

YOUR DETAILED GUIDE TO THE NEW WORKING WORLD

Job Applicant Toolkit



Where are you on your job search journey?



Click on the step that best applies to your job search to get the advice you need. Alternatively, scroll to the next page to run through all ten steps.

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Defining my goals

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How to define your career goals

Before you update your CV and start applying to new jobs, you'll need to understand what you're looking for. Are you hoping for more responsibility, or a shorter commute? Are you dying to work for a company that offers better perks such as home working, medical insurance or even allowing dogs in the office? Taking time to identify your goals, both big and small, will help you to home in on the types of jobs you should be targeting.

Feeling stuck? Try ranking these five key factors in order of importance:



**COMPANY
CULTURE**



**OPPORTUNITY
FOR GROWTH**



**PAY AND
BENEFITS**



**JOB
STABILITY**



**LEVEL OF
RESPONSIBILITY**

Deciding what specific day-to-day responsibilities you would like to have will also be essential as you begin to update your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile. Try asking yourself what you've enjoyed doing most throughout your career and what you'd prefer never to do again. This exercise should help you to picture your ideal role more clearly.

TOP TIP

Try browsing job postings for the different types of roles you're considering. Do you find the responsibilities described to be interesting and exciting, or dull and boring? Make note of the duties that appeal most to you and keep them in mind as you begin searching and reading job descriptions.





Defining my goals

Tweak your CV

Updating my CV

The structure and contents of your CV are both essential to get the attention of prospective employers, who are often filtering through dozens of others. Here is a guide to laying out and filling in a logically structured and easy to read CV, so that your application goes to the top of the pile.

Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

Optimising my LinkedIn

John Smith IT Project Manager

Phone 774-00504-02
E-mail j.smith@pagegroup.eu
LinkedIn linkedin.com
Twitter @johnsmithutw

Perfecting my interview skills

Brief personal statement

Write a few lines to summarise your career experience so far and what you can offer the employer. Make sure it's concise and unique to your specific skill set and the role you are applying for.

Writing a follow up email

Career history

Starting with your most recent employer, list your past jobs in chronological order. If you do have gaps in your work history, due to travel, furlough or job loss, just be clear about them. Think about things that you have done in the past that will catch the eye of the recruiter. Include skills that are relevant to the role and use stats or examples to back them up.

Negotiating my salary and package

Skills and achievements

Keep this section brief - list a few short bullet points, describing some of your key achievements and skills. Tailor these for the job you're applying for and make sure they're as relevant as possible.

Starting a new job

Education and training

Starting with the most recent, lay out your education and qualifications in chronological order. Make sure that you have the 'to and from' dates of the institution you attended, then fill out the subjects, grades obtained, and other related awards and achievements.

Handling rejection

Interests and activities

This is a good opportunity to reveal a little of your personality. Talk about some of the things you like to do outside of work and any interesting or fun facts you might have.

Helpful tools

References

Use this extra space on your CV wisely. List the name, job title, and address of a former employer and also make sure you give them a heads up that you're using them as a reference.



TOP TIP

Always do a typo and grammar check before sending out your CV. Any errors will severely dent your chances of a job interview or offer. If you can, get another person to look at your CV too and if you're applying for a job vacancy in the UK, remember to name it as a CV and not a resume.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

What skills should you include on your CV?

Find out here.

Next up:

Selling your strengths and spinning your weaknesses



Defining my goals

Selling your strengths and spinning your weaknesses

Updating my CV

Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

In most job interviews, you will be asked to describe your strengths and weaknesses. In preparation for an interview, you should consider how best to answer this question so that the information is useful to employers and improves your chances of being hired.

Optimising my LinkedIn

Perfecting my interview skills

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Selling your strengths

EXAMPLE ANSWERS

Leadership skills



"I consider my leadership skills to be some of my biggest strengths. During my time as a team manager, I successfully merged two teams and organised training programmes for all team members to ensure that everyone was confident in their new role. As a result, we were able to increase sales by 5% within our first month as a new team."

Communication skills



"Thanks to my experience as an HR representative, I have gained excellent communication skills. I was responsible for setting up workshops for staff members and mediating any conflicts in the workplace. I have also completed a course on effective communication."

Teamwork



"In my current position, I'm part of the team that coordinates the company's lunch-and-learn sessions. Each week, we meet to brainstorm who will be our upcoming guest speaker. We all work together to ensure a diverse mix of speakers, aiming to appeal to a wide swath of people in the company. Because everyone on the team comes from different areas within the company, we've all learned so much, from marketing to tech."

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Spinning your weaknesses

EXAMPLE ANSWERS

Public speaking



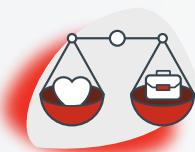
"I sometimes find public speaking intimidating in a new environment. To overcome this I have recently signed up to a public speaking course to help boost my confidence when it comes to presentations or speaking in meetings."

Delegation



"I can sometimes struggle with delegating and choose to take on a larger workload to ensure that a task is completed perfectly. I know that this puts more pressure on myself, so I have recently been using new software tools such as Asana to assign tasks to others and track their completion. So far this has helped me to trust my co-workers and focus more on my own tasks."

Keeping a healthy work/life balance



"Because I truly love my work and I am very ambitious, I sometimes find it difficult to set boundaries between my work and personal life. However, I know that ignoring my personal needs can have a negative impact on my motivation and focus. To overcome this weakness, I now actively create time in my schedule to spend with my family. Small changes, such as putting my phone on silent, have made a huge difference. Having more balance in my life between work and leisure makes me more productive at work."

Next up:
Optimising your LinkedIn



Defining my goals

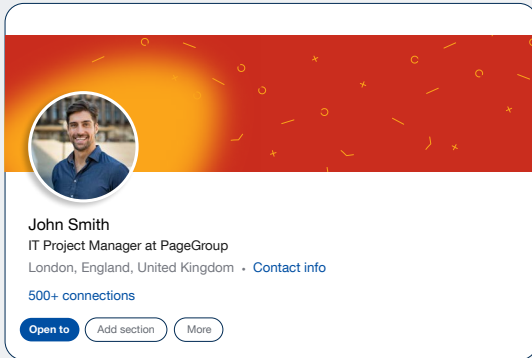
Optimise your LinkedIn

Updating my CV

Making sure your LinkedIn profile is up to scratch is key to getting noticed by recruiters and hiring manager. Here are our five steps to creating a LinkedIn profile that'll get your noticed.

Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

Optimising my LinkedIn



Perfecting my interview skills

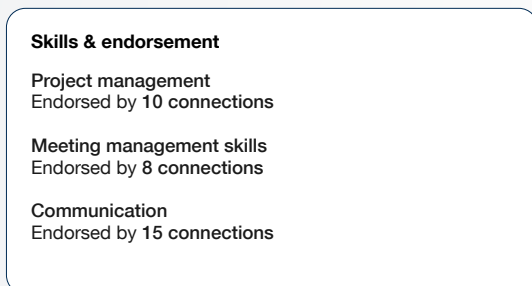
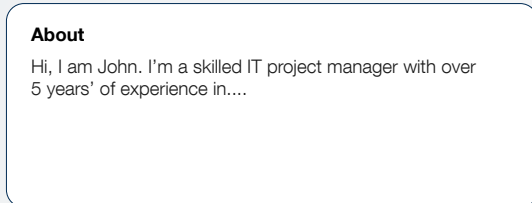
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1. Photo – Keep it professional. It is all too easy to use LinkedIn as an extension of your personal Facebook or Twitter. While it might be amusing to have a social picture as your profile picture, this is not conducive to finding a new job.

2. Headline – A clear job title/function and a USP helps recruiters and potential hiring managers to know whether you fit their criteria or not right away.

3. Summary – Writing a summary in the 'About' section on your LinkedIn will help recruiters or hiring managers find out more information about you and your career history. This is also a great place to promote your personality and you can make this section as formal or as informal as you see fit.

4. Jobs/history – Make sure you have a clear career history with employer, job title and ideally some detail about your role and responsibilities. It also helps when you add in a small summary of what the company does, or the industry they're in for extra clarity.

5. Recommendations – This means that recruiters can see that your services are valued, and others have had positive experiences working with you. Recruiters or hiring managers trust these more than anything else.

Next up:

Perfecting my interview skills



Defining my goals

Perfect your interview skills



Updating my CV

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Optimising my LinkedIn

Getting to the interview stage is an exciting time for any job hunter. However, when you enter a job interview it is crucial to have answers to several typical STAR interview questions prepared.

With this tried and tested interview technique, you can structure your answers to common interview questions clearly and professionally:

Perfecting my interview skills

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SITUATION

Describe the situation or the task you needed to accomplish

TASK

What goal you were working toward?

ACTION

Describe the situation or the task you needed to accomplish

RESULT

What were the results or outcome of your actions?

Video guide:

Using the STAR interview technique

[Click to watch](#)

Situation

Task

Action

Results

Next up:
Video interview tips



Defining my goals

Your video interview checklist

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Since the pandemic, there has been a rise in interviews being carried out over video and it looks like it'll be here to stay! Especially for the first few stages of the interview process anyway. That's why it's important to know how to tackle them. Here's a handy video interview checklist that'll help you conduct yourself perfectly in an interview:



✔ Power, connection, and your device

If you are using a laptop, make sure that it is properly charged or plugged in throughout the interview. You don't want to get cut off in the middle of your conversation! Make sure you choose a location with a good internet connection too.

✔ Light, background, and what to wear

Try to arrange your space so that there is a good source of natural lighting. Otherwise, ensure you have strong lights overhead and slightly behind. Shadows can distort your appearance and your interviewers will want to see you clearly. A plain, light-coloured background is best.

✔ Avoid distractions

You need to be away from all distractions when you sit down for your interview. Choose a quiet room and make sure that any people who are around are aware that you should not be disturbed.

✔ Practice makes perfect

A practice run before the interview is essential. You want to ensure that you look good, can be seen clearly and all the equipment is working properly. A huge advantage of video interviews is that you can have prompts. Set them just above the line of the camera and no one will even know you are using them.

✔ Camera

Make sure your camera is set in line with your eyes. If it is too high, the interviewers will see too much of the top of your head, and if it is too low your face will be distorted. You want them to be able to see your head and shoulders clearly, so do not sit too close or too far from the camera.



TOP TIP

Often on camera, there is a slight delay. So, it's a good idea to wait a few seconds before responding to a question just in case. You don't want a situation where you accidentally cut off your interviewer mid-sentence.

Next up:
Research advice



Defining my goals

The importance of doing your research

Updating my CV

Company research is the best way to learn about what the company does and what they look for in a candidate. You'll also be better prepared to answer questions and position yourself as the best candidate. As you prepare for your upcoming interview, here's what you need to know about the company and the job you're applying for:

Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

Optimising my LinkedIn



1. The skills and experience the company values

You want to know what the company looks for in qualified candidates. This enables you to position yourself as the best candidate for the job.

Perfecting my interview skills



2. Key players of the organisation

Find out who holds important positions in the company. These might be managers or directors, all the way up to the CEO. Good places to look are 'About us' pages on company websites or LinkedIn.

Writing a follow up email



3. News and recent events about the employer

Going into an interview, it's always a good idea to be knowledgeable about the company's latest news and updates. This will show that you are engaged and are taking the interview seriously.

Negotiating my salary and package



4. The company's culture, mission and value

Pay attention to what's written on their website regarding culture and company values. It's also a good idea to follow the company on social media for the inside scoop.

Starting a new job



5. Big clients, projects and services

You want to have an idea of the type of work you'd be doing once hired. So having a general idea of who the company's top clients are and the type of products and services they offer is a great place to start.

Handling rejection

Helpful tools



TOP TIP

Don't forget to use LinkedIn to find out some more information on your interviewer's background, their role within the company and even some common interests you both share.

Next up:

Writing a follow up email



Defining my goals

Writing a follow up email

Updating my CV

After a job interview, it's only natural to want an update on the hiring process, particularly if you feel it went well. But it's important to strike the right tone when you do so, or you may risk undoing your hard work in the interview. Use our follow-up email template below to craft the perfect email, so you can find out about next steps on your most recent interview:

Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

Follow up email template:

Optimising my LinkedIn

SUBJECT: John Smith – Re: Interview on Tuesday at 4pm

Perfecting my interview skills

INTRODUCTION:

Hi <Julie / Ms. Jones>,

Writing a follow up email

BODY TEXT:

Thank you for your time <yesterday / date of interview>. It was great to speak to you about the <job title> role and I'm convinced that the position is a perfect fit for this stage in my career. I was hoping to get an update on the recruitment process, so any information that you can give me about the next steps would be greatly appreciated. Also, feel free to ask me any follow-up questions that may have come up since we last spoke.

Negotiating my salary and package

SIGN OFF:

Looking forward to hearing from you,

John Smith

Starting a new job

Send



Discard



Handling rejection

Helpful tools

DO'S

Leave time for the dust to settle. Wait a few days before sending that all-important follow-up so the interviewer has time to reflect on the experience.

Keep your follow-up professional and courteous. No matter how well you thought the interview went, or how informal the process felt, it's always best to keep your follow up email professional.

Be clear about the purpose of your message. In your follow up email, mention your interest in the position and why you're the best candidate for the job.

Read over your follow-up email before sending. Ensure its well-spaced, correctly punctuated, and free of typos.

DONT'S

Don't waste time and words on unnecessary small talk. Presumably you're simply looking for an update on the recruitment process, so get straight to the point.

Don't be pushy. Keep it casual and avoid being too demanding to a potential new employer.

Don't pester. Refrain from continually contacting the hiring manager if they have already informed you that you are no longer being considered for the position.

Ghost an interviewer. If after the interview you feel like the job is not right for you, just let the company know in a follow-up email that you would no longer like to be considered. This is much better than just ignoring their calls or emails.

Next up:

Negotiating my salary and package



Defining my goals

How to handle a job offer:

Nail the negotiation with this four-step plan

Updating my CV

Congratulations on getting this far on your job search! Now you've made it to this stage, you need to make sure you join the company on terms that will suit your lifestyle and keep you financially content for the foreseeable future.

Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

Optimising my LinkedIn



Find out your worth

Use our [Salary Benchmarking and Comparison Tool](#) to find out exactly how much you could be earning elsewhere.

It's important to negotiate your salary when accepting a new role, but you also don't want to risk souring the process by asking for an unrealistic amount. So, use our handy tool to work out how much you should be earning. Then you just need to aim towards the higher end of that salary bracket during the negotiations.

Perfecting my interview skills

Writing a follow up email



Consider external factors

Your value to the business is not the only factor at play. Few companies have limitless financial resources, so it is important to understand potential factors before entering negotiations.

- Do your research and find out any industry conditions that might come into play
- Find out what others are saying about the immediate and longer-term future of the market

This will help you to anticipate potential objections when discussing your salary.

Negotiating my salary and package

Starting a new job



Work out your financial needs

Sit down and work out how much you really need to live the life you want. Think about the following:

- How much do you need to live on? This will show you the minimum salary you require.
- How much would you need to feel satisfied and live comfortably? This gives you a middle ground ready for negotiations.
- What is your dream salary? This is your top tier pay bracket. It's always good to aim high so have this figure in mind when you start negotiating.

You also want to factor in your future career goals at this stage. For advice on defining your goals click [here](#).

Handling rejection

Helpful tools



Outline your non-financial benefits

It's not all about the money. Don't forget that, sometimes, non-financial benefits can mean more than a pay increase. Check to see if your new company offer:

- Support for education and training; this could involve paying for a certification, or simply guaranteeing you the time out of the office to complete a training programmes
- Flexible working hours
- Health insurance
- More annual leave, plus the option to purchase additional days off
- Free gym membership
- A company car or mobile phone
- Childcare benefits

Next up:

Starting a new job

Get ready for onboarding...

You've got the job, well done! Now it's time to prepare for the next phase – onboarding. Starting a new job can be a scary prospect, but the added pressure of starting that new job remotely may feel like stepping into uncharted territory. Assuming there are no lockdown restrictions in place, your first day is likely to be face-to-face. But you should also be prepared that it may need to happen virtually instead. However you're starting your new job, stay positive by following these simple steps;



- ★ If you're starting your first day from home, make sure you have a comfortable home office space.
- ★ Read through any induction documents you get sent, familiarise yourself with any tools they might use, and ensure all your tech has arrived and is working correctly.
- ★ Get to know your colleagues by setting up catch-up calls in your first few weeks.
- ★ Identify someone who could be your 'buddy' to guide you through unfamiliar processes.
- ★ Learn how your team communicates and works together.
- ★ Get to grips with expectations and set clear boundaries.
- ★ Request regular catch-up calls with your line manager so you always know what you are doing.
- ★ Don't be afraid to ask for help. It's far better to be willing to learn by asking questions, than waste lots of time trying to figure something out yourself.
- ★ Remind people who you are: reintroduce yourself in meetings or at the start of emails just to remind colleagues of your name and role in the business.



TOP TIP

Be confident in yourself! Always remember you were hired for a reason, so you've nothing to fear. Be yourself, ask plenty of questions and most importantly have fun.

Next up:
Handling rejection



Defining my goals

Handling rejection

What to do if you don't get the job

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Identifying my strengths and weaknesses

Optimising my LinkedIn

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Unfortunately, after your final job interview, it usually goes one of two ways. If a rejection email does ping into your inbox, here are a few things to remember to help you remain positive, optimistic, and motivated on your job search:

1. It is not personal

It's easy to take rejection to heart and blame your ability or interview skills. These decisions are rarely based on your performance and more likely around strengths of the other candidates and other external factors.

2. Always ask for feedback

Always ask the recruiter or employer for more detailed comments about your interview in order to help you improve. Remember though, interview feedback can sometimes be bland and unhelpful, so do seek out other genuinely useful feedback where possible.

3. A fresh approach

Don't carry interview baggage around with you. Approach each new job opportunity with a fresh perspective and learn from the feedback you received previously.

4. Keep learning and developing

Your confidence can take a hit when you get a rejection, so it is important to work hard at keeping your morale and motivation levels buoyant. Especially if you are not in current employment, it is a good idea to keep your skills sharpened and your experience up-to-date. This may take the form of a part-time training course (if relevant), a charity project, mentorship, or a voluntary position in a company of interest.

Ready to apply again?

We have
over **10,000**
live jobs.

APPLY TODAY



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Helpful tools

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Helpful tools and additional resources

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Salary Benchmarking and Comparison Tool



More helpful career advice

Submit your CV
Become discoverable for all of our roles



Use our Skills Checker

Discover the skills you need to progress to your next job. Search by job title to find out the skills and qualifications employers are looking for when hiring new staff.

Skills Checker Tool
What skills do you need for your next role?

PageExecutive

MichaelPage

PagePersonnel

PageOutsourcing

Part of
PageGroup