



Lines open Mon - Fri 10am - 6pm

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CV's and Interviews

APPLYING FOR A JOB

So you've found a job that interests you. Now you have to show a future employer that you're the best person for the job. How do you do this?

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

- Many employers will ask for, or expect, an up-to-date CV. This is your personal information sheet containing details such as your date of birth, address, etc. and your education and employment history.
- It can also include your voluntary experience, hobbies, and the things you've achieved in your spare time which may show your suitability for a job.
- You can get help with writing a CV from Careers Scotland or ask at your local Jobcentre Plus for more info.
- As well as being a factual document about you, your curriculum vitae should be used to promote you as an employee, so how it looks is important.
- You should have two referees listed on your CV. It is usual for these people to have known you for a reasonable length of time; ideally one of them should have known you as an employee and the other in your capacity as a student, member of a club, or member of the community (no family members or friends). **Remember to ask someone before you put them down as a referee.**

Application forms

- Often employers will ask you to fill out an application form - you can copy the factual details from your CV.
- These forms can take time to complete, but persevere and fill them out as fully as possible. Remember, whoever you send it to will probably see dozens of forms and it's important that yours stands out.
- Try to be enthusiastic and geared towards the position even if you're really fed up filling out applications.
- Bear in mind that this person has probably not heard of you before, so this is your chance to impress.
- Read the whole form through and write your answers on a separate piece of paper or computer, before copying them on to the form.
- Wherever possible, link your qualifications or experience to what the job involves. Many employers know you won't necessarily have the exact skills required, so they look for 'transferable skills' – any experience which is relevant to the job. If there is a job description, use this as a guideline.
- There is usually a section in the application form which asks you to explain why you think you are most suited to the job. Try to give as full an answer as possible and not to leave any sections blank. Remember the more information you provide the better picture you create for the employer.
- Keep a copy of all application forms. You can use the information again, and remind yourself what you said if you are called for an interview.
- Check to see if the application needs a covering letter. You may want to summarise your characteristics and skills in this if there is no room on the form.



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Interviews

If you are lucky enough to get an interview, you're half way there! Find out exactly where to go, how to get there, and as much as you can about the organisation. Try to prepare yourself as much as possible before you go.

- Try to find out what kind of interview to expect. Does the letter about your interview explain how many people will be present? Will you be shown around the premises? Are you expected to do a test?
- Sometimes with your letter it offers a telephone number for an informal discussion about the position. You could try calling this number for more info.
- They may ask you more about what you've done, and to expand on what you've mentioned in your application form. Think about the sort of questions they may ask you (why you are interested in the job, what are your strengths/weaknesses . . .) and think about what your answers will be.
- Stay calm. This is a stressful experience, but the interviewers are aware that you are under pressure and will take some anxiety into consideration. Still, try to stay focused and answer questions fully. Make eye contact with those interviewing you and be positive with your body language.
- Show an interest at all stages of the interview. Keep listening to what is being said and asked. Remember they will probably ask you if you have any questions at the end of the interview, so try to think of something relevant to ask e.g. what training they offer. Don't be afraid to draw up a list of questions. (And don't forget to switch off your phone!)

Take with you:

- the name, address and phone number of the firm and the person you've to see
- money for fares and a phone call/mobile should you get held up
- any information you were sent before the interview
- any certificates, record of achievement, references you may need
- a pen, pencil and rubber in case you have to do any tests.

Accepting a job

When you are offered a job by letter or phone, think it over before you accept. If you're not sure ask for a day or two to do this. And although it's OK to accept by phone, it's better to confirm it in writing.

For more information on looking for, applying for and interviewing for jobs now and in the future please go online to our website www.youngscotextra.org

Alternatively you can call our freephone InfoLine on 0808 801 0338 for all your information needs!

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