundancy. The Employer has a duty to make reasonable adjustments at work such as modifying manuals and instructions, providing extra supervision and extra training. This legislation will be incorporated into the new Equality Act 2010 coming into force in October which will cover all disability, mental & physical health issues, gender, race, religion, age and sexuality.

BASE (British Association for Supported Employment) is an organisation which provides information to employers about how to support someone at work who has a Learning Disability, particularly at crucial times such as starting employment, change of manager and company reorganisation. It may be helpful to pass on their details to the prospective employer when you make your disclosure.

Disclosure is a personal decision but if you do choose to disclose your disability how you do it is very important. The earlier you disclose the more time a potential employer has to consider adjustments and how the company will be impacted, however, the more risk there is to elimination from the selection process. Even though you are covered by the law against discrimination, proving it is likely to be very difficult at the early stages.

1. If you disclose your disability **any time during the application stage** up until the time you sign and post your contract you are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Once you have posted your contract of employment, an employer may unwittingly discriminate against you because they do not know and you are unlikely to be able to make a claim.
2. Many companies will have a **medical questionnaire** or section in the application form which will give you an opportunity to declare you have a learning and/or physical disability. You will need to answer honestly and declare any health implications. Keep your answers short, simple, and factual e.g. *"I have DiGeorge Syndrome resulting in a learning disability. I wear a hearing aid and have a speech impediment. Annually I have a cardiac check up due to surgery I had as a baby"*. Any further discussion needed can take place at the interview should you get one. If you present your abilities and achievements in a positive way on your C.V./Application Form this should reassure any prospective employer that you are capable of doing the job.
3. **At a Medical.** Some companies may insist on a medical at some stage in the recruitment process and you would have to disclose at this stage. Remember, the report is to assess for fitness for the job, so still maintain a positive attitude. Also note that medicals are expensive and in most cases are an indication that a company is seriously considering your application.
4. **An Equal Opportunities form**, if given, should give you the option to disclose. The advantage is that the interviewer does not see this information and therefore cannot pre-judge you.

5. **On your C.V.** If you have details on your CV which are directly linked to your disability and need explanation, e.g. gaps in your education, you may need to clarify this either on the CV or in the covering letter. Keep the disclosure positive again focussing on what you have achieved and the qualities you have gained through managing your disability e.g. never giving up on your studies and maintaining a good attendance.
6. **Before the Interview.** You may need to disclose at this stage due to adjustments needing to be made to help you get to the interview e.g. ramp access for a wheelchair or undertake any tests e.g. allowing you extra time, or taking a test on a computer instead of writing. Disclosing at this stage may give a slight advantage. The interviewer may form lower expectations of you and be pleasantly surprised, and therefore think more positively of you, once you they have met you in person.
7. **At the Interview.** It is likely that if you have not yet disclosed, your disability will come up for some reason during the discussions. If the interviewer does not already have the information, time will be wasted discussing the issue. You would need to be a very confident communicator to discuss this in such a high pressured environment and be sure that you can turn the conversation around, back to your skills, experience and abilities. This is a potentially high risk strategy.
8. **The Job Offer Stage.** Once you have secured the offer, disclosing now will give you and the employer a chance to discuss any reasonable adjustments that may be required. This will only be a problem if the employer has genuine reasons why adjustments cannot be made.





# At Work

## Be a good employee.

No matter how boring you may find the work, always:

- Take pride in the work you do, do it to the best of your ability and to best quality possible
- Be willing to learn new skills and take on new responsibility
- Turn up for work on time, all the time – be reliable
- If you have to wear a uniform, wear it smartly.
- If you have to wear safety equipment, wear it properly and at all times required
- Always follow Health & Safety procedures properly
- Show commitment
- Be able to work as part of a team and on your own.

The above qualities will distinguish you as a good employee. These qualities will help improve your chances of getting better work. When you leave you are much more likely to get a good reference. A good *work ethic* (your ability and willingness to do a good job) is one of the most important qualities you can bring to an employer.

## Should you join a trade union?

Today's unions aim to work in partnership with employers to ensure, good, productive, safe work practices. They offer advice on a wide range of employment issues to their members and some offer training courses. They represent their members in disputes relating to issues such as pay, discipline, grievance, harassment and discrimination. I would strongly recommend that you investigate joining the union relevant for your company or industry as a good union representative will be an important support for you in the tough world of work.

For further information go to:

**[www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)** - for general information about trade unions

**<http://www.worksmart.org.uk/unionfinder/>** - to help find a union relevant for you

**[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)** – for general advice on employment issues.

# Glossary

**Employer:** Person or company which has regular workers and pays them

**Employee:** Person employed by another.

**Recruitment:** The process of finding, selecting and hiring new employees.

**Interviewer:** Person who is conducting the interview and asking the questions.

**Interviewee:** Person who is being interviewed.

**C.V. (curriculum vitae):** A summary of a person's work experience and qualifications.

**Induction:** An introduction to a new job.

**Full-Time:** Working a normal day/shift (usually eight hours)

**Part-Time:** Working for part of the day/shift.

**Wages:** Regular payment to the employee (usually weekly in cash)

**Salary:** Regular payment to the employee (usually monthly directly into bank account)

**Payslip:** Statement showing the salary, tax deductions, national insurance contributions and pension contributions if applicable.

**Reference:** A statement on a person's character, abilities and job performance.

**Referee:** Person who gives a reference.

**Job Description:** A summary of the main duties for a job.

**Contract of Employment:** A legal document between the Company and employee, setting out the conditions of work

**P.A.Y.E. (Pay As You Earn):** The system which deducts income tax from a salary before it is paid to the employee.

**N.I. (National Insurance):** Compulsory insurance paid to the Government for services such as medical care, hospitals and social security benefits.

**Human Resources (HR) or Personnel:** The department which is responsible for the workforce, including duties such as recruitment, training, payroll, redundancy and termination of employment.

**Payroll:** The list of employees and how much they are paid. The person who administers the wages/salaries.

**Line Manager:** A person who has authority over a section or department; is responsible for budgets and decision making. They often report to senior management.

**Supervisor:** A person who has authority over a group of workers and often reports to a line manager.

**P45:** A tax form given to an employee when they leave a job. It shows how much tax has already been paid from pay in the current financial year. It is given to the new employer when starting a new job.

**P60:** A tax certificate received at the end of the financial year (April) showing how much pay an employee has received and how much tax has been paid. **KEEP THIS DOCUMENT** in a safe place.

**Employee Handbook:** A document which outlines the rules and procedures for the Company. It often forms part of the employment contract.

**Disciplinary Procedure:** The formal process for warning an employee that they have broken the rules or to improve poor performance. This procedure may lead to termination of employment if behaviour or performance is not appropriately changed.

**Grievance Procedure:** The formal process for an employee to make a complaint against their employer.

**Redundancy:** Termination of employment when the skills of the employee or the role they do are no longer needed.

**To be 'sacked' or 'fired':** To be dismissed from your job.

**Termination of employment or Dismissal:** The ending of a job by the employer.

**Resignation:** The ending of a job by the employee.

**Promotion:** Moving an employee to a more senior/high grade job.

**Trade Union:** An organisation which represents workers/employees. It is necessary to join as a member.

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