



Employability skills with REED

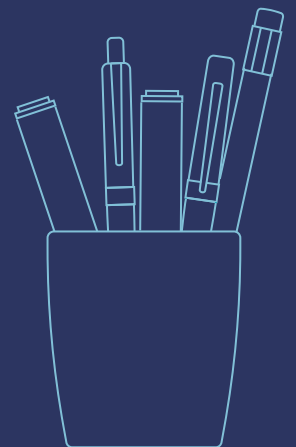


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Introduction

A very warm welcome to your employability skills programme. Although you may not physically be with us in one of our buildings, this module will provide you with the skills and experience required when making job applications.

There are four modules to complete, with each module representing a part of the overall job application process. You will be set tasks in each module, with additional supporting links to help you.

Here is an overview of the four modules you will be completing:

MODULE 1	Employability skills
MODULE 2	CV and cover letter writing skills
MODULE 3	Interview skills
MODULE 4	Mock interview



This booklet will act as a guide while you complete the modules. For each module, simply:

- Click on the video link
- Make notes while watching the video
- Remember that you can pause the videos and re-watch them as many times as you need to
- Summarise the key information from your notes and type these into the notes section of this booklet
- Answer any questions that have been set relating to the video
- Read all the information about the task before starting
- Complete the task that has been set
- Click on the links to help you

In the spirit of workplace wellbeing, we suggest you find a calm and quiet space to learn.

After taking notes, we suggest that you summarise the key points and type these as bullet points into the notes section within this booklet. This will help you to remember and be able to go back to key information. As the module progresses you should keep referring to the notes you have taken, as each day you will build on your knowledge.

After each task you will be encouraged to share your work with your teacher. Please do this in the usual way.



Module 1: Employability skills

When looking at candidates for a job, employers look at skills specific to the role you are applying for, as well as general employment skills. These general skills are sometimes called 'employability skills' or 'soft skills'.

These are common skills needed to do most jobs. They often highlight that you are dependable, easy to get along with, and open to learning new things.

Below we have listed some employability skills with helpful summary videos for you to watch.



Confidence:

Confidence is about believing in yourself and your ability to do the job at hand. You may feel confident in expressing your opinions, showing who you are without fear of what others think, and in feeling ready for everyday challenges.

[Play video ▶](#)



Honesty:

Honesty is about being truthful. It lets the employer know you can be trusted and will be open and upfront if you make a mistake. Trust is a very important factor in a working relationship.

[Play video ▶](#)



Teamwork:

Teamwork is the ability to work effectively as part of a group. In some cases, you will have to work with people you do not know, people you do not agree with, and people you do not like. Showing you can still get the job done despite this is an example of great teamwork.

[Play video ▶](#)



Organisation:

Having good organisational skills is key in most jobs. Being organised means you are methodical and able to plan work to meet targets. It also means you can monitor the progress of your work to ensure you are on track to meeting a deadline.

[Play video ▶](#)



Negotiation:

Negotiating is a discussion, aimed at reaching an agreement. To be good at negotiation, you should consider another person's feelings and express your own requirements in an unemotional argument to achieve a win-win outcome for each person or party involved.

[Play video ▶](#)



Problem solving:

Problem solving is about using logic and imagination to make sense of a situation, while coming up with a credible solution.

[Play video ▶](#)



Leadership:

Leadership is the ability to take control of a situation and to lead by empowering others to achieve the desired outcome.

[Play video ▶](#)



Motivation:

Motivation is the desire to get work done and complete goals, demonstrating a strong personal drive and not waiting to be told to do things.

[Play video ▶](#)



Ability to work under pressure:

The ability to work under pressure means keeping calm in a crisis and not becoming overwhelmed or stressed as you complete a task. In interviews, it is common to be asked to present an example of when you have worked well under pressure.

[Play video ▶](#)



Top Tip

Get into the habit of regularly documenting any occasion you have demonstrated these skills. It will help you when preparing for a job interview, as you will have a list of examples to use.

Notes:



Task:

Now you have more of an understanding on what employability skills are; it is time for you to put this into practice.

Your first task is to self-reflect using our downloadable worksheet.

We would like you to grade yourself on each of the employability skills using our grading scale below:

1. Confident and able to demonstrate
2. Confident but needs more work
3. Needs more work
4. Not confident and needs more work
5. Not confident and not ready

Once you have completed this, you need to give examples of when you have demonstrated each of the employability skills.

For each skill, think about when you have demonstrated this in school, or outside of school. You can list multiple examples if you can think of more than one.

If you do not feel you have demonstrated a skill yet, write an example of how you intend to demonstrate it.

Download your worksheet here:



Employability grading document

Please complete the downloadable worksheet and submit to your teacher in the usual way.

Module 2: CV and cover letter writing skills

CVs

A CV is the first big step to getting a job. It does not just show employers what you have done – it shows them what you can do. Think of it as your personal introduction to the world of employment.

A CV should be one or two full pages of A4 (but no more). The information should be presented clearly and spaced out to be easy to read.

You might think you do not have enough information to fill a page, but you will have more than you realise. We have put together some tips for you and a training video to get you started.

A CV should contain the following seven sections:



1. Personal details:

Include your first and last name, email address, contact phone number and current address.



2. Personal statement:

A catchy personal statement is an essential part of standing out from the crowd. It adds a personal touch and is normally near the top of your CV. Aim to keep personal statements to one short paragraph.



3. Work experience:

This section should include all of your relevant work experience, with your most recent experience listed first. Include your job title, the name of the organisation, the time frame you held the position, and your key responsibilities.



4. Education:

Your academic qualifications and achievements should be listed here, along with dates, the type of qualification and the result you achieved.



5. Hobbies and interests:

This is your opportunity to provide additional information that may make you stand out from other applicants. E.g. Lifeguard qualification, play the guitar to Grade 3, speak Spanish, etc.

However, do not say you, “enjoy going to the cinema” for the sake of including something. If it is not going to add value, leave it out.



6. Achievements

This is your chance to show how your previous experience has given you the skills needed to make you a suitable candidate. List all your relevant achievements and back them up with examples, such as any awards you have won.



7. Social media:

70% of employers check job applicants’ social media profiles, so make sure you have checked your privacy settings on all your social media accounts.

Social media can give you an advantage too – it is a great way to show you are active and engaged on social media in industries related to the job role you are applying for. If you have this experience, you can list these professional accounts. However, refrain from putting any personal social media accounts which are unprofessional on your CV.



Top Tips

1. Ensure you note any career gaps on your CV.
2. Remember that you have many options on how to format the layout of your CV, so take some time browsing different formats to decide what is right for you.

Watch our video from Andrea Raven-Hill on CV writing tips here: [Play video ▶](#)

Notes:

Cover letters:

A cover letter is a written summary of your skills, experience and suitability for a job. It is normally sent to employers alongside your CV and is traditionally shown as the 'cover' of your application.

Cover letters are used to emphasise why you are the best candidate for the job. It highlights:

1. Your interest in the role and company
2. Expands on your skills and experiences which most relate to the job you are applying for
3. Explains your CV in more detail

While a CV and cover letter will cover similar elements, they are very different in terms of formatting, layout and depth of information.



Top Tip

Before you write your cover letter, do your research. Take some time to look at the role you are applying for and the company. You should find out: **What does the company do? Who are their competitors? Who are their target audience? What does the role involve? What are the essential skills?**

Cover letter structure:

Your cover letter should be brief, to the point, and tailored to the role you are applying for. As the name suggests, it should be written in a letter format, and be no more than one full page of A4.

Here is a general structure you can use in a cover letter:

1. Your name and address

These should be placed in the top-right of the page.

2. Hiring manager's name, hiring manager's company name and company address

These should go under your details, and placed on the left-hand side of the page.

3. Today's date

4. Greeting

Cover letters should be addressed to the person dealing with the applications (the hiring manager). This may be shown somewhere in the job advert, or you may need to call and ask for a name. If you manage to find a name – address with ‘Dear Mr Smith/Dear Ms Jones’. If you do not find a name, use ‘Dear Sir/Madam’.

5. Opening paragraph

The opening paragraph should be short and to the point, explaining why you are getting in touch. It is useful to include where you found the job listing – e.g. as advertised on reed.co.uk. If someone referred you, mention their name in this section.

Example: I wish to apply for the role of IT Manager, currently being advertised on reed.co.uk. Please find enclosed my CV for your consideration.

6. Second paragraph

Briefly describe your professional and academic qualifications which relate to the role, and ensure you refer to each of the skills listed in the job description.

Example: As you can see from my attached CV, I have over three years’ experience in the IT Industry, and I believe the knowledge and skills built up during this time make me the perfect candidate for the role.

7. Third paragraph

Use the third paragraph to emphasise what you can do for the organisation. Outline your career goals, making it relevant to the position you are applying for, and expand on points in your CV. Include examples to back up your skills.

Example: In my current role as Senior Marketing Executive at Software Company X Ltd, I have been responsible for increasing incoming client enquiries for our B2B product lines by 156% in under 12 months, which helped the business increase its revenue by 55% year-on-year.

8. Fourth paragraph

Reiterate your interest in the role and why you would be the right fit for the company – show off a little bit of your knowledge about the company here. You can also indicate that you would like to meet with the employer for an interview.

Example: I am confident that I can bring this level of success with me to your company and help IT Company LTD build upon their reputation as the UK’s fastest-growing software houses for 2020. With my previous experience and expertise, I believe I can start actively contributing to the business as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my application further.

9. End of letter

Sign off your cover letter with 'Yours sincerely' if you have addressed the letter to a named person, or if you do not know the person (i.e. used 'Dear Sir/Madam') then use 'Yours faithfully', followed by your name.



Top Tip

Do not reuse the same cover letter for multiple jobs. Always tailor it with specific knowledge of each company and use examples of skills from the job role you are applying for.

Once you have made a first draft of your cover letter, we suggest you read back over it and check that you have:

- Been clear and concise
- Kept paragraphs short and direct
- Backed up any statements you make with facts and figures
- Chosen a professional font
- Checked spelling and grammar



Task:

A good CV is essential to your success during a job search and will be the first thing prospective employers will look at. For that reason, it is important you make the right impression and create a CV that is the best version of yourself.

In this module we have provided you with information on how to create a CV and cover letter. It is now time for you to put what you have learned into practice. Your task is to create your own CV and cover letter.

To assist you further, we have provided additional resources with some more information in the links below. Please take the time to read these links before beginning your CV:

- [CV help and tips >](#)
- [How to: Write a CV >](#)
- [What words should I use on my CV? >](#)
- [CV layout examples >](#)
- [Which parts of my education should I include in my CV? >](#)
- [How to: Explain a gap in your CV >](#)



Task continued:

Remember, you can also go back and watch the CV writing tips video again.

For your cover letter, we would like you to write it as if you were about to apply to any current job listing. Go to the reed.co.uk website, find a job listing that you would be interested in applying for in your local town or city, and then get started on your cover letter for that role.

Pick your job from here: [Job search](#)

Please take the time to read these links before beginning your cover letter:

- [What is a cover letter? >](#)
- [Cover letter help >](#)
- [How to: Write a cover letter >](#)
- [Five things you need to stop doing on your cover letter >](#)
- [How to: Overcome common cover letter problems >](#)

Once you have completed your CV and cover letter, please submit to your teacher in the usual way.



Module 3: Interview skills

We have now covered employability skills and CV writing. The next step of the journey is preparing for the interview itself.

Interviews are important because they allow employers and job seekers to form an opinion of each other. It assists employers in selecting the right person for their job. But, it is also an

opportunity for you to present yourself and acquire a job offer.

Throughout this module we will take you through all elements of the interview process, from preparation to follow up.

Preparation

It can be as simple as researching the organisation and finding out more about the marketplace, but that alone can be the difference between success and failure. Here are some steps to take before any interview:

1. Research the company
2. Look up your role
3. Find the address
4. Pick an outfit
5. Think of some potential questions your interviewer may ask and prepare for them.

[Click here to get some ideas.](#)

Notes:

6. Prepare some potential questions you could ask at the end of the interview.

[Click here to get some ideas.](#)

Notes:

Dress smart and appropriately

Getting your outfit right is a potential minefield. Get it right, and you instantly show you can fit in with the team. But get it wrong, and you might have just blown your chances.



Before you decide on your outfit, we have made a short video on what not to do.

[Watch our video here:](#)

[Play video ▶](#)

Notes:

Now that you have had a look at what not to wear, here are our suggestions on how to prepare the perfect interview outfit:

Do 	Don't 
Dress in a professionally appropriate manner to the position for which you are applying – if you can, find the company's dress code and adhere to it	Wear anything too distracting – for example anything too tight, too revealing, or too loose – you want your accomplishments to do the talking, not your wardrobe
Check that your clothing is neat and clean. If wearing a button-up shirt or blouse, make sure it is ironed	Wear a novelty or tacky tie – plain or traditionally patterned ties will make a better impression
Wear appropriate footwear that you can easily move in	Wear scruffy shoes. Even if you are applying for a job that involves being active and have been told you can wear trainers, make sure they're not covered in dirt

Continued:

Express yourself with jewellery, belts and accessories, but keep bling to a minimum	Think you have to wear black – pick a colour that looks good on you
Aim to look tidy and refreshed when it comes to grooming. You can wear make-up if you think it will help you feel your best, but do not overload it	Over-do it on perfume and cologne – you never know if your interviewer might have an allergy or aversion to strong scents, so keep it light
Get your outfit picked and ready the day before your interview. This way you will not have any last-minute panics about needing to wash or find your chosen clothes	Wear headphones to your interview. While listening to your music on your way to the interview is fine, take them off before you enter the building or office and stow them away

Practice makes perfect

There are hundreds of different questions that could come up during your interview and answering them in the right way is key to increasing your chances of success.

Although you cannot prepare for every eventuality, you can prep for some of the more common questions that could come up.

For advice on how to answer everything from “**what are your weaknesses?**” and “**where do you see yourself in five years’ time?**”, through to “**what motivates you?**” and “**what are your hobbies and interests?**”, read our guide to answering common interview questions and five interview questions you should stop being scared of.

Read our guide: [Interview questions guide](#)

Notes:



Top Tip

Test wear your outfit beforehand
– make sure you are
comfortable sitting, walking
and standing in it.

Preparing for different types of interview

Not all interviews will take the standard question-and-answer format.

For certain industries, telephone or group interviews may also make up part of the process. Without the proper pre-interview preparation, you will run the risk of passing up a golden opportunity to shine.

To avoid any embarrassing mumbling on your mobile or re-enacting a bad scene from *The Apprentice* (the TV show), we have got all your telephone interview tips and group interview tips covered.

Telephone interview tips: [View dos and don'ts](#)

Here are two videos for you to watch with some top interview tips:

Courtney's top tips: [Play video ▶](#)

Steven's top tips: [Play video ▶](#)

Notes:

Follow up

Following up after the interview and asking an interviewer for feedback should be a key part of your jobseeking process. So instead of spending your time wondering "why have they not called?", get out there and do something about it.

Click here for a link on the importance of asking for feedback.

Now watch some videos from our directors on what they look for when interviewing:

Simon's top tips: [Play video ▶](#)

Dan's top tips: [Play video ▶](#)

Notes:



Task:

Preparation is essential to a successful interview. We all know the common saying: fail to prepare, prepare to fail.

Using the information you have learned throughout this module, and the resource links provided, we would like you to put together an advice guide or video blog (vlog) summarising the key things you should do to prepare for an interview.

This guide or vlog will be aimed at supporting individuals who have never attended an interview, so you must ensure every point made is clear and concise. We have provided some guidance below to keep you on track.

The advice guide must be one to two A4 pages and contain essential information such as:

- What should you do before the interview?
- What should you prepare?
- What should you do on the morning of the interview?
- How can you manage your interview nerves?

or

The vlog must contain:

- What you did before the interview?
- What did you prepare?
- What outfit did you wear?
- What did you do on the morning of the interview?

Once you have completed your document or vlog, please submit to your teacher in the usual way.



Module 4: Mock interview

Congratulations on completing Employability Skills with REED, we hope you have enjoyed the modules and we wish you all the best for your future. As this is your final module, we recommend you revisit the other modules before completing the task.

By now you will have a good knowledge on:

- Employability skills
- CV and cover letter writing
- Interviewing preparation

It will soon time for you to put your new knowledge to the test and attend your interview. But before you do, we would like you to watch the following videos of two very different interviews and provide your feedback using the tables below each video.

You will then be asked to pick who you would hire and why.

Justin [Play video ▶](#)

Positives:

Negatives:

Fern [Play video ▶](#)

Positives:

Negatives:

Based on their interview alone, who would you give an offer employment to and why?

Answer:



Task:

It is now time for you to put the skills you have learned into practice and take part in a mock interview.

Below is a downloadable list of questions that would be typically asked in an interview.



Mock interview questions document

In order to create a realistic interview environment, we would like you to film yourself answering each question. You will be required to imagine the camera is the interviewer and you must consider the following:

- How you dress
- Eye contact and your body language
- How formally or informally you talk to the interviewer
- How you would answer the questions
- What questions you want to ask the interviewer

Please ensure you have the interview questions visible when filming.

Once completed, please submit your video to your teacher in the usual way.



Top Tip

In a real interview you cannot erase mistakes, so instead of starting again, demonstrate how you would deal with this as if it were a real interview.

THANK YOU

and well done for completing our employability skills workbook.



