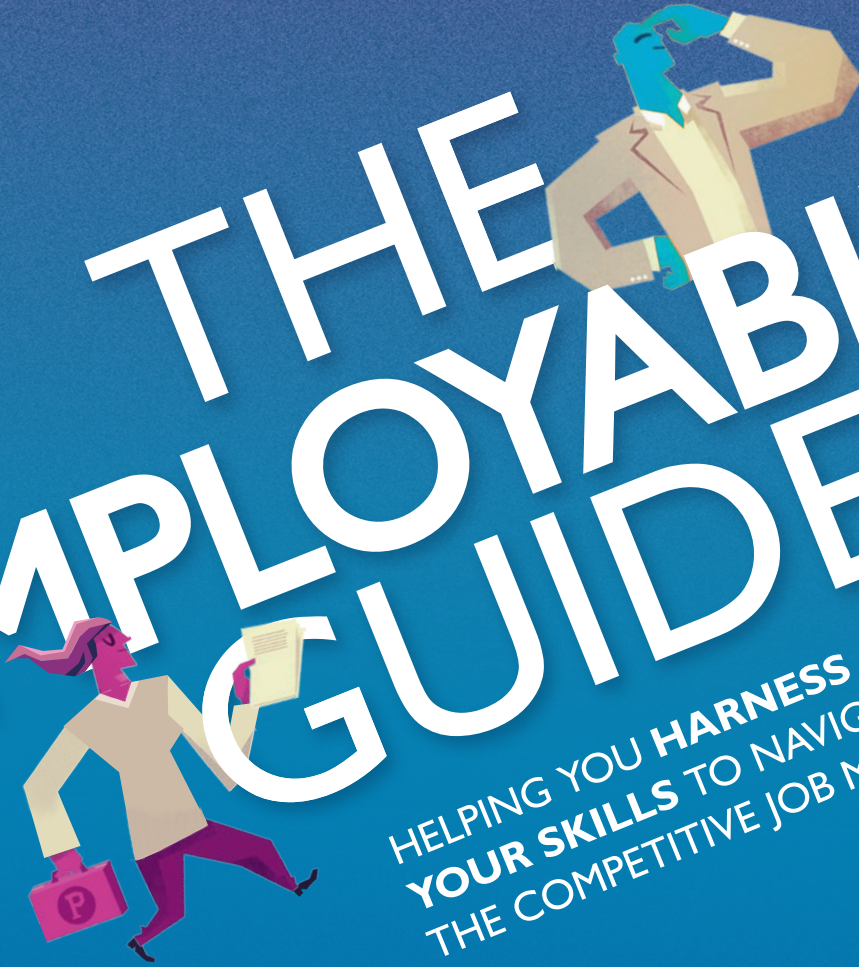


PEARSON
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

THE EMPLOYABILITY GUIDE



HELPING YOU HARNESS
YOUR SKILLS TO NAVIGATE
THE COMPETITIVE JOB MARKET

 Pearson
College
London

Employability. It's a buzz word that's for sure, but what does it actually mean?

In the simplest terms, employability refers to having the qualities suitable for the workplace.

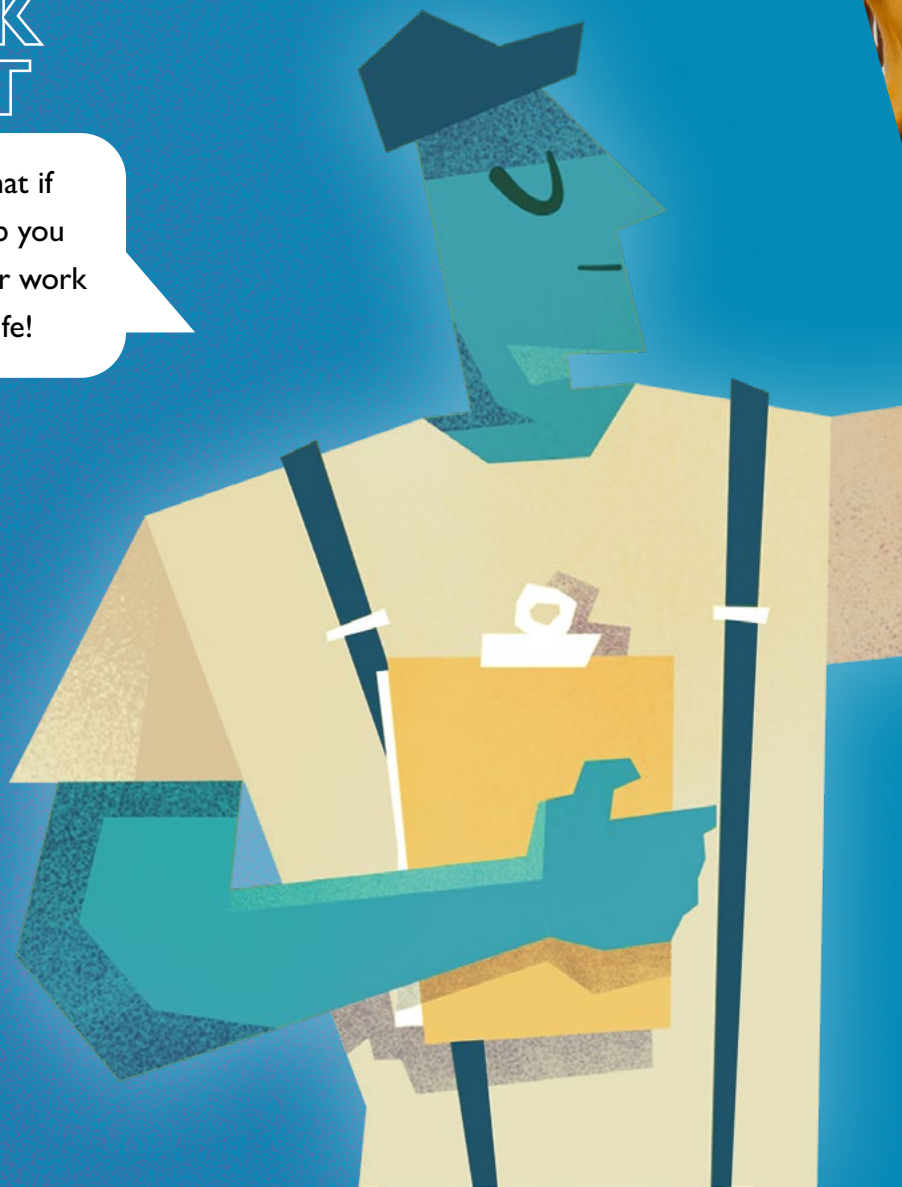
Although, it goes beyond this, it's ultimately about being equipped with the skills and resources to enter a rewarding and fulfilling career.

Reaching 16 can be a scary time, school assemblies are all about your next steps, finding work experience, a part-time job and the right university.

Whilst this may seem overwhelming, it's exciting too! You're one step closer to becoming an established young adult, so it's likely you'll have lots of questions...

QUICK POINT

They do say that if you work a job you love, you never work a day in your life!





Our Employability Guide is designed to help you navigate the next steps in your career and answer commonly asked questions (remember, if you're thinking it, there's a strong chance that others are too!). But most importantly, it's a guide to ensure that you have all the skills you need to make you employable and stand out from the crowd!

WHAT WILL THE GUIDE COVER?

YOUR CV AND COVER LETTER PAGE **03**

It's all about you

HOW TO PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS PAGE **09**

They're not as scary as you think

EXPERIENCE PAGE **13**

You'll have more than you realise

NETWORKING PAGE **16**

The modern steppingstone for opportunities

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PAGE **21**

VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE PAGE **23**

TIPS FOR PARENTS PAGE **24**

BUILDING YOUR CV

Have you ever wondered what CV stands for? It stems from the Latin word curriculum vitae, which means 'course of life'. So, it's unsurprising that a CV is a snapshot of your academic and professional achievements, as well as your hard and soft skills.

QUICK POINT

Whilst what CV stands for is a bit of trivia, it's best to keep to the abbreviation.



There are basic components your CV must include:

- › **An introductory paragraph** – grab the recruiter’s attention, sell yourself! Showcase your qualifications, relevant experiences and what makes you unique.
- › **Core skills** – whether it be communication, leadership or teamwork, what skills do you have that are relevant to the job role?
- › **Experience** – this section will grow as you progress but always include something! From volunteering to work placements or even completing projects at school, show off what you’ve learnt.
- › **Education and qualifications** – list your GCSE and A Level grades. If you performed well in a subject related to the role, this could be a great talking point!

OPTIONAL

- › **Hobbies and interests** – provide a well-rounded impression of yourself, your personal hobbies may demonstrate your passion for a role.

BASIC CV CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does the CV have a clear layout? Use bullet points where possible. | <input type="checkbox"/> Have you stated references are available on request? You can use your teachers or mentors. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is the content in chronological order? | <input type="checkbox"/> Is the CV no longer than 2 pages? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have you included personal contact information? | <input type="checkbox"/> Have you spell checked the content? |

MY CV THEN VS NOW



Your CV is a way of selling your personal brand to a recruiter and to leave them wanting to know more about you.

This was something I struggled with long before starting my degree, I was constantly being rejected from part-time jobs because 'I didn't have enough experience'. It felt like a constant battle of rejection, how could I get experience if I wasn't given an opportunity to work?

START SAYING YES

I quickly realised this during my time at Pearson Business School. Every Industry Day (and there were lots of them), was a new opportunity;

- › I stood up in front of 100 people and pitched a solution for **IBM** about bridging the communication gap between lecturers and students.
- › I helped **Boots** brainstorm how to stand out to the younger generation.
- › I even entered **CIM**'s marketing competition and presented in front of the Director of Marketing at **Lidl** and the Marketing Advisor to **10 Downing Street!**

MAKE EACH EXPERIENCE A TALKING POINT FOR YOUR CV

I quickly transformed my CV from having a week's work experience in year 10, to contributing towards operational solutions for leading brands.





YOUR CV WILL INEVITABLY GROW OVER TIME

Here are some of my top tips to give you a head start:

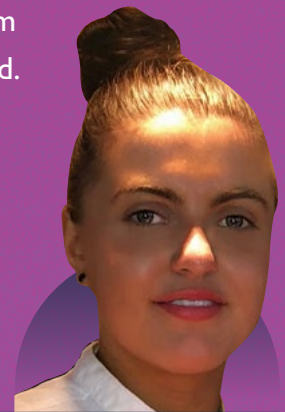
- › **Take part in online certifications** – a lot of these are free and are easy to navigate.
- › **Design your CV** to represent who you are and what you're interested in. If you're unsure like I was, you can design a CV which is quite generic, which can easily be adapted.
- › **Volunteer!** This highlights what kind of person you are and charity shops will welcome your help with open arms.
- › **Upskill on key platforms** – explore the ins and outs of Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- › **Network!** Pearson Business School organises loads of events to help with this. Just remember, knowledge is wisdom, you'll be surprised what opportunities you can create by putting yourself out there.
- › **Ask your teachers and parents** – show them your CV, get their feedback and take it on board.

You won't regret saying 'yes'.

Good luck!

Chloe Jarman

Pearson Business School alumna



COVER LETTERS

When applying for a job, you'll also need to submit a cover letter to accompany your CV – don't worry if this is new to you, it's often the part students are unaware of.

This is your opportunity to tell recruiters why you're the most suitable candidate for the position, be sure to include:

- > Your **contact** information
- > A **greeting** – 'Dear [hiring manager]'
- > An **introduction** – tell them why you want the job
- > Tell them why you are **qualified** for the job – show how your skill set aligns to the role and what can you bring to the team
- > A closing – 'Yours sincerely' or 'Kind regards' – the formality of the closing depends on whether the cover letter is in an email
- > Your **signature**

QUICK POINT

Let's face it, life takes place online nowadays, so it's likely your cover letter will be sent via email.

EMAIL COVER LETTERS



There are three key differences between email and physical cover letters:

THE SUBJECT LINE (you don't want to end up in spam...)

- > Keep it professional
- > State why you're writing the email
- > State the job role you're applying for
- > Some employers will specify a subject line format – follow this carefully

An example...

[Position] – [Name], application

Marketing Assistant Position – Sarah Smith, application

CONTACT INFORMATION (this should be in your email signature as laid out below)

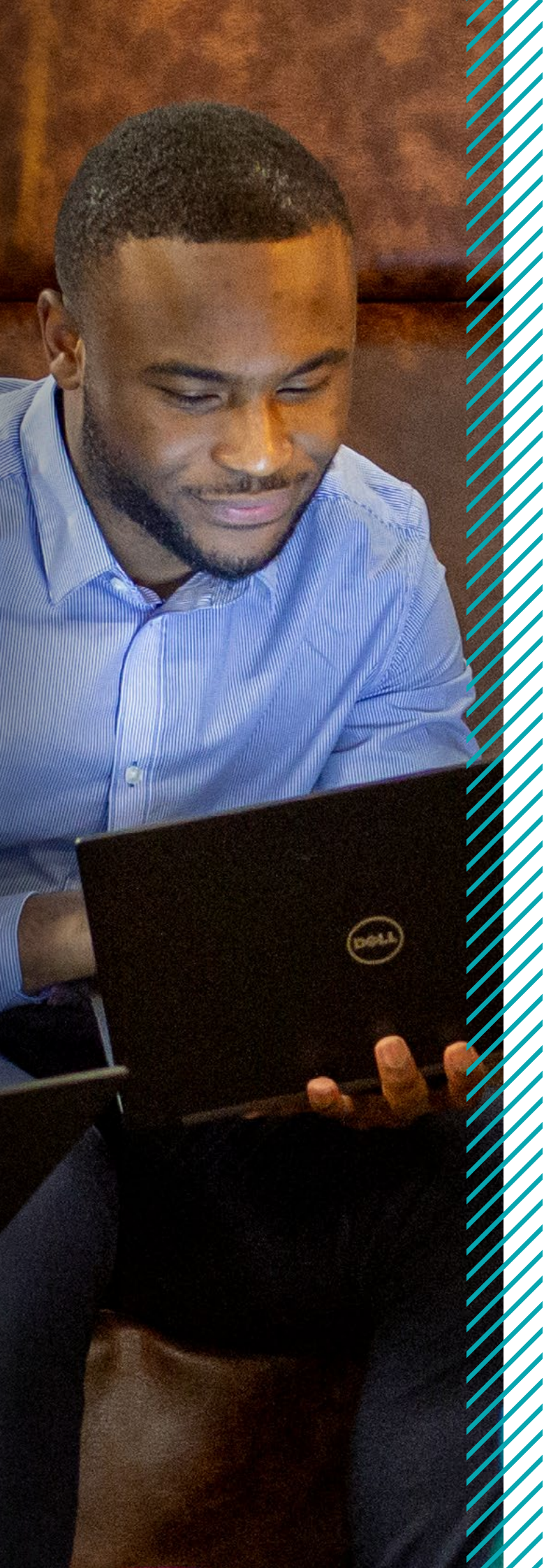
FirstName LastName

Email Address

Phone

THE CLOSING

A cover letter is formal so generally the sign off should be formal too. However, if the cover letter is sent via email, it can be less formal, for example 'Kind regards' or 'Many thanks'.



HOW PEARSON BUSINESS SCHOOL HELPS

Your CV and cover letter are the first impression you will give to an employer, so we help our students make this count by running:

- › Regular CV workshops with our Talent Development team (because practice makes perfect!).
- › Mentoring programmes to gain advice from experienced professionals.
- › Industry events and workshops where you can gain experience to include in your CV.



HOW TO MASTER AN INTERVIEW

TOP
TIPS

Preparation is key

Being invited to an interview means you've already impressed the employers with your CV and cover letter.

It's natural to be nervous because interviews are often perceived as the scariest part of the application process.

So what's the secret to staying calm? Be prepared! Good preparation brings greater confidence, which is exactly why we've collated our top tips to **help you bring your A Game**.



Impress by **researching the company** and their competitors, this knowledge can help you tailor your answers specifically to the company.

Know your CV – this is the only information they have about you, so be ready to answer questions about it!



Try to relax and be yourself, interviewers are human too and being a good cultural fit is just as important as your experience and skills – **let your personality shine through**.

Create a brief summary about you, your career and why you'll be good for the job – it's always good to have this prepared in your mind!



Be punctual – know your route, leave plenty of time to get there and arrive ten minutes early – no later and definitely no sooner!



Your **presentation is vital for first impressions**. Dress professionally, check your posture, give a strong handshake, don't avoid eye contact and **remember to smile!**





HOW TO PREPARE

Having some pre-prepared answers can really increase your confidence in an interview. Some questions are inevitable and it's important to answer these well.

Common interview questions

- › Where do you want to be in 5 years?
- › What are your biggest strengths and weaknesses?
Talking about your weaknesses is never easy, but it's important to acknowledge them!
- › Take examples – if you're applying to a job in marketing, have some brilliant marketing campaigns in mind. Draw examples from your own experiences too.
- › Think about when you have demonstrated soft skills such as, time management, teamwork and decision making – these skills are just as important as your academic performance and competency-based questions are common in interviews.



Remember to switch your **mobile phone off**.



Take a spare printed copy of your **CV** so you have it to hand.



QUICK
POINT

You will most probably be asked behavioural questions such as 'describe a situation when you have shown your initiative'. This is the perfect time to use the well-known **STAR technique**.



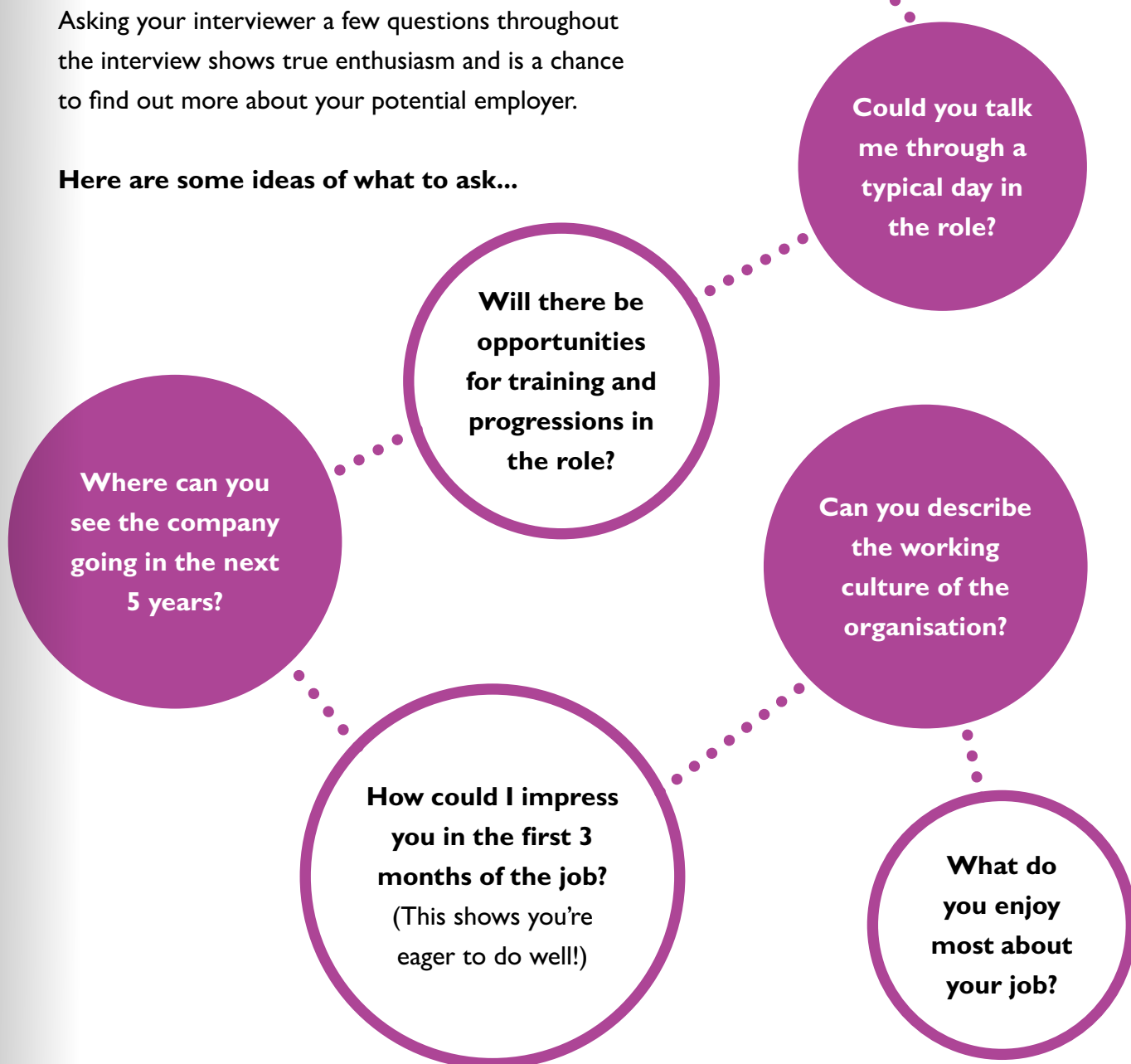
HOW TO PREPARE FOR VIRTUAL OR TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

- › **Confidence** – if you’ve got to the interview stage, it’s likely there’s something which stands out about you, so have confidence in your abilities.
- › **Pace yourself** – make sure you’re not speaking too quickly, it’s normal to speed up when you’re nervous. Don’t be afraid to pause and think before answering a question.
- › **Listen** – make sure you properly understand the questions, don’t be afraid to ask the interviewer to repeat something if you’re unsure.
- › **Prepare your technology** – ensure your device is fully charged, has a strong connection and there is minimal background noise (it’s always good to have a backup plan too!).
- › **Enjoy yourself** and smile (even on the phone, we can hear it in your voice)!

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK

Asking your interviewer a few questions throughout the interview shows true enthusiasm and is a chance to find out more about your potential employer.

Here are some ideas of what to ask...



HOW PEARSON BUSINESS SCHOOL HELPS

We make sure all our students graduate ready to head into an interview with confidence.

Our Talent Development Programme is packed with **interview preparation techniques** for various job roles. We hold **regular mock interview** events where you have the chance to be interviewed by our academic professionals, who will give you direct feedback about your performance. And the best thing is... **it's fine to make mistakes because this is where you'll learn and improve!**

EXPERIENCE

CREATING

YOUR OWN

OPPORTUNITIES

At 16, getting experience can be a daunting prospect. To get a job, you need experience but to gain experience, you need a job. This catch-22 can seem difficult to break into, but don't let this discourage you. There are plenty of options, you just need to show willing and be proactive!

Why is experience important?

- › **Soft skills** such as communication, teamwork, time management and motivation, are key and they only improve with experience.
- › **You will stand out from the crowd.** Employers love seeing a young adult showing motivation and initiative to ask for work experience.
- › **Build relationships for the future.** Leave a lasting impression, if you apply for a job after graduation, they will already know you!
- › **You get an insight into different industries** and discover what you do and don't enjoy!

QUICK POINT

When you first start out, you may have to accept some work without pay. Just remember, for every day you work, the experience you gain is invaluable.

FIND THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE FOR YOU



Let's look at some of your options...

VOLUNTEERING

Dedicating a Saturday morning or an evening after school at your local soup kitchen, care home or charity shop would be a fantastic addition to your CV.

QUICK
POINT

For anyone who has completed their Duke of Edinburgh, this should already be a box ticked!

WORK EXPERIENCE AND SHADOWING

Show your initiative by reaching out to your network of family, friends or local businesses. Talk to anyone you know who works in an industry that interests you and ask for a week's work experience. It's unlikely they will turn down an extra pair of hands!

SCHOOL LEAVER PROGRAMMES

Ask your secondary school if they organise school leaver programmes. If you've already left school, it would still be worth getting in touch. Career advisors could even be able to show you other opportunities available.

QUICK
POINT

UCAS has loads of information about school leaver programmes that could help you find new opportunities.

HOW I GOT EXPERIENCE



I applied for my first job at **Waitrose** when I was 16 and worked there twice a week for two years. However, after completing my A Levels, I decided it was time for something new. I was planning to travel and applied to work full time at a local restaurant to start saving like crazy!

With my CV in mind, I was also keen to get some corporate work experience. Luckily, we have a family friend who arranged two weeks of work experience for me to explore the various departments at **Savills HQ**. The team even organised for me to attend a graduate field trip to a country estate! This experience gave me an insight into the corporate world and the many opportunities available in a big firm.

Just take the leap and ask around. The worst anyone can say is no!

Beth Crosbie

Marketing Assistant, Degree Apprentice,
Pearson College London

HOW PEARSON BUSINESS SCHOOL HELPS

- › Guaranteed internships (*subject to eligibility criteria*)
- › Start-ups in residence internship schemes
- › Industry Days – attending events with industry partners and coming up with solutions to their latest problems. [Read more about Chloe's experience at an Industry Day.](#)

NETWORKING



WHAT IS NETWORKING?

Lots of people talk about networking, but what does it really mean? Networking comes in so many forms, making it tricky to define. Every person you meet, in the real world or online, is a new connection that could become part of your network.

Networking events might seem intimidating, but just remember, everyone is in the same boat. They are meeting people for the first time too – try not to be nervous and get chatting!

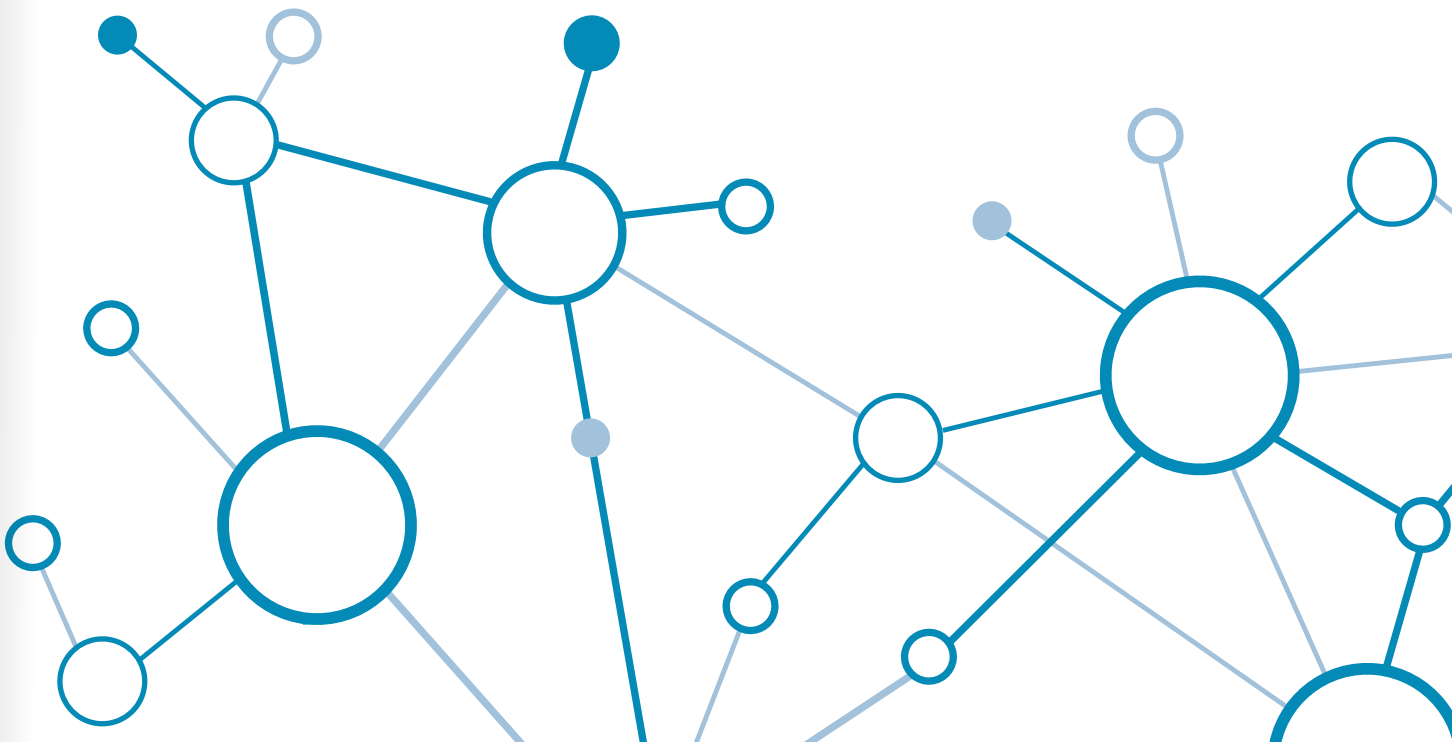
QUICK POINT

Did you know? 85% of jobs are filled through networking*

*Hubspot

WHY IS NETWORKING IMPORTANT?

Networking events are a fantastic way to develop professionally and get advice about career development. You can find new job roles or build relationships with people who may become your future employer, business investor or even business partner! What can seem like an introductory chat about your career could lead to great things. So, we have compiled a few simple pointers to get you on the right track...



HOW TO NETWORK LIKE A PRO

DRESS PROFESSIONALLY

This is an obvious one, but first impressions mean a lot.

CREATE A 60 SECOND INFORMAL PITCH ABOUT YOURSELF

Share your USP's, future goals, what you're passionate about and why you can bring value to a company.

Later in your career, you may have more specific skills or a pitch for your new business, but for now, it's about you.

RESEARCH ATTENDEES

If the list is available. Come prepared with a few questions to ask them.

MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

With your network all year round. Stay in contact and check in with them – they might have an opportunity for you.

BE PROACTIVE

Take every opportunity to talk to new people, seek out networking events and keep note of the best ones.

BE YOURSELF

You're not there to put on a sales pitch – you're there to chat, discuss your careers, past experiences, goals and find ways to help each other develop.

ADD CONTACTS YOU MEET ON LINKEDIN

Start building your network and stay connected on a professional platform.

LISTEN CAREFULLY

To whoever you are talking to. Do your objectives align? Ask interesting questions that make them think – this is an excellent way to make people remember you!

LISTEN AND LEARN

As your career develops, remember good colleagues you have worked with. They may be able to help someone you meet!

QUICK POINT

What is a USP?

USP stands for Unique Selling Point. What makes you different to everyone else at the networking event? What can you bring that no one else does?

HOW NETWORKING LANDED ME A JOB



As we've learnt, networking can create multiple opportunities. See how **Caroline Taylor**, a Business Management student, went from attending an Industry Day with **Deloitte** where she made connections, to landing a graduate scheme...

- **OCTOBER 2019** – Caroline attends an Industry Day, takes part in a challenge set by **Deloitte** which her team wins.
- **NOVEMBER 2019** – visits the **Deloitte** London offices for lunch as the prize for winning the challenge.
- **SUMMER 2020** – secures a virtual internship with **Deloitte**.
- **3RD SEPTEMBER 2020** – applies for a **Deloitte** graduate role in Tax Management Consulting and contacts our team for help to prepare for her interview and get some tax-focused tips.
- **7TH SEPTEMBER 2020** – has a mock interview with a Pearson employee who's also a partner from **Deloitte**.
- **8TH SEPTEMBER 2020** – has interview at **Deloitte** feeling full equipped and prepared.
- **11TH SEPTEMBER 2020** – she's offered the job!





HOW PEARSON BUSINESS SCHOOL HELPS

As networking across these different channels is so important, Pearson Business School organises different events to cater for each.

Some of our past events have included:

- › LinkedIn workshop from Marketing Tutor **Sacha Clark**.
- › Industry events with the likes of professionals from **WPP (Coca-Cola team), Deloitte, Pearson, ETC Venues, Barclays Ventures and LVMH**.
- › Soft skills workshop run by global accounting firm **EY**, to help students develop their organisational, time management, teamwork and leadership skills, which all come into play when networking.

**WATCH OUR LINKEDIN
WORKSHOP VIDEO
HERE** 



EXPLORING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

When you apply for a job, academic success is important, but employers will almost always look beyond it. They will want to see your attitude to work, your skills and your knowledge (which will expand over time!) of the role.

Employability skills are very similar to the commonly used phrase 'soft skills', which incorporate the day-to-day skills you need to function at work. Every job has different requirements but let's delve into some of the most important ones...

COMMUNICATION

This can be verbal and written and involves two key skills. Listening attentively to take on the information and in return responding in a clear, concise manner.

EXAMPLE

Presenting a project to your classmates or working together in a team to complete a task.

NUMERACY

Numbers aren't everyone's strong point, but basic numeracy skills help in many roles. Understanding numbers allows you to make effective decisions (just remember, you're allowed a calculator at work!)

EXAMPLE

Reading graphs and drawing conclusions based on what they tell you is a skill you build in science, maths and geography.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Taking a problem and breaking it down into lots of little tasks to identify and overcome the key issue.

EXAMPLE

If you've ever been given homework you didn't know how to start, it's more than likely you broke down the question to fully understand it and get started!

WORKING UNDER PRESSURE

Despite not every job having deadlines, it's more than likely that you will experience pressure at work at some point. This skill shows when you manage that pressure and cope with your workload effectively.

EXAMPLE

When you are preparing for a test, it can feel like a lot of pressure to do well. If you schedule in enough time to revise, you will manage that pressure because you have tried as hard as you can!

USING YOUR INITIATIVE

Going above and beyond your day-to-day responsibilities not only displays self-motivation and a good work ethic, but also shows you're a real team player.

EXAMPLE

Taking part in extra-curricular activities, volunteering to be a Prefect, Head of House, or even outside of school at a local charity shop, shows initiative to expand your experiences and your CV.

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

Monitoring your progress across various tasks, and knowing how to prioritise them, to ensure you're on track to meet your goals and deadlines.

EXAMPLE

Planning your revision timetable, making sure you schedule enough time for each subject to achieve the results you were aiming for.

TEAMWORK

Most roles involve working in a team. It's important to work well with people of different disciplines, backgrounds, seniority and expertise.

EXAMPLE

Science experiments at school often involve working as a team, each having designated roles to finish your experiment in time.

ADAPTABILITY

Work changes all the time. Whether it's new software, different teammates or changing and improving old processes, you must be able to adapt effectively to the changing environment.

EXAMPLE

Taking on comments from your teachers, and improving your work based on what they tell you, is a great way to show you can adapt and improve based on feedback.

NEGOTIATION

Being able to express your own requirements whilst factoring in the feelings and needs of others is vital to achieve a win-win situation for you and your teammates.

EXAMPLE

In group projects, you may have to discuss which role everyone is going to take by negotiating who has the strongest skills in each area to determine who does which task.



VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Pearson Business School is excited to announce their Virtual Work Experience event will be returning for 2022.

This two-day programme will help you boost your employability, build new skills, introduce you to new contacts and expand your professional network.

It is an exciting opportunity for you to boost the impact your CV will have on future employers. A FREE course tailored to help YOU land your first job, all from the comfort of your own home.

More information coming soon!

LOCATION

Live online

DATE

Tuesday 12th July 2022

TIME

TBC

FEES

Free

BOOK MY PLACE >

WHY ATTEND?

- > **Impress employers** by listing your Virtual Work Experience on your LinkedIn profile.
- > **Learn essential skills** and knowledge needed to thrive in the workplace.
- > Support you to **make the right academic choices** for yourself.
- > Participate in a competition and receive a digital badge you can share on **LinkedIn**.
- > Kick-start your **professional network** by making connections with guest speakers from industry.

Here's a bank of FAQs to help parents:

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE TO CREATE A CV/COVER LETTER TEMPLATE?

Check the CV and cover letter sections of the guide on pages 4-7. Our [useful video](#) and [CV checklist](#) should also help provide guidance.

HOW TO FIND INTERNSHIPS FOR STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL?

Some parents have connections with their own employers, other employers or friends' employers which they're able to leverage to provide an internship opportunity for their child. There are also lots of useful websites which advertise internships for 16-18-year-olds, such as:

» [Get career confident](#) » [Prospects](#) » [Springpod](#)

HOW TO HELP MY CHILD PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

- › Help them **practice** their interview: this will help with understanding and digesting a question in a short space of time.
- › **Challenge** them by asking questions about themselves: this will help build your child's confidence, as it will make them reflect on all the skills and knowledge they've built up over their education.
- › **Quiz** them on the company they've applied to: it's important to have read about the company and have examples to hand which showcase research.

Lastly, remind your child to:

- › Prepare their **technology**: ensure the device is fully charged, has a strong connection and there's minimal background noise (it's always good to have a backup plan too!).
- › Enjoy themselves and **smile** (even on the phone, we can hear it in their voice)!

HOW TO HELP MY CHILD SEARCH FOR JOBS/APPRENTICESHIPS

There are many websites which list jobs and apprenticeships.

Our main recommendations are:

- » [Not Going To Uni](#)
- » [The Government Apprenticeship website](#)
- » [Find Apprenticeships](#)
- » [Get My First Job](#)
- » [Rate My Apprenticeship](#)

If you have any questions,
please contact:
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