

ELC Job Club

Information and resources for ELC Bristol students wanting to work in the UK



Index

Introduction to Job Club	3
The Programme	4
Visa requirements - Can I work in the UK?	4
National Insurance Number	4
Section 1: Looking for Work	5
On the internet	6
Job search websites	6
Recruitment agencies in Bristol	8
Other places to look	8
Volunteering	9
Charity shops	12
Section 2: CVs	13
Useful websites	14
What to think about when writing your CV	14
What to include in each section	16
CV Template	19
Section 3: Cover Letters	21
General points and guidelines	22
The start: grab the reader's attention	24
The middle paragraphs	25
Signing off	26
Cover letter makeovers	27
A cover letter for an advertised vacancy - BEFORE	28
A cover letter for an advertised vacancy - AFTER	29
A cover letter for a speculative enquiry - BEFORE	30
A cover letter for a speculative enquiry - AFTER	31
Section 4: Interviews	32
Interview dos and don'ts	33
What types of interview are there?	35
Most common interview questions	36
Questions I should ask	41
What if I get asked about skills or experience I don't have?	42
How do I negotiate salary?	42
The night before the interview	43
What if I get asked why I've been out of work for a long time?	43
What if I voluntarily left my previous job?	43

Introduction to Job Club

The Programme

Visa Requirements - Can I work in the UK?

National Insurance Number



THE PROGRAMME

The Course is divided into 3 different sessions where you will receive information and advice on the following topics:

- Session 1 – Looking for work & doing volunteer work
- Session 2 – CVs & Cover Letters
- Session 3 – Job interviews

You can also receive 1 to 1 advice on your CV/cover letter in a 15 minute interview. Please arrange this with your Job Club teacher.

neil@elcbristol.co.uk

Please note, Job Club does not arrange jobs for you. It is designed to give you the skills and knowledge to find work in the UK yourself.

VISA REQUIREMENTS – CAN I WORK IN THE UK?

There are strict visa requirements for working in the UK. Only those who meet at least one of the following criteria are eligible.

- You have a [Student Visa](#) (required to study at university)
- They have a [Youth Mobility Scheme Visa](#) which is only available to citizens certain countries including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Iceland, Monaco and San Marino.
- They are an EEC citizen with settled status for the period you are applying (usually because you have a partner with some kind of residence/study visa)



NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER

If you want to work in the UK, you need to have a National Insurance Number.

You can apply for this [online](#).

What documents you'll need

- a passport from any country
- a biometric residence permit (BRP)
- a national identity card from an EU country or from Norway, Liechtenstein or Switzerland

Prove your identity

- a photo of yourself holding your passport
- photos of other identity documents

You can use a smartphone, tablet or a digital camera. You'll be told how to take the photos and what they must look like during the application process.

After you apply

After you apply you'll get an email with your application reference number. The email will tell you if you need to provide further proof of your identity.

It can take up to 4 weeks to get your National Insurance number after you've proved your identity.



Section 1: Looking for Work

On The Internet

Job Search Websites

Recruitment Agencies In Bristol

Other Places To Look

Volunteering

Charity Shops



ON THE INTERNET

Often the first place to look for work is online, and in particular on job search websites. These sites can vary a lot. For example, some are better if you are searching for professional work while others are more suited to casual work vacancies.



Some of the websites listed below not only advertise job vacancies but also allow you to upload CVs and offer career advice, such as how to perfect your CV, write a cover letter and how to approach a job interview.

Prospective employers (for professional work) are also able to find you on these sites. You can add tags to your profile to make it stand out from the crowd and draw attention to your skills.

JOB SEARCH WEBSITES

One of the first places to look for a job in the UK is on the DirectGov website. It is run by the government's Department of Employment and new jobs in all fields are added daily.

You can search for jobs without registering on the site, but if you do register then you have the option to add your profile, upload a CV and apply for jobs directly from the site.

Government Website

Find A Job

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-job>

General Job Websites

Totaljobs

<http://www.totaljobs.com>

Reed.co.uk

<http://www.reed.co.uk>

MONSTER

<http://www.monster.co.uk>

jobsite

<http://www.jobsite.co.uk>

indeed

<http://www.indeed.co.uk>

jobserve
www.jobserve.com

<http://www.jobserve.com/gb/en/Job-Search/>

Gumtree

<https://www.gumtree.com/>

FISH4JOBS

<http://www.fish4.co.uk>

The GuardianJobs

<http://jobs.theguardian.com>

Specialist Job Websites



Health workers
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>



Jobs in education
<https://www.tes.co.uk/jobs>



Jobs in education
<https://www.eteach.com/>



Bilingual jobs
<https://www.toplanguagejobs.com/uk>



IT jobs
<https://www.technojobs.co.uk/>



Engineering jobs
<https://www.justengineers.net/jobs/uk>



Design and creative jobs
<https://www.mustardjobs.co.uk/>



Retail jobs
<https://www.retailchoice.com/>



Jobs at Cabot Circus shopping mall
<https://www.cabotcircus.com/jobs>



Jobs at The Mall at Cribbs Causeway
<https://www.mallcribbs.com/jobs-at-cribbs/>

LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#) is the largest professional network in the world, with over 300 million members now using it.

By becoming a member and setting up a profile, it can be a useful way to build up contacts in your field of work which can sometimes lead to job or business opportunities.

The site allows you to upload academic records and details of your professional experience which can be used by head-hunters and recruiters.



RECRUITMENT AGENCIES IN BRISTOL

There are a lot of recruitment agencies in Bristol and some of them are listed below. Although you can search for jobs on their websites, it is a good idea to visit their office and arrange an appointment with one of their advisors in order to build up a more personal relationship.

Most recruitment agencies will help you find both temporary and permanent work.



Badenoch & Clark

101 Victoria Street
Bristol BS1 6HB
0117 930 8534

Pamela Neave Employment

18 St Augustines Parade
Bristol BS1 4UL
0117 921 1831

Office Angels

Victoria Street 101 1st Floor
Bristol BS1 6BN
0117 922 1941

Flair 4 Recruitment

10 Redland Terrace
Bristol BS6 6TD
0117 970 6505

Pertemps

36 College Green
Bristol BS1 5SA
0117 929 4422

Manpower

41 Park St
Bristol BS1 5NL
0117 925 0837

OTHER PLACES TO LOOK



In local newsagents

Look at the notice boards in local newsagents' windows for other recent job vacancies.

In the newspaper

Get the Bristol Post on a Wednesday to see the latest local job advertisements.



In shop / café / restaurant / pub windows

Walk around places like Clifton Village and see if any vacancies are advertised in the windows.

Also, look out for new bars / restaurants / shops /cafes opening – this can be a very good way to find casual work!

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is a great way to get work experience in an English speaking environment. As well as practicing your English, volunteer work can be very fun and rewarding. Also, it looks great on your CV for both jobs here in the UK and back home.

There are several agencies which can help arrange placements to suit your skills and interests.

(Please note – you will still need an appropriate work visa to do volunteer work)

Voscur

<https://www.voscur.org/>

Bristol's leading volunteer agency – they offer over 600 volunteering opportunities for around 400 voluntary and community organisations across Bristol. Volunteers have the chance to use their talents, develop new skills, and experience the pleasure that comes from making a real difference to other people's lives, as well as their own.



Bristol Museums

<https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/work-for-us/>

There are both short and long term volunteer opportunities with Bristol Museums such as helping visitors in exhibitions and events (great for increasing your customer service experience!) and weekend work on railways and historic boats.



National Council For Voluntary Organisations

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has over 11,000 members and helps a great deal of volunteer projects, from some of the largest charities to the smallest community organisations.



Reach Skilled Volunteers

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

Reach is a volunteer agency which looks for skilled workers, in particular those with three or more years' experience in management, IT, marketing, accountancy, project management, HR, finance, business and other areas. They work with over 10,000 organisations across the UK and have over 6,000 skilled volunteers working every day.



Do It

<https://doit.life/volunteering>

Do-it is the UK's largest volunteering database, it lists over 1 million volunteering opportunities that are posted by volunteer centres, national/local charities and voluntary groups. It enables 250,000 people every month to donate their time and build their skills.

Many positions don't require any particular skills, while others might make use of specific training, for example in accountancy. Most organisations will pay any costs you have, such as transport or meal expenses.



Charity Job

<http://www.charityjob.co.uk/Volunteer-Jobs>

CharityJOB is the UK's busiest site for charity jobs and volunteering opportunities. They regularly have more than 1000 voluntary, internship and trustee positions available across 27 job categories.



Vinspired

<https://vinspired.com>

Vinspired is one of the leading youth volunteering charities in the UK. They have created more than one million volunteering opportunities throughout the UK and so far, over 150,000 young people have used vinspired.com to volunteer with more than 3,600 charities.

They have a wide range of volunteer opportunities, from volunteering in events such as music festivals to coaching local football teams.



WWOOF

<https://wwooof.org.uk/en/>

WWOOF is a worldwide effort to link visitors with organic farmers, promote an educational exchange, and build a global community conscious of ecological farming practices.

Visitors, or 'WWOOFers', share in daily life with their host and learn about organic agriculture, while spending about half of each day helping out on a farm.



CHARITY SHOPS

There are many charity shops close to ELC which are often looking for volunteers and sometimes they accept people with little or no previous experience. They also offer quite flexible schedules which means they are well suited to ELC students who are still studying with us.



Brandon Trust Charity Shop

2 Cotham Hill, Redland, BS6 6LF
0117 974 1656

British Heart Foundation Books & Music

148 Whiteladies Rd, Clifton, BS8 2RS
0117 973 9274

Cancer Research

71 Queens Rd, Clifton BS8 1QP
0117 922 6793

Cats Protection

60 Westbury Hill, Westbury on Trym, BS9 3UJ
0117 962 5566

Mind

40 Cotham Hill, Redland, BS6 6LA
0117 946 7443

Oxfam Bookshop

56 Cotham Hill, Redland, BS6 6JX
0117 973 7958

Oxfam Books & Music

26 Princess Victoria Street, Clifton, BS8 4BU
0117 9467926

Oxfam Books & Music

1 Canford Lane, Westbury on Trym, BS9 3DB
0117 950 2146

Oxfam Bookshop

1 Queens Rd, BS8 1QE
0117 929 4890

Oxfam Shop

62 Cotham Hill, Redland, BS6 6JR
0117 973 5200

Oxfam Shop

11 Regent St, Clifton, BS8 4HW
0117 973 9684

Oxfam Shop

66 Westbury Hill, Westbury on Trym, BS9 3AA
0117 962 2159

PDSA

5a Clifton Down Shopping Centre, BS8 2NN
0117 923 8600

Save The Children

24 Regent St, Clifton BS8 4HG
0117 973 4057

Shelter

12 Regent St, Clifton, BS8 4HG
0117 923 8121

St Peter's Hospice Shop

112-114, Whiteladies Rd, Clifton, BS8 2RP
0117 973 0171

St Peter's Hospice Shop

3 Boyce's Ave, BS8 4AA
0117 923 8039

St Peter's Hospice Shop

107 Henleaze Rd, Henleaze, BS9 4JP
0117 962 5156

St Peter's Hospice Shop

147 St Michael's Hill, BS2 8DB
0117 923 8315

St Peter's Hospice Shop

37 North View, Westbury Park, BS6 7PY
0117 973 9972

Section 2: CVs

Useful websites

What to think about when writing your CV

What to include in each section

Graduate CV template

Career CV template



USEFUL WEBSITES

There is a lot of advice on the internet for help in writing UK based CVs. The following websites offer good examples of different CV templates to use:

The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/careers/cv-templates>

Total Jobs

<https://www.totaljobs.com/advice/cv-templates>

Reed

<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/free-cv-template>

Monster

<https://www.monster.co.uk/career-advice/cvs>

Day Job

<https://www.dayjob.com/>



WHAT TO THINK ABOUT WHEN WRITING YOUR CV

Appearance

You should use Arial or similar business font and the size should be 10.5 or 11 and, if possible, your CV should be printed on a laser printer using good quality paper. In general, it is better to use a standard CV format that is recognisable to UK recruiters.



Make it concise

Keep your CV to 2 pages maximum and use bullet points to describe your skills, responsibilities, achievements etc. Start each point with a verb in the gerund form (such as teaching, leading, working, developing, helping etc.) this creates more impact.




Check for typos

Poor spelling is a sign that the candidate pays little attention to detail and will put off most recruiters, even if your CV is otherwise strong. Spell check your CV each time it is amended and also ask a friend to proof-read the final version. Computer spell-checkers will not catch every typo. For example, if you meant to write *programme* but instead typed *program*, the computer would not catch this mistake because both words are nouns, with different meanings, in British English. Also, if you are applying for a job in the UK, avoid *Americanisms*. This includes spelling; *colour* (UK) / *color* (US).








WHAT TO INCLUDE IN EACH SECTION

Your personal details

-  You should include your name, address and contact details.
-  It is up to you whether you include your age, marital status and nationality. Recruiters should be able to make a decision about your skills and abilities without this information.
-  If you are adding your email address to your contact details make sure that it sounds professional and creates the right impression. You may also want to add a link to a professional social media website like LinkedIn. If you do, check that the website shows you in a positive light and doesn't contain anything you wouldn't want an employer to see.



Your personal profile

-  Your personal profile is a mini-advert for you and should summarise your:
 - skills and qualities
 - work background and achievements
 - career aims.
-  It should only be a few lines and must grab the reader's attention. Try to avoid over-used terms, such as 'reliable', 'hard working', 'team player', 'good communication skills' etc. These general terms are heard very often and they don't help an employer to build up a picture of you.
-  For example, if the job involves working with people, try to highlight relevant, specific people skills such as: negotiating, effectively dealing with demanding customers, presentation skills, handling conflict, or showing empathy. These help the reader build up more of a picture of your skills, knowledge and experience.
-  Be brief - you can go into more detail and highlight examples of your skills in later sections.
-  When you're summarising your career aims, think about the employer you are sending the CV to. It will hit home with employers if your career aims sound exactly like the kind of opportunities they currently have.

Key Skills

- This used to showcase your skills in a separate section to the rest of your CV.
- Although you may want to list all of your skills, this is never a good idea. Remember an employer takes an average of 20-30 seconds to read through an entire CV, so you don't want to bulk it up with irrelevant information. Instead, carefully read through the personal specification and see if you have any of the skills the employer is looking for; these should form the basis of your key skills.



Employment history and work experience

- If you have been working for a while, you could put your employment history first.
- If you don't have much work experience, you might like to highlight your education and training.
- In this section you should start with your present or most recent job and work backwards. You should include employer, the dates you worked for them, job title and your main duties. Provide more detail on the relevant jobs you have had and give examples of the skills you used and what you achieved.
- Use bullet pointed lists and positive language. Try thinking of 'action' words that you can use to describe what you did in your job, like achieved, designed, established, supervised, co-ordinated, created or transformed.
- Try to relate your skills and experience to the job description, person specification or what you think the employer is looking for, if you're sending your CV on spec. Also include any relevant temporary work and volunteering experience.
- Avoid unexplained gaps in your employment history. If you had time out travelling, job seeking, volunteering or caring for a relative, include this along with details of what you have learned and skills you have gained.



Education and training

- Start with your most recent qualifications and work back to the ones you got at school.
- Using bullet points or a table include:
 - the university, college or school you went to
 - the dates the qualifications were awarded and any grades
 - any work-related courses, if they're relevant.



Interests and achievements

- You can include hobbies, interests and achievements that are relevant to the job.
- For example, if you're involved in any clubs or societies this can show that you enjoy meeting new people. Interests like sports and physical recreation activities can also show employers that you are fit and healthy.
- Try to avoid only putting activities that you would do alone like reading, bird-watching or playing video games, unless they relate directly to the job that you are applying for. They may leave employers wondering how sociable you are. Make your activities specific and interesting!



Additional information

- You can include this section if you need to add anything else that's relevant.
- Such as explaining that a gap in your employment history was due to travel or family reasons. You could also include other relevant skills here, such as if you have a driving licence or can speak any foreign languages.

References

- References available on request
- Privacy and identity theft have become an issue in recent years and it is best to protect the details of your referees, do not include their contact information on your CV. Employers don't need this information within the early stages of the recruitment process.

CV TEMPLATE

Your Name

Your Address

01234 000000 • 0113 000 0000
name@mail.com • linkedin address

The profile includes some keywords and gives an example of a recent achievement.

Personal statement

A conscientious and professional personal assistant with extensive experience in administration, PA and secretarial roles, currently seeking a new position as an Executive PA. A highly organised and efficient individual, whose thorough and precise approach to projects has yielded excellent results. Recent achievements with my current employer include the implementation of an innovative new filing and indexing system.

Key Skills

- 80 words per minute typing
- Proficiency in all areas of Microsoft Office, including Access, Excel, Word and PowerPoint
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Accredited member of APA (Association of Personal Assistants)
- Fully qualified first-aider

Use bullet points to highlight your key skills rather than simply including them in your employment history.

Employment History

PA to Personnel Manager, Company Name, Location

(April 2011 – Present)

Achievements and responsibilities:

- Implemented a change of stationery supplier, reducing costs by 20%
- Reorganised the meeting booking process, implementing an online system which all staff can access, leading to reduced diary conflicts within the team
- Devised and implemented a new filing and indexing system for files, resulting in greater ease of access and a more time-efficient process
- Helped provide a safer workplace by cataloguing and dispatching health and safety information and posters for the whole company
- Diary management, typing correspondence and documents, creating presentations and creating meeting minutes

Use the STAR method in bullet form to highlight your achievements in a previous job.

Front of House Receptionist, Company Name, Location

(June 2010 – April 2011)

Achievements and responsibilities:

- Presenting a professional and friendly first impression of the firm to all visitors and clients
- Managing incoming phone calls and mail
- Organising stationery orders and liaising with suppliers to meet business requests
- Replenishing and restocking the bar, always ensuring high level of stock management efficiency

Secretary, Company Name, Location

(October 2007 – May 2010)

Achievements and responsibilities:

- Maintaining and organising the company filing system
- Answering incoming calls
- Typing all necessary documents and correspondence as required
- Printing any supplementary notes as required
- Running professional errands
- Also assumed the role of fire/health and safety officer for the entire office staff

Education & Training

University Name

(September 2004 – June 2007)

2:1 BSc. (Honours) Business Economics

Professional Memberships / Affiliations

Executive Assistant Network (EAN)

Make yourself sound interesting. Don't include too many activities (like reading) which make it seem like you prefer being alone! Activities which illustrate your ability to work with others can be useful.

Hobbies & Interests

I am involved in a local amateur dramatics society, where I volunteer as a lighting and sound technician. I have been involved with this society for three years and very much enjoy being part of the team. More recently, I assumed the role of Stage Manager for a two week production and relished the chance to take control of performances and react to a high-pressure environment.

References

References are available upon request.

Section 3: Cover Letters

General points and guidelines

The start: grab the reader's attention

The middle paragraphs

Signing Off

Cover letter makeovers



GENERAL POINTS AND GUIDELINES

Your cover letter is a document that is individual to you and the job you're applying for, but there are some general rules to stick to. Here are some points about cover letters to get you thinking along the right lines.

Use a computer

Most employers will prefer cover letters to be written on a computer and, if possible, printed on a laser printer rather than inkjet printer. It makes it easier for them to read and easier for you to make any changes or corrections before you print it out. As with your CV, font and size is important. Use a business font like Ariel and a font-size of 10.5 or 11.



You might occasionally be asked to handwrite your cover letter. This is normally so employers can see what your handwriting is like. Make sure you follow any instructions you are given. Take your time, make sure you have not made any mistakes and that your handwriting is clear. You could do a draft first, ask somebody else to check it for you and then re-read it and check it yourself.



Push your strengths

Your cover letter should draw attention to your most relevant skills and achievements. You can provide more information on the skills and experience that are relevant to the job. You could explain how a particular experience helped you develop the skills included in your CV. For example, 'doing the weekly stock take helped me to sharpen my maths skills and spot sales trends'.

Make it personal

Don't send out identical cover letters without any details about the employer. Show the employer that you have done your research on the company and you know what they do. Make it clear you have thought about which skills they want and how you can provide them. The more specific you can be, the more attention your letter will attract. It is better to spend your time writing ten personalised cover letters than sending out 50 identical ones.



Explain CV gaps

You can use a cover letter to explain gaps in your CV, such as unemployment, gap years or time spent travelling. If you take this opportunity to explain any gaps in a positive way it will mean that an employer has a full picture of your history. There will be no unexplained gaps that could cause concern. Whatever the reason for gaps in your CV, explain what you have learned. If you have been unemployed you could mention how organised you were in your approach to job hunting, training courses you have been on, or any volunteering you have done.

Use the right language and tone

When applying for most jobs, use clear, business-like language. If you're applying for a creative role, such as an advertising copywriter, you could show your originality and word skills in the language and tone you use. However, use your judgment carefully, based on what you can find out about the company and their approach to recruiting.

Check it and then check it again!

Always check your cover letter for spelling and grammatical errors. Don't rely on word processing spell checkers, as they don't pick up everything. (If we had written 'pack', 'peck', 'pock' or 'puck', a spell checker would not have picked these up as these are valid words. It would not have known that the word we wanted to use was 'pick'!)

It helps if you leave some time after completing the letter before checking it. This way you'll look at it with fresh eyes. When you have been working on one piece of work for a while, it can be difficult to spot any mistakes or errors.

It is a good idea to ask someone else to check it over for you, to get a different perspective. Just like the employer, they will be reading it for the first time. They might also be able to make helpful suggestions and check that it flows well.



Keep it brief

Keep your cover letter short and to the point. A maximum of five short paragraphs on a single page should be enough to get your message across. It will also be short enough for employers to read quickly.

Keep the format consistent

If you use the same font and text size on your cover letter and CV it will look neat and professional.

THE START: GRAB THE READER'S ATTENTION

You want the employer to read your letter, so remember, this is all about selling yourself. It is essential you make a good impression at the start of your letter.



Address your letter to a specific person

If you're applying on the off-chance they have a vacancy, first ring the company or organisation to find out the name of the recruiter or the head of the department you want to work for. Don't just address it to Human Resources Department – your application may never get through to the person who's in charge of hiring.

If you're replying to an advertisement, address it to the person named in the advert. In both cases, make sure you spell their name correctly and address them with their preferred title, whether it is Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, etc.

Explain why you're writing

Employers may have to read hundreds of CVs and cover letters so avoid starting yours with 'I am writing'. It is stating the obvious, can become repetitive and may not help your letter to stand out from the crowd.

Be clear about what you're applying for, if you're responding to an advertisement. Include the full title of the job, the reference number (if included in the advertisement), and where you saw it advertised.

If you're applying 'on spec', be clear about what type of job you're looking for.

Be enthusiastic, show motivation

The start of the cover letter is a good place to show how keen you are to get this job and work for this employer. Many employers will be skim-reading cover letters, so the opening paragraph is your opportunity to impress them with how much you know about their work.

Explain why you believe you are the right person for the company, and what makes you highly motivated to work for this particular employer. Show that you're familiar with their products and services, and recent news about them. You could also explain that you're enthusiastic about working for them because you share their work values, culture and style.



THE MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS

You have started well - now convince the reader that you know what the job involves, what they want from applicants and that you are the right person. The middle section is where you get into more detail and sell your most relevant skills.

Sell your skills and achievements

Do your homework - research the company and the job to find out which are the main skills the employer needs. Think like an employer - which combination of personal qualities, experience, qualifications, and skills would impress? Provide the evidence that you have got them.

The cover letter is your opportunity to provide more detail about these key points, more so than in your CV. You might like to include real examples of when you have used these skills. Highlight any major achievements, such as completing training courses, promotions, company awards, or any other praise or recognition.



Describe what you can do for them

Present your skills in a way that shows how giving you the job will benefit their company. You can do this by cutting down on the number of times you use the word 'I' and increasing the number of times you use 'you' and 'your company'.



Speak their language

Use their kind of language. It may seem like a small point, but some organisations prefer formal business language, and others prefer plainer speaking. Have a look at the employer's website, job advertisements and any other communication to try to find out what their preferred language style is.

Put yourself in the employer's shoes

It can help if you try to look at your cover letter from the reader's point of view. Imagine you're the employer and ask yourself, 'what do I want from applicants?', 'what would make a candidate stand out?', 'what would be my ideal candidate?', 'why would I hire the person who sent this cover letter?'

Identify your unique selling points

Think about whom you'll be competing with and what sets you apart from them. For example, you might have a very specific combination of experience across different work areas. Or you might have been responsible for winning or completing a big order. Details like this can impress employers and help them build up a picture of who you are.

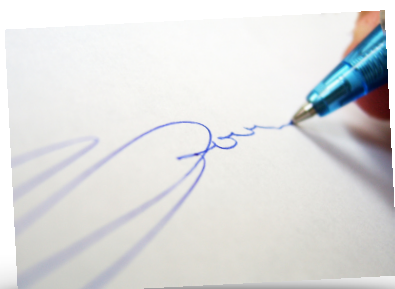
Be positive about who you are and what you have to offer. For example, if you're older you could push your experience, and your ability to learn quickly and hit the ground running. If you're recently out of college you could say that your strengths are having new ideas, enthusiasm and willingness to learn.



Promote your transferable skills

Transferable skills are general skills you can use in many different types of jobs. Selling these skills might be useful to you if you're looking to change career. Think about a job you have done before and the job you want to get into, and try to identify the skills you need for both. Examples of these skills are working to deadlines, managing budgets and working well with a wide range of people.

SIGNING OFF



The last paragraph of your cover letter needs to pull it all together. It needs to leave employers with a positive impression of you and make it clear what you'd like to happen next.

Suggest where to get more information

Invite the reader to get more details about you from the enclosed CV.

Suggest a response

If you're replying to an advertised vacancy, say you're looking forward to hearing from them. Explain how you'd like to be contacted, whether it is by phone, email or post. But make sure your contact details are on your cover letter and CV.

If you're applying on the off-chance of a job, you could say you'll wait for their call or that you will call them in a week or two. You could even ask for an interview or an informal chat, as long as you're polite and not too pushy.

COVER LETTER MAKEOVERS

Your cover letter can make all the difference to your application. A persuasive and enthusiastic cover letter, which really sells your skills and abilities, is as important as the CV itself.

Here are some examples showing mistakes that people often make when writing cover letters.

Look at situation 1 first and read David's cover letter. What is wrong with it?



Situation 1

David's cover letter for an advertised vacancy

David's story:

David is currently working as an assistant hospitality manager. He has worked in hospitality for seven years, four of which were in management roles.

Career goal:

David's looking to take the next step up the ladder so he is applying for the post of hospitality manager.

The situation:

David's responded to many jobs with his CV and cover letter, but he is not having much success. He is convinced he has the right experience, and his CV is good. He is wondering if it's his cover letter that's letting him down.

Now do the same for situation 2. How could you improve Nicola's cover letter?



Situation 2

Nicola's cover letter for a speculative enquiry

Nicola's story:

After time spent travelling the world, Nicola is keen to return to work.

Career goal:

Nicola is interested in working as a teaching assistant.

The situation:

Nicola wants a career change and wants to find out the best way to highlight the transferable skills she can use in her new career.

A COVER LETTER FOR AN ADVERTISED VACANCY – BEFORE

David Gray
34 Hammond Road
Manchester
M34 2AA

Telephone: 0161 237 4658
Email address: dgray@mail.com

David has not included enough details of the recruiter. As well as their name and company name, he should also include their job title and full address.

23rd October 2012

Mrs Lucy Watts
The Grange Hotel

This isn't specific enough. A large company may be recruiting for a number of different jobs and David needs to say which one he is applying for.

Dear Lucy

Using just the first name is too informal and familiar.

Re: Hospitality Job

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV in response to your advert. I am currently working as Assistant Hospitality Manager at The Reynolds Hotel and Conference Centre in Manchester. My job there involves:

- Managing staff
- Dealing with customer complaints and comments
- Making sure the hotel follows regulations such as licensing laws
- Securing corporate bookings for entertainment and conference facilities
- Coming with up creative ideas and themes
- Preparing proposals and quotations for the work
- Mediating in any differences of opinion about details
- Keeping detailed records to make sure that costs stay within budget
- Dealing with paperwork, phone calls, emails and letters
- Being there on the day of the event to make sure everything goes to plan.

His experience and skills are presented in bullet points. This is appropriate for CVs but not for cover letters.

David includes a lot of detail about his current job rather than describing what he could offer the new employer.

My skills are:

- Organisational skills
- Good communication skills
- Creative skills
- Attention to detail
- Ability to work under pressure
- Sales skills
- Admin and IT skills
- Team work skills
- Business skills

There's more than one font style used here. If David had kept one font style throughout it would have looked a lot neater.

There are spelling mistakes, which don't create a good impression. David could have used a spell checker and asked somebody else to proofread.

The skills and qualifications section seems to repeat the information you would get in David's CV. It doesn't add anything to strengthen his application. He needs to expand on his CV and explain why he is the person for this job.

My qualifications are:

- Foundation Degree in Hospitality Management
- 5 GCSEs – ENGLISH (C) Maths (C) Science (D) French (B)

I really believe I can do this job and hope my CV and covering letter shows this.

Thanks

David Gary

A COVER LETTER FOR AN ADVERTISED VACANCY – AFTER

David Gray
34 Hammond Road
Manchester
M34 2AA
0161 237 4658
dgray@mail.com

David has now included the full name, job title and address of the person he is writing to.

23rd October 2012

Mrs Lucy Watts
Personnel Officer
The Grange Hotel
Manchester
M17 1BB

By using the recruiter's full name and preferred title (Mrs) David's created a polite and businesslike tone.

All the job details are correct: the job title, where David saw the job advertised and the reference number in the advert. The employer knows exactly which job David is applying for.

David summarises his recent experience. This is a management vacancy, so it's a good idea for him to push his management experience.

Dear Mrs Watts

Re: Hospitality Manager Vacancy, ref 234hosp

The advert asked for someone with a range of hospitality experience. Listing these skills shows how they fit the employer's requirements.

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV in response to the advert for the vacancy advertised in the Manchester Evening News on 21st October 2012.

As you will notice from my CV, I am currently working as Assistant Hospitality Manager at The Reynolds Hotel and Conference Centre in Manchester. I have seven years' experience within the hospitality industry at various levels, including four years in management roles.

This allowed me to develop my skills in a range of areas including food and beverage operations; accommodation management; marketing; conference and event management; financial management; food safety and human resources. This experience, combined with my Foundation Degree in Hospitality Management, has provided me with broad-ranging skills.

As the Grange Hotel is a new venture, I feel that my experience of the whole hospitality operation would be a valuable asset in this role. Building up the client base of Lloyds Hotel in Chester taught me about the particular importance of effective marketing in making a success of a new business. I hope this experience can help The Grange to become one of Manchester's leading hotels.

I am now looking to use these skills and progress to a more senior role. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my experience with you in more detail and look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

David Gray

David signs off in the correct way. His letter is to a named person (Lucy Watts) so he uses 'Yours sincerely' instead of 'Yours faithfully'.

This paragraph summarises what David's looking for (promotion and a challenge) and states what he would like to happen next.

This shows David has read up on the company. He's thought about what the employer is likely to want. He's related his experience to the job, and given specific examples of how he can contribute.

The covering letter is neatly presented in paragraphs and it's all in the same font and text size.

A COVER LETTER FOR A SPECULATIVE ENQUIRY – BEFORE

Nicola Simpson
61 Key Drive
Newcastle
NE23 4FG
0191 345 6789
nicola.always.drunk@ms.com

Nicola hasn't included any contact details so it may not end up on the desk of the person who is responsible for recruitment. This is even more important if she's applying to a large organisation.

Make sure your email address sounds professional, Nicola's might result in her cover letter going in the bin!

23rd October 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

Nicola's just said that she's applying for vacancies. It isn't specific enough. She needs to mention job roles or types of work so the reader is clear about her aims.

Nicola is including too much irrelevant information here. Make sure your cover letter includes only details, experiences and skills relevant to the job.

Please find enclosed my CV. I am applying for any vacancies you may have within your school.

I've recently returned to the UK having spent the previous two years travelling around the world. I was fortunate to be able to experience different cultures in the Far East; in Japan, Korea and Taiwan, as well as in the Pacific, most notably in Australia.

I am currently staying with some friends in Bristol but I am looking to move here permanently when I find the right flat, at the right price!

Keep the cover letter formal!

As you can see from looking at my CV, I have the skills and experience relevant for the job.

I would be grateful if you would consider my application either now or in the future.

Yours faithfully

Nicola Simpson

Nicola's covering letter is just saying 'here is my CV' when it should add to the information in her CV. Nicola's CV will show what her skills and experience are; her covering letter should explain how these skills can help this employer. It should show how keen she is to work for them. Together, her CV and covering letter should convince the reader she is the ideal person for the job.

This letter looks like a standard letter that is being sent to lots of employers with no tailoring for each application. This won't impress a potential employer – they want to see that Nicola's done some research on what they do and which skills they're looking for. Employers receive lots of applications and Nicola's needs to stand out to get an interview.

A COVER LETTER FOR A SPECULATIVE ENQUIRY – AFTER

Nicola Simpson
61 Key Drive
Newcastle
NE23 4FG
0191 345 6789
nicolasimpson24@ms.com

23rd October 2012

Addressing the letter to a named person shows the employer that Nicola hasn't sent the same letter elsewhere.

Mrs Jennie Jones
Headteacher
Slate Lane School
34 Slate Lane
North Shields
Newcastle
NE54 6HT

Nicola's contacted the employer and found the name of the person responsible for hiring staff. This will ensure it arrives on the right person's desk.

Nicola's specific about the type of work she's looking for.

This paragraph shows Nicola has researched the school she's applying to and thought about why she'd like to work for them.

Dear Mrs Jones

Do you currently have any teaching assistant opportunities within your school, particularly supporting children with complex learning and behaviour needs?

Slate Lane School has an excellent reputation with local parents for supporting children with learning difficulties. Your recent Ofsted Report suggests your designated unit for pupils with severe autistic spectrum disorders has strong pool of teaching assistants who provide support. I believe I can make a valuable contribution to this team and continue to develop my own skills and knowledge.

I have recently returned to the UK having spent the past two years traveling the world. While in Australia, I undertook voluntary work at the Surestart Centre in Brisbane, working with children up to the age of five. The most rewarding aspect of this role was working on a one-to-one basis with children with challenging behaviour. I recently completed an introduction to teaching assistant course, which has provided me with a good understanding of the role and responsibilities of a teaching assistant.

I have enclosed my CV and would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss my skills and experiences with you and to learn more about your school. I will call next week to see if we can arrange a convenient meeting.

Yours sincerely

The final paragraph tells the recruiter what's going to happen next. It's assertive and confident without being pushy.

Nicola highlights her relevant skills, qualifications, experience, achievements and personal qualities.

Nicola Simpson

Section 4: Interviews

Interview dos and don'ts	33
What types of interview are there?	35
Most common interview questions	36
Questions I should ask	41
What if I get asked about skills or experience I don't have?	42
How do I negotiate salary?	42
The night before the interview	43
What if I get asked why I've been out of work for a long time?	43
What if I voluntarily left my previous job?	43



INTERVIEW DOS AND DON'TS



What to do:

- dress smartly
- enter the room confidently
- shake hands firmly and introduce yourself
- look bright and attentive, smile and speak clearly and confidently. Don't forget that in the first few minutes only 7% of the interviewer's opinion of you is formed by what you say - the rest is judged on how you look, act and sound
- find out where the venue is beforehand, how to get there and how long it takes
- find out what kind of interview it will be so you can prepare
- examine the person specification and your CV/application form, and think about what type of questions they will ask you
- prepare answers for the main questions - for example, why do you want the job, what are your strengths and weaknesses, what are the main tasks in this job?
- make about three or four points in each answer
- quote real examples of when you've used certain skills - just saying you've got a skill isn't enough
- take your time when answering the questions: make sure you understand the question and take your time if you need to think
- sell yourself: no one else is going to! Be positive about yourself and your experiences
- prepare some questions to ask at the end of the interview - use it as an opportunity to find out more about the role and the company. (Don't ask about money or perks just yet!)
- when discussing salary, know your market worth and start by quoting a little higher than this
- get feedback on your performance, whether you were successful or not
- turn off your mobile phone: treat the interviewers with respect and give them your undivided attention
- keep your answers focused on what you can do for the employer, not what they can do for you

What not to do:

- ☑ don't be late
- ☑ don't swear or use slang words
- ☑ don't slouch in your seat or do anything that makes you look uninterested
- ☑ don't lie: the interviewer may see through you. Even if you get the job, your employer can dismiss you if they find out that you have not been honest
- ☑ don't let your nerves show too much; a few nerves are normal but extreme nerves will affect your performance. Use breathing techniques and try to remember that it's not a life and death situation - there are plenty of jobs out there!
- ☑ don't be arrogant and assume you've got the job. Nothing turns off employers more than someone who is disrespectful and over-confident
- ☑ don't discuss controversial topics such as religion, politics and gender relations
- ☑ don't read from notes or your CV — you should be familiar enough with your own history to be able to talk about it unprompted
- ☑ don't criticise former employers or colleagues. Interviewers may mark you down as a troublemaker and a gossip
- ☑ don't argue with the interviewer, no matter what. Remember to keep things positive!



Exceptions to the rule

These rules apply for most jobs. However, employers in some industries can use more relaxed and informal interviewing techniques. In some creative fields (design and media for example) it may be expected that you turn up for the interview in casual clothes, as that is the dress code in the office.

However, smart casual is better than very casual. If you're in any doubt, do some research on typical interview techniques in your line of work.

Above all, preparation is the key to performing well in interviews. Research the role and organisation, and prepare evidence and examples of your skills and competencies.

WHAT TYPES OF INTERVIEW ARE THERE?

If you've not had an interview for a while, it's worth knowing that organisations use different types of interview for different types of job.

Some of the most common are:

Competency-based

These focus on the skills and attributes needed. You'll have to relate your skills and experience to the job in question.

Technical

These are for technical positions such as IT or engineering jobs. You will probably be asked to display your technical knowledge of a certain process or skill. They may ask you to do this by talking about your previous experience or by asking you hypothetical questions, such as "what would you do if you were working on this project?"

Face-to-face

The interviewer meets with the candidate in person.

Telephone

Some organisations use these as the first stage of screening. You may be warned in advance or contacted out of the blue. First impressions count, so you should prepare for a telephone interview just as much as you would for a face-to-face interview. Unless it takes place on a videophone, you won't need to worry about what you are wearing at the time.

Panel

This is when more than one person interviews you. Usually, one person chairs the interview and panel members take it in turns to ask you different questions. You should direct your answer mainly towards the panel member that asked the question.



MOST COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions about your skills



Typical questions an interviewer might ask:

- ☀ What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ☀ What can you do for us that other candidates can't?
- ☀ What would your colleagues and friends consider as your best qualities?
- ☀ Why should we hire you?

What the interviewer really wants to know: can you do the job?

Know your strengths, and mention ones that are relevant to the job you're being interviewed for. It's important to quote examples of when you used the skills; it's not enough to just say you have the skills. Typical strengths employers look for are:

- ☀ Communication - the ability to get on with a wide range of people
- ☀ Team working - the ability to be an effective team leader or team member
- ☀ IT skills - most jobs these days need some IT skills
- ☀ Good attitude - hard worker, honest, polite, co-operative
- ☀ Problem solving - using your initiative to identify solutions
- ☀ Enthusiasm - employers like someone positive
- ☀ Quick learner - so you can take on new tasks
- ☀ Determination - shows you are focused on achieving goals
- ☀ Flexibility - doing a variety of tasks to achieve a common goal.

If you're asked about weaknesses, don't list many - only mention one! Choose a minor flaw that isn't essential to the job. Turn it into a positive, such as how you've worked on the weakness. Or you could present it as an opportunity for development.

Good answers:

Strengths: *'I'm a good organiser, and I plan everything in detail. I showed this when I was given a new project, and I had to get it up and running from scratch.'*

Weaknesses: *'Sometimes I'm too enthusiastic when working on a new project. But I've learned to adjust to everyone else's pace, and not go charging ahead.'*

Questions about the employer



Typical questions:

- ☀ Why do you want to work here?
- ☀ What do you know about our company?
- ☀ What can you do for us that someone else can't?

What the interviewer really wants to know: Do you know what we do? Why have you chosen to apply to this company?

The interviewer wants to know you've done your homework and that you know about the organisation and its aims. They want to know you've thought it through and you've chosen to apply to them for a good reason. Show your knowledge of the company by having some facts and figures at the ready, such as:

- ☀ the size of the organisation
- ☀ what the product or service is
- ☀ last year's turnover figures
- ☀ latest developments in the field
- ☀ the history, goals, image and philosophy of the employer.

When talking about why you want to work for the employer, focus on what you can do for them, not on what they can do for you.

Good answer:

'Smith's is a respected firm with a reputation for high quality work, and I'd like to be part of that success. The quality of my work is important to me, so I feel I'd be at the right place. I've also heard you invest in your staff by training and developing them.'

Questions about the job

Typical questions:

- ☀ What will the main tasks and responsibilities be in this job?
- ☀ What do you think the main challenges will be?
- ☀ What would you do in the first day/week/month/year?

What the interviewer really wants to know: Do you know what the job's all about?

The interviewer wants to know if you fully understand what the job will involve. They want to know why you think you'd be good at it, and how you'd approach it if they offer you the job. To answer this question well, make sure you read the job description thoroughly and research how the organisation operates.

Good answer:

'The main task is to supervise a team of sales staff to ensure they exceed sales targets. It's my responsibility to motivate them and pass on my sales experience to enable them to achieve more.'

Questions about your ambitions

Typical questions:

- ☀ What are your goals?
- ☀ Where do you see yourself in five years time?



What the interviewer really wants to know: How ambitious are you?

This is your chance to show how enthusiastic you are to get on. (You should avoid sounding too aggressive and over-ambitious: 'I want to become managing director in three years'.) Avoid sounding unenthusiastic and passive: 'I'm not sure - I'll see how it goes'.

To avoid this, you could talk in terms of short-term and long-term goals. Remember you are at the interview for that particular job - so your short-term goal should be to get that job for the time being. Then you can start talking about moving on higher.

Good answer:

'My immediate aim is to get a trainee chef position, then to work through NVQs level 2 and 3 to become a qualified chef.'

Questions about your work history

Typical questions:

- ☀ Why did you leave your last job?
- ☀ Tell me about a typical day in your current/previous job
- ☀ What experience have you got from previous jobs?

What the interviewer really wants to know: What have you done in your previous jobs?

When talking about previous jobs, focus on the positives. Even if you think your previous or current job wasn't very demanding, if you jot down the tasks and responsibilities it will sound more impressive than you think. You will have learned something, so mention it. Focus on the skills and experience that are relevant to the job you're being interviewed for.

Don't bring up negative things like having a dispute with a colleague or your boss. And don't criticise previous employers.

Good answer:

'In my current job I have developed my knowledge of computer software packages. But now I'm ready for a new challenge, and want to use these skills in a more customer-focused role.'

Questions about your motivation

Typical questions:

- ☼ What motivates you?
- ☼ Which tasks do you get the most satisfaction from?



What the interviewer really wants to know: What makes you tick?

By finding out what motivates you, the interviewer can find out which environment you'll perform well in. Try to think of examples of when a work task excited you.

Good answer:

'I like problem solving - that point you reach in a project where you come up against something unexpected, and you have to think creatively to come up with a solution.'

Questions about the product or service

Typical questions:

- ☼ What do you know about our products/services?
- ☼ What do you think of our products/services?
- ☼ Can you think of any improvements to our products/services?

What the interviewer really wants to know: Are you keen enough to have looked at our products and services?

The employer wants to know that you're familiar with their products or services. They may also want you to have the initiative to look for ways of improving things. Be tactful: only mention small improvements. Make these the kind of suggestions people in the street might come up with and not because you are an "expert" and know best.

Good answer:

'Your products are recognised as the industry standard, leading the way in style and performance. However, maybe by altering your advertising style you could appeal to older consumers as well as young ones. I think older people would value your product just as much, and this could lead to increased sales.'

Questions about team working



Typical questions:

- ☀ What makes a good team?
- ☀ What makes a good team member?
- ☀ What makes a good team leader?

What the interviewer really wants to know: Can you operate effectively in a team?

Employers value team-working very highly. They want to know you can work effectively in a team, whatever your role within it is.

Good answer:

'A good team needs to have clear objectives and goals, and procedures to work towards these. Each person needs to be clear what their role is, and what is expected of them. There needs to be openness and trust, and clear communication.'

Questions about your personality and interests

Typical questions:

- ☀ What was the last film you saw or the last book you read?
- ☀ How would you describe yourself?
- ☀ How would your friends describe you?

What the interviewer really wants to know: Are you a well-rounded individual?

By asking personality questions, the employer wants to know how well you know yourself - how self-aware you are. Having self-awareness means you can look at yourself critically, and know what you're good at and where you could improve.

When it comes to your interests, the employer wants to know you're an active citizen, who tries to get the most out of life. When choosing examples of interests to mention, try to choose a wide range to show you're well balanced. However, when quoting films or books, choose classic or mainstream ones rather than obscure or extreme ones.

Some employers will expect you to know about current affairs and popular culture - jobs in the media, for example.

Good answer:

'In my personal life I'm always organising everybody. People look to me for ideas and plans - I guess in some ways that shows I'm a natural leader.'

Questions to make you think on the spot

Typical questions:

- ☀ If you were a biscuit, what type of biscuit would you be?
- ☀ If you were an animal, what type of animal would you be?

What the interviewer really wants to know: Can you think on the spot and come up with a sensible answer?

You probably won't have prepared for this, so the interviewer is seeing if you can think on your feet. Take your time over this question, and think of something that generally reflects you, but also has positives you could apply to the world of work.

There is no 'good answer' but just be prepared for this sort of question.

QUESTIONS I SHOULD ASK

At the end of the interview you usually get the opportunity to ask your own questions. You should always ask at least one question, to show your enthusiasm and interest in the job.

Here are some examples:

- ☀ Can you describe a typical day?
- ☀ What training do you offer?
- ☀ Ask about something you read about in your research – such as a new product or service
- ☀ Who will I be working with?
- ☀ Who will my manager be?
- ☀ Where do I fit into the organisational structure?
- ☀ How much of my time will be spent on this task?
- ☀ How do you see the role developing?
- ☀ When will you let me know the outcome of the interview?



WHAT IF I GET ASKED ABOUT SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE I DON'T HAVE?

You can face questions like this if you're applying for promotion or going for a career change. As a general rule, however, you should apply for jobs for which you have most of the skills. Do not worry if you haven't got one or two of the required skills. Remember, the person specification is an ideal, and no one person might match the ideal.



However, you will have to show that you have the potential to develop these missing skills. You can do this by describing times when you've:

- ☀ been given extra responsibilities
- ☀ been left in charge
- ☀ showed this skill on an informal basis, either in work or at home.

For example, if you're applying for a job as an ambulance care assistant, you know it is essential to know how to carry patients and secure them in the vehicle. You could mention how you've done this with small children or elderly relatives, so you are aware of the need for safety. You need to show that you're aware of the need for the skill, and that you're capable of developing it.

If you have no related experience, describe how you would act if you were placed in this situation. For example, if you had to deal with a difficult customer you could explain how you would approach it: stay calm, be polite and be clear on what your roles are.

Explain how you approach learning new skills, and that you are a keen and efficient learner. You may also score points if you describe how you handle tasks that don't play to your natural strengths. It would show you are willing to adapt and take on tasks that do not come that naturally to you.

HOW DO I NEGOTIATE SALARY?

For some jobs (usually in the private sector) where a salary is not stated, you may have to negotiate your salary. This will usually happen when you are offered the job.

Some tips:

- ☀ ask them what the salary range is for similar jobs in the company
- ☀ get an idea of what the going rate is for the job – check other job ads
- ☀ if you're asked what salary you are expecting, answer quickly and confidently - don't dither
- ☀ start high, and meet in the middle if necessary
- ☀ don't ask about salary or benefits before you've been offered the job.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

It's important to prepare for interviews.

But the night before the interview you shouldn't put in too much work, so try to relax. Last minute "cramming" might only stress you out.



Make sure:

- ☀ you've planned your route, checked timetables and how long it takes to get there
- ☀ decided what you are going to wear to the interview
- ☀ organised any documents you need to take with you
- ☀ have a copy of your CV
- ☀ set the alarm!

WHAT IF I GET ASKED WHY I'VE BEEN OUT OF WORK FOR A LONG TIME?

First, stress any positive activities you've undertaken during your period out of work.

Such as:

- ☀ voluntary work
- ☀ courses
- ☀ keeping up with developments in your field
- ☀ treating job seeking as a full-time job
- ☀ keeping fit
- ☀ networking.

You can also say that you were being selective, and not taking the first job that came along. Stress that you were waiting for the right opportunity, such as the job being offered by the employer interviewing you.

WHAT IF I VOLUNTARILY LEFT MY PREVIOUS JOB?

Make sure you state positive reasons for leaving.

The best reason is to say that you wanted a fresh challenge, and you wanted to fully concentrate your efforts on finding your next opportunity. Reflect positively on your time in your previous job - describe how you developed in the role and say you were grateful for the opportunity.