

Develop Your Career: Top tips to inspire and equip Professional Services Staff

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Careers Club

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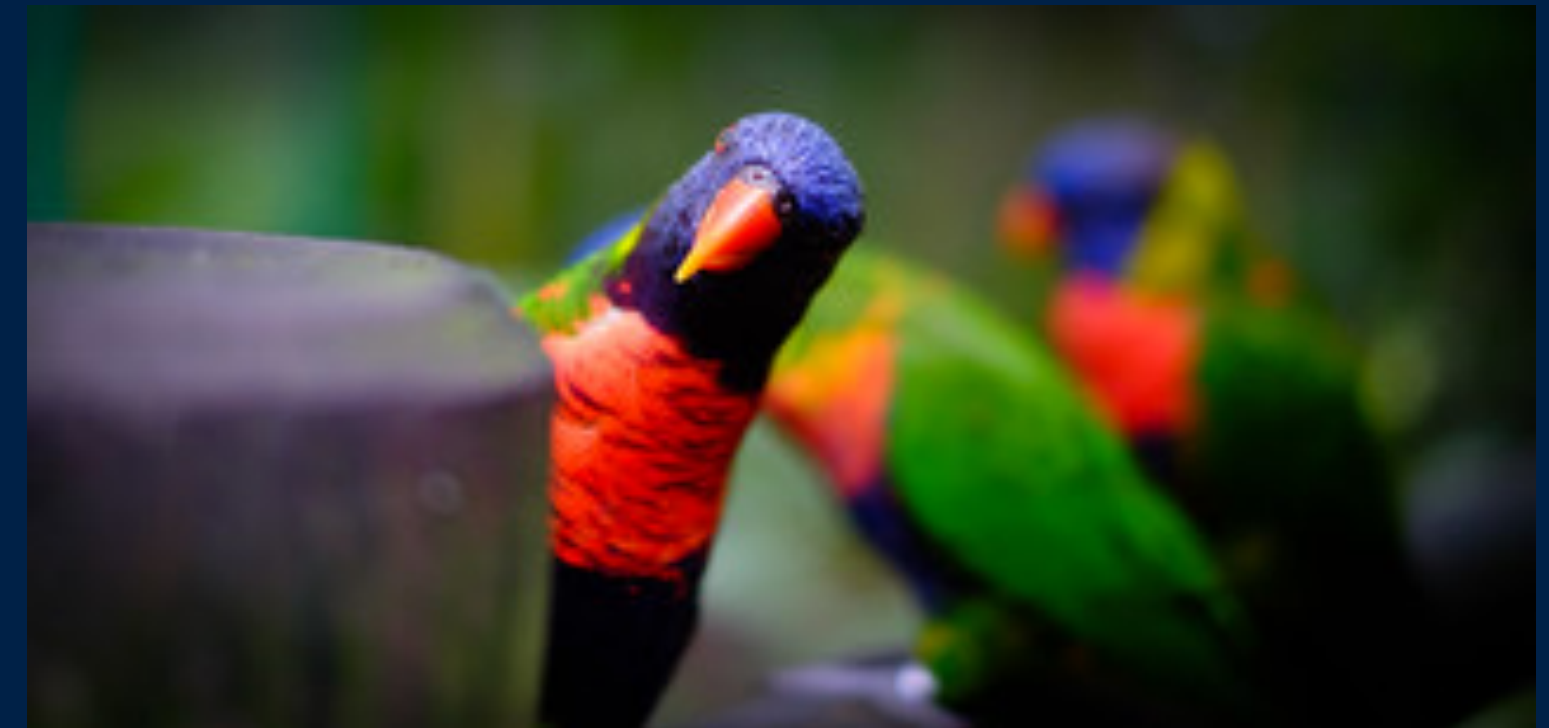
Careers Service



This afternoon



- CVs
- Cover letters
- Interviews
- Increasing your skills



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All questions welcome





5

CV top tips



1 Remember the aim

- A CV is only to get you the next meeting, not close the deal
- Don't include anything that might help someone reject you
- Engage the reader so they want to meet you
- Tailor every time – develop different CVs for different roles



CV Layout quick tips

- In the UK, a photo is not required on your CV
- It is not necessary to include a personal / goal statement
- Stick to a simple style, avoid using logos, **fancy fonts** etc.
- Don't overdo the use of **bold**, *italics* and underlining
- Use bullet points, avoid large chunks of text
- Think about the balance of text to white space
- Make it scannable

ZAYNAB BATHIA

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EDUCATION & AWARDS

BA Hons English, Worcester College, University of Oxford 2018 – 2021

- First year exam results: 2.1 (65% average)

St John's School, Milton Keynes 2011 – 2018

A levels: French A*, English A*, Chemistry A, Geography A
GCSEs: 5 A*, 3 A, 1 B including A* in English and Maths

- Awarded School Prize for A-level results and Smith Prize for 'Contribution to School Life'

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Worcester College Wind Ensemble, Marketing Officer 2020 – ongoing

- Responsible for promoting termly college concerts using social media and printed material
- Organised online events during lockdown period
- Manage ticket sales, successfully increasing audience numbers by 30% in the first term

WWOOF, Organic Farm in Haute Vienne, France, Volunteer (summer) 2019

- Independently planned and organised two months' work in France
- Improved to near-fluent French, while learning organic food production chain processes
- Developed good working relationships with 22 colleagues from 12 countries

Student Consultancy, Team Leader, Oxford University (8 weeks) 2019

- Led a team of five students to develop marketing strategy for local start-up
- Designed and executed paper and phone surveys, engaging 250 participants
- Presented recommendations to client; all implemented within 3 months and delivering 20% increase in sales within 6 months

EGM Analysis, Market Research Assistant (1-month internship) 2019

- Responsible for producing eight data tables summarising previous field activities using SPSS
- Presented daily key data summary to four senior managers, with a colleague
- Developed knowledge and interest in marketing and consumer goods

Red Lion Hotel, Newport Pagnell, Waitress (part-time summer work) 2018

- Provided professional, courteous dinner service in busy gastro-pub with 80 covers
- Maintained positivity and good working relationships in high-pressure service environment

Milton Keynes Hospital, Data Entry Clerk (part-time holiday work) 2017

- Developed administrative skills, and understanding of organisational processes
- Ensured accurate classification of records and meticulous proof reading
- Liaised with six hospital departments to compile datasets to tight deadlines

ADDITIONAL SKILLS & INTERESTS

Languages: Bilingual Punjabi and English; French – near-fluent; German – conversational
IT: Advanced proficiency in Excel, WordPress, InDesign
Music: Lead clarinetist in Milton Keynes Youth Band; member of National Youth Orchestra
Sport: College football team, training twice a week
Travel: Extensive travel throughout Europe, including organising work placement in France

Select and order headings to showcase relevant experience



- Education
- Awards
- Experience
- Relevant experience
- Research interests
- Research experience
- Fieldwork experience
- Teaching experience
- Public engagement activities
- Administrative experience
- Employment
- Additional experience
- Positions of Responsibility
- Volunteering
- IT skills
- Programming skills
- Laboratory skills
- Technical skills
- Languages
- Additional skills
- Professional affiliations & memberships
- Extra-curricular activities
- Interests
- Publications
- Conference presentations & posters
- Invited talks & posters
- Referees (*if requested*)



2 Employers want people who ...



- Take responsibility
- Achieve things
- Nice to have around



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3 Be specific

- Numbers and details add power
- Use keywords
- Don't worry if you raised 'only' £500
- Describe your role accurately and fully
- Avoid generic process descriptions



4 Have you read your CV?

Can you ...

- Summarise each role?
- Describe why you did each activity/job?
- Demonstrate motivation for each organisation?
- Demonstrate relevant skills if asked?
- Confirm everything?



5 Polish to perfection!

- Appropriate email address, checked regularly
- Use professional out of office settings
- Check file format (word? PDF?)
- Proof read, proof read, **proof read!**
- Use free style guides for spelling / grammar
- Check for institution-specific jargon
- Double check your web footprint



What should you **include** in your CV?



- Name, contact details
- Education, qualifications, awards
- Work experience or employment history
- Interests & Community activities
- Additional skills



What should you **exclude** from your CV?



- Marital status, children
- Date of birth / age
- Driving licence
- Basic IT skills
- Personal profile statement
- Referees
- Anything negative
- Photo
- Anything else?



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A cover letter is designed to get the next meeting

- Persuade
- Introduce
- Convey your motivation
- Provide evidence



Key sections / paragraphs:



- Warm opener
- Why this department/organization/ this sector?
- Why this job?
- Why you?



Key sections / paragraphs:



- Warm opener

I am delighted to submit my application for the role of Outreach Officer at Jesus College. I hope my extensive experience, and sustained commitment to social mobility will be of interest to the College.



Key sections / paragraphs:



- Why this department/organization/programme/this sector?

I LOVE YOU

What is so special about the organisation that has made you want to apply?

Programmes People Cutting edge research Services

BE SPECIFIC

Web pages

Press/Social Media

Internet



Key sections / paragraphs:



- Why this job?

I was drawn to this position because I have extensive experience (or interest) in this sector/type of role/projects (evidence) and believe I can contribute positively to the development of your programme/company/organisation.

This is an opportunity to evidence that you understand about the position/department/sector. For some roles, particularly outside the university, there may be an expectation that you understand some of the challenges you might face. Express positivity that you have the skills to address these.

Key sections / paragraphs:



Why you? Why are you well suited to the position?

What evidence can you provide that meet the criteria/requirements?

Who are we looking for?

Essential criteria

Person specification



Why you? Why are you well suited to the position?



Refer to the relevant skills, experience and knowledge you have and match what you say to the requirements outlined in the job description.

Provide evidence on how you meet the criteria (find examples from a range of activities).

If you feel this position is out of reach, you have to convince the reader that you are qualified enough and able to do the job.

Focus on your accomplishments and the transferable skills that are relevant to the role.

State explicitly how you match the job criteria – don't expect the person reading your letter to infer your skills or experiences for themselves.

In other words, show don't tell!

Organisational/Social Media skills

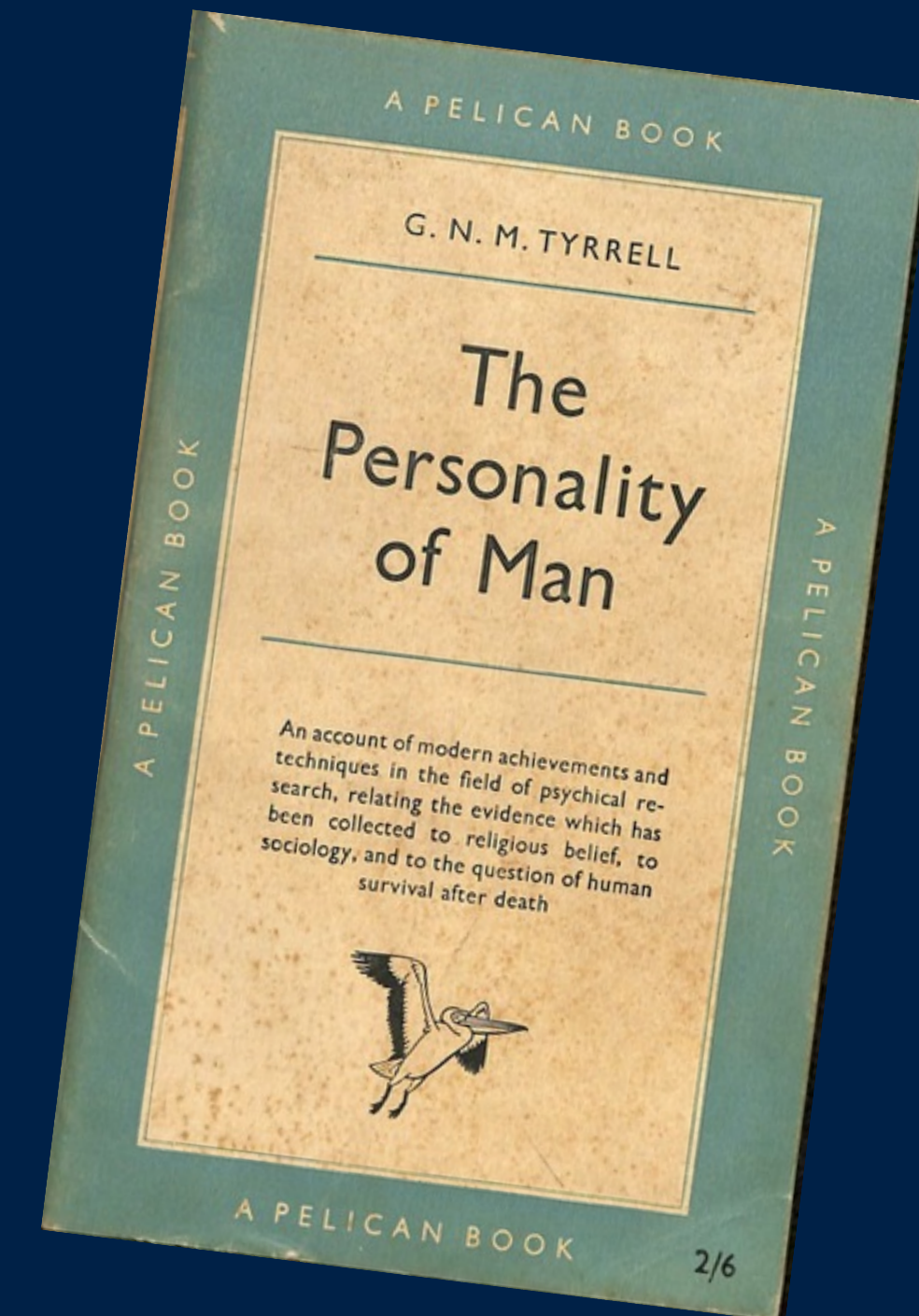


I first demonstrated my organisational skills by managing an outreach event in my previous department, and have developed them further by volunteering to help coordinate a school visit to highlight the department's access courses. By using social media, I was able to increase participation at the event by over 100% more than the previous year. Social media is an effective tool to communicate with year 12 pupils and I launched a new Instagram and Facebook page for this purpose. Since I launched the social media campaign 12 months ago, we now have over 4,000 active followers.

Some golden rules



- 100% tailored
- Brief
- Clarity
- Personality
- “Show me, don’t tell me”
- Sleep on it



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Interviews



1

What to
expect

2

Preparation

3

In the
Interview



What are interviews for?



What to expect

- Can you do the job?
Your competencies
- Will you do the job?
Your knowledge, interest and motivation
- Do you fit the culture of the organisation?
Your personality, values, attitudes
- And for you to find out more about the employer



Competency-based



A screenshot of the Shell Graduate Programme website. The page features a large central image of a smiling young woman with a grid overlay. Surrounding this image are several smaller photos of diverse young professionals in various work settings. The text 'SHELL GRADUATE PROGRAMME' is prominently displayed in the center, with a subtitle below it: 'Discover the advantages of the Shell Graduate Programme. Learn more about applying and the opportunities that await you.' The website's navigation bar includes the Shell logo, 'Media', 'Shell Go+', 'Help And Support', 'Careers', 'Station Locator', and 'United Kingdom'. A secondary navigation bar lists 'Home', 'Motorists', 'Shell Energy', 'Business customers', 'A Cleaner Energy Future', 'Sustainability', and 'About us'. A breadcrumb trail at the top reads 'Shell in UK > Careers > Students and graduates > Shell Graduate Programme'.

Capacity

How well you absorb information, analyse problems, make fact-based decisions and propose innovative solutions.

Achievement

How well you get things done, for example your drive, resilience, self-confidence and organizational skills.

Relationships

How well you work in teams, communicate and respect others.



Strengths-based Interviews



Typical questions

- When are you at your best?
- What do you love to do in your spare time?
- What are you most proud of achieving?
- What would your friends say are ...your strengths?
...your weaknesses?
- Describe a successful day you've had.
- What aspects of your course have you most enjoyed?



Practice Case

FashionCo.

Case study interviews

Client Background

Case Recommendation



Example

Client Background

Our client is FashionCo, a player in the women's fashion market. It's been in the industry for a long time, but has experienced declining revenues each year for the past five years.

FashionCo wants to understand:

- What is causing this decline?
- What can the organization do to drive revenue?

FashionCo will have a management meeting at the end of the week, and the CEO wants a recommendation from Bain on how to proceed.

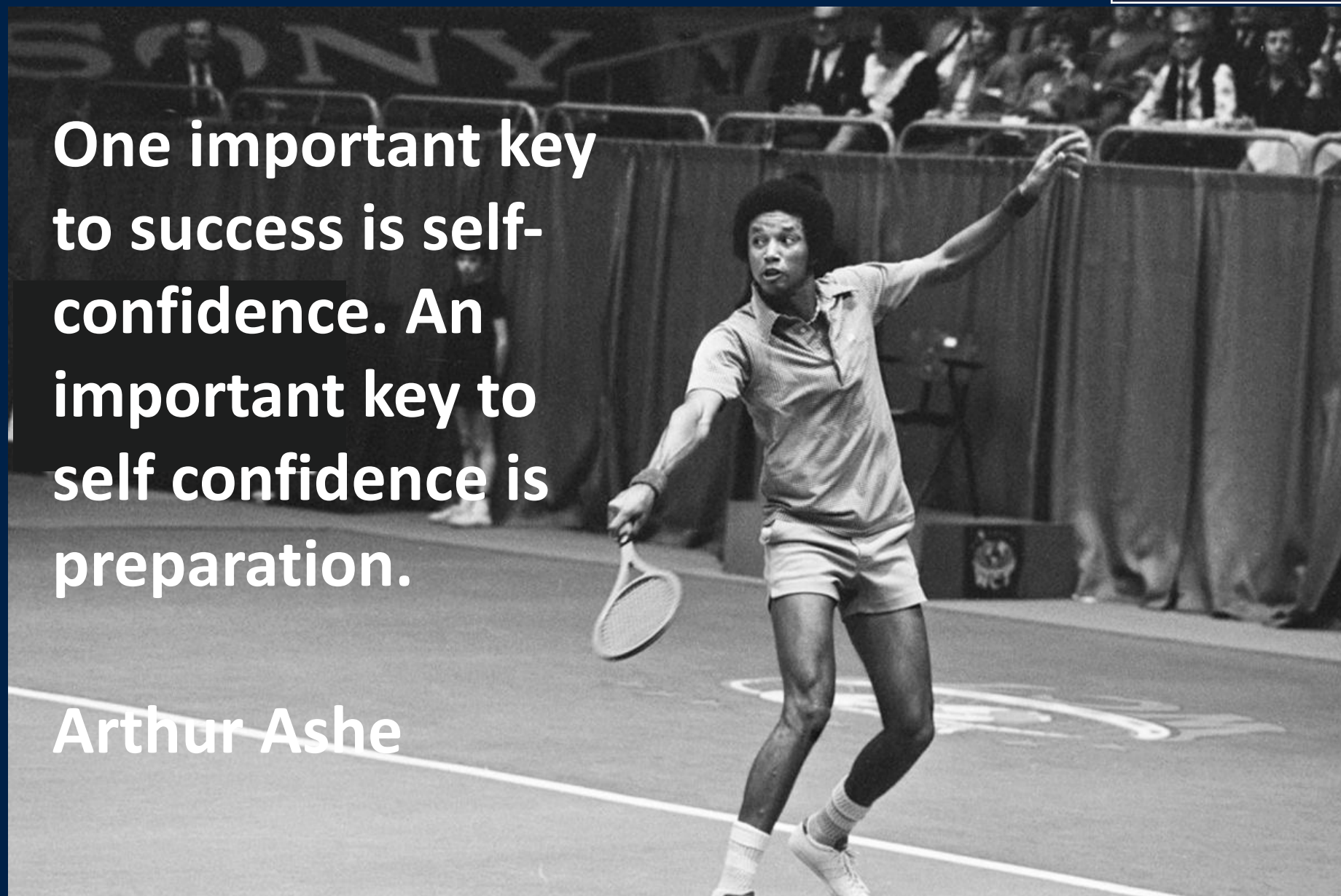
What can they do to drive revenue?





2

Preparation



One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self confidence is preparation.

Arthur Ashe



3 stages of preparation

- Company & sector knowledge
- Occupational knowledge
- Self knowledge



Organisation knowledge:



Ask Yourself:

- What do I know about this organisation?
- What attracts me to this organisation?
- Who are their competitors?
- What is happening in the sector?

Occupational knowledge:



Ask yourself:

- What do I know about this type of work?
- What attracts me to this type of work?
- What relevant work experience have I done?
- What kind of training/additional skills am I hoping to gain?

Self knowledge:

- Why do I want the job?
- Why am I a suitable candidate and what evidence do I have of this?
- What have I gained from my academic/employment/extra-curricular activities?
- What are my ambitions?
- What was my best/worst decision, my greatest achievement?
- What are my main strengths and weaknesses?



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Competency Based Questions:

- When did I...work in a team, solve a problem, etc.?

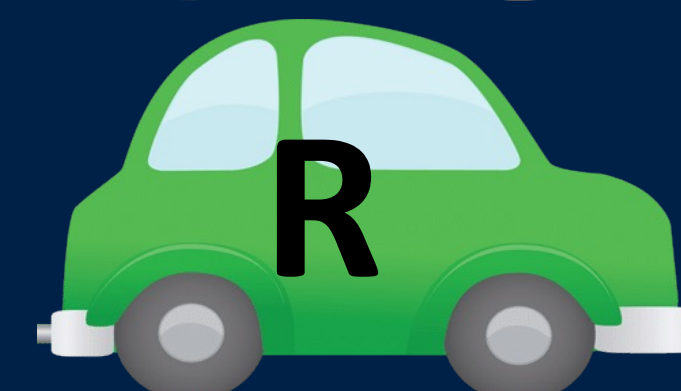


Situation

Task/Context

Action

Result



Examples are: Relevant, reasonably recent, detailed enough, focus on evidence about **you**



3

In the
Interview





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T7ix9VkE14>





Tips from RADA in the FT video



Dealing with nerves

*Shift your focus from
“What are they going to think of me?”
to
“How can I help them understand more
about me?”*



Inappropriate questions



Interviewers may not ask

- Whether you are **married**, have **children** or your **future family plans**
- “Are you a **UK citizen?**” or “How long have you lived here?” but could ask “Whether you are able to work in the UK”
- Your **age**. But could ask whether you meet minimum age requirements, for example selling alcohol over 18s only.
- About **criminal convictions**, or your **health** or **disabilities** unless it is directly related to the job. For example it’s ok to ask “Are there any specific accommodations you’d need us to make in order for you to do this job effectively?”

Your questions:



- Prepare a couple in advance
- Recognise that questions give away how much you know
- If you're stuck, ask the individual interviewing you: How would you describe the culture here? What particular challenges does the organisation face at the moment?
- If you have had all your questions answered, say so



After the Interview



- Review your performance
 - what went well/badly
- Make some notes to help next time
- Ask for feedback
- Don't get discouraged – treat each interview as a chance to develop skills.



Summary



Preparation is key

- Your stories
- Your STAR/CAR answers to all questions
- Homework on the organisation and industry

Any questions?



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Enhancing your CV



- New roles in existing activities
- Take up new activities & join relevant societies
- Volunteering
- Work Experience, see advice and links to programmes at www.careers.ox.ac.uk/internship-and-work-experience-advice
- Skills Development Programmes www.careers.ox.ac.uk/build-skills

Thank you and feedback

Thank you for participating today.



The next Careers Club session is on the 20th June. Join us to hear how colleagues have flourished in their career by taking opportunities to move roles within the University, whether through secondments, shadowing or switching to a new role.

If you are interested in finding out more please do contact us: Sarah.Lewis@admin.ox.ac.uk

Please also complete the evaluation form for today with your feedback and ideas for future sessions.

