



SYNAPSE

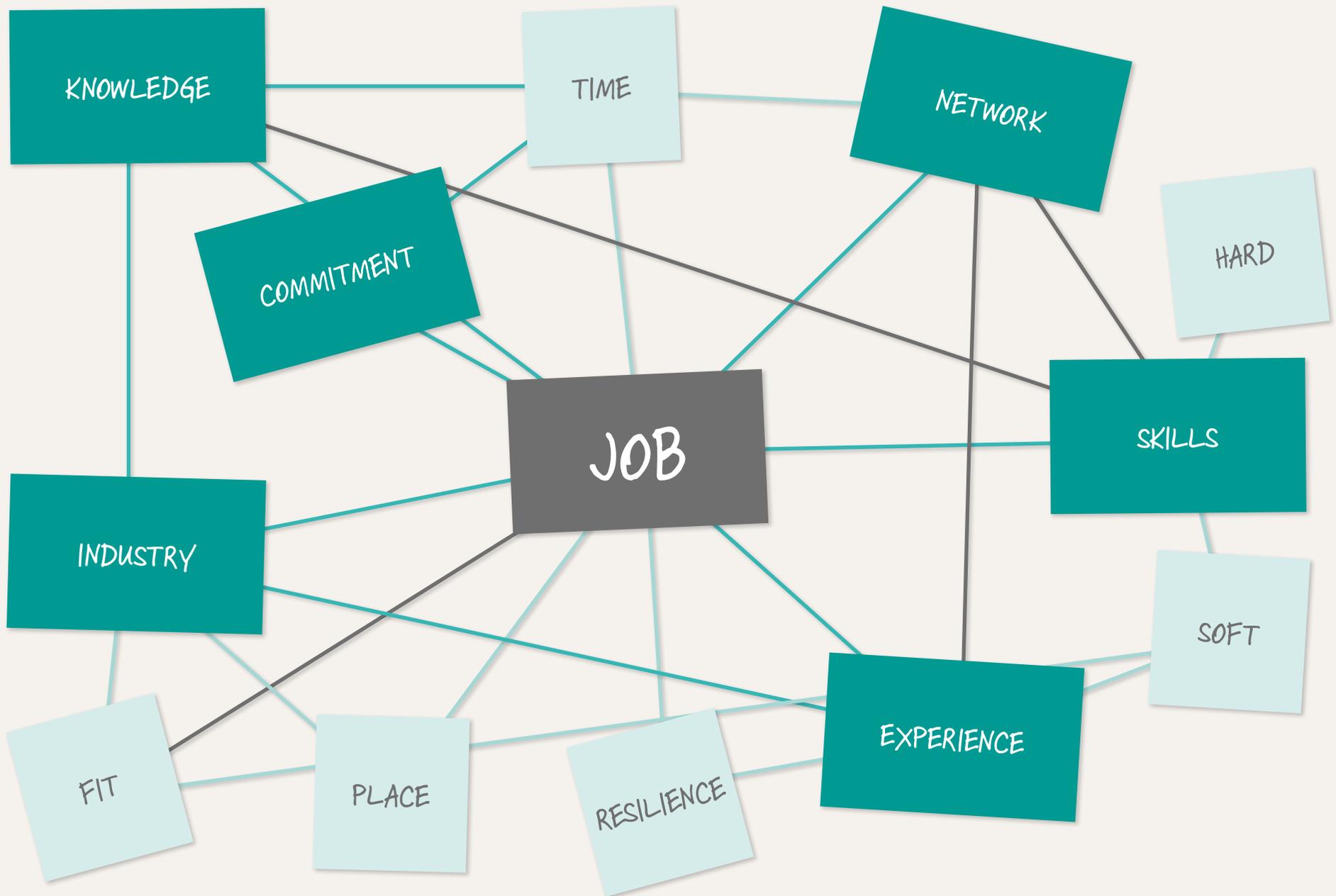
Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

EMPLOYABILITY TOOLKIT



JULY 2023

We see searching for a job as a piece of detective work – you need to investigate various areas, and explore the connections between them, to successfully find your job...



INTRODUCTION

Searching for your first job, your next job, or even a change of position can be daunting. It can also be time-consuming, and can feel like an enormous challenge. This toolkit will help to break it down into a series of manageable and hopefully enjoyable tasks.

You could see it as a piece of detective work: piecing together what's available, what the sector needs, where jobs are advertised, and where you fit into the bigger employment picture.

This toolkit will support you through the process, offering advice and tips to help you find the role you're searching for. It contains a set of guides, each on a specific area that we know will help you in your job search.

You can either work your way through the whole toolkit in order, or select whichever guide feels most relevant to you right now. Both ways work.

The toolkit contains exercises which either ask you to do a bit of research, or to work from your past experience. The exercises are often visual in form – for example we might ask you to draw a map on paper with coloured markers. We know from our experience of supporting people finding work that a visual approach really works, helping to visualise your ambitions, skills and knowledge in a tangible way.

Staying motivated and optimistic can be hard, so we recommend finding a buddy to support you – we guarantee it will be worthwhile and rewarding.

We hope you enjoy working through the toolkit, and wish you every success on your journey into employment.



ABOUT SYNAPSE

Synapse is an award-winning initiative developed through the Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship at Goldsmiths, University of London. Synapse develops and empowers participants through a series of workshops that develop confidence, a sense of direction, creative thinking and innovation skills. Synapse workshops focus on supporting participants to consider their future direction – either to gain a job, develop a career, start a new enterprise or build on the one that they've already created.

Originally aimed at students looking for careers and opportunities in the Creative and Cultural Industries, since its inception the Synapse programme has assisted close to 7,000 students in understanding and developing an entrepreneur's mindset, and using entrepreneurial thinking to innovate progress across organisations, charities and emerging enterprises.

Synapse's reach has since been extended outside the scope of students, to working externally beyond Goldsmiths – from local, urban and rural communities, to global landscapes and policy makers. We have worked with thousands of organisations globally to develop their business models and cultures of inclusion.

The Synapse programme has been delivered in: Kenya, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Germany, Russia, China, Hong Kong, Chile, Brazil, the USA, Mexico and more.

Synapse makes use of creative activities and hands-on exercises as a way to get creative minds to align with business and entrepreneurial thinking. This process helps creatives to find confidence in a multitude of business skills, including financial literacy, networking & selling, engaging in collaborations with peers, and project management.

ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This Employability Toolkit has been designed as a supplementary resource tailored for participants of Synapse Workshops. It has also been written to support people who wish to work with it independently, or those who may not be able to access Synapse.

The toolkit has been developed for those who want to find a new job. We've presented the exercises in a specific order to help users understand the impact they can make in a new organisation, and how to present themselves to get a job. But we encourage users to find their own way through the exercises – they might need to return to some and repeat them, and some may not feel relevant to them. The exercises can be worked through by someone on their own, or with the help of others.

This toolkit is a result of the work we've done in the sector with artists, designers, managers, marketing officers and innovators from many disciplines. It encapsulates the invaluable insights garnered through these partnerships, as well as our previous

work and collaborations with Nesta, Cultural Enterprise Office, the British Council; and at Goldsmiths, University of London.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Adrian De La Court is a creative advisor, academic and business development consultant. As a critical practitioner he trained and worked professionally as a fine artist, live artist and contemporary dancer and choreographer. He has developed a strong portfolio career in the creative industries.

Siân Prime has worked to find new, impactful ways to engage highly creative individuals and social innovation and cultural organisations in sustainable practice.

Adrian and Siân have worked together in a range of roles, but most recently at Goldsmiths, University of London, where they lead the entrepreneurship education work.

Ashley Evenson is a facilitator for the Synapse programme and a lecturer in Creative Enterprise. She has worked with a number of different funders to bring Synapse workshops to local communities across London, including Inspire Lewisham, Start Up In Stride, UK Community Renewal Fund and Deutsche Bank Award for Creative Entrepreneurs. She currently runs Oval Productions, a storytelling agency that focuses around personal narrative.

CONTENTS

Overview	6
Skills Map	12
Asset Map	15
Industry Map	18
CV Building	20
Building a LinkedIn Profile	22
Making Your Own Introductions	25
Finding a Job	27
The Interview Process	31
Websites for Finding a Job in the Creative Industries	41
Glossary	42

OVERVIEW

PREPARATION

Before you start a massive online search of available positions, take some time to organise yourself and plan. Your approach should be to not just look at what is available, but to search for what would best suit you, where you might be able to learn new skills perhaps, and where you would find job satisfaction, and the opportunities you're looking for. Make sure that your search is about finding the right fit between you and your employer.

Start by doing the [Skills Map](#) exercise. What are you **good** at? Don't be modest, be confident! What are your talents, interests and hobbies? What are you **passionate** about? What have you learned from previous experiences? Map all of these out on paper or in a notebook. Keep this map as it will be invaluable when you are completing application forms, and for interview preparation. It should be a document that you review and add to regularly, even after you've secured that initial job.



OPPORTUNITY HUNTING

Next you need to take time to really think about what sort of position you are looking for.

- Is location a factor? Are you willing and able to commute, or even move?
- Does the size of the organisation make a difference? Would you prefer to be part of a smaller, more personal company or are you looking to be part of a huge corporation?
- Do you want to be part of a team, or would you prefer something that means you work alone for the majority of the time?
- Are you looking for a position that fits with your ethics, politics or beliefs?
- Are you looking for a position that offers you the opportunity to stay in a company and take on more senior roles? Is this a stepping stone to another role in another organisation, or are you simply looking for something that pays the bills?
- Are you looking for employment that will offer you training and skills development?
- Are you looking for something full or part-time?
- How much money do you **need** to earn from this employment? How much would you **like** to earn?

Being clear on role you want, and what you want from it, will make your job search more focused and easier.

NEGOTIATING BETWEEN A JOB AND A CAREER

For most people a job – something that pays you for working – is enough, and often means that you do not have to continue thinking about your work after working hours

A career is a direction of work in a sector that you hope will develop over a long time, maybe a lifetime. For example, a career as teacher, carpenter, creative director – remember, a career isn't necessarily for everyone. In some sectors moving in and out of employment is considered normal – such as acting, music, theatre or film production.

There could be times when you're trying to develop your career that mean you just need a job to get you through a period of time. Knowing and recognising this can help to keep you balanced and levelheaded, and stop you from fretting that you're heading in the wrong direction or not making progress.

A job, even if it isn't your ideal job, is always something to add to your [CV](#), and will provide you with skills or experience. It can be a stepping stone to move to the next, better job – one that is more aligned to your longer-term ambitions.

It's worth being flexible about what you're looking for and what you might accept. You might start in a position because you need a job, and then gradually find that it becomes your career. One of our friends, Jacob Hill, founder of [Offploy](#), recommends following his [ABC](#) (opposite).

And we agree. The 'Any Job' stage helps you to move forward, and builds your CV, your experience and your network.

ANY JOB



BETTER JOB



CAREER!

THE SEARCH PROCESS

This can be time-consuming and sometimes daunting, but being organised and keeping a record of your searches can help make the process feel more strategic.

There are lots of recruitment agencies out there that specialise in specific industries such as arts, education, administration or construction. There are also agencies for casual and unskilled work. The agencies for part-time or temporary work are also really worth registering with.

Most early career jobs come from either job adverts or connections.

There are many sites online that host job advertisements for a range of different industries. Here are just a few to begin your search:

ESCAPE THE CITY

‘On a mission to help a million people do work that matters to them and the world.’

escapethecity.org

LINKEDIN JOBS

‘64% of job seekers get hired through a referral. Use LinkedIn Jobs to boost your chances of getting hired through people you know.’

linkedin.com/jobs

INDEED

‘Indeed is the number one job site in the world, with over 300m unique visitors every month. Indeed strives to put job seekers first, giving them free access to search for jobs, post resumes, and research companies. Every day, we connect millions of people to new opportunities.’

uk.indeed.com

MONSTER

‘The UK’s leading job board, offering job vacancies, career advice and much more.’

monster.co.uk

REED

‘Reed features vacancies from over 30,000 recruiters a year, including private and public sector employers and leading recruitment agencies and consultants. Reed Courses works with around 1,000 respected learning providers to advertise more than 70,000 courses on a wide range of subjects; from accounting and HR, right through to fitness and cooking. Hundreds of thousands of readers visit Reed’s Career Advice site every month for expert tips and advice on CVs, cover letters, interviews, professional development and more.’

reed.co.uk

THE GUARDIAN

‘Every person – and every organisation – is unique. We all have different goals at work. At Guardian Jobs, we bring together like-minded job seekers and employers to create a happier world of work for everyone.’

jobs.theguardian.com

For more, see the section [Websites for Finding a Job in the Creative Industries](#).

If you’re looking for something more local, try your local newspaper and community websites. Keep an eye out on your high street as well – some retailers still have community noticeboards in their windows.

Being determined and focused helps with a sense of optimism and positivity, but searching for a position can still be exhausting. Manage your time, take regular breaks and look after yourself physically and nutritionally. Decide when you will be able to dedicate yourself to job-seeking, and set aside a specific amount of time for it, either per day or per week.

Sometimes it might feel as though your search isn’t coming up with any results. Other times you might find lots of positions you can really see yourself in. Allow yourself the time and space to engage with as much or as little as the process requires. Remember that there has to be a time in the day when you stop, review your notes, plan the next session, and reflect and rest. Remember as well that these sites update with new opportunities constantly, so it’s worth returning to them regularly, as well as searching for new sites. You might also be able to set up job alerts, so you get emailed when relevant positions become available.

Set up a list or database of sites you’ve visited, and make notes about each search session.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

If you have a clear idea of what you are looking for, or if you know exactly what type of organisation you want to be working for, then the first thing to do is check their website to see if they have any available positions that are suitable.

If they are hiring, double check the dates when they are accepting applications. Set deadlines in your diary to work on your application, including time to review it, so that you can be sure that you meet the application deadline. Allow plenty of time to tailor your application to them. Even if they ask for 'just' a CV, think about how you can make it relevant to the application, highlighting any relevant experience.

Before you apply, you can try reaching out to someone working at the organisation to ask them about their role and their experience of working for the company (take a look at the section on [Making Your Own Introductions](#) for more on this).

It's sometimes a good idea to contact the manager of the company (if it's small enough), to ask them if they have time for an informal chat about the position, and to find out what sort of person they are looking for. If it's a larger organisation, you might need to speak with the HR department and ask them if they can put you in touch with someone in the company who can tell you more about the role.

If they say no, please don't think they are rejecting you, they may just be too busy – which is why they are recruiting.

Think about what you can say that might make you stand out from other applicants.

Always think about it from the employer's point of view:

- What are they looking for?
- What skills / experience / qualities / interests do you have that will be of use to them?

Take a look at the table opposite, and fill in three things that make you as an individual stand out from other applicants.

Three things that make you as an individual stand out from other applicants

1

2

3

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

While searching, start writing your CV. It should be slightly amended for every application you make, as different skills and experiences will be relevant for each post. (See more in the [CV Building](#) section).

There are many good tips for writing a CV available online – here are some of ours:

- Summarise your skills and experiences
- Write in a way that your best referee (the person giving you a **reference**) would
- If you can, write about the impact / results of your work, not just the experience and responsibilities
- Be concise, maybe use bullet points
- Put your contact details on it – you could include your LinkedIn address, but no other social media links unless directly relevant to your work

Make sure it is in a clear, readable font (Helvetica or Georgia are good options, 10pt text is a good size), with a simple and clear layout. You can download CV templates online from sites like Reed or Monster, and LinkedIn allows you to build a CV (or ‘Resume’) from your profile.

Remember to save it as a .pdf before sending it out. Get someone to proof-read it before you send it out too (it’s often hard to spot our own spelling and grammar errors).

If the application demands a certain length of CV, then edit to that length, don’t get tempted to cheat by using a smaller font.

Make sure you have asked two people to be willing to provide a reference for you. Include their name, work position, how you know them (teacher, lecturer, former employer), their email and phone number. (You can say that you would prefer for them to be contacted only if you are offered the position.)

APPLICATION LETTER

Set aside time to write your application letter, or to complete an application form. It can take a lot of time, and always needs to be reflected on, and proof-read.

Often skills are divided in to ‘hard’ and ‘soft’.

Hard skills are factual ones, such as financial / mathematical / IT skills, and absolutely necessary to perform the role.

Soft skills are the personal qualities that help you meet the way the organisation works, and for you and others to thrive in the workplace.

Again, use your detective skills.

- What are they asking for in terms of experience, approach and skills?
- How can you prove that you have what they need?

Review both the **Person Specification** and **Job Description** thoroughly. Think about how you can show your enthusiasm for the post, how you might fit the culture of the organisation – its way of working and values – as well as deliver the more operational skills requested.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Once you have been invited to interview, there are a few stages we think will help you be successful:

- Re-read and summarise the Job Description and Person Specification
- See if you can find out who is interviewing you (and if there will be more than one person)
- Do a little more online research in to the company, and see if you can visit the organisation (if it is a shop, bar, community space this may be possible)
- Time the journey to the interview to make sure you will arrive in time
- Think about the three things you want the person / people interviewing to remember about you and how they relate to the job description
- Be ready to tell the panel what attracted you to the role and the organisation as this is often asked
- Prepare at least two questions for them – one might be about whether there are personal training / development opportunities for you, or it might be about the organisation's future plans

If you worry you may forget the areas you want to cover, or the questions you want to ask, feel able to take a notebook or device into the interview.

RESULTS

The interviewers should ask you how you would like to be contacted with the results of the interview, and should tell you when they will be able to let you know their decision.

If it's a 'yes' – brilliant, make sure you celebrate, and also ask them to confirm the rate of pay, terms and conditions and start dates. Sometimes you can negotiate these.

If it's a 'no' – decide whether you'd like to ask them for **feedback**: What could you do better? What didn't help you? Often you're told that there was just someone with more experience – so then ask them if there are ways you could gain more experience. Use this for all the learning you can. If they don't give you feedback, take time to reflect on the process, and give yourself your own feedback. Remember to focus on the things you did well rather than focusing just on a negative outcome.

Take a break, reward yourself, and get ready to take the learning forward.

For more on interviewing, see [The Interview Process](#) section.

SKILLS MAP

INTRODUCTION

When starting anything new, there can be moments of self-doubt, where you wonder: 'Can I do this?' As well as convincing yourself that you can do something, you might need to convince other people too. This exercise will help with that, by making clear your knowledge, experience and skills.

We gain skills and knowledge through work and education, but also through other experiences. Our home life, or caring responsibilities, or volunteering – they can all develop expertise.

If you're applying for a job, creating a new business, or setting yourself up as a sole trader, it's important to know what skills you already have. Whether you use them frequently or not, it's still important to know you have them, or that you can develop them. Just as when you make a meal, you need to know which ingredients you already have in your cupboard, and which ingredients you need to get.

Being clear about your skills helps:

- Boost your confidence in your own abilities
- Boost the confidence a future employer or commissioner has in your abilities, and the place you could have in their organisation
- Identify how your strengths can be help you grow or develop your business, idea, or further opportunities
- Highlight any skills gap – areas where you might need to develop your existing skills, build some new ones, or even outsource them, in order to move yourself / your business / your project forward

You are going to create a **Skills Map** by putting all of the things you can do, from all aspects of your life, onto one large sheet of paper. In doing this, you'll clarify what you're already capable of doing, while identifying the areas where you need to develop new skills.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Several large sheets of paper, poster size – a flip-chart pad is ideal for this exercise
- Markers and pens in various colours and sizes
- Post-its of various colours and sizes
- Or a laptop, tablet or phone to write on.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

To get the most out of this exercise, it's best to approach it in two ways:

- The first is to be honest and realistic about what you can do. Don't write that you can do something if you can't, even if you hope to be able to do it soon.
- The second approach is to be confident. In fact, the best way to do this exercise is to think about someone in your life who's always bragging about you in an embarrassing way. Maybe it's a family member (even if they say things **about** you, not **to** you), or your best friend, or partner – someone who is happy to sing your praises. Do the exercise from their perspective. Be bold about all the things you can do – whilst still being realistic!



THE EXERCISE

1. Think about all of the different aspects of your life, both past and present. Include Hobbies, Work, Work Placements, Life Experiences, Relationships, Interests, Education, Courses, etc.
2. Create a sheet for each of those aspects of your life. Then think of the skills you have that relate to each one. The following questions might help:
 - a. What are your interests?
 - b. What are your hobbies?
 - c. What knowledge do you have?
 - d. What are you passionate about?
 - e. What are you good at?
 - f. What do you enjoy doing?
 - g. What do other people say about you?
 - h. How easy do you find it asking for help?
3. Draw a bubble for each thing you come up with, with its title in the middle. To make the areas clear, draw each one in a different colour.
4. Around each bubble, draw smaller bubbles with the different aspects or experiences that relate to the central title.

For example: Say you started with your Hobbies sheet, and you have ‘Woodworking’ as a skill. The next thing you would do is to break that down into its constituent skills.

Big bubble

- Woodworking

Smaller bubbles

- Understanding types of wood
- Working with tools
- Whittling
- Carving wood
- Understanding different saws and how they work
- Sculpting things from wood
- Staining wood
- Knowledge of some health and safety guidelines
- Able to work alone

Top tip: Anything that looks like a job title *is not a skill* eg ‘photographer’. Break this down into minute detail. What skills do you have that make you good at photography? Perhaps a good eye for composition, or you’re good at colour balance, good at capturing the moment, have an eye for detail, find it easy to make people feel relaxed and confident (people skills), or you’re very patient...

Repeat this process across each sheet, for all the different aspects of your life.

As you work on each set of smaller bubbles, keep adding! In the above list the first ones may be obvious, the bottom two less so – though equally true, and possibly more transferable! Collectively, these sheets form your **Skills Map**.

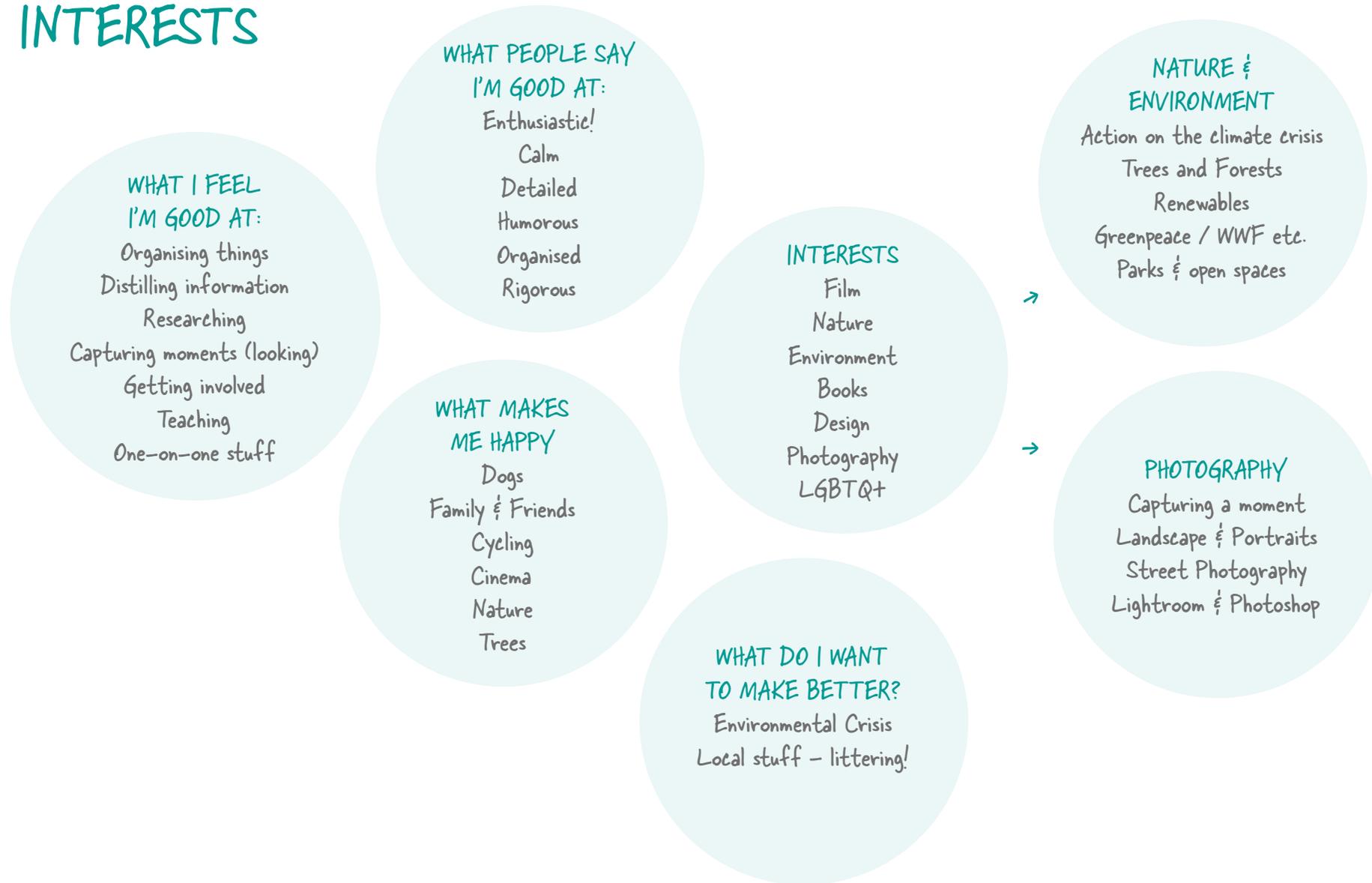
WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

This exercise helps you to better understand yourself and what you’re capable of.

It clearly sets out all the skills you have so you can see them on paper. In doing this, it’ll help you to articulate the things you like doing, the things you are passionate about, the things you want to learn more about, and the things that can help you to find employment – or perhaps start a business of your own. If you know what you’re good at, then you can build upon those skills.

Additionally, if you know what you’re **not** good at, then you know where to start looking for help, or find training to learn more. For anyone who has recently found themselves without a job, or in a new set of life circumstances, then doing a skills audit can help to centre you, to remind yourself who you are, what you know you can do, and can help reignite the confidence to do it.

INTERESTS



ASSET MAP

INTRODUCTION

Ideation: the process of forming ideas (noun)

Ideate: to form an idea (verb)

Where do ideas come from? Have you been in a situation where you found that whatever was happening around you simply wasn't working? Was there a waste of resources, or were people failing to use their full potential? Did you have a moment where you thought, 'I **know** I could make this better'? Or did you see something fantastic and inspiring, and feel you could make more of it? That's the starting place of an entrepreneur's ideation process. Entrepreneurs around the world have looked at their corner of the universe and thought: 'There **has** to be a better way'.

Sometimes it comes out of a **Pain Point**. Other times it comes from seeing a real **problem** or **need** in your community. Or perhaps it comes from a love or passion for something in your industry. Coming up with ideas is like exercising a muscle: the more you do it, the stronger you get.

In this exercise, we are going to look at:

- Creating ideas from where you are right now
- Piloting or prototyping as a first step

MATERIALS

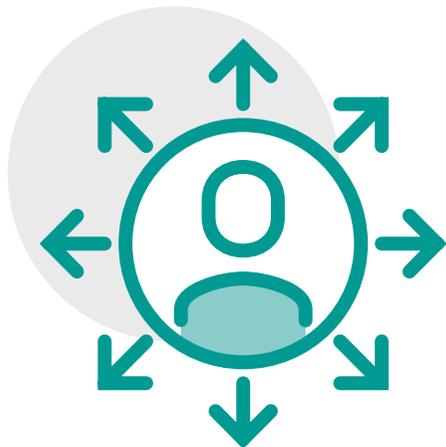
You will need the following materials:

- A large sheet of paper, poster size, A1 - A2
- Markers and pens in various colours and sizes,
- Various post-its of colours and sizes.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

Similar to the [Skills Map](#), now we will look at what your **Assets** are, and how can you use them to ideate your potential next move. Maybe it will be starting a new career path, or creating a new business or enterprise that will help you and your community.

The best way to go into this exercise is to really look around. What surrounds you? What do you have access to? Try to think in a positive way. Instead of thinking of what you **don't have**, think deeply about what you **do have**. Also, look at the people surrounding you – they are assets too – how can you utilise their talents?



THE EXERCISE

PART 1

It would be good to give yourself an hour or so to do this first part. Be in the moment and try to take everything in as you do it.

- In a group, or with a partner. Walk around your space. Take in your surroundings. Try to memorise your surroundings, looking at each item, each space, each person, and see what's happening with it. Take note of everything you see, everything you can feel, touch, or hear.

While walking around ask yourself questions:

- Are there spaces that are being under-utilised?
 - Are there resources that have not been used (maybe tables, chairs...)?
 - How are things laid out?
 - Who is where?
 - What are they doing?
 - How is the space used?
- You've identified the tangible assets, now try and reveal the intangible assets within these eg – your mobile phone is more than just a phone, it might also be a music storage device, calculator, address book... and books contain knowledge or can lift spirits, maps, to guide you, or could contain emotion stirring poetry ...

PART 2

After you and your partner have done a thorough exploration of your surroundings, it's time to create an Asset Map of what you've seen.

- On your large piece of paper, draw a map of everything you have just seen. Be as creative as you want. You can use post-its, markers, anything. But create a map. Think of this as almost as a treasure map of sorts.
- Identify the intangible in the tangible.
- What are the different areas of the map that are real assets?
- What do those assets offer?
- Make a note of everything. Think about the different way things can be used or turned into an asset.

PART 3

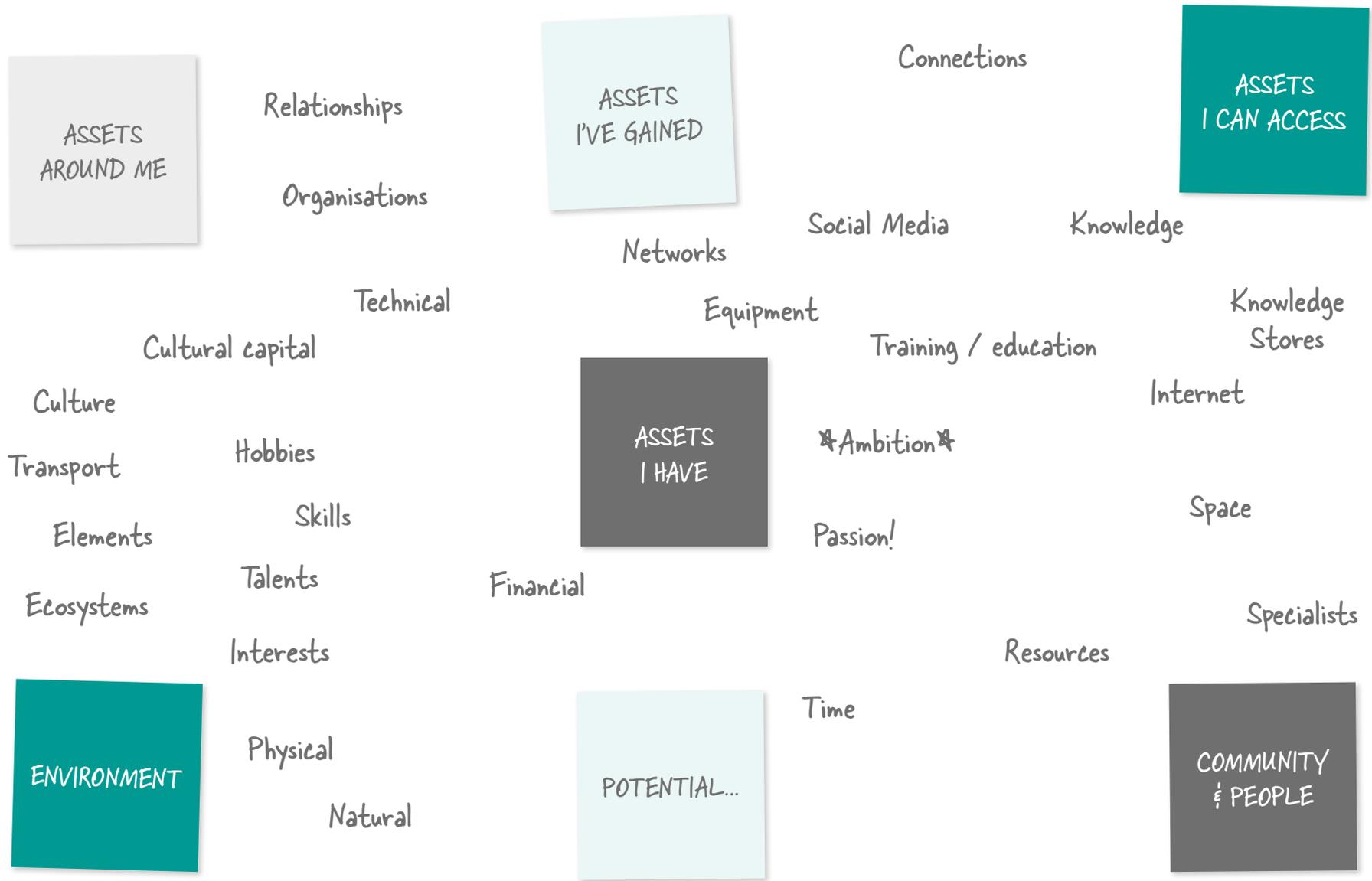
Look at the map you've created, and now think about an **offer**. Can you use the assets in new and different ways – to create something new, or to solve an issue or pain point for those around you?

- What can you offer to your community?
- How can you re-purpose some of your assets to create a product or service?
- How can you make your surroundings better?
- What can you design?
- What can you build to make this community better?

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Often when we think about what stops us from creating something new, or going after what we want, we look at what we **don't have**. This is a good way to **change that mindset** and see that you might have quite a few things at your disposal. This approach is a way of coming up with ideas that have fresh perspectives but are also rooted in reality.

ASSET MAP (Example)



INDUSTRY MAP



INTRODUCTION

An industry map is all about getting to know your industry. What are the relationships between the audiences or consumers, and the businesses or organisations of the industry? How do they operate? Who are the key players? Who are the gatekeepers to the key players? What are the gaps? And how are you going to find a place in this industry?

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

The more information you can put on paper, the more informed you can be about your industry. It's good to use sticky notes for this exercise, as you might need to move things around – some relationships might be more or less connected than you originally thought.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Large (A2/ A3) size piece of paper
- Markers / pens
- Sticky notes

THE EXERCISE

1. On a large piece of paper draw your industry. Think of this as a mind map, and draw connections between suppliers, customers, distributors, influencers. Who are the key players? Name them, draw connections between them.

2. Who are the gatekeepers? Draw them.
3. Write out all the people who are involved in your industry. How do they interact? What are the activities they do?
4. What are the gaps in the industry? **Are** they gaps in the industry, or gaps in your **understanding** of the industry?
5. What do you know? What do you not know?
6. What do you need to do to find out?
7. From this map, devise a plan of next steps. Who do you want to reach out to? Which key players would you want to know or work with? What research do you need to do? How are you going to do it?
8. Make a plan for going forward.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

This map will help you make a plan to discover who your collaborators and competitors are. It will inform how far you can move forward with the knowledge you have, and give a clear idea of the knowledge you need to gain.

Source: De La Court & Prime (2012)

INDUSTRY MAP



CV BUILDING

INTRODUCTION

A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a short written summary of a person's career, skills, qualifications and education. Having a good CV is one of the factors that determines whether or not you're accepted for an interview. It's your story and it needs to be compelling, and appropriate for the audience. Having a clear and concise CV that shows your skills and experiences, whilst still leaving room to be ambitious, is what lots of employers are looking for. In this exercise you will:

- articulate your career goals
- spotlight your best or most important qualities
- draft a CV

We know there are lots of CV templates available, and services that help you write a CV. Our advice is to keep the design simple and remember that no-one will know your story as well as you, and your CV is your story.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

This exercise should be done after the [Skills Map](#) one. That way you'll already feel confident about all the things you can do, the experience you have had, and the things you should be highlighting to potential employers.

So, to get the most out of this exercise:

- Do the [Skills Map](#) first
- Have the job titles, dates and list of **duties** of any previous jobs
- Have the **Job Description** and **Person Specification** of the job you're applying to hand

Preparation

Write down the names and dates of all the places you've worked, with your job title, and a list of what your tasks or responsibilities were, as well as any skills or knowledge you gained in that time.

Pick out a few Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for jobs you hope to get.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Paper
- Pens
- Highlighters
- OR a laptop or tablet



THE EXERCISE

1. If you have not done the **Skills Map**, please do that first, and then look at the map in front of you.
2. Set a goal (or goals) for what you want to achieve with your career.
3. Pick one of the Job Descriptions.
4. Research the skills and duties that the position requires, or create a list of the activities someone in that position does. You can do this by either reading Person Specification; or finding someone who already has a similar role, and chatting to them.
5. Check your Skills Map and start highlighting any skills you already have that are transferable.
6. Make a note of when and how you used those skills.
7. Once you've gone through all of the skills or duties required by the position, and where you've already done something similar, check to see what's left. Are there any skills or duties that you don't have experience in? If so, make a list of them and put it to one side.
8. Start building your CV using the information from your Skills Map, and steps 1-6 above.
 - a. Begin with your **Contact Information** at the top – your name, phone number and email
 - b. You could add a short **Professional Summary** – a sentence or two which summarises who you are, what your core skills are, and what sort of work you're looking for.
 - c. List your **Experience** (or **Previous Employment** history): List the most recent or relevant position you have held (ideally this should be related to the job you are applying for), detailing:
 1. The position you held (your job title)
 2. The organisation or business name
 3. The dates you worked there
 4. **4-6** bullet points of the key duties you did in this job (ideally these should match the Job Description of the job you're applying for).
Repeat this process with the second most recent, or most relevant position, but this time, do not use more than **4** bullet points. Repeat this process again with the third most recent, or most relevant position, but this time, do not use more than **3** bullet points.
 - d. After **Experience**, list **Additional Skills** – choose the skills that would be most relevant to the job you're applying for.
 - e. List your **Education** – where you studied, what you studied, when you studied, and any results and qualifications you gained – start with your most recent and work backwards.
- f. Finally add at least two **References**. These should be people who can talk about your work experience, work habits, character and skills – perhaps a previous employer, or if you're recently finished education, a teacher. Include the person's title, name, contact details, and how you know them. Make sure you've asked your referees if it's okay to include them on your CV.
9. Finally go back to the list of skills the job requires that you don't already have (the list you put to one side earlier). Look again at these skills, and double check if any of them might be things you can do or have experience doing, in a different way. If you do, add those skills to your CV. If not, then be aware of what they are, in case you are called for an interview.
10. Lastly, once you've pulled all the information together, get someone else to have a look through your CV, check for typing errors, make sure they understand everything, and can read it easily.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Having a good CV that is skill-based is what employers are looking for. They want to ensure you can do the job they are asking you to do, and ensure you have the capacity to grow in your role and develop their organisation or business.

BUILDING A LINKEDIN PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

[LinkedIn.com](https://www.linkedin.com) is a social media platform for the work side of your life. Here's how they describe the platform themselves:

“You can use LinkedIn to find the right job or internship, connect and strengthen professional relationships, and learn the skills you need to succeed in your career. You can access LinkedIn from a desktop, mobile app, or mobile browser. A complete LinkedIn profile can help you connect with opportunities by showcasing your unique professional story through experience, skills, and education. You can also use LinkedIn to organize offline events, join groups, write articles, post photos and videos, and more.”

Recruitment firms look at LinkedIn when recruiting new employees, and companies often advertise new jobs there too. A good LinkedIn profile can help you to:

- Show the work you have done previously
- Create a strategy to get you discovered by employers
- Engage in industry conversations, and do other things to boost your professional profile

YOU'LL NEED THE FOLLOWING

- Internet Access
- Good headshots / photographs of you working – if you feel comfortable sharing them
- Your most up-to-date CV (do the [CV Building](#) section if you haven't already done so)
- Summaries of your proudest achievements

SETTING UP YOUR PROFILE

When you set up a LinkedIn profile, you'll input the following information:

- **Name**
- **Location**
- **Most recent job title** – or list yourself as a student

You can then choose to say whether you're actively looking for a job, would consider the right opportunity, or aren't interested right now. If you say you're looking for a job, you can select up to five job titles and locations, and can be asked to be notified when relevant positions become available. Once you've gone through the setup, you should edit your profile using the **Update profile** button. You can add a list of **Skills** at this point.

Now go to the **Me** link in the menu bar, and click on **View Profile**. Now you'll be able to edit the details of your profile. It will have the following sections automatically, and you can add more:

- **Intro** section (name, headline, current position, industry, education, location and contact info)
- **Activity** (this will show any posts you make on the platform)
- **Experience**
- **Skills**
- **Interests**

Click **Add profile section** to add any more sections you like. If relevant, we'd recommend:

- **Core:** About
- **Recommended:** Licenses & certification, Courses
- **Additional:** Volunteer experience, Projects, Honors & awards, Languages, Causes you care about

A FEW IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

PHOTOGRAPHS

Use clear photos that show you in a professional light. Make sure you have at least one or two good photos you can use. You'll need a headshot of your face, and it might be good to have ones showing your impact / work / volunteering.

- **Headshot:** Your profile picture. It should be a simple, clear, high quality photo of your head and shoulders. Most of us don't love having our picture taken, but it's worth asking someone to take this for you. A mobile phone shot is fine, but make sure you have enough light, and that you look professional (don't use a friend's photo of you from a bar with a drink in your hand, and don't wear sunglasses).
- **Background photo:** Behind your profile picture there's a space where you can put another photograph or image. It could be an action shot of you doing the work you currently do, or the work you would like to be doing. Or it could be an example of the work you've done.

HEADLINE

- In the first section of your profile, there's a field called 'Headline'. After your name this is going to be the first thing potential employers will read. Make it a powerful. Maybe a statement about the job you're looking for. Be realistic though: you'll want to show evidence on your profile that you've done elements of this aspirational position before. You might also want to include the sector you are looking to work in – for example:

Office Manager – Arts Education
Sound Engineer – Music & Concert Venue

ABOUT SECTION

- In the **About Section**, there should be more than your work experience. (If anyone wants to know the specifics of your employment history, they can scroll down to Experience.) Use this section to highlight the best parts of you and your experience.
- **Tagline:** This is one sentence that could detail your professional focus, or whatever is important to you. Or perhaps what is it about you that sets you apart from others. Think about this as your personal career mission statement.
- Put the information in the About Section in bullet points. It helps the reader to be clear about what you do. The bullet points should be the most important information about your professional self. What have you done so far in your career? What are you hoping to do in your career? What interests you about your industry? What kind of position are you seeking?

EXPERIENCE SECTION

- List each of the jobs you've had. On each you can include:
 - Job Title
 - Company name
 - Location
 - Dates
 - Industry
 - Description of your role
 - Skills
 - Media
- The description of your role might be best done in bullet points. Your most recent job should have the most bullet points. Jobs that are less recent should have fewer bullet points (but at least 2 for each job).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In the **My Network** section of LinkedIn, you can add Contacts and Connections, creating a network of people you've worked with before. Once you've done that, using the **Add Profile Section** button, and scrolling to **Recommended**, you can add recommendations and search for people you've worked with, or people who just know you. They need to have some idea of how you operate in the workplace.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

MESSAGING & CONNECTING

- Grow your network by making as many connections as possible. But remember it's not enough just to connect with people. You could start by sending a 'thank you for the connection' message, but why not also ask that person what they're currently working on? Use your judgement / comfort level as a guide on to what to say. Be careful not to spam people.
- If you're currently seeking a position, it's a good idea to use LinkedIn to do some research on companies you want to work with. Do send a message and connect with those people. Take a look at the [Making Your Own Introductions](#) section for more on this.

INTERESTS

- On your LinkedIn homepage (not your profile page), if you click the **Discover More** link at the bottom of the left hand column (or use this link: [linkedin.com/mynetwork/discover-hub/](https://www.linkedin.com/mynetwork/discover-hub/)), you can follow companies and connect with topics you're interested in. Liking and commenting on people's posts will help you grow your network, and get involved in conversations about industry topics.

LINKS & EVIDENCE OF WORK

- It's great to provide examples of work you've done – whether it's an event you worked on, a production you were part of, or an exhibition you curated. Whatever you've done, find links, and post them. There's a box at the top of your homepage where you can **Start a post**, adding links, photos, video, whatever feels right. Doing this allows other people to comment on and share your post, which in turn means more people knowing about you.

In most industries, but especially the creative industries, making connections often leads to employment. When you apply for a job, the more someone working for a company can discover about you, the more likely they are to engage with you, whether that's through a job offer, or a recommendation.

MAKING YOUR OWN INTRODUCTIONS



INTRODUCTION

If you're looking for a new job, or your first job, it's important to start some industry conversations, helping you to find out about a particular company or role. It shows initiative and can help future employers see your skills and enthusiasm before the actual job application process. It can also help you gain insights into a sector. Don't worry, be surprised, or take it as rejection if you don't get a response though. The person you're getting in touch with may well be very busy. It might be that they've filed your information away for when a suitable moment comes up.

Have a look at the Outreach Templates overleaf, and adapt them to your own situation to start a conversation, either via email or on LinkedIn.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

There are two templates, one for email and the other for LinkedIn. Use these templates by adapting the content. **Do not just copy and paste.** You need to tailor your message to each individual you contact, with the right information, showing a careful attention to detail. (Otherwise you risk making a bad impression, which is worse than no impression at all.)

Always make sure you show that you have researched the person you're writing to, and their work. Giving an example of something they've worked on that you like is a good start – but make sure you say why you like it. Maybe don't pick their most recent project – that can look like you haven't done more than cursory research.

Alternatively, you can adapt these templates to send a written letter – receiving a typed or handwritten letter often makes a stronger impression than getting an email or direct message.

If you're comfortable with it, give your contact details in case they want to call or message you rather than emailing or responding via LinkedIn.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- An email account (make sure this has a clear and professional name)
- A LinkedIn profile
- Tablet, phone or laptop; or paper and envelopes.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

The more people you reach and connect with, the more you increase your chances of finding a job that fits you and your skills.

OUTREACH TEMPLATES

EMAIL TEMPLATE

Dear [Contact's first name]

My name is [your full name]. I hope you don't mind, but I'm getting in touch as I've seen your work at [name of company]. I really admire the [name of project], because [reason you like it – this might take a sentence or two].

I'm currently looking for a new role in the industry. I'd love to learn more about your journey, and would really appreciate the chance to learn from your experience.

If you'd be up for a short conversation, either in person, or via email or phone, do let me know.

I understand how busy you must be, so thanks in advance for taking the time to read this.

Kind regards,

[Your name and contact information]

LINKEDIN MESSAGING TEMPLATE

Hi [Contact's first name].

Thanks for connecting!

I'm getting in touch as I saw your work at [name of company]. I really admire the [name of project], because [reason you like it – this might take a sentence or two].

I'm currently looking for a new role in the industry. I'd love to learn more about your journey, and to learn from your experience.

I know you're busy, so any time or advice you might be able to give would be greatly appreciated.

All the best,

[Your first name]

FINDING A JOB



INTRODUCTION

If haven't applied for a job in a new sector before, one of the hard things is knowing exactly where to look in order to find the sort of job you want. This guide will help you understand the best places to look, both online and offline. It will help you to see which organisations in the creative sector put out job adverts, and how they find candidates.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

You'll need internet access. It would be good if you could have a notepad and pen to take notes, and make sure you have your diary with you. You'll want to make note of deadlines, when applications are due, which websites to follow up with, and basic criteria that show up in job advertisements.

MATERIALS

- A device with internet access
- Pens
- Diary
- Notepaper

THE EXERCISE

PART 1: ONLINE SEARCHING

The first thing to do is identify which sector you are seeking employment within. Take a look at the list below, which we've put together to show the creative industries. (This is just a short list – each sector, and each area, can be expanded much further.)

- **Performing Arts:** Theatre | Dance | Opera | Music | Orchestra | Symphony
 - **Fine & Visual Arts:** Galleries | Artist submissions callouts | Residencies | Painting | Sculpting | Creation
 - **Culture:** Heritage Sites | Museums and Galleries | Community representation and advocacy
 - **Media:** Film | TV | Content Creation | Animation | Advertising
 - **Craft Spaces:** Furniture Making | Jewelry Making | Woodwork | Makers spaces
 - **Design:** Interior | Exterior | Product | Graphic | Illustration | Project Management
 - **Fashion:** Design | Management | Distribution | Retail
 - **Culinary:** Food Design | Recipe Building | Raw materials and distribution of foods
 - **Publishing, Literature & Libraries**
 - **Gaming:** Virtual / Augmented Reality | Game Design | Digital creation and engineering
- Once you have identified a sector, the next thing to do is to start researching it. If haven't already done the [Industry Map](#) exercise, it's a good one to pair with this one.
 - You might not know anything about the sector you're choosing. That's fine. Start with a simple Google search, and look to see which are the big companies that take up the space. Make a list of them. For example, you could search for 'biggest companies media film TV UK' or 'biggest companies hiring media UK'
 - Next try the same search, but replace the word 'biggest' with 'independent'. This will help you to understand the landscape of your chosen sector.
 - Once you know which companies make up the majority of your sector, the next thing to look at is which skills make you the most 'hirable'. So do a search of your chosen creative industry and 'most hirable / desirable skill' or 'most in-demand skills'.

Hopefully after doing some searches, you'll gradually build up a picture of the industry within which you want to work, but which areas the industry is hiring in. Once you've done this, the next thing to do is to understand how you can apply for, or get notified about, the jobs you're excited by.

LINKEDIN

While there are many websites where you can search for a job in the creative industries, [LinkedIn](#), the social networking app for professionals, is one of the best.

- On LinkedIn, you can set up a profile where potential employers can seek you out, based on your skills, experiences and ambitions.
- To learn more about how to set up a LinkedIn Profile, or use LinkedIn, please see the [Building a LinkedIn Profile](#) section.

COMPANY WEBSITES

Sometimes the best way to find a job is to go straight to the source. If you know you want to work in one of the companies you've researched, just go to their company website and see if they're hiring.

Places to look on company websites:

- Scroll to the bottom (the footer) of the website and look for links such as: 'Jobs', 'Work with Us' or 'Careers'
- Alternatively, look for a section on the site called: 'About us' or 'Meet the team', and have a look for links like 'Open Positions', 'Work with us', 'Join the Team' or 'Vacancies'.

JOB ADVERTISEMENT WEBSITES

There are quite a few general recruitment websites where creative industry companies advertise their vacancies. As well as browsing existing positions, if you sign up to the websites, you'll get new job notices delivered straight to your inbox. Here are just a few that you could take a look at.

- [ziprecruiter.co.uk](#)
- [uk.indeed.com](#)
- [targetjobs.co.uk](#) (for graduate jobs)
- [monster.co.uk](#)

For more websites that cater specifically to the creative industries, have a look at the [Websites for Finding a Job in the Creative Industries](#) section. Below are just a few from that selection:

- [artsjobs.org.uk](#)
- [ifyoucouldjobs.com](#)
- [the-dots.com](#)
- [escapethecity.org](#)

ONLINE NETWORKING GROUPS

- There are numerous events that go on throughout the year for different industries. A lot of those industries use platforms like [itickets.com](#), [eventbrite.co.uk](#) or [meetup.com](#) to create networking events, or to promote festivals.
- Check those websites and see if any of the companies you are interested in are doing any events.
- See if they offer networking events. Or if anyone from similar companies are doing networking events.
- Subscribe to get notifications of new events from the companies and organisations you're interested in.

PART 2: OFFLINE SEARCHING

While the internet is a thorough source for understanding more about the industry, and for finding jobs, it's also worthwhile investigating offline options available to you through your network and community.

- One of the first places to look for jobs can be with the people of your immediate network. And it's as easy as just chatting to people you know, and letting them know that you're looking for work in the creative industries. That way, if or when they hear of any opportunities, they can pass them on to you.
- You could also get in touch with your local [Job Centre](#). Go in and ask to speak to a representative, letting them know the industry you're interested in, and ask them what they know about getting into the industry.
- As with the online networking groups above, you could also try in-person networking events. Search for the same sites for industry events, fairs, or festivals.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

By building up a detailed picture of all the possible places you might find a job advertised, or even just talked about, you'll be giving yourself the best chance of finding exactly the right job.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS



INTRODUCTION

Understanding communication, and how to communicate effectively, is a necessary and important skill for anyone, and it's essential when looking for employment. How you present yourself and how you communicate with potential employers can be a key factor in the hiring process.

This section focuses on the interview process: from your first contact with an organisation to starting your new position, and everything in between.

Understanding how to communicate effectively can help in multiple situations:

- Applying for positions
- The negotiation between applying for a position and gaining an interview
- During an interview
- After the interview
- Salary negotiations
- Starting a new position
- In employment

Often, if you're nervous or anxious, it's easy to lose sight of how to communicate naturally and clearly. This exercise is all about remembering to put communication first, and making sure that clarity is at the forefront. We give you tips for presenting yourself in an interview – or in a presentation, if the interview requires one. There are also some tips that are useful for communicating generally.

Make notes with pens and post-its, or even flashcards, and have a highlighter to hand. It's a good idea to have a list of your values, as well as the company's values, at your disposal.

MATERIALS

- The **Job Description** for the **role** you're applying for
- The **Person Specification** (the written description of the ideal candidate for a role)
- A friend, or mentor
- Highlighter
- Pens
- Post-its
- Flashcards
- Internet access – either at home, a library, café or wherever you are able to access the internet and work with focus.

PART 1: APPLYING FOR A POSITION

For each position you apply for, you should tailor your **CV** to fit the Job Description and Person Specification. Similarly, you should never send out a standard cover letter with applications – you need to write a new one for each position you’re applying for.

- Firstly, read the Job Description and Person Specification thoroughly.
- Now read it again, but this time with a highlighter. Highlight any areas where you have previous experience doing what is needed.
- Review your CV, and check that you’ve listed any previous experience which matches the details in the Job Description and Person Specification.
- Make a note of all the areas where you’re lacking the required experience.
- Now go to your **Skills Map** and see if there’s anything there that’s transferrable. There may be things laid out in the Job Description which you haven’t done professionally, but which you have done on a smaller, more personal level. For example, if the job requires ‘event planning’: have you ever planned an event for friends or family members? Did everyone know where to go, and what to do? If yes, then maybe you do have some experience in event planning.
- Check and double check your CV and Cover letter, making sure that you’ve hit everything on their list.

- Now send the CV and letter out to friends / family members / mentors (especially anyone with more experience in your industry, or currently employed in it).
 - Ask them to proofread it (it’s really hard to spot your own mistakes!)
 - Ask them to make suggestions about what you could improve.
 - Make those adjustments.
- Do this at least twice with different people.

Once you’ve done all that, you’re ready to make your application.

MAKING FIRST CONTACT

Some organisations will ask you to email someone directly when applying. Others will require you to fill out a form. But nearly all of them will have someone as a point of contact for anyone applying for a position.

- **The key to making first contact is to get to the point, to be polite, and to make sure the recipient knows you value their time: by being brief.**

If you’re applying by email it’s always good to write a small email introducing yourself to the point of contact, acknowledging them and giving them a brief introduction to who you are.

For example:

Dear _____,
I hope you are well. My name is _____.
I am applying for the position of _____.
As you can see, my CV and Cover Letter are attached. I believe I would make a good fit for the position. I appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,
Signature

If applying through an online form, then it might be a good idea to email the contact, letting them know you have just applied.

For example:

Dear _____,
I hope you are well. My name is _____.
I would like to let you know that I have just applied for the position of _____. I realise you will have a lot of applicants to consider, and I appreciate your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,
Signature

PART 2: ARRANGING AN INTERVIEW

- Once an application has been put into an organisation, the waiting process begins. Have a look at the timeline that has been put up. In most cases, this will be on the job advertisement, letting applicants know what to expect, when the interviews will take place, and whether or not someone will be in touch if applicants are, or are not selected.
- If you **are** selected, someone will get in touch to let you know, and probably arrange a time for an interview – either online or in-person. Before this happens, think about whether you have any special requirements for the interview, either things you can do yourself, or things you might need from them.

For example, if you know you have a tendency to get overwarm when you are nervous, make sure you wear layers, and allow extra time to get there, so that you don't have to rush your journey. Or if you have any accessibility issues, make sure to ask about the accessibility of the interview location.

One thing to remember is that interviewers want to give you what you need, so they can see the best version of you. They want you to succeed just as much as you want to succeed. They are looking for the best candidate and they hope it is you.

- Find out if it's an online interview, or in person. Double check your availability for the date and time with the interviewer. If you have a good reason why you can't make the proposed slot, it's okay to ask for a different one – they'll try to accommodate you if they can.

- Ask who'll be on the interview panel, and what type of interview it will be – task based / questions / interview, and if there is anything you need to prepare in advance.
- As there is often someone in charge of the job listing, feel free to get in touch with them, and ask them what you can expect from the interview process.
- Remember to take note of all the details for yourself.

Once you have settled on a date and time, how the interview will take place, next is preparing for the interview.

PART 3: THE INTERVIEW ITSELF

PREPARATION

In plenty of time before the interview, look up the company and do some research on the work they do, the key players in the organisation, and the people on your interview panel.

Take a look through the company website and pay attention to who is on what team, and what they each do. You might be able to see who is the head of each team, and how the team operates. Even just looking at how the teams are structured can set you up to get a better understanding of how the organisation works.

MOCK INTERVIEW

It might be a good idea to ask a friend of someone you know to do a 'mock' or practice interview with you. Rehearsing things can make you feel more comfortable and confident. You'll get used to saying things out loud, and you'll have some answers ready for questions that might be asked.

To conduct a mock interview, set up a Zoom, or sit across from someone, and give them a notepad or blank sheet of paper and pen, as well as the sample list of questions (opposite).

Interviewers will write notes on what you've said or done during an interview. It's good to get used to someone writing while you're speaking, or waiting in silence while they finish their thought.

Sample Interview Questions

- Why do you want to work for this organisation?
- What drew you to this position?
- Sometimes in this position you will be asked to _____ (*refer to the Job Description, and pick a task from there*). Can you tell us about your experience with this?
- Here at this organisation, we value _____ (*check their website to determine what some of those values are*). How would you and your work represent that?
- Out of all the applicants, why do you think we should choose you?
- Do you have any questions for us?
Always prepare questions for your interviewers – it shows your interest in the position, and it shows you've researched the organisation and the position. Some sample questions you could ask:
 - Why do each of you like working here?
 - What is your favourite aspect of working in this organisation?
 - What project have you worked on which excites you?
 - Can you give me an example of your ideal candidate for this position?

GETTING THERE

An interview can be a very nervous situation. But there are some simple ways to calm your nerves.

- If you're doing an in-person interview, make sure to get to your destination early. Check your route for the time of the day of your interview, work out when you have to leave and get everything ready for half an hour before that time.
- If you're doing an online interview, double check you have the link, and that you can access it. Also, make sure you have the contact details of someone you can contact if anything goes wrong: like losing internet connection, or not being able to access the link at the time of the interview.

ARRIVING AT THE INTERVIEW

When you first arrive, remember that you may well get nervous – that's completely natural. Our throats dry up when we're nervous, which can then make us cough, or make it difficult to speak clearly. Stay hydrated. Either have some water with you, or if offered some, make sure to accept it. It's fine – often we don't want to inconvenience anyone, but it will help when it comes to being nervous.

COMMUNICATING DURING THE INTERVIEW

Firstly, speak loud enough for people to hear you – some people tend to speak more quietly when they're nervous. If the interviewer is leaning in, or if they ask you to repeat yourself, it could be that you're not speaking loudly enough or clearly enough for them. To avoid this, it can be helpful to do some breathing and vocal exercises before your interview:

- **Vocal exercises**
 - Say 'Red leather, yellow leather' ten times, fast but clearly
 - Say 'I slit a sheet, a sheet I slit, and on that slitted sheet I sit' five times, fast but clearly
 - Say 'The big black bug bled black blood on the blonde boy's barn floor' five times, fast but clearly
- **Breathing exercises:**
 - Inhale to the count of four, hold for the count of four, exhale for the count of six
 - Pretend you're smelling a flower – breathe in and out deeply
 - Inhale to the count of six, hold for the count of four, let out an audible 'ah' sound as you exhale for the count of six
 - Pretend you're blowing out a candle – breathe in deeply, and blow out.

ENGAGED SPEAKING AND LISTENING

It's important that the interview panel feel that you are present and engaged during the interview. So you need to understand what that looks like, while knowing that it doesn't look the same for everyone. (Sometimes people have different ways of being: try to refrain judgment, and try not to judge yourself based on how you think people engage with you.)

- **Speaking**

While you are speaking, it is good to know that people are listening to you, and that you are speaking clearly. Keep your answers to the point, and don't go off on long tangents. Answer the question directly, and if you have an example to illustrate a point, ask the listeners if they would like you to continue, or if they already have enough information.
- **Showing your interest in both the listener and the topic**

There are ways to show the listener you care about what you are talking about.

 - Make eye contact with the listener
 - Take small pauses at the end of a sentence and begin the next sentence with energy
 - A neutral to positive look on your face (smiling)

- **Signals to stop speaking**

Sometimes, people might understand what you mean quickly, but are being polite and so they won't interrupt you. You do not want them to be waiting for you to finish speaking, you want them to be listening. So here are some ways some people show they have lost interest:

- They are avoiding eye contact
- They are looking everywhere but at you
- They are yawning
- They are nodding and looking to the side
- They are opening their mouths, as if they want to speak, but are waiting for you to finish
- They put their hand up, looking to ask a question, or to get you to stop speaking

However, sometimes this is just how people focus – people are different, and it's hard to always read the signs correctly. It's okay to ask if you are speaking too much, or giving answers that are too long.

- **Listening**

Just as you want to show you are engaged and present during the interview, you want to show you are engaged while others are speaking.

Ways to show you are listening:

- Nodding your head
- Giving verbal affirmations (this could be: yes, yeah, mm, mmhmm)
- Neutral to positive facial expressions
- Taking notes
- Showing enthusiasm (energetic nodding, energetic verbal or physical affirmations)

Ways to show interest:

- All of the above
- Asking questions
- Engaging in a dialogue or conversation

THINGS YOU WANT TO ENSURE THEY UNDERSTAND ABOUT YOU

Think about the lasting impression you want to leave the interviewers with. Pick three things that you want them to know about you. It could be:

- **The way you work**

This could be that you tend to work better in the mornings or evenings. It could be that you are great at correspondence, but find in person relationships difficult, or vice versa. It could be that you are flexible in your approach. It could be that you are process driven.

- **Your ambition**

This could be what you aspire to, what you hope to gain out of a position like this. It could be your flexibility about where you end up.

- **Something noteworthy about yourself**

This just helps them to remember you. Maybe you love video games, or you support Arsenal. Maybe you have a coin collection, maybe you love watching dance videos on TikTok. Think about a thing that makes you essentially you and try to make them aware of this.

Fill in the table on the next page with three things you'd like an interviewer to remember about you.

THREE THINGS YOU'D LIKE AN INTERVIEWER TO REMEMBER ABOUT YOU

1

2

3

FINISHING THE INTERVIEW

Most interviewers will give an understanding of what to expect next in the process: when they'll finish doing all the interviews, when they'll let you know if you've been successful. And if they don't, it's fine to ask.

Depending on the level of comfort you have with physical touch, you can offer either a handshake or a wave after concluding the interview. It would be good to thank them all, both for meeting with you and for their time.

If there was anything specific of personal interest that came up during the interview, now is a good time to mention it. For example, liking the same football team, or following the same content creator, or having the same hobby.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Make sure you make a note of any dates they've given you, or of anything that felt important, particularly when and if you should expect to hear anything, whether you're successful or not.

If you hear something within the time period, that's great.

If they respond positively:

- They might ask for a second interview, which could mean:
 - Meeting with people higher up in the team
 - It could be task based: where they will give you a task to do and a time to complete within
 - It could be a trial run: maybe they want you to come in for a shift and see how things operate and see how you handle them.
- They might offer you the job: if so, congratulations!

If they respond negatively:

- Do ask for feedback
- Make sure to thank them, and leave things on good terms. You never know when a position will come up again. Or the person they hired might not work out, and they might ask you to come in again, and hire you the second time. The point is, you never know when your paths will cross again. Don't be disheartened. Sometimes a 'no,' means a 'not right now'.

PART 4: THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

This can be a difficult and tricky process to navigate when starting a new position. Sometimes, organisations will have a specific starting salary for your position. It's always good to research the average rate of pay* for someone in a similar role, with your level of experience. Sometimes though the first offer is not always the best offer.

- When given an offer (an offer usually includes all the terms of your employment, including salary, benefits, longevity, etc.) the first thing to do is thank them for their offer. It might be that you want to then ask if there is any possibility of negotiation at all, or you might find it reasonable, in which case you simply accept it.
- Sometimes the offer given might be a **firm offer**. That means 'this is it, take it or leave it'. (And remember, you do always have the option of leaving it.)
- A **counter offer** is when you come back to them and say 'Thank you for your first offer, I would like to counter', and then outline the terms of the offer you would like, such as 5% higher salary, or a shorter term.

Or you could suggest taking the lesser salary for the first 6 months, and then having a performance review, with opportunity for promotion / an increase in salary.

Sometimes they'll accept your counter offer, sometimes they'll counter with less than you've asked for, but more than they originally offered.

It's up to you to decide what you're happy to accept. But be sure that whatever you decide, you have evidence to back up anything you say to them.

For example "Because I have more than 10 years' experience in this field, I think I am worth 5% not 3%". Or, "I believe it's industry standard to offer 30 days holiday, plus bank holidays."

* *You might be offered more pay if you're in London than elsewhere in the country – this is known as 'London weighting', and applies mainly to key workers.*



PART 5: STARTING A NEW POSITION

When you're ready to start your new position, go back to the job description and check to see if it matches with what was said during the interview. If there's a disparity, make note of it, and ask for clarity in your first few days or weeks of working.

ASK QUESTIONS

When starting a new position it's essential to ask questions. There are lots of new things to learn, and you shouldn't expect to know everything from the start. The main questions you should ask are:

- What is expected of me? What is generally expected of somebody in this position?
(Those two things can be different. For example, if you don't have quite the right experience, your employers might not want you to do a specific task until you are properly trained, even if it was specified in the Job Description.)
- What's the timeline attached to these expectations? Which is to say: when should you have a full understanding and be fully executing all areas of the position?

SET BOUNDARIES

If you think there might be something that is overwhelming, and if they have clarified what is expected, make sure you're clear about what you can offer what you cannot. If there's something you're uncomfortable offering, make sure to discuss it with them.

ENJOY IT

Try to enjoy the new position, find the things you like about it, and be excited about those things. Quite often it can be really refreshing when a new person comes onboard in a positive way, and it can energise a whole team.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Understanding what to expect, from your first application for a job all the way through to starting a position, can be really beneficial. Hiring practices vary widely across different industries, so all of the above might not be relevant for the specific jobs you're applying for. But at the very least, parts of it will be true. Having this knowledge prior to going through the application process can really help to build your confidence, and put you in a better position to gain employment.



WEBSITES FOR FINDING A JOB IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Arts Jobs

artsjobs.org.uk/jobs

'Run by Arts Council England, Arts Jobs shares adverts for a range of opportunities within the arts sector including positions that require specialist knowledge and skills, and unskilled positions at arts organisations – which help organisations to run effectively and deliver creativity and culture.'

ArtStation

artstation.com/jobs/all

'ArtStation provides you with a simple, yet powerful way to show your portfolio and be seen by the right people in the industry.'

Behance

behance.net/joblist

'Portfolio site with creative jobs listing – discover your next career move, freelance gig, or internship.'

Campaign Jobs

campaignlive.co.uk/jobs

Campaign Jobs is the official jobs board for *Campaign*, published by Haymarket Media Group. Campaign Jobs brings together the biggest brands and the latest jobs within the media, creative, marketing and advertising industry.

Creative Access

opportunities.creativeaccess.org.uk

'We specialise in finding incredible opportunities for people from under-represented communities in the creative industries.'

Creative Opportunities

creativeopportunities.arts.ac.uk

'The go-to jobs board for creative students and graduates.'

Creative Pool

creativepool.com

'The Creative Industry Network. Connect, hire and be inspired by the world's most talented industry professionals and companies.'

Discover Creative Careers

discovercreativecareers.com

'Discover Creative Careers is a government-funded, award-winning, industry-led programme working to ensure there is a larger and more diverse intake of talent into the creative industries.'

Escape the City

escapethecity.org

'We are a global community. Since 2010 we've been on a mission to help 1,000,000 people quit their corporate jobs and find work that matters to them and the world.'

Guardian Jobs

jobs.theguardian.com/jobs/arts-and-heritage/

'Run by the Guardian newspaper. Every person – and every organisation – is unique. We all have different goals at work. At Guardian Jobs, we bring together like-minded job seekers and employers to create a happier world of work for everyone.'

If You Could

ifyoucouldjobs.com

'If You Could is the place to find jobs in the creative industry. If You Could Jobs is a quick and easy way to browse hundreds of roles across the creative industries. Whether you're just starting out or planning your next move, you'll find new opportunities added daily. In our Journal, we explore the current topics and conversations around the creative working world. We ask the crucial questions on behalf of job hunters and the job-curious, and gather insights and advice from across the industry.'

Indeed

uk.indeed.com

'Indeed is the #1 job site in the world with over 300m unique visitors every month. Indeed strives to put job seekers first, giving them free access to search for jobs, post resumes, and research companies. Every day, we connect millions of people to new opportunities.'

Inspiring Interns

inspiringinterns.com/blog/category/useful-careers-resources

A selection of useful resources from Inspiring Interns and Graduates, which uses video CVs to help place graduates into jobs.

Targetapprenticeships

targetapprenticeships.co.uk

'targetapprenticeships is a tool to help school leavers who choose the apprenticeship route realise their potential in the world of work. It provides advice content for every step of the process and enables them to discover employers advertising apprenticeships.'

The Dots

the-dots.com

'The Dots is a community of no-collar professionals, including creators, entrepreneurs, freelancers and teams. Anyone can create a free profile to post their work (as projects) and credit teammates they worked with. With hundreds of thousands of projects on the site, The Dots is a vast source of inspiration for work from across the creative industries. 10,000+ companies and brands also use The Dots to share projects and hire people. When searching for people to work with, companies will either post a job to our jobs board, or use the site to search, discover and message people.'

Event sites:

eventbrite.co.uk

itickets.com

meetup.com

GLOSSARY

Asset An asset is anything of value. This can be adding value to your life, or it can be adding value to the lives of others. Take the time to define this for yourself. An asset might be a book. A book is both a tangible asset (something you can touch) and intangible (something you can't). The tangible value on the book might be £5 as a resale value, or it could be the wealth of knowledge you may learn from reading that book. Or will that book add a wealth of curiosity to you, in the form of a new career?

Budget The estimated amount of money a business calculates it needs to do what it does, and the estimated income that activity will generate.

CV (Also known as Curriculum Vitae or Résumé) A one or two page document that documents your contact details, work or professional history, your education, and your experience and skills. Usually made in reverse chronological order – with your most recent job listed first.

Department A set of people that you're associated with, but don't work directly with (though they still share the company's larger aspirations).

Duties / Responsibilities A specific list of the day-to-day things you'll be required to do as part of the job. It's important that a potential candidate knows how to do them, or at least is capable of doing them.

Feedback This is a kind word for constructive criticism. It is commentary on how a task has been fulfilled with the hopes of improving the delivery for next time.

Follow Up The process in communication when a request has been made, or outreach has been done, and there has been little to no reply. When one person or entity is waiting for a response, and they decide to reach out again to see if the request will be fulfilled.

Job Description (JD) A summary of the job, including: Job Title, Role, Responsibilities and Duties, Required and Preferred Qualifications and Skills, and Location. It may also tell you where the job sits within the team or the company, detail your Salary and Benefits, and expectations of what it will be like to work there.

Line Manager The person directly responsible for supervising how well you're performing your duties and responsibilities. They can help steer your career forward, and assist in any workplace questions or reflections.

LinkedIn A social networking site for professionals to search for jobs, celebrate victories, post questions about their industry, and develop their professional network.

Mind Map A drawing which help you visualise, organise and make memorable the thinking inside your head. You place a central idea on a blank page, and then surround it with associated thoughts (these can be at various different levels). *'A Mind Map is a diagram for representing tasks, words, concepts, or items linked to and arranged around a central concept or subject using a non-linear graphical layout that allows the user to build an intuitive framework around a central concept. A Mind Map can turn a long list of monotonous information into a colorful, memorable and highly organized diagram that works in line with your brain's natural way of doing things.'*

mindmapping.com/mind-map

Negotiation The process when two parties (such as a potential candidate and employer, or an employer and a customer) engage in a discussion of terms: such as salary, benefits, or what one is willing to give and the other is willing to receive, and vice versa.

Notice Period The amount of time someone must remain in their position before leaving a company. It can be as short as two weeks, or up to three months.

Offer (in the context of applying for a job) The term used when an employer or company offers and individual a job, with the attached salary and terms of employment.

First Offer An offer where there is room for negotiation. This means you, as an individual, or with your hiring agent or representative, can then start the negotiation process.

Counter Offer Your response to the First Offer, with some minor changes to their offer: a change in working hours, additional benefits, or a higher salary.

Outreach A process of communication. It might be when companies reach out to customers, or to potential candidates. It can be when candidates seek communication with potential employers. It is the process of taking initiative and beginning a conversation with someone whose audience you seek.

Pain point A very specific problem that a user or customer of a service or product has in their journey of engaging with a service or product. For example: if supermarkets put shopping baskets at the back of the store, so every customer had to trek to the back of the store before they could start shopping, that makes the customer's journey more difficult and would be a pain point.

Person Specification A written description of the ideal candidate for a role. This should include personality traits, demeanour, interests and skills. For example, if the job is in retail or hospitality, the Person Specification might say they're looking for someone who 'works well with customers' or is 'a people person' because the job will be people facing and someone who enjoys being with lots of people might enjoy the job more than someone who prefers to work alone.

Reference An individual who has previously worked with you, or been witness to your skills and expertise. It should be someone who thinks positively of you, and has a good knowledge of how you work.

Role This defines your purpose within the company, and where you fit within the team, department, or business. It might mention any specific projects you're being employed for. It can be a useful reference when it comes to appraisals.

Salary Expectation The amount of money a candidate or employee expects to be paid. This can be weekly, monthly or annually.

Skills Map An exercise developed by Siân Prime and Adrian De La Court, where an individual takes inventory of all of their skills, interests and capabilities to discover what they are great at, what they are good at, and which areas of their life or work need further development.

Team A group of people who work with you within your department, usually sharing many of the same goals and responsibilities.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
To view a copy of this license, visit creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0

Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (ICCE)
Goldsmiths
University of London
New Cross
London SE14 6NW
gold.ac.uk/icce

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



**inspire
lewisham**